

The conservation program of the BirdLife Americas Partnership 2004–2008



# ACTION FOR BIRDS AND PEOPLE IN THE AMERICAS

*Making a difference through Partnership*





**Spanning both hemispheres from the sub-Antarctic to the northern Arctic islands, the Americas region comprises two large continents bridged by Central America and a chain of tropical islands sweeping in an arc through the Caribbean basin from northern South America to the tip of south-eastern North America. The Americas region is home to an amazing 4,102 species of bird. The majority of these species are found within the Neotropical realm, home to 36% of the world's landbirds. More than 850 species have restricted ranges, and over sadly 12% of all Americas bird species are considered globally threatened, due primarily to habitat destruction and the degradation and fragmentation that go with it.**

### **BirdLife Presence in the Region**

As of 2004, the Americas Partnership comprises a network of 15 national, democratic, membership-based NGOs working towards the BirdLife mission. In countries without an official BirdLife Partner, conservation objectives are being advanced through NGOs and BirdLife-led country programs. The Americas Partnership and Program is supported by an international Secretariat staff based in Quito, Ecuador. A Regional Council of the Americas (CRA), comprising representatives from all Partners and Partner Designates, oversees the governance and strategic direction of the Americas partnership and program. While the CRA meets biannually, a small elected executive body (ExCRA) convenes regularly to guide program development and provide continuity. In 2004, more than 500,000 Partnership members and over 1,000 staff engaged in conservation activities and helped raise more than US\$80 million for bird conservation in the region.

### **BirdLife Regional Directions and Priorities**

**Saving Species:** While species conservation efforts are being undertaken by many Partners, this has not been done in a regionally coherent or coordinated way. Over the next four years the Partnership aims to develop and implement species conservation plans for all "Critically Endangered" and "Endangered" bird species. Broadening this out to prevent more species from becoming globally threatened, the status of all bird species will be assessed, a monitoring program will aim to measure changes in bird populations, and efforts will be made to keep "common birds common". Basic information on globally threatened birds will be made widely available to raise awareness of these species and the issues they face. At the same time, Partners will engage the major international Conventions to garner support for regional and global species conservation efforts.

**Protecting Sites:** The Important Bird Area (IBA) program is the foundation on which the Americas Program is built. By 2007, all IBAs in the region will have been inventoried and mapped, and the information will be widely accessible through local language publications and, using the

World Bird Database, over the web. IBAs will thus constitute a major planning tool for governments, funding agencies and NGOs at the national, regional and global levels. However, it is the conservation of these most important of sites that will be the major focus of the Partnership's activities. Although conservation approaches will vary on a case by case basis, the "Site Support Group" concept will be developed throughout the Americas, building on existing successes within the region.

**Conserving Habitats:** Comprehensive programs are already underway to safeguard the region's most endangered ecosystems, including the Atlantic Forest, Caribbean forests and wetlands, the Tumbesian Region and the Southern Cone Grasslands. These programs will be further developed, and additional conservation programs may be developed for other critical habitats such as the upper Amazon watershed, Boreal Forests, important marine areas and the forested areas of Mesoamerica. BirdLife will continue to support major habitat initiatives including those advanced through international conventions such as Ramsar.

**Empowering People:** People are central to BirdLife's strategy for bird and biodiversity conservation. The concept of "Site Support Groups" will be further developed as a mechanism for ensuring people are truly engaged and empowered to conserve IBAs. These local stakeholders will be trained and supported to ensure the conservation and sustainable development of the IBAs upon which their livelihoods often depend. Through campaigns, "citizen science" initiatives and other events (e.g. Bird Festivals), BirdLife will engage a broad range of potential stakeholders, with the aim of increasing awareness of the value of birds, and the link between people, their livelihoods and biodiversity concerns. The BirdLife Partnership is varied in nature, and thus considerable efforts will go towards building internal Partner capacity to effectively advance bird conservation issues nationally and regionally. This includes developing a sustained and varied source of funding to achieve its goals.

