

BirdLife International launches Europe's most ambitious bird conservation project

BirdLife International launches Europe's most ambitious bird species project to identify the conservation needs of 16 charismatic species across 10 countries. The Vulture Conservation Foundation (VCF) and the hunters' association FACE will also participate and contribute.

Brussels, 7 April 2015

In April, BirdLife International launches a new EU funded project to tackle the severe threats that represent a danger for the conservation of a number of iconic birds.

LIFE Euro SAP will run for 3 years, involving 13 partners, covering a total of 16 species. The project will develop new Species Action Plans (SAPs) for 2 species (Yelkouan Shearwater, Monteiro's Storm-petrel), it will review and update existing SAPs (Velvet Scoter, White-headed Duck, Cinereous Vulture, Bearded Vulture, Dalmatian Pelican, and Turtle Dove) and it will develop and pilot Multi Species Action Plan for European lowland grassland breeding waders (Eurasian Oystercatcher, European Lapwing, 'Baltic' Dunlin, Ruff, Common Snipe, Eurasian Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit and Common Redshank).

Iván Ramírez, Head of Conservation for Europe and Central Asia stated: *«Euro SAP marks the beginning of a new era for bird conservation in Europe. We are tackling bird conservation at a truly continental scale, we are creating a wide partnership that will work together to better protect our species, our activities and the wider biodiversity of our region.»*

The Species Action Plans provide the status, ecology and threats of bird species and are used by the European Commission to undertake the key actions required to improve their conservation status in Europe. This revision is more than urgent as several species benefiting from SAPs have seen their conservation status deteriorate recently.

The 6 bird species [1] targeted by the LIFE Euro SAP project [2] are some of the most charismatic and endangered species in Europe. Current conservation measures are not adapted and their populations are in continuous declines. The project will study the birds' entire life-cycle, covering entire migratory routes, it will analyse threats and will define better-adapted conservation actions.

Partners will also produce new Action Plans for two species, the Yelkouan Shearwater and the Monteiro's Storm-petrel, defined as "threatened" in the latest IUCN Red List Assessment [3], and therefore, in need of urgent, targeted protection.

ENDS

BirdLife Europe is a Partnership of nature conservation organisations in 47 countries, including all EU Member States, and a leader in bird conservation. Through its unique local to global approach BirdLife Europe delivers high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of nature and people.

Notes

[1] SAPs will be revised and updated for the following 6 species: White-headed Duck, Velvet Scoter, Dalmatian Pelican, Cinereous Vulture, Bearded Vulture and European Turtle-dove) and develop two new plans for species of greatest urgency (Yelkouan Shearwater and Monteiro's Storm-petrel).

[2] LIFE Euro SAP specific objectives and targeted species are:

1. Undertake the most urgent update and revision of six existing action plans for birds with continuous population declines and in need of coordinated conservation efforts at international level and develop two new plans for species of greatest urgency.
2. Develop a pilot group action plan for the European lowland grassland waders (Eurasian Oystercatcher, Northern Lapwing, 'Baltic' Dunlin, Ruff, Common Snipe, Eurasian Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit and Common Redshank).
3. Respond to a need expressed by the European Commission to develop and test/apply a methodology for multi-species action plans for a group of species, based on commonalities in their habitat needs.
4. Create conditions for effective coordination among the European Commission, EU Member States, the international conventions and non-governmental organisations involved in international bird conservation efforts.
5. Put in place a system for coordination among the main actors involved in the development and implementation of species action plans.

[3] Yelkouan Shearwater: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/speciesfactsheet.php?id=3937>
Monteiro's Storm-petrel: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/species/factsheet/22735624>

Participating countries: Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Portugal, Lithuania, Spain, France, Greece.

BirdLife Partners involved: BirdLife International (BirdLife), Naturschutzbund Deutschland e. V. [NABU], Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Sveriges Ornitologiska Forening – BirdLife Sweden (SOF), Vereniging tot de Bescherming van Vogels (VBN), Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO/BirdLife), Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (SPEA), Lithuanian Ornithological Society (LOD), Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO), Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS).

Other organisations involved: Vulture Conservation Foundation (VCF), Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE).

Co-financer: Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)

FACE (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU): will advise and participate in the definition of management measures for the huntable species, working together with BirdLife to ensure their conservation status is improved and/or maintained.