

LOCAL ACTION, GLOBAL IMPACT

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

We would like to express our deep appreciation for the generous support of our Honorary President, HIH Princess Takamado of Japan, whose commitment and personal interest in birds and conservation contributes enormously to BirdLife's progress and achievements. We are extremely grateful for the generosity shown by our Founder Patrons, members of BirdLife's Rare Bird Club and Advisory Group, without whom we could not continue protecting sites and species around the globe. We also thank our corporate supporters and BirdLife Species Champions who have helped us with major initiatives.

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Partnership for
nature and people

BirdLife International is the world's largest nature conservation partnership. Together we are 115 BirdLife Partners worldwide – one per country – and growing, with almost 11 million supporters, 7,000 local conservation groups and 7,400 staff.

Find out more at: www.birdlife.org

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Building the capacity of BirdLife Partners – be it science, policy, fundraising or human resources – is central to our vision of long-term, sustainable conservation.



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Equitable conservation cannot occur without the consent and participation of local communities – one of the reasons we put people at the heart of everything we do.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



BirdLife International was founded nearly 100 years ago, at the beginning of a decade that became known as the 'Roaring Twenties'. For affluent western nations, it was a time of unprecedented growth and prosperity, as economies rebounded from wartime devastation. Historians will note, however, that this growth was unsustainable. And before the decade was out, it all ended with a crash.

Now, 100 years on, it is nature that roars. Rising sea levels, unseasonal storms and the wildfires that have ripped through the Amazon and Australia are merely physical manifestations of a world at breaking point: the toll the natural world is paying for our excess and neglect.

For the unprepared, the Wall Street Crash of 1929 would have hit like a freight train. They would have turned a blind eye to the numerous warnings from economists. A century on, nature's warnings are getting harder to ignore. And 2019's IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services report (which we are proud to say BirdLife contributed heavily to) is clear in its message – if we don't act in a timely fashion to tackle the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change by 2030, we will plunge the planet into a tailspin from which it will struggle to pull out. The crash is waiting.

Fortunately the winds seem to be changing. The business and financial communities are showing signals that they are finally starting to understand that the loss of biodiversity and climate change represent the largest risks for the world's economy, as captured in the World Economic Forum Risk Report issued in Davos earlier this year. We also see the increasing declarations and commitments by managers of investment trusts, presidents of central banks, ministers of economy and finance and CEOs of major companies stressing that new investments should only be for those consistent with sustainable development, which includes the conservation and restoration of nature and reduction of green-house gas emissions. The government of my own country, Brazil, has been swamped with criticisms in recent months from global and national leaders of the business and finance community for failing to understand this.

The current pandemic, beyond its huge health impacts, is predicted to cause a huge economic recession, reducing the global GDP by close to 10% - the largest economic depression since the one that quietened the Roaring Twenties a century ago. Recent scientific assessments estimate the cost of avoiding new pandemics through enhanced nature conservation and control of illegal wildlife trade and consumption would cost in the order of a thousand times less than the social and economic cost of the current pandemic. Dodson et al. (2020)* estimated the annual net cost of pandemic prevention at US\$ 18-27 billion which to be justified would only need to reduce the likelihood of another pandemic like COVID-19 in the next year by about 27% below baseline probability.

It is up to organisations like BirdLife International to step up their conservation efforts. The BirdLife Partnership is a lot of things to a lot of people, but it is, in its essence, a scientific conservation organisation. We do not shy away from that, and indeed we take pride in it. Everything we do is backed by solid science; be it the Red List, our ever-expanding IBA/KBA network and our fledging flyways networks or the insights gleaned over land, air and sea from our pioneering studies and collaborative way of working. We believe in the ethos that scientific insight leads

to action, which is why we are committed to keeping our data open and free. But we need to be bolder in getting that message out beyond the conservation circle, and that is how BirdLife needs to evolve during this critical decade.

Fortunately, evolution is in our DNA. In 1922, when BirdLife was founded as the ICBP, it was to protect birds from the effects of human utilisation. But in the interim, we learned that conservation can't succeed unless it works for all; birds, nature, humans. This informs our holistic approach to conservation and is the catalyst behind our most ambitious campaign to date: One Planet, One Right - in which we call on the United Nations to make a healthy planet a universal human right.

Far from a flight of fancy, this is our new 'north star', with high-level support from Dr David Boyd, the UN's own Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, and prominent conservationists such as Chris Packham. And it underpins, bolsters and gives context to every area of our work, whether it be boots-on-the-ground conservation, or high level policy work. Only by reconnecting people with their links with nature can we truly turn the tide.

One Planet is also a vivid demonstration of BirdLife's true strength; the Power of Many. We have Asuncion Ruiz and her team at SEO/BirdLife, our Partner in Spain, to thank for the concept of this campaign; and the numerous Partners around the world who have adopted and spread the message.

As we leave the 2010s behind and embark on this crucial decade, we need to work harder than ever to ensure the next set of global goals and targets for nature, to be adopted at COP 15 of the CBD next year in China, are fit for purpose, and that the considerable investments governments and the business community will make to recover the economy from the pandemic will result in the future result in a green recovery. As we pause for breath before the battles to come, we take this time to say thank you for the contributions of those whose time within BirdLife have come to an end: our outgoing treasurer Nick Prentice and David O'Neill, who has taken the role of 11th President at Massachusetts Audubon. We give a warm BirdLife welcome to Beccy Speight, who succeeds Mike Clarke as RSPB's new Chief Executive, and Nick Blackwood, who takes over as Treasurer. We also welcome the American Bird Conservancy as our newest Partner, and second in the United States alongside Audubon, and welcome back UzSPB, who once again represent BirdLife in Uzbekistan.

Finally, I would like to share my deepest gratitude to all our staff around the globe who have continued their fine and essential work over the last few months, in the toughest and most stressful of circumstances.

Yours,



Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias,
Chair, BirdLife Council

**Dodson, Andrew P. et al., 2020. Ecology and economics for pandemic prevention. Science 369(6502): 379-381
DOI: 10.1126/science.abc3189 (issued on 24 July 2020)*

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



For the last few months, it has been ‘business as normal’ at BirdLife – even if the circumstances we have found ourselves in have been anything but. It would be remiss of me to begin this message any other way than to echo Braulio’s sentiments regarding the way

our talented and dedicated staff around the world have responded to the COVID-19 crisis. At every corner of the Partnership, we have seen staff think on their feet to develop innovative solutions to ensure their crucial work continued with as little disruption as possible.

I would like to give particular mentions to just a few that have gone above and beyond: the Forests team, who without missing a beat, acted to reposition pivotal workshops to push forward the Forest Landscape Accelerator; little was lost in the transition from bricks and mortar to digital. Our hardworking Red List team, who are working on their comprehensive quadrennial update under the most challenging of circumstances; and our incoming interim CDO, Pam Davis. She and her Fundraising team are working tirelessly to diversify our income streams, and to provide assistance to Partners across the world where COVID has hit hardest.

Braulio mentions that evolution is in BirdLife’s DNA, and as nature lovers, we all know that evolution reflects the ability to adapt. Necessity is the mother of invention, they say, and we have demonstrated a proactive attitude to the adversity, creating structures to connect our teams during lockdown, and, importantly, scaling them up for a better connected, more informed Partnership. We will come out the other end stronger.

