

The conservation programme of the BirdLife Pacific Partnership 2004–2008



**ACTION
FOR BIRDS AND PEOPLE
IN THE PACIFIC**

Making a difference through Partnership



The Pacific Region spreads over more than 38 million km² of ocean – an area three times larger than China. Much of the region's biodiversity is threatened with extinction. It is home to 289 species of Globally Threatened Birds – 24% of the world's total – 37 (14%) of which are Critically Endangered and has the dubious distinction of recording the most extinctions. The main threats to the region's biodiversity are habitat destruction and introduced alien species. Birds, in particular, have evolved in the absence of alien species and have few defences against them, while habitat destruction is a chronic and increasing threat.

BirdLife Presence in the Region

The Pacific Partnership currently comprises a network of eight national NGOs in Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Palau and Samoa supported by a small Secretariat based in Fiji. Together these countries are representative of the sub-regions of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia as well as continental Australia and range in type from high, volcanic, tropical islands to coral atolls to temperate zones to extensive deserts. Within these sub-regions are found nearly a quarter of the world's most threatened bird species. The Pacific Partnership network is committed to working together to address bird conservation issues at the local, national, regional and global levels.

BirdLife Regional Directions and Priorities

Initiated in 1999, the Pacific Partnership network is the newest of BirdLife International's regional groupings. The Pacific Regional Programme 2004–2008, the first devised by the Partnership, aims to bring together regional efforts towards bird conservation in a focused and strategic manner. It will be used by Partnership members as a programme management tool with more detailed work plans, based on the Programme's activities, being drawn up by each member and reported back to regular, regional partnership meetings to ensure that at least satisfactory progress is being made. The main focus of the Programme lays in education, awareness-raising and capacity-building – vital components for all conservation projects, particularly in developing Pacific Islands states.

In adopting the four main themes of BirdLife International: Species – Sites – Habitats – People, Pacific Regional Partners have identified in the Programme the following priorities as the most crucial:

- Preventing further extinctions and improving the status of Globally Threatened Birds;
- Identifying and monitoring a network of Important Bird Areas within the region and promoting them as key biodiversity areas;
- Identifying habitats needing urgent conservation action and promoting policies and management practices that conserve Important Bird Areas; and

- Taking or promoting a range of actions relating to empowering people including:
- Use of awareness materials, the media and campaigning;
- Initiating the development of an islands network within the Global Partnership;
- Improving or increasing levels of sustainable financing for the Partnership; and
- Developing projects and proposals to channel international and national funding into priority Important Bird Areas and priority species.

These priorities, while not covering every issue that needs to be addressed, are nevertheless seen as the most critical and urgent. They represent vital measures that can and should be taken – in line with the region's limited resources and expertise – over the next four years to ensure that an effective start is made on coordinated, regional efforts to ensure the future of the far-flung region's unique bird species.

Vision for the Future

Most small-island nations have very small populations and resources and – so far – only a handful of committed and knowledgeable conservationists. The greatest need and challenge for the Pacific region is to convince people that they should be doing something to help conserve the region's birds and biodiversity and to help them do this by developing their conservation knowledge and ability to plan and take effective action. The Pacific Regional Programme, while recognising these realities, at the same time provides its members with a real opportunity to make significant, community-based progress in the vital task of conserving birds and biodiversity.

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	Undertake urgent actions for priority species (Extinct in the Wild (EW) and Critically Endangered (CR)) according to existing plans
	1.1.2	Agree and implement action for all priority species for which there is currently no action
	1.1.3	Monitor populations of every priority species
Targets	1.1.1a	Possible threats to each species identified
	1.1.1b	Action taken to address threats to every species
	1.1.1c	Reports of 'lost' species followed-up
	1.1.1d	Searches for 'lost' species stimulated and supported
	1.1.3a	Populations of priority species are monitored

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 Develop, prioritise and implement Action Plans for threatened species
 - 1.2.2 Increase public awareness of threatened birds and their needs
 - 1.2.3 Advocate measures for threatened species for adoption by national governments, international conventions (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)), international agencies and intergovernmental unions (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), South Pacific Forum (now Pacific Islands Forum) (SPF))
 - 1.2.4 Update information on all GTBs
 - 1.2.5 Promote ratification of, and adherence to, ACAP (Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels)
 - 1.2.6 Undertake project work to address impacts of invasive alien species on threatened birds¹