## **Vision for the Future**

Species are being lost, and as critical areas such as the Atlantic Forests, Tumbesian and Caribbean forests become ever more fragmented we will be faced with increasing numbers of bird extinctions. The challenges are thus enormous, but working as a coherent international Partnership can provide a powerful tool to address these challenges. However, it will only be through working in collaboration with all potential stakeholders, locally, nationally and globally that we will stand any hope of preventing the next species from becoming but a memory. Sustaining our conservation efforts is increasingly difficult, yet innovative approaches such as locally engaged Site Support Groups, or collaborative relationships with the corporate/ private sector may provide the key to maintaining our conservation programs in the long-term. BirdLife partners believe trained, empowered, resourced and aware people are the basis for helping secure the future for birds, other biodiversity and their habitats, while also achieving a better standard of living for all.

### **Saving Species**

### **1. Conserve the diversity and distribution of wild bird species worldwide as an integral part of nature**

#### **Global Objective**

1.1 **Prevent** Extinctions

#### **Activities**

- 1.1.1 Gather data on all Critically Endangered (CR) species in the Americas (will not include subspecies for the moment)
- 1.1.2 Develop and implement species recovery/action plans for most CR birds
- 1.1.3 Support IUCN National Red Data Lists in each country with an emphasis on Globally Threatened Birds (GTBs)
- 1.1.4 Create legal instruments that favor the protection of GTBs in the Americas
- 1.1.5 Promote bi/multinational cooperation on GTB conservation
- 1.1.6 Increase awareness of GTBs

#### **Targets**

- 1.1.1a Detailed accounts on all CR birds completed
- 1.1.1b Information on GTBs being to BirdLife International's Cambridge Secretariat to feed into IUCN Red Lists
- 1.1.2a Species Recovery Plans completed for all CR species in the Americas
- 1.1.3a GTB concept adopted in National Red Data Lists
- 1.1.4a Some Partners publish Red Data Books
- 1.1.5a GTB concept adopted by governments
- 1.1.6a Transboundary initiatives established for shared CR species in the Americas
- 1.1.7a BirdLife International Americas policy and advocacy group in place and effectively engaged in GTB issues
- 1.1.8a GTB publication produced in Spanish

## **Saving Species**

### **1. Conserve the diversity and distribution of wild bird species worldwide as an integral part of nature**

#### **Global Objective**

1.2 **Improve** the status of Globally Threatened Birds (GTBs)

#### **Activities**

1.2.1 Determine GTBs in greatest decline in the Americas and develop strategies to ensure their conservation

1.2.2 Develop species conservation plans for GTBs with severely declining populations

1.2.3 Make widely available on the Internet information on GTBs in Spanish

1.2.4 Determine the mechanism for implementing hemispheric cooperation for conservation of key GTBs (e.g. Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) or Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) environmental side-agreement) and implement advocacy campaign to ensure effectiveness (e.g. get Canada to become a signatory to CMS)

#### **Targets**

1.2.1a GTBs with significantly declining populations identified

1.2.1b Strategies addressing those populations of GTBs in greatest decline completed

1.2.2a Conservation plans in place and being implemented for GTBs with severe population declines

1.2.3a Data on GTBs of the Americas published in Spanish and English on the Internet

1.2.4a Significant progress towards establishing a legal mechanism to enable a hemispheric bird conservation initiative

<b>Saving Species</b>	<b>1. Conserve the diversity and distribution of wild bird species worldwide as an integral part of nature</b>	
<b>Global Objective</b>	1.3	<b>Keep</b> common birds common – reduce the decline in common bird species
<b>Activities</b>	1.3.1	Develop a program to identify those common species in decline
	1.3.2	Where relevant, encourage policies in support of ensuring all bird species are considered in actions taken at site, national and regional levels
	1.3.3	Support direct action to conserve common species in decline
	1.3.4	Disseminate information to key stakeholders on the status of birds in general
	1.3.5	Engage the public in conserving all bird species through broad based "Citizen Science" initiatives
<b>Targets</b>	1.3.1a	Program for identifying common species in decline initiated
	1.3.2a	Mechanism in place for feeding new information into <i>State of the world's birds</i> , World Conservation Union (IUCN) red lists and other relevant stakeholders
	1.3.3a	Common birds incorporated into general strategies for bird conservation
	1.3.4a	Partners engaged in encouraging local and national governments to develop and incorporate the conservation of all birds in Biodiversity Conservation Strategies
	1.3.5a	Results from <i>State of the world's birds</i> are disseminated to key stakeholders in each country in the Americas
	1.3.6a	Local groups adjacent to IBAs engaged in "Citizen Science" efforts to increase awareness and importance of birds and the environment