I would like to conclude by highlighting a few achievements from 2019 we are proud of:

- A first annual on-line update of State of the World’s Birds includes a dynamic online “Species Dashboard”, through which statistics, charts and graphics on the state of the world’s birds can be generated.
- The 2019 Red List update of the world’s globally threatened birds was completed, updating maps and factsheets for hundreds of species, and a global assessment of threats to seabirds was published.
- BirdLife contributed to the building of environmental safeguards into the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement, and a significant increase in pressure to reform the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy.
- BirdLife’s position and input papers on the post 2020

strategy of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) were prepared and promoted with Government Parties and together with other international NGOs.

- A first anti-poison project was completed in East Africa and impacts measured including a >30% reduction in vulture poisoning and mortality over three years; new Vulture Safe Zones are being created in Zimbabwe and one in South Africa.

- The BirdLife-led Southern Cone Grasslands Alliance in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay expanded bird-friendly grassland management to more than 620,000 hectares (513 ranches).

- With BirdLife support, Phase 1 of the China Yellow Sea World Heritage nomination was successfully inscribed, covering the two largest sites, with a further 14 sites due for nomination in phase 2 in 2022.

- The Albatross Task Force (ATF) recorded its highest-yet bird-scaring line compliance rate in the Argentinean hake trawl fleet at 50% (up from 18% in 2018) and the Chilean government announced new bycatch regulations for the trawl fleet, meaning that all ATF target fleets now have seabird bycatch regulations in place.

- BirdLife’s policy and advocacy work has advanced efforts towards the inclusion of Nature Based Solutions to Climate Change, such as forest biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, into the ambitions agreed at the UNFCCC Bonn Conference.

- A five-year grant from Arcadia Fund to the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) (run by BirdLife, FFI and WCS) has enabled this important programme to continue to provide small grants and training to young conservation leaders across the world.

The aftershocks of COVID-19 will hurt BirdLife, that is impossible to ignore, and it will do so in ways that are impossible to predict today. But it is the people who make BirdLife BirdLife, and I am confident we have shown, and will continue to show, the resilience, ingenuity and verve required to weather any storms that come our way.

Yours,

Patricia Zurita,
Chief Executive Officer



Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophrys* via Shutterstock

HOW WE WORK

A

s arguably the most mobile lifeforms on Earth, birds know no borders. Thus, if we're to protect them, conservation also needs to know no borders.

That's why BirdLife International was formed in 1922 (as the International Committee for Bird Preservation) - conservationists in the UK, Netherlands, France and US realised the need for transnational co-operation to effectively combat the threats facing the world's birds.

The result: a truly global partnership of national conservation organisations, all of whom share a common vision – to mobilise lasting, sustainable protection for the world's birds, their habitats, and global biodiversity in general.

Together, we believe in a holistic approach to conservation – using the insight we gain from our rigorous studies on the health of the world's bird species, to work for a world where nature and people live in harmony. Here's how we do it...



1

WE ARE TRULY GLOBAL.

The USA's American Bird Conservancy became the newest BirdLife Partner in 2020, bringing the total to 115 representing 112 countries or territories. Our Partners are as diverse as the birds we protect – some, such as the UK's RSPB, are household names with over a million members, while others employ less than a handful of staff. Big or small, young or old, the Partnership empowers BirdLife Partners to connect with each other and extend their own local conservation efforts beyond their own national boundaries – what we call our 'local-to-global' approach.



2

WE KEEP OUR EYE ON ALL THE WORLD'S BIRDS – RARE AND COMMON.

Passenger Pigeon. Eskimo Curlew. Just two examples of bird species that were once a common sight in our skies – until they weren't. As part of our commitment to preventing extinctions, we keep an eye on all the world's bird species – including the well-known ones. By spotting downwards trends in species like Amur Falcon, Canada Warbler and Snowy Owl early, we can act quickly to address the underlying reasons and ensure common birds stay common.



3

WE'VE DOCUMENTED THE BIGGEST NETWORK OF KEY CONSERVATION AREAS GOING.

Forests, wetlands, deserts, mountains, even the middle of the ocean – birds are capable of specialising to adapt to almost any environment. Which means it's a massive challenge to ensure the world's birds are safe across their range. To sharpen both local and global conservation priorities, our Important Birds & Biodiversity Area network charts the habitats we need to fight the hardest to protect.



4

WE WORK IN A PRACTICAL AND COST-EFFECTIVE WAY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS.

What is the value in pouring time and resources into a project, if it won't leave a lasting footprint? Whether it's replanting forests, engaging hunters or influencing global policy, the Partnership strives to ensure that ecological and practical sustainability is built into everything we do. As part of this, we demonstrate and advocate nature's values at every turn.



5

WE DELIVER POSITIVE CHANGE FOR PEOPLE.

Conservation cannot work effectively if it is delivered without consideration or involvement from the local communities who share the same resources as the species we work to protect, and are dependent on the same resources for their livelihoods. The Partnership strongly believes that working with local communities, and locally empowering people, are the foundations for long-lasting conservation. Using birds as indicators, our projects work to make a better world for birds, nature, and humans, too.



THE YEAR IN Preventing Extinctions



"More than one in eight of the world's 11,000+ bird species are threatened with extinction, of which 225 are categorised as Critically Endangered. The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme uses the unique network of individuals and organisations within our global Partnership to find those best placed to combat threats, and match them to the help and support they need. Partners all over the world are working on species in their territory, with the BirdLife Secretariat supporting this work where needed. It has been another busy year, with progress on many fronts. Much of these achievements are made possible thanks to funding from BirdLife Species Champions."

ROGER SAFFORD,
Senior Programme Manager,
Preventing Extinctions Programme



Anti-poisoning project visibly benefits African vultures

A

African and Eurasian vultures face many urgent threats, with eight of the sixteen species now Critically Endangered.

This year, we completed our first anti-poisoning project in East Africa. As a result, annual vulture mortality in Masai Mara and southern Kenya has dropped from 33% a year in 2010 to 6-10% a year. Our training programme has reached more than half of law enforcement officers and field rangers across project regions.

In southern Africa, several Partners have joined the Vulture Safe Zones initiative, which we hope will become a vast network allowing vulture populations not only to stabilise, but to thrive. In Nigeria, we have launched the first major project to reduce belief-based use of body parts, including working with traditional medicine practitioners to promote plant alternatives.

“The work of multiple partners across southern Kenya has established a growing network committed to ensuring that mortalities from poisoning events are at a bare minimum.”

DR. PAUL MATIKU
Executive Director, Nature Kenya (BirdLife Partner)

Victims of bird trade safeguarded in action policy

In 2019, our work to combat the illegal and unsustainable bird trade focused on the Helmeted Hornbill (Critically Endangered), Indonesian parrots and Asian songbirds. Actions include conducting population and habitat surveys, and engaging local people to monitor and patrol important sites. We also ran numerous community outreach and livelihoods support activities to change attitudes and behaviours of traders and consumers. This year, we helped to ensure that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) adopted recommendations on all our trade priorities. These include new decisions to tackle the trade in vulture body parts in West Africa.



Helmeted Hornbill © Craig Ansibini/Shutterstock



Indian Skimmers © Dhairya Jhaveri

Community conservationists watch over Indian Skimmer nests

In 2019, we trialled an innovative community-based conservation project engaging local people to act as guardians of key riverbank nesting colonies for the Indian Skimmer

(Vulnerable). The aim is to protect birds' eggs and chicks from free-ranging dogs and trampling cattle. These "river guardians" also observe Gharial (a Critically Endangered crocodile) and a turtle hatchery, making the most

efficient use of their time. So far, the initiative has resulted in a significant increase in nesting success of the target species on at least one of the nesting islands. We are now planning to expand the project to other colonies.



