Commitments are being made to protect and restore forests on a scale never before seen. We need to turn these commitments into reality on the ground. Saving the world’s forests requires BIG ideas, BIG money, BIG systemic change. To solve the underlying problems, all sectors of society need to align. It’s not only about conservation and restoration now – these forests need to stay standing. We have to find solutions that are sustainable for the long haul. How can BirdLife build on our experience of protecting and restoring priority forests and transform the way we work, and whom we partner with – to succeed at a scale and speed we have never attempted before?
BIG money being committed to conservation is increasingly diverse, with business-based approaches and outside traditional grant models NGOs are built on. Expectations are of massive scale, immediate impact, and often, financial returns.

We need investment in forests as we do in other critical assets but conserving forests isn't like building a bridge. The necessary funding/financing systems and markets for forests, and for the value they hold, are only now being developed.

And, the global expertise on forest conservation and restoration doesn't sit in big business or banks. It sits with us - in NGOs, in communities, and local institutions. And many of us, particularly national NGOs in developing countries, are struggling to secure the new types of funding being invested in forest and climate.
The Implementation Gap

So, despite decades of experience and track record of delivering forest impact that the world wants and needs, many organizations critical to tackling the challenge, are in danger of being left out of the new paradigm.

The implementation gap – where many lack the language to articulate ideas and impact in a way that investors understand, or plans that reflect the desired level of scale, or the business structures that can absorb such huge sums or new types of finance, or links to the decision makers shaping and directing funding opportunities.

And this isn’t just about us. There is a real danger that in the rush to invest in big fast forests, the world may end up with poorly thought out, badly managed initiatives that deliver few benefits for biodiversity, society or the planet.

Without enabling those who have been working to conserve forests for hundreds of years, and intentionally placing the myriad values of forest at the centre of this paradigm, we will not achieve the results we all so urgently need.
The BirdLife Partnership combines knowledge from decades of on-the-ground experience with the strengths of the Partnership as a whole, harnessing global work on science, policy, corporate engagement and capacity development, to amplify our impact.

BirdLife Partners understand the national dynamics and drivers of forest change, they have the credibility and legitimacy working with key stakeholders. This means delivery of high impact, cost effective and sustainable action on the ground.

United by shared BirdLife vision, strategies, and programmes, jointly developed by the Partnership. Working together enables sharing of best practices, model approaches and experience. This means international programmes are informed by on the ground experience and local action is enabled by international advocacy.

The landscape-scale initiatives we work on represent vast and important forest all around the world. We have invested in relationships, partnerships and multi-stakeholder platforms that can really deliver. We understand our local dynamics, and how to create new incentives at local level that recognize the value of forests.

And we’re ready to do more and to scale up!
Our solution to bridge the gap

• To help BirdLife Partners to access opportunities to present large-scale, ambitious proposals and business cases that match the level of ambition required

• To focus on the landscapes where there is real and immediate potential for truly transformative models of conservation, development and sustainability

• To have flexibility, so that partners can determine the best way to overcome their own barriers or pursue ambitious untested ideas

• To foster collaboration – capitalizing on the power of BirdLife, and the diversity of its Partners and their experiences

• To inspire our peers and supporters, our Partners and even ourselves, to think a little differently and be a little bolder

We have created an exciting new initiative:

*BirdLife’s Forest Landscape Sustainability Accelerator*
Accelerating Sustainability

We have had a remarkable impact and secured vast forests under legal protection - our challenge now is to sustain that success.

**BirdLife’s Forest Landscape Sustainability Accelerator**

Is built on the model of seed accelerators in the innovation sector: “A fixed-term, cohort-based program that includes seed investment, connections, mentorship, educational components, and culminates in a public pitch event to accelerate growth.”

Accelerators act as hubs and matchmakers through which investors find new companies and promising investments. Accelerators enable people with BIG IDEAS to develop them in a supportive environment.
Our Accelerator model

**Technical Collaborations**
Sharing knowledge, skills and connections housed in BirdLife International and beyond

**Seed Funding**
Supporting BirdLife Partners implementing sustainability strategies

**Training Workshop**
Providing an intensive training workshop on key sustainability topics

**Knowledge Exchanges**
Facilitating knowledge transfers between BirdLife Partners

The Accelerator delivers a direct, multi-faceted support package for each participating partner.