<b>Protecting Sites</b>	<b>2. Identify, conserve and promote a global network of internationally important sites for birds and biodiversity</b>	
<b>Global Objective</b>	2.1	<b>Identify</b> and <b>monitor</b> a network of international Important Bird Areas (IBAs)
<b>Activities</b>	2.1.1	Complete an inventory of all terrestrial IBAs in each of the 38 countries in the Americas by 2007 and begin identifying marine IBAs
	2.1.2	Publish national and regional inventories for all countries and where small island nations, publish regional directories (on Compact Disk, web or hard copy)
	2.1.3	Identify priority sites and begin a monitoring scheme to ensure their future conservation
	2.1.4	Establish a technical IBA support mechanism for Partners in each sub-region
	2.1.5	Enter all data on IBAs into the World Bird Database (WBDB) or its equivalent (should one be developed) by end of 2006
<b>Targets</b>	2.1.1a	An Americas regional inventory of IBAs published in English and Spanish in 2007
	2.1.2a	BirdLife International Secretariat provides technical support to Partners to complete and publish national and regional IBA inventories
	2.1.3a	Priority IBAs identified for each sub-region by 2008
	2.1.4a	Technical IBA support mechanism established for each sub-region
	2.1.5a	All information on IBAs entered in WBDB by end of 2006

## Protecting Sites

## 2. Identify, conserve and promote a global network of internationally important sites for birds and biodiversity

### Global Objective

2.2 **Conserve, protect** and **restore** the global network of Important Bird Areas (IBAs)

### Activities

2.2.1 Seek to Include IBAs in national conservation strategies

2.2.2 Based on a prioritization of sites, support the development of site-based action at priority sites either nationally or at the sub-regional levels

2.2.3 Provide adequate training to local stakeholders to manage IBAs effectively

2.2.4 Support law enforcement activities at protected sites

2.2.5 Promote alternative livelihoods at key sites

2.2.6 Secure necessary resources (technical or financial) to implement long-term conservation at priority IBA sites in each country/sub-region

2.2.7 Implement a coordinated approach to IBAs in key habitat types identified by the Americas region as a priority – Caribbean dry forests, the Tumbesian region of Ecuador and Peru, the grasslands of the southern cone and the Atlantic forests of Brazil and Paraguay

2.2.8 Support conservation at Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites in the Americas

### Targets

2.2.1a IBAs officially recognized at the national level

2.2.2a Site Support Groups (SSGs) adopted as a tool for implementing conservation at priority sites in the Americas

2.2.2a At least 5 SSGs in each country established and supported

2.2.3a Partners have capacity to train local stakeholders to manage IBAs

2.2.4a Where viable, Partners support law enforcement efforts to conserve IBAs

2.2.5a Increased number of Partners engage in promoting alternative activities in and adjacent to IBAs that foster site conservation while contributing to local livelihoods

2.2.6a Adequate resources are secured for specific action at priority sites in each country

2.2.7a A coordinated approach to conserving IBAs is implemented in at least the Atlantic forest of Brazil and Paraguay, the southern cone grasslands, the Tumbesian region, the Caribbean dry forests of Cuba

2.2.8a The Partnership is engaged in promoting conservation of species at AZE sites

<b>Protecting Sites</b>	<b>2. Identify, conserve and promote a global network of internationally important sites for birds and biodiversity</b>
<b>Global Objective</b>	2.3 <b>Promote</b> IBAs as key biodiversity areas
<b>Activities</b>	2.3.1 Encourage communities, governments, conventions and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to recognize IBAs as important indicators of areas of high biodiversity 2.3.2 Support the official designation of IBAs as a mechanism to increase the profile of IBAs as a legitimate and effective conservation tool for biodiversity conservation 2.3.3 Promote the declaration of IBAs as key biodiversity areas, AZE, Ramsar and Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) sites as appropriate
<b>Targets</b>	2.3.1a IBAs, biodiversity hotspots, and data for other taxa overlaid to establish IBAs as important umbrellas for broader biodiversity 2.3.1b IBAs are supported as the mechanism for implementing an "All Americas Bird Conservation Initiative" (or equivalent) 2.3.2a IBA designation ceremonies are supported throughout the Americas 2.3.3a IBAs are linked to other site designation efforts such as WHSRN, key biodiversity areas, AZE and Ramsar sites where appropriate 2.3.3b BirdLife International takes a lead role in helping to conserve AZE sites in the Americas