Gold-ringed Tanager © Francesco Veronesi

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

New Colombian Species Guardians extend our reach



FERNANDO CASTILLO,
Director, Asociación
Calidris

BirdLife Species Guardians are organisations or individuals who help us to extend the scope of our work beyond BirdLife Partners. Some of the most exciting appointments have been made in South America, a part of the world that contains the highest number of bird species – and some of the most threatened. Here, we focus on Colombia, home to BirdLife Partner Asociación Calidris.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN COLOMBIA?

We have signed exciting new agreements with the Vertebrate Ecology and Evolution Group of the University of Antioquia, and the Serraniagua Community Environmental Organisation. They have now become guardians of threatened Colombian bird species.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Calidris provides these Species Guardians with technical support, training and funds for conservation action, based on mutually agreed plans. We also provide support in liaising with decision-makers and governments, and raising awareness through the media. It fills us with joy to be able to sign these Species Guardians agreements and highlight the work that these organisations and groups are doing. It is such a boost for the conservation

of threatened bird species in western Colombia.

WHICH SPECIES ARE THE FOCUS?

There are three focal species, including one that, until recently, had not been observed in almost 50 years: the Antioquia Brush-finch (Critically Endangered). It is estimated that there are fewer than 50 of these birds left in the world. The Guardians rediscovered it and are now working to understand its ecological needs and protect its habitat. We have minimal information on the natural history and ecology of the species, so our Guardians are seeking funding and allies to improve its future prospects.

The Species Guardians are also working hard with us to protect the Munchique Wood-wren (Vulnerable) and the Gold-ringed Tanager (Endangered).

THE YEAR IN Flyways



“The boundlessness of birds is a constant source of wonder and fascination for people all over the world. The need for environmental protection is shared globally, and this is brought into particular focus by the annual movements of migratory birds. Many birds follow regular routes, known as flyways, to travel between their breeding and non-breeding grounds. The BirdLife Partnership is ideally placed to protect them, with national Partners throughout the world. In the past year we have taken action across seven major flyways to ensure birds arriving at their feeding and resting places find the sanctuary and sustenance that they so acutely need.”

BAREND VAN GEMERDEN,
Global Flyways Programme
Coordinator



“China has shown real global leadership by announcing a moratorium on coastal reclamation and securing World Heritage listing for the Yellow Sea ecosystem.”

PAUL SULLIVAN
CEO, BirdLife Australia

Flight for Survival campaign grabs public attention

In early 2019, we launched our Flight for Survival campaign, raising awareness of the shocking 25 million birds illegally slaughtered each year as they migrate between Africa and Europe. The campaign illustrates the journeys made by seven iconic flagship species: the Eurasian Blackcap, Common Quail, Eastern Imperial Eagle, Egyptian Vulture,

European Turtle Dove, European Honey Buzzard and White Stork. Through emotive storytelling, it covers the issues these species face from illegal killing, energy infrastructure and poisoning, and what BirdLife Partners are doing to keep the African-Eurasian flyway safe. The campaign has gained significant ongoing momentum via social media and conventional news outlets.

I N N U M B E R S

IMPACT OF THE FLIGHT FOR SURVIVAL CAMPAIGN

200
countries
reached

160,000
unique
website visits

8 million
social media
impressions

£140,000
raised

Yellow Sea wetlands secure World Heritage listing

On the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, our highest priority has been the conservation of coastal wetlands. This year, BirdLife supported China's leadership and initiative in securing one of the biggest ever wins for the world's migratory waterbirds: the World Heritage Listing of key sites on China's Yellow Sea coast. Elsewhere, we provided support to Thai Partner BCST to secure Pak Thale salt pans, home to the greatest number and diversity of shorebirds in Thailand, for long-term management. Also, the monitoring of coastal wetlands by Hong Kong Partner HKBWS and local stakeholders in southern China has contributed to the identification of new IBAs.



Far Eastern Curlew © Duade Paton



© Bildagentur Zoonar GmbH/Shutterstock

Energy Task Force's influence grows

Energy infrastructure continues to pose a significant and growing threat to birds. The BirdLife Secretariat currently supports work in 13 countries to reduce accidental collisions and electrocutions of birds. This year, BirdLife contributed to the new EU wind energy guidance and a sensitivity mapping instruction manual. We coordinated the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Energy Task Force, welcoming the Government of Jordan as a member, and our Jordanian Partner RSCN and Greek Partner HOS as observers. BirdLife has also been hard at work advocating for a stronger role of the CMS in the implementation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbird Action Plan.



Steppe Eagle, *Aquila nipalensis* © Ondrej Prostickyr

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

India rolls out action plan for ‘forgotten flyway’



DR DEEPAK APTE,
Director, Bombay Natural
History Society

The Central Asian Flyway (CAF) is the shortest of the world’s major flyways – but is no less significant. It crosses over the highest mountain range in the world: the Himalayas. It spans over 30 countries, and is used by over 300 migratory bird species. It connects breeding grounds as far north as the Siberian Arctic to non-breeding grounds in the tropics of Southern India, Sri Lanka and Maldives. It also includes some of the world’s most densely-populated countries, each facing its own developmental challenges.

WHAT ARE THE BIG CHALLENGES?

The CAF is in many ways the ‘most neglected’ of all global flyways. Many aspects of bird migration in the CAF are still poorly understood. Although some countries on the flyway are making efforts for the conservation of migratory birds, there is no strong institutional framework for coordinating actions between the governments and organisations.

WHAT ACTION HAVE YOU BEEN TAKING?

Since 2017, two BNHS scientists have been seconded within the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in India, coordinating CAF work nationally and internationally. With our assistance, the Government of India launched its National Action Plan on Conservation of Central Asian Flyways

birds in 2018. We now are in the process of developing National Single Species Action plans for 20 priority migratory birds.

In 2019, the BNHS hosted meetings designed to develop and enhance the BirdLife Central Asian Flyway Initiative (CAFI) as BirdLife Partners joined forces and brought in other partner organisations. We have persuaded the Indian Government to take a leadership role in protecting the flyway.

AND THERE IS A NEW PARTNERSHIP?

In addition to the CAFI, BNHS has also established a partnership with the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative. We are hoping these new partnerships will help us to significantly scale up our efforts.

THE YEAR IN IBAs



“Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBAs) are places of international significance for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity – the jewels in the crown, and a growing global network of the most precious sites. BirdLife has been developing and applying this methodology for more than 30 years, on land and, more recently, at sea. The IBA Programme aims to safeguard these sites through a range of activities, from data collection through site conservation to advocacy, and from the local level up to the global.”

ZOLTAN WALICZKY,
Global IBA Programme Coordinator



“We urgently need all countries with AZE sites to take action to protect these unique places.”

MIKE PARR, AZE Chairman and President of the American Bird Conservancy (one of two BirdLife Partners in the USA)

Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) achieves landmark success

BirdLife is a founding member of the Alliance for Zero Extinction, an initiative aiming to identify sites that hold the last remaining populations of highly threatened species. In June 2019, a three-year Global Environment Facility-funded project, managed by BirdLife, came to a close. In this time, the project achieved significant results. An updated and revamped AZE site map was published, pinpointing 853

sites and nearly 1,500 species. The Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a formal decision urging all 196 signatory countries to conserve AZE sites. AZE sites have been incorporated into the national biodiversity plans of 22 countries and included in several financial institutions’ safeguard policies, including the International Financial Corporation – an entity of the World Bank Group.