- Targets**
- 1.2.1a Opportunities for action on all threatened species pursued
 - 1.2.2a Every network organisation to have raised public awareness of threatened birds and their needs
 - 1.2.3a New measures advocated, where appropriate
 - 1.2.4a Desk reviews on status of all threatened birds completed based on all available information
 - 1.2.5a All Pacific governments lobbied by regional Partnership to ratify and adhere to ACAP
 - 1.2.6a Funding secured for a regional invasive species project, with action at a national level

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

Global Objective 1.3 **Keep** common birds common – reduce the decline in common species

Activities 1.3.1 Education and media work to increase public awareness of common birds, their threats and their conservation

Targets 1.3.1a Increased general public awareness of the importance of, and threats to, common birds

¹ Note that eradication and control of alien invasive species (including disease) will form a key part of many Species Action Plans and part of Site Management Plans too (see Important Bird Area work under Sites), as well as this single initiative which will have a wider impact on all bird species as well as other biodiversity

Protecting Sites	2. Identify, conserve and promote a global network of internationally important sites for birds and biodiversity
Global Objective	2.1 Identify and monitor a network of international Important Bird Areas (IBAs)
Activities	2.1.1 Identify and document IBAs for each Pacific country with a Partner or Affiliate 2.1.2 Identify and document IBAs for each Pacific country with no Partner or Affiliate 2.1.3 Identify and document marine IBAs, starting with New Zealand and Australia
Targets	2.1.1a IBA documentation completed in countries with current IBA programme (Palau, New Caledonia, Fiji, French Polynesia) 2.1.1b IBA programme in Samoa and Cook Islands promoted 2.1.1c IBA programme in Australia and New Zealand progressed 2.1.2a Agreement reached with nations and territories outside Partnership to be involved in IBAs 2.1.2b Desk review completed for nations and territories outside Partnership 2.1.3a Methods and criteria agreed to identify marine IBAs 2.1.3b Draft inventory of marine IBAs completed for New Zealand and started in Australia

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 IBAs

Activities

- 2.2.1 Undertake interventions to remove specific threats from IBAs
- 2.2.2 Improve management of IBAs (including development of local and national government protected areas)
- 2.2.3 Awareness raising of the importance and vulnerability of IBAs
- 2.2.4 Seek recognition of IBAs by national and local governments (e.g. in National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), national land-use plans, regulations and legislation)
- 2.2.5 Seek recognition of IBAs by intergovernmental organisations, development banks, and bilateral donors
- 2.2.6 Seek designation of IBAs under international and regional conventions and programmes (e.g. Ramsar Convention)
- 2.2.7 Encourage Site Support Groups (SSGs) to conserve IBAs
- 2.2.8 Strengthen and develop reserves programme at IBAs
- 2.2.9 Work with relevant regional and international institutions to develop projects to prevent introduction and re-infestation by alien invasive species

Targets

- 2.2.1a Interventions successfully undertaken by network organisations to remove threats in IBAs
- 2.2.2a Management of IBAs improved through development of management structures and plans
- 2.2.3a Increased awareness at all levels
- 2.2.4a IBAs are recognised by national and local government through active partnership of participation, funding and legislation
- 2.2.5a IBAs are recognised by regional organisations, development banks and bilateral donors as important development and conservation mechanisms
- 2.2.6a IBAs are designated under relevant international conventions and regional programmes
- 2.2.7a Increased number of SSGs supporting IBAs
- 2.2.8a Reserves management plans implemented in Australia
- 2.2.8b Governments lobbied to establish and actively manage more 'protected areas'
- 2.2.9a Projects developed, funded and implemented

Protecting Sites

Protecting Sites	2. Identify, conserve and promote a global network of internationally important sites for birds and biodiversity
Global Objective	2.3 Promote IBAs as key biodiversity areas
Activities	2.3.1 Conduct surveys and undertake advocacy measures to promote IBAs as key biodiversity areas
Targets	2.3.1a IBAs successfully promoted as key biodiversity areas

Conserving Habitats

Conserving Habitats	3. Maintain, manage and restore the diverse habitats that sustain vital ecological services
Global Objective	3.1 Identify and monitor habitats of international importance for birds and the environment
Activities	3.1.1 Identify habitats needing urgent action ² 3.1.2 Develop monitoring mechanisms for habitats of global importance
Targets	3.1.1a Key habitats needing action for threatened birds are agreed 3.1.2a Range of forest birds that indicate forest 'health' are identified 3.1.2b Increased monitoring of seabird by-catch is advocated 3.1.2c Key habitats monitored as opportunities allow to be involved in global programmes

² National and regional groups will identify and advocate conservation of key habitats. Interim activities are proposed for forest, other key terrestrial habitats and marine habitats as these are of immediate concern.