Brings together bespoke components + knowledge exchanges and training on common themes.

Seeks to address specific challenges faced in accessing sustainable financing and funding for forest landscapes.

Focused on unlocking implementation gap between landscape-level initiatives and global pool of finance and funding available through donor community.
Accelerating landscape sustainability strategies

- Visitor and tourism services
- User fees
- Payment for Ecosystem Services
- Licensing of extraction and off-takers

Sustainable services

- Corporate engagement and sponsorship
- Government agreements
- Subsidies
- Tax schemes
- Biodiversity offsets
- Other fiscal policies

Enabling policies

- Sustainable agricultural supply chains
- Sustainable NTFP supply chains
- Certification/assurance of sustainability

Sustainable products

- Removing disincentives to conservation
- Promoting reduction of unsustainable investments
- Reducing unsustainable practices
- Implementing cost effective sustainable land management

Reducing unsustainable practices
Accelerator strategy: Investing in Flagship Landscapes

Targeting BirdLife’s leaders in the field of sustainability already successfully invested in sustainability strategies, maximizing investments made

Landscapes that are global conservation priorities, with long-term BirdLife engagement, and clear commitment and buy-in from key stakeholders for shared landscape vision

Landscape needing a boost to go to scale, that provide the opportunity to develop and showcase a set of best practice models
Accelerator Flagships

Atlantic Forests
Argentina, Brazil & Paraguay

15,000 ha of priority Atlantic forest, supporting endemic biodiversity, forests have been secured in perpetuity, and are being expanded and restored, integrating creative sustainable financing solutions.

Greater Gola
Sierra Leone & Liberia

300,000 ha of one of largest remnants of West Africa’s forest has been protected, working with 200,000 local people on sustainable agriculture, and underpinned by 1st REDD+ programme for the region.

Lowland Rainforests
Indonesia

280,000 ha of priority lowland rainforest across three flagship landscapes in Indonesia are being conserved through innovative management approaches, integrating sustainable financing strategies.

North-Eastern Plains
Cambodia

380,000 ha of Cambodia’s northern forested watersheds, increased protection, sustainable land-use plans and an innovative sustainable agricultural production system have been established.
Accelerator Flagships

Southern Madagascar

58,000 ha of one of the last tracts of lowland rainforest in the country, has been protected through innovative co-management with local communities and integrating sustainable livelihood activities, underpinned by sustainable landscape strategy development.

Bahoruco-Enriquillo-Jaragua Biosphere, Dominican Republic

318,000 ha of diverse forest mosaic, supporting all the countries endemic birds, is benefitting from native forest restoration and implementation of a pioneering climate-smart agroforestry model, supporting local sustainable livelihood development.

Truong Son, Vietnam

145,000 ha forest landscape of tropical lowland evergreen rainforest, provides livelihoods for some of the poorest people in Vietnam, and is benefitting from an innovative sustainable forest management pilot to protect biodiversity and improve carbon capture.
Accelerating Impact

Every year:
• Fifteen BirdLife Partners are enabled to develop sustainable financing and funding strategies for priority tropical forest landscapes
• 1,000,000 ha of tropical forest landscapes are benefitting from a sustainability strategy that is securing investment
• Five flagship demonstration models are promoted through the Partnership for broader replication, and beyond to leverage investment

Every 5 years:
• 5,000,000 ha of tropical forests are being conserved, protected and restored
• 50% of the funding gap to conserve priority landscapes is secured

£200k investment needed in the Accelerator per year
Meet the BirdLife Forest Landscape Sustainability Accelerator Team in 2019 with over a hundred years of combined experience, ranging across an extremely broad range of disciplines and skills from agriculture and forestry to economics and environmental law, not to mention geographies, spanning the globe from Paraguay to Indonesia.
Collaborate with us

By 2025, BirdLife aims to advance protection of an additional five million hectares of forest and to have one million hectares of forest under a sustainable funding and financing strategy.

To achieve this, we are actively seeking new collaborations with those who can work with us to meet our ambitious aims. With opportunities to get involved across each of the landscapes and at the portfolio level of initiatives; from technical collaboration, advisory, grant-making, impact investing and more. If this is you, please contact the team at forests@birdlife.org.