AROUND THE WORLD IN AZES

MADAGASCAR established a 58,500-hectare protected area for the Tsitongambarika Forest AZE site

BRAZIL published two national ordinances on AZE sites: the first of their kind in the world

CHILE is conserving two AZE species in collaboration with local Indigenous communities

Mapping and saving IBAs in Danger

In December 2019, we published the latest update to our IBAs in Danger Story Map. This exercise has identified more than 250 imperilled sites in need of immediate action across 48 countries. The list builds on the decades of work BirdLife has devoted to identifying and safeguarding the world's 13,000 IBAs. This year, one IBA left the danger zone thanks to 15 years of tireless advocacy from our Montenegrin Partner CZIP, who finally succeeded in blocking a controversial building development that threatened to destroy Ulcinj Salina, one of Europe's most important migratory bird habitats. A protected area has now been designated at the site.



Ulcinj Salina © CZIP

Measuring carbon storage, Dominican Republic © Isadora Angarita-Martinez



Accessible toolkit rolled out to measure ecosystem services

The benefits people receive from nature are not always easy to measure. To address this, BirdLife developed a Toolkit for Ecosystem Service Site-based Assessment (TESSA) in collaboration with six other institutions.

The toolkit provides relatively simple but scientifically robust methods for evaluating ecosystem services at particular sites. This generates valuable information that can influence decision-making. TESSA is designed primarily for conservation practitioners, but can

be applied by a wide range of users including forestry, fisheries and water management professionals, land-use planners, development organisations, and the private sector. In 2019, BirdLife trained four Partners to use the tool in their work.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Drawing a line in the mud to save Moreton Bay



DR GOLO MAURER,
Key Biodiversity Area
Programme Leader,
BirdLife Australia

Moreton Bay, Australia is internationally recognised as a Ramsar wetland and Key Biodiversity Area for more than 40,000 overwintering migratory shorebirds. Now, the threat of a large-scale tourist development looms large. BirdLife Australia is raising a stink to gain public support for these mudflats.

WHAT'S THE THREAT?

Walker Group, Australia's largest and wealthiest private developer and a considerable donor to both major political parties, has proposed to build a marina and luxury high-rise residential complex at Toondah Harbour. The proposal would permanently destroy a large area of the habitat, which is the single most important site in Australia for Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* (Endangered). This species has already declined by 80 per cent in the past 30 years due to coastal development. A private proposal of this scale has never been approved within an Australian Ramsar site, and would set a dangerous precedent, threatening Ramsar sites worldwide.

HOW HAS THE GOVERNMENT RESPONDED?

The Australian Government's own

experts have previously advised the Minister for the Environment to declare the proposal 'clearly unacceptable' due to the exceptional value of the area and likely impacts to the site. Despite this, the Government has progressed the proposal to the next phase of assessment. However, that decision was taken under a previous Minister, and the new Federal Environment Minister has the opportunity to turn things around.

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU TAKING?

BirdLife Australia has joined local community groups and other national NGOs calling for the protection of the environmental values at Toondah Harbour. Thousands of people have added their support to an online petition, have contacted their local representatives at all levels of government, and have linked arms at events like the 'Line in the Mud' rally.

THE YEAR IN Climate Change



“Climate change is the greatest long-term threat to people, and to the ecosystems upon which we all depend. BirdLife plays a leading advocacy role on the world stage and takes urgent, swift and decisive action, based on scientific recommendations.”

ASHTON BERRY,
Global Climate Change
Programme Coordinator

Nature-based Solutions rolled out in Rwanda and Burundi

Efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions must not come at the expense of habitat loss – especially since healthy ecosystems are better at adapting to climate change and sequestering atmospheric carbon. This year, BirdLife has ramped up its work on Nature-based Solutions, helping countries to get them included as part of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – official targets for greenhouse gas reductions. Rwanda

has become the first African country to submit a NDC proposal in 2020, which includes multiple nature-based solutions. Meanwhile, ABN (BirdLife in Burundi) has been mapping soil erosion hotspots in the Sebeya, Ruhwa and Muhira water catchments of Rwanda and Burundi, working with local communities to identify priority resolutions. Over 400,000 indigenous plants and fruit trees have been planted to restore degraded areas and enhance their resilience.

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN THE AMERICAS

AVES ARGENTINAS (BIRDLIFE PARTNER): reforesting protected areas to provide carbon stores

GRUPO JARAGUA (BIRDLIFE IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC): studying climate change adaptation in coastal wetlands and mangroves.

SAVE BRASIL (BIRDLIFE PARTNER): implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the Atlantic forests

“Once the trees are planted, local communities will reap the triple benefits of improved livelihoods, sustainable agriculture and carbon sequestration.”

JOSEPH BIZIMUNGU,
Executive Director, ABN
(BirdLife in Burundi)

Climbing the CRAGs to a greener future

Climate Resilient Altitudinal Gradients (CRAGs) are a new concept developed as part of the conservation strategy for the Great Lakes Region of East and Central Africa (funded by the MacArthur Foundation). CRAGs are landscapes with a minimum altitudinal range of 1,000 metres, characterised by climate-resilient biodiversity that provides valuable ecosystem services. The altitudinal range allows biodiversity to move up and down the gradient in response to climate change, improving its resilience. Conservationists can facilitate this resilience through activities such as integrated water management, soil erosion prevention, pollution control, forestry and community livelihoods, whose impacts directly benefit human wellbeing and biodiversity.



An example of a CRAG © Jean De Dieu Bucankura



Wind turbines © Laurentius/Shutterstock

Taking our place on the world stage

This year, BirdLife played a leading advocacy role at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Intersessional in Bonn in June, and at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties

in Madrid in December. Along with Wetlands International, we hosted an event in Madrid promoting Version 2 of the Critical Site Network Tool to conserve important wetlands on the African-Eurasian Flyway. In addition, we coordinated a successful

fourth meeting of the Convention on Migratory Species Energy Task Force in Paris. Finally, we successfully advocated for the inclusion of biodiversity considerations in the Climate Action Network Energy Working Group's position on renewable energy.



Grupo Jaragua © Itala Yepez

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

A Climate Action Plan for the Dominican Republic



YOLANDA LEON,
Chair of the Board,
Grupo Jaragua

Grupo Jaragua's 2016-2026 Climate Action Plan promotes climate-resilient, biodiversity-based livelihoods in key sites across this island of Hispaniola. Three years in, the plan is already starting to bear fruit.

WHAT HAS YOUR ACTION PLAN ACHIEVED SO FAR?

We had a lot of success promoting our agroforestry model in three communities within the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve. Some of the agroforestry plots are already yielding incomes for local people. Furthermore, we have provided support, training and promotion for local nature guides in Laguna de Oviedo, which is part of the Jaragua Important Bird & Biodiversity Area. 14 households currently receive regular incomes from nature guiding. Local boat owners, captains and food vendors are also benefiting from this new tourism initiative.

HOW HAS THE PLAN INSPIRED DIRECT CLIMATE ACTION?

A major challenge was Laguna de Cabral, another Important Bird & Biodiversity

Area. This vital freshwater lagoon was drying up, with water from incoming canals being diverted for irrigation. The situation was exacerbated by an intense drought. We prepared maps of the affected area and raised the issue with the Ministry of the Environment, who called for a meeting of the Ramsar Commission, including the National Hydrology Institute, to develop solutions that address climate impacts and biodiversity loss.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?