Conserving Habitats

3. Maintain, manage and restore the diverse habitats that sustain vital ecological services

Global Objective

3.2 **Develop, implement** and **advocate** policies to safeguard priority habitats for birds

Activities

3.2.1 Promote policies and management practices that conserve important habitats

3.2.2 Foster conservation, rehabilitation and sustainable use of important habitats

3.2.3 Minimise impact of potentially damaging development projects in key habitats

Targets

3.2.1a Traditional practices, policies and where appropriate legislation, are promoted to enable conservation of important habitats

3.2.2a Increased awareness of the biodiversity conservation value of priority habitats

3.2.2b Sustainable management of priority habitats is promoted

3.2.2c Sustainable management of marine resources is promoted as part of a seabirds campaign

3.2.2d Projects raising awareness of impact of climate change on reefs and low-lying islands are supported, e.g. through provision of bird data

3.2.3a Ecologically damaging projects are opposed, or mitigation measures advocated, by BirdLife in conjunction with other collaborators

Empowering People **4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment**

Global Objective 4.1 **Engage** and **expand** a global constituency of people who are passionate about birds and nature

- Activities**
- 4.1.1 Reach as wide an audience as possible through the BirdLife network by carefully planned use of awareness materials, informative campaigning, bird fair events, websites and the media
 - 4.1.2 Build the membership and volunteer base of each organisation in the network
 - 4.1.3 Promote birdwatching and bird ecotourism

- Targets**
- 4.1.1a Increased number of local birdwatchers in the region
 - 4.1.1b Increased levels of awareness amongst local people and visitors about biodiversity conservation
 - 4.1.2a Increased membership and number of volunteers participating in each network organisation
 - 4.1.3a Increased number of local bird ecotourism ventures, operators and guides

Empowering People **4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment**

Global Objective 4.2 **Grow** and **empower** a worldwide network of grassroots conservation organisations

- Activities**
- 4.2.1 Expand the geographical coverage and strengthen the Partnership in the region
 - 4.2.2 Strengthen the regional Partnership and network through capacity building (e.g building NGO strategic and business plans), joint projects, increased participation in networks
 - 4.2.3 Initiate the development of an islands network within the global Partnership

- Targets**
- 4.2.1a Work towards increasing the number of Partners and Affiliates and BirdLife programmes in the Pacific³
 - 4.2.2a Institutional capacity and regional/global linkages of network organisations are strengthened
 - 4.2.2b Successful management of IBA and other bird projects
 - 4.2.3a BirdLife islands network working to coordinate and promote small islands actions

³ The Pacific Partnership also wishes to engage with Hawaii, which remains part of the Americas Programme

Empowering People	4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment	
Global Objective	4.3	Expand and maintain the funding needed to achieve conservation and sustainability
Activities	4.3.1	Improve or increase level of sustainable financing of Partners and Affiliates (e.g. diversification of funding sources, capacity building for fundraising)
	4.3.2	Develop projects and proposals to channel international and national funding into priority IBAs, priority species and other objectives of BirdLife International
Targets	4.3.1a	Network organisations financially stable
	4.3.1b	Increased levels of financial income
	4.3.2a	Project proposals successfully funded
	4.3.2b	Increased resourcing of BirdLife priorities by other institutions
Empowering People	4. Empower, mobilise and expand a worldwide constituency of people who care for birds and their natural environment	
Global Objective	4.4	Promote and foster the links between biodiversity conservation and sustaining people's livelihoods
Activities	4.4.1	Develop and implement projects that integrate conservation and people's livelihoods
	4.4.2	Advocate acknowledgement (at least) of the role of birds and biodiversity shown in national development plans or other strategies
Targets	4.4.1a	Projects implemented that integrate conservation and people's livelihoods
	4.4.2a	Links established between BirdLife priorities and NBSAPs and other national development plans and strategies

Glossary

ACAP	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CR	Critically Endangered
EW	Extinct in the Wild
IBA	Important Bird Area
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPF	South Pacific Forum (now Pacific Islands Forum)
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