## Conserving Habitats

<b>Conserving Habitats</b>	<b>3. Maintain, manage and restore the diverse habitats that sustain vital ecological services</b>
<b>Global Objective</b>	3.1 <b>Identify</b> and <b>monitor</b> habitats of international importance for birds and the environment
<b>Activities</b>	3.1.1 Cooperate on the conservation of critical habitats important for all birds at national or multi-national levels 3.1.2 Develop tools for monitoring status of key habitats (including use of indicator species to assess habitat status) 3.1.3 Build the capacity through in-house expertise or alliances with key institutions to use remote sensing tools for habitat monitoring
<b>Targets</b>	3.1.1a The Partnership engaged with Ramsar to conserve marine and wetland habitats throughout the Americas 3.1.1b The Partnership is an active player in the conservation of critical forest and grassland habitats 3.1.2a Clear, easy to use protocols for habitat status monitoring established and in use in 10 countries 3.1.3a Capacity within the Partnership to use Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to monitor and map habitat status in the Americas is developed and shared

<b>Conserving Habitats</b>	<b>3. Maintain, manage and restore the diverse habitats that sustain vital ecological services</b>	
<b>Global Objective</b>	3.2	<b>Develop, implement</b> and <b>advocate</b> policies to safeguard priority habitats for birds
<b>Activities</b>	3.2.1	Support the development of national policies for conserving key habitats in the Americas
	3.2.2	Engage in and support other regional/hemispherical initiatives, such as the InterAmerican Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) and Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference initiative (WHMSC)
	3.2.3	Engage in and support global conventions and their policies as they relate to habitats
<b>Targets</b>	3.2.1a	Partners engage in the formulation of policies at national level to conserve critically threatened habitats
	3.2.1b	"Developed" countries' policies to support key habitat conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region enhanced (this applies to species and site work as well)
	3.2.2a	BirdLife International is an active partner involved in the InterAmerican Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) and other similar information systems
	3.2.3a	Americas policy and advocacy group effectively engaged in processes related to the implementation of key relevant international conventions – Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Kyoto (Climate Change Convention), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
	3.2.3b	BirdLife International is a leader in developing the WHMSC initiative

<b>Empowering People</b>	<b>4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment</b>
<b>Global Objective</b>	4.1 <b>Engage and expand</b> a global constituency of people who are passionate about birds and nature
<b>Activities</b>	4.1.1 Raise the profile of birds through public awareness events/materials including: newsletters, bird guides, festivals, newspaper articles, submission of articles in national and local publications, urban activities 4.1.2 Recruit and retain BirdLife International's membership 4.1.3 Engage in coordinated campaigns on species, sites and habitat issues 4.1.4 Develop a user friendly web presence for BirdLife International in the Americas 4.1.5 Education programs aimed at youth are developed throughout the region
<b>Targets</b>	4.1.1a Secretariat to coordinate development of a BirdLife in the Americas Marketing Plan 4.1.1b All Partners provide regular information to their membership and the public at large through newsletters, bird guides, festivals, newspaper articles, submission of articles in national and local publications, urban activities 4.1.2a The membership within BirdLife increases more than 15% 4.1.3a Cooperative campaigns are coordinated on issues of international importance including migratory species, key habitat protection and species survival 4.1.4a A dynamic website for BirdLife International in the Americas is operational and regularly updated 4.1.5a The number of schools engaged in youth education environmental programs doubles by 2008