In addition to the Climate Action Plan, we have also drafted a comprehensive, nationwide Mangrove Education Plan for 2020-2025. Activities will target direct and indirect users of the mangroves, as well as educators, decision-makers, young people and the general public.

THE YEAR IN Marine



“Half of the world’s seabirds are in decline, and a third are threatened with extinction.

Populations of once common and familiar species, including puffins, penguins and albatrosses, have plummeted. Since its establishment in 1997, the BirdLife Marine Programme (led by RSPB, our Partner in the UK) has been working in step with fisheries to put in place practical solutions, and mobilising partners worldwide to achieve lasting impact. A major highlight for this year has been completing the first global estimate of the level of albatross mortality in tuna fisheries. This has required coordination of numerous countries bringing all of their bycatch data together for the first time.”

STEPHANIE PRINCE,
High Seas Programme Manager, RSPB

Albatross Task Force ingrains seabird-friendly fishing in law

The Albatross Task Force (ATF) continues to work with fisheries to prevent accidental 'bycatch' of seabirds, and has seen major breakthroughs in 2019. Chile has introduced regulations requiring all trawl fleets to use mitigation measures

to protect seabirds. This means that all of the ATF's original priority target fleets now have the necessary seabird protection laws in place. The past year has also seen some promising results from trials with Hookpods – devices that open to reveal the hook at a depth of 20 metres – in Brazil's

pelagic longline fishery. Thanks to our advocacy, Argentina has incorporated a bycatch mitigation module into the curriculum of the National Fisheries School. In South Africa, fisheries permits have been updated to include a new design for bird-scaring lines in longline fisheries.

“The announcement of these new regulations is wonderful news. The Albatross Task Force team stands ready to assist and support the industry to make them happen.”

CRISTIÁN SUAZO
Leader of Albatross Task Force Chile, CODEFF
(BirdLife in Chile)



New floating gadget could save threatened sea ducks

In collaboration with the Estonian Ornithological Society (BirdLife Partner), we have been testing an ingenious new device that could help save diving birds such as the Long-tailed Duck and Steller's Eider, both globally threatened and particularly prone to bycatch in gillnets. Informed by research on how birds respond to visual cues, this conspicuous device is mounted on a regular buoy to ward off birds and avoid deadly encounters with nets. If proven successful, the device, nicknamed 'Bobby', could revolutionise bycatch prevention. This project is made possible thanks to funding from the National Geographic Society and the Baltic Sea Conservation Foundation.



The floating buoy, or 'Bobby' © Andres Kalamees



King Penguins © JohnDickens

Pinpointing and protecting vital ocean habitats

The year 2019 brought us closer to the designation of a new large Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Northeast Atlantic: one of the most important migratory hotspots in the high seas. We also published

a landmark study showing how marine Key Biodiversity Areas can be used to inform the management of fisheries operating within a large MPA around South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. BirdLife facilitated the consultation on marine species

protection for the Convention on Biological Diversity, which will be built into the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. We are engaged in negotiations for a new United Nations treaty to safeguard marine species and ecosystems on the high seas.



“This year, we successfully completed the first phase of a major seabird project in Cabo Verde, West Africa. Surveys and tracking technology revealed birds’ colonies, movements and interactions with fishing vessels, and we met with 20 fishing communities across six islands to promote sustainable practices. We also helped to draft legislation on biosecurity and environmental crime. Our seabird interpretation centre attracted 5,000 visitors and the campaign spread across TV and radio. No killing of seabirds has been recorded on the Raso, Branco and Rombo islets in the last 2.5 years, and the MAVA Foundation has committed funding for a second phase.”

ANA VEIGA
CABO VERDE SEABIRD PROJECT COORDINATOR



THE YEAR IN Invasive Alien Species



“From a local to global level, the Invasive Species Programme develops and shares expertise to

tackle invasive alien species, which are a key driver of biodiversity loss and extinctions throughout the globe. BirdLife International is an important global player in this field, particularly in the Pacific, where we have successfully cleared more than 30 islands of invasive predators since the programme was established.”

KEVIN HACKWELL,
Invasive Species Programme Coordinator,
Forest & Bird New Zealand

Fact-finding mission paves way for Marquesas restoration

In November 2019, an intrepid BirdLife-led team landed in challenging conditions on one of the world's remotest islands, Mohotani – part of the Marquesas archipelago – on a fact-finding mission to pave the way for a vital restoration project. Over 1,500 kilometres from French Polynesian capital Tahiti, and 5,000 kilometres from the nearest continent, the Marquesas host numerous unique and rare birds – many of them globally

threatened due to invasive rats, cats and sheep.

The three-week expedition conducted field trials critical to preparations for the islands' restoration, building on the successful restoration of Teuaua, a Marquesan islet, in 2018. It was made possible through a combined local and international effort, working with experts from SOP Manu (BirdLife in French Polynesia), Auckland Zoo, Island Conservation, French Polynesia Government and Marquesan islanders.

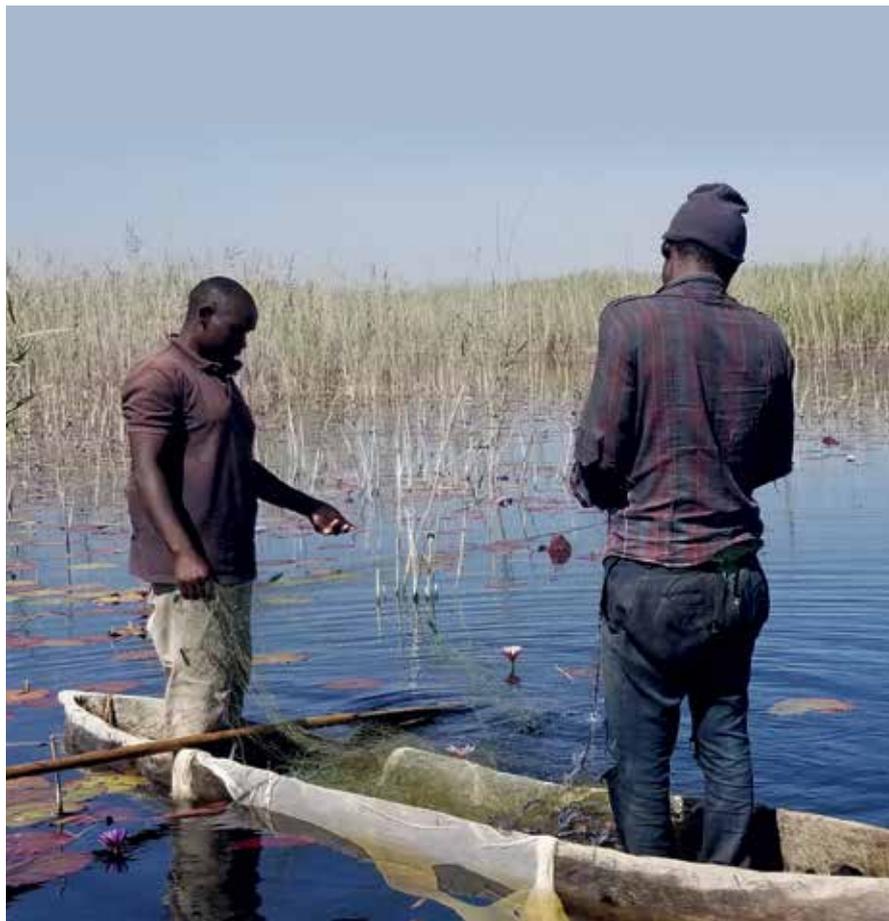
SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

The Marquesas Monarch *Pomarea mendozae* (Endangered) is only found on Mohotani island. Despite numbering fewer than 400 birds, these territorial, inquisitive flycatchers were highly visible. Researchers saw many juveniles, but were concerned they would be unable to create territories of their own, as overgrazing continues to erode forest. Observations of wild feeding behaviour and a short time spent in aviaries confirmed the species would not adapt well to captive breeding, highlighting the importance of preserving their habitat.



Zambia uses innovative biocontrol to combat invasive weed

BirdLife is collaborating with BirdWatch Zambia (BirdLife Partner) and others to remove invasive Kariba Weed from Lukanga Swamp in central Zambia, an Important Bird & Biodiversity Area and Ramsar wetland. The free-floating fern forms a thick mat on water, blocking light and starving the habitat of oxygen, harming fish and birds. Local fishermen have also been badly affected by loss of fish stocks. The project introduced the *Salvina* Beetle, a natural predator of the weed, to approximately 30% of the infested area. We are closely monitoring improvements and plan to extend the project to the remaining areas if further funding is secured.



© Clara Nanja



© Fred Jacq

Rapa seabird colonies: first step of restoration completed

This year, we successfully removed feral goats from two of the three priority islets in Rapa, French Polynesia, working with Rapa Council, local elders and goat owners to ensure shared agreement and support. This achievement is expected to improve nesting habitat for the Rapa Shearwater *Puffinus myrtae* (Critically Endangered), Polynesian Storm-Petrel *Nesofregatta fuliginosa* (Endangered) and nine other seabird species that breed on the islets, which rat removal will enhance further. Plans to remove rats from three islets are underway, and drones are likely to provide a practical solution for distributing bait across the rugged, inaccessible terrain.



Berlenga Island © SPEA

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Restoring the Berlengas Islands



JOANA ANDRADE,
Head of Marine
Conservation, Portuguese
Society for the Study of
Birds (SPEA)

The Berlengas Islands are a small archipelago ten kilometres from Portugal's western coast. They comprise one of Portugal's most important areas for terrestrial and marine biodiversity. Following their restoration project, SPEA is already seeing tangible results of what can happen when native nature is allowed to flourish.

WHAT ARE THE THREATS?

Invasive species like Black Rats, Hottentot Fig and rabbits have been identified as driving declines in Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris borealis* and Band-rumped Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma castro* populations. This happens through predation, burrow competition and degradation of breeding habitats. Native plants and reptiles are also affected by the population of Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus michahellis*, whose rapid increase in the 1990s has impacted other surface-nesting seabirds through egg predation.

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE YOU MADE?

A SPEA-led partnership supported by the EU LIFE Programme has been identifying and addressing the main threats on land and at sea. We have successfully eradicated Black Rats from Berlenga Island, reduced the extent of Hottentot Fig by 90%, and suppressed rabbits.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

The islands' native vegetation has recovered dramatically, re-establishing itself in areas previously dominated by the Hottentot Fig and heavily browsed by invasive rodents. The island's three threatened endemic plants are also slowly recovering. As a result, we are delighted to report that Band-rumped Storm-petrel has for the first time been observed breeding on Berlenga, and Cory's Shearwaters are also recovering.

AND THE FUTURE?

By implementing biosecurity protocols to prevent the arrival and spread of invasive species, we are helping future-proof the Islands' ongoing recovery. This work is complemented by measures to reduce the accidental bycatch of seabirds, and guidance on sustainable tourism.

THE YEAR IN Forests



“Our Forests Programme aims to prevent deforestation, protect trees and restore natural forests in the tropics.

We maximise the programme’s effectiveness by linking forest conservation on the ground to policy and advocacy work at national and international levels. The world’s natural forests are of critical importance as habitat for birds and other biodiversity, while also providing the ecosystem services and climate regulation we all depend on. The Trillion Trees initiative – a joint venture between BirdLife, WCS and the WWF – is a cornerstone of our Forests Programme, founded on the vision of a world where global tree cover is expanding, not shrinking.”

BRYNA GRIFFIN,
Head of BirdLife International
Forests Programme



“In order to build better strategies for people, we need to meet their needs while protecting forests, biodiversity and water resources.”

EVELYN BRÍTEZ

Conservation Units and Sites Programme Officer, Guyra
Paraguay (BirdLife Partner)

Accelerating forest protection

National environmental organisations have the proven ability to find local, long-term solutions to manage and conserve their tropical forest. They often just need access to shared knowledge, training and finance to design sustainable landscape-scale initiatives. The new BirdLife Forest Landscape Sustainability Accelerator is an innovative, cohort-based programme bringing together seed investment, connections, mentorship, training workshops and promotional

events to accelerate growth.

The 2019 Accelerator supported Partners with seed funding to kick projects off across 1.2 million hectares of priority Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas, ranging from Paraguay to Indonesia. We convened at a special conference at our Cambridge Secretariat, and meet regularly via webinars to share experiences and best practice. The Accelerator is empowering landscape leaders to pursue diverse and innovative approaches to sustainable financing.

KEY PROJECT SITES

- **PARAGUAY:** San Rafael, Atlantic Forest
- **CAMBODIA:** Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary
- **BRAZIL:** Serra do Urubu-Murici Corridor, Atlantic Forest
- **VIETNAM:** Truong Son
- **INDONESIA:** Mbeliling, Flores Island
- **MADAGASCAR:** Tsitongambarika
- **SÃO TOMÉ:** Obô Natural Park
- **SIERRA LEONE:** Gola Rainforest
- **KENYA:** Mount Kenya forest
- **ARGENTINA:** Misiones province

Gola Forest carbon credits hit £1 million

In 2019, the Gola REDD+ carbon credits scheme, an initiative of CSSL (BirdLife in Sierra Leone) and the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) reached a major milestone, with over £1 million of credits sold. This is, in part, a reflection of increasing interest from the commercial sector in nature-based solutions to climate change. The Gola Rainforest Conservation Company also launched a verification process for 2015-19 emissions reductions, which is expected to result in three million new carbon credits. In addition, Ngoleagorbu Cocoa Farmers Union in Gola Sierra Leone was certified as FairTrade. Ongoing monitoring and training of farmers also continues.



Forest-friendly cocoa © B Horvath



Obô snail with young © Vasco Pissarra

Strengthening ecotourism in the “African Galapagos”

In the remote African islands of São Tomé and Príncipe, sometimes nicknamed the “African Galapagos” due to their wealth of unique species, BirdLife has been boosting ecotourism in Obô Natural

Parks. Activities included restoring the botanic gardens and developing park entrances, ranger posts, park trails and visitor services. BirdLife also coordinated community awareness events including school activities, a competition to create public posters

promoting best ecotourism practices, and a celebratory hike to the summit of Pico de São Tomé to reinforce the importance of the island’s ecosystems and cultural heritage. These steps have opened opportunities for policy influence and access to funding.



Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros* © Bjorn Olesen

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Giving power to the people to protect Malaysia's forests



I.S. SHANMUGARAJ,
Executive Director,
Malaysian Nature Society

A new initiative is building the capacity of local communities, indigenous people, NGOs and the public, to ensure that their generation and future generations have the tools necessary to preserve Malaysia's forests from the ground up.

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THIS LATEST INITIATIVE?

MYForest is MNS' implementation of a wider project for strengthen non-state actor involvement in forest governance in Malaysia, supported by the European Union and led by BirdLife along with three project partners in Indonesia, Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

WHY ARE FORESTS SUCH A PRESSING ISSUE IN MALAYSIA?

The tropical forests of Malaysia are a treasure trove of biodiversity. We have 55 Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas which harbour endangered species and support the livelihoods of our people.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

Human activity has created long-standing environmental problems through agricultural expansion, infrastructure development and deforestation. National and state governments have implemented

initiatives such as Central Forest Spine, Heart of Borneo, and carbon credits schemes. However, weak governance may sound the death knell for these green spaces, unless non-state actors can be empowered to play a larger part in forest governance.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE BEING TAKEN?

Critical stakeholders in forest conservation – local communities, indigenous people, non-governmental organisations and the public – are constrained by a lack of technical knowledge, experience and political influence. Our project aims to equip non-state actors with the necessary platforms and skills to establish forest monitoring programmes and have a stronger voice in forest management advocacy. MNS is acting on our vision of Malaysia's natural heritage and rich biological diversity being effectively managed and conserved for the benefit and appreciation of all Malaysians.

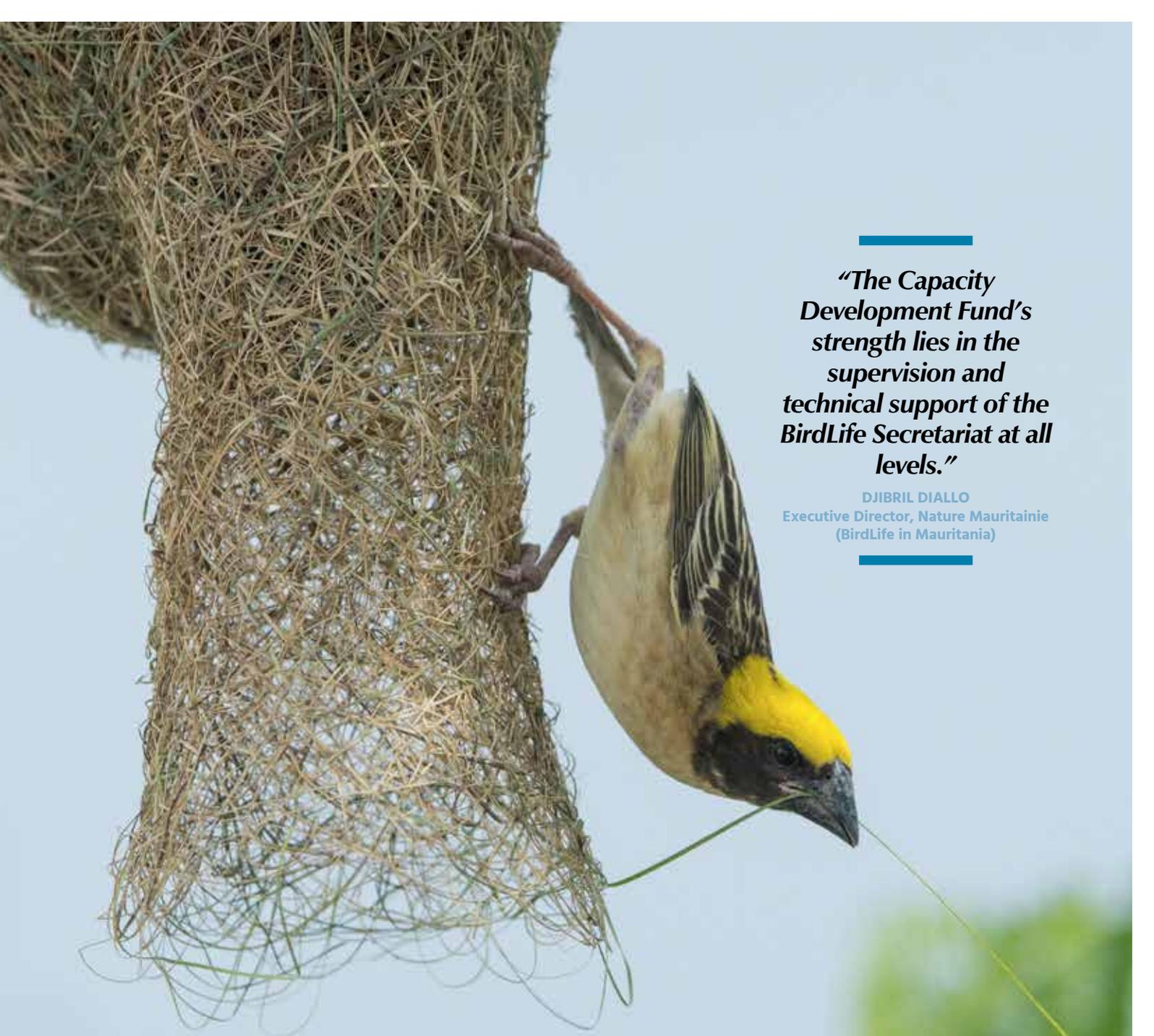
THE YEAR IN Capacity Development



“Developing the capacity, or ability, of Partner organisations is a theme that runs through all of BirdLife’s programmes. We aim to help everyone in the BirdLife family to improve in all areas of their work: science, policy, practical action on the ground, communications, fundraising, information systems. This is enshrined in the BirdLife philosophy of a thriving and vibrant global community of grassroots organisations, achieving sustainable wins for conservation and communities.”

KIRAGU MWANGI,
Senior Capacity Development Manager





“The Capacity Development Fund’s strength lies in the supervision and technical support of the BirdLife Secretariat at all levels.”

DJIBRIL DIALLO
Executive Director, Nature Mauritanie
(BirdLife in Mauritania)

Major review confirms we’re making a real impact

As an organisation that combines the strength of 115 Partners, we are constantly striving to learn from each other and enhance our ways of working. In 2019, we completed a major evaluation under the Quality Assurance Systems framework, receiving feedback from almost 100 Partners. As well as providing valuable learning points, it shows that BirdLife is on track to meet and sometimes exceed the targets of our current

strategy.

We have also made good progress in implementing our Strengthening Plans, which we currently use to build the capacity of 21 Partners in the Mediterranean and Africa. These provide clear pathways to identify and fund initiatives such as strategic plans, commercial strategies, human resources manuals, fundraising and donor diversification strategies. We continue to work towards all Partners attaining Full Partner or Affiliate status.

TARGETS SURPASSED

- Globally threatened birds conserved
- Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas conserved
- Engagement in policy for conservation of migratory birds
- Engagement in policy that promotes sustainable forest management
- Engagement in climate change policy
- Number of supporters and volunteers
- Financial reserves



Conservation Leaders © Sherilyn Bos

Empowering the conservation leaders of tomorrow

Our Conservation Leadership Programme provides grants to support early-career conservationists across the world. Arcadia, a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, confirmed a five-year grant starting in

July 2019, providing \$1.2m a year. So far, over 340 applications have been submitted from around the world. Young Conservation Leaders projects, funded by the British Birdwatching Fair and the A. V. Jensen Foundation, are also achieving great results. In

2019, 44 candidates received grants to conduct nine conservation projects in their home countries. For example, Young Conservation Leaders in the Pacific successfully restored habitats for threatened birds on Rapa, French Polynesia [see page 30].



Birdwatching, Senegal © Nature Communauté Développement

Helping Partners to help each other

BirdLife continues to drive multiple approaches to enhance the capacity of individual organisations as well as collectively as a Partnership. One of these approaches is through a Capacity Development Fund, mainly funded by the MAVA Foundation, which supports organisational development and partner to partner technical support. Over £500,000 has been disbursed in 2019 benefiting 17 Partners in the Mediterranean region and West Africa. Secondly, we established Communities of Practice involving 112 partner and secretariat staff, addressing nine topics including education, communications and financing. Lastly, we facilitated peer-to-peer mentoring among Partner Chief Executives on a wide range of topics including governance and fundraising.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

How Jordan supports Middle East Partners



YEHYA KHALED, Director General, Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

As part of the Capacity Development Fund's initiative to foster partner-to-partner cooperation, The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN - BirdLife in Jordan) provided technical support to the Palestine Wildlife Society (PWLS, BirdLife Partner), assisting them in the design and development of their organisational strategy.

WHAT IS THE RSCN APPROACH TO CONSERVATION?

RSCN creates, manages and advocates for a national network of protected areas to conserve Jordan's biodiversity and support local communities. We promote wider public support and action within Jordan, and have also been very active in supporting Partners in neighbouring Middle Eastern countries.

WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS IN SUPPORTING PARTNERS?

First, we carry out a capacity assessment of the Partner, then work out how we can best help them fulfil their missions, focusing on areas of their work most in need of development.

HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE THIS?

We use different techniques, including coaching, study tours and sharing lessons

learned. We have hosted capacity assessment workshops and a series of tours for visiting BirdLife Partners, including the Palestine Wildlife Society, with whom we played significant role in the development of their strategy.

HOW DID YOU WORK WITH THE PLWS?

We hosted members of PWLS' Board of Directors at our Azraq Reserve Lodge. With direct input from our own Director, the strategy was developed based on a detailed assessment of the working environment of PWLS, and the social and economic context of Palestine – the PWLS has to navigate unusual challenges on top of environmental and institutional issues. The wetland venue of the workshop made it easier to escape from day-to-day distractions, and enabled the PWLS team to examine and apply practical conservation principles.

THE YEAR IN Local Engagement & Empowerment



“The engagement of local people is critical to effective, sustainable, and equitable conservation, and one of the principles on which the BirdLife Partnership is built. BirdLife aims to support and empower the communities we work with by safeguarding their access to rights, and strengthening and expanding networks of Local Conservation Groups at critical sites for biodiversity. This year we highlight important educational initiatives, and celebrate the local communities at the forefront of protecting nature.”

CHARLOTTE KLINTING
Global Programme Coordinator,
Local Engagement and Empowerment

Shea butter © David Fulmer/Flickr



“This project will not only benefit the local community, but also aligns well with one of our program areas, which is conservation of migratory birds.”

IDRISSA ZEBRA
Executive Director NATURAMA (BirdLife in Burkina Faso)

Bringing trees, bees and birds back to shea parklands

Africa's shea parklands have drastically lost plant diversity due to intense cultivation driven by a global demand for shea butter. With support from the Darwin Initiative, in 2019 we completed a three-year project demonstrating that shea

pollinators, on which migratory birds and other wildlife depend, rely on having a diversity of trees and shrubs throughout the year. The “Trees, Bees, and Birds” strategy shows how planting native tree species, leaving fallow areas and beekeeping can increase pollination and improve food security

for people in the Sahel. The strategy has been officially adopted by the Global Shea Alliance. Going forward, NATURAMA (BirdLife in Burkina Faso) has scaled up the initiative to “Birds, Bees, and Business” in collaboration with VBN (BirdLife in the Netherlands), focusing on protecting rural incomes.



Indigenous people, Agos river © Haribon Foundation

Empowering the female forest defenders of the Philippines

The Haribon Foundation (BirdLife in the Philippines) is engaged in an initiative to strengthen local people's involvement in forest governance. Since 2017, they have been engaging with local communities to build

teams of volunteer forest watchers, training them in valuable topics such as environmental law, business planning and forest monitoring. Key 'forest defenders' include vocal, influential women who are leading their communities in protecting their

forest, livelihoods and heritage. The programme is also training youth leaders in developing and projects to support them. This initiative is part of the wider European Commission-funded Asia-Pacific Forest Governance project, coordinated by BirdLife.



© pxhere.com

Spring Alive children's programme sparks 'bird-safe window' movement

This year, Spring Alive, BirdLife's children's programme, chose the theme 'Safe Havens', focusing on how to prevent migratory birds from colliding with windows along the African-Eurasian Flyway. It

sparked a cross-border movement that reached over five million people and prevented hundreds – if not thousands – of bird fatalities, encouraging the public to share their own innovative tips. The 2019 Spring Alive season was sponsored by HeidelbergCement.

Events engaged approximately 2,000 teachers, more than 21,000 adults and 75,000 children in 20+ European countries and nine African countries. We also welcomed three new countries: Georgia, Morocco and Mauritania.



© Kristina Govorukha

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

BirdLife Malta: changing hearts and minds through education



SARAH BRADY,
Head of Education and
Engagement, BirdLife
Malta

You may see a lot of headlines about illegal hunting in Malta, but what is less well known is the huge amount of education work taking place in the country. BirdLife Malta strives to connect children, young people and adults with nature – because only through fostering a sense of connection can they motivate the public to change culturally-ingrained behaviours and become advocates for the environment.

WHAT'S THE BIRDLIFE MALTA APPROACH?

We have three education streams: Schools, Outreach and Community, and International. In schools, we promote the Dinja Waħda (One World) curriculum-based environmental education programme. In every Dinja Waħda school, we have a volunteer teacher who coordinates the programme. We offer teacher training and certification, lesson plans, field visits to our nature reserves, and teaching resources. We even create school gardens. Thanks to a close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Employment, three-quarters of all primary schools in Malta take part in this programme. We have recently written a new action guide called Dinja Waħda+, introducing Maltese teachers to outdoor education beyond the school.

Meanwhile, our outreach and community education includes scout and guide youth group programmes, youth leader training and even eco-therapy.

WHAT DOES THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME INVOLVE?

This includes several Erasmus+ projects in partnership with many European BirdLife Partners, along with other environmental and educational organisations. They cover a vast range of topics, from training teachers to deliver nature education, all the way to developing new sign language words to describe bird species for those with hearing impairments. We are now facilitating BirdLife's environmental education Community of Practise group, hosting webinars to connect BirdLife educators and support their professional development.



Finances

2019

The BirdLife Secretariat has continued its high levels of income during 2019 with total income of £23.0 million compared to £21.8 million in 2018. The Secretariat's total expenditure has increased to £23.1 million in 2019 compared to £20.6 million in 2018. The increase in expenditure relates to restricted spend, which enabled the organisation to deliver extraordinary conservation results.

After movement in investments of £552k, the Secretariat added £419k to reserves which includes a surplus of £313k to unrestricted net income. This includes a one-off addition of £283k reflecting BirdLife's ownership of Cousin Island, a Nature reserve in the Seychelles. This compares to a surplus in 2018 of £168k.

Nick Blackwood,
Treasurer

Income, £'000s	2019	2018
Grants from institutions and foundations	14,464	15,108
Individual donations, memberships and legacies	3,153	1,383
BirdLife Partners	2,050	2,318
Corporations	1,952	1,662
Events & other	1,249	1,278
Investments	119	88
Total	22,987	21,837

Expenditure, £'000s	2019	2018
Fundraising	913	1,049
Charitable Expenditure	22,207	19,579
- Preventing Extinctions	1,968	1,670
- Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas	4,065	3,711
- Migratory