<b>Empowering People</b>	<b>4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment</b>	
<b>Global Objective</b>	4.2	<b>Grow</b> and <b>empower</b> a worldwide network of grassroots conservation organizations
<b>Activities</b>	4.2.1	Strengthen the capacity of organizations to carry out effective conservation through strategic planning, effective management and the sharing of experiences
	4.2.2	Promote strong governance and national participation in the BirdLife Partnership
	4.2.3	Encourage and develop a strong volunteer network to help advance the conservation actions of each Partner
	4.2.4	Develop leadership amongst BirdLife Partner organizations on specific issues (thematic and operational)
	4.2.5	Convene strategic meetings (e.g. Americas Regional Committee (CRA)) to coordinate and discuss issues of relevance to bird conservation in the Americas
	4.2.6	Develop a BirdLife International presence in priority countries where there is currently no representation
<b>Targets</b>	4.2.1a	Americas Supporting Partners Network engaged and participating in staff exchanges to increase capacity of key Partner organizations
	4.2.1b	All Partners and the Secretariat are guided by strategic plans that are periodically reviewed and evaluated
	4.2.2a	All Americas Partners are governed by strong, democratically elected boards with a clear mandate for engaging in the organization's development
	4.2.3a	Internships and Volunteer Program established and coordinated by the BirdLife International Secretariat to support partners in specific predetermined needs
	4.2.4a	Training opportunities are identified and BirdLife International Partners participate in leadership development courses
	4.2.5a	CRA and regional partnership meetings convened annually and bi-annually respectively
	4.2.6a	BirdLife International presence in Peru, Chile, Mexico and Colombia

<b>Empowering People</b>	<b>4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment</b>
<b>Global Objective</b>	4.3 <b>Expand</b> and <b>maintain</b> the funding needed to achieve conservation and sustainability
<b>Activities</b>	4.3.1 Identify resources to fund bird conservation in the Americas and globally 4.3.2 Develop innovative mechanisms for ensuring sustainability of BirdLife International's global programs – GTBs, IBAs, others – through the establishment of endowments, trust funds, revolving funds, loans, etc 4.3.3 Secure funds for the IBA program in each of the seven sub-regions in the Americas 4.3.4 Cooperate on joint fundraising proposals in each sub-region 4.3.5 Maintain and share experiences on successful funding initiatives
<b>Targets</b>	4.3.1a A funding database is maintained by the Secretariat and shared within the BirdLife International Partnership 4.3.2a Each sub-region has core funds to sustain on-going IBA programs to identify and monitor the conservation status and protect/conservate highest priority sites 4.3.3a An Americas "President's Council" is organized and successfully raises funds for priority activities identified by the Partnership – target US\$100 million by 2015 4.3.4a Fundraising workshops are coordinated and focused on developing and submitting concepts that support IBA work in the Americas 4.3.5a Successful fundraising efforts are shared amongst Partners

<b>Empowering People</b>	<b>4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment</b>	
<b>Global Objective</b>	4.4	<b>Promote</b> and <b>foster</b> the links between biodiversity conservation and sustaining people's livelihoods
<b>Activities</b>	4.4.1	Support innovative practices that enhance local people's income while ensuring the sustainable use of resources, particularly in and around IBAs
	4.4.2	Encourage nature tourism as an alternative economic activity at select sites in the Americas
	4.4.3	Support initiatives to market and sell goods and services, sustainably developed, from IBAs (e.g. coffee, tagua, spices, wood products, cacao, barks, arts and crafts, etc.)
<b>Targets</b>	4.4.1a	Mechanism established to share experiences and lessons learned from Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs) in the Americas
	4.4.1b	Increased sources of funding secured from traditional development agencies (i.e. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), US Agency for International Development (USAID), and multilateral agencies)
	4.4.1c	Multidisciplinary ICDPs established in each sub-region
	4.4.2a	Documented policies, best practices, resources and lessons learned from nature tourism activities in the Americas produced and distributed to all Partners (via website)
	4.4.3a	Feasibility studies on the "organic" and "fair-trade" markets in the Americas produced (identify the criteria, quality control, and processing requirements to market organic/fair-trade products)
	4.4.3b	At least two successful partnerships established with business to market fair-trade/organic products

## Glossary

AZE	Alliance for Zero Extinction
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CR	Critically Endangered
CRA	Americas Regional Committee
ExCRA	Small elected executive body of the Americas Regional Committee
GIS	Geographic Information System
GTB	Globally Threatened Bird
IABIN	InterAmerican Biodiversity Information Network
IBA	Important Bird Area
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SSG	Site Support Group
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WBDB	World Bird Database
WHMSC	Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference
WHSRN	Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network

# THE BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL AMERICAS PARTNERSHIP



[www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org)

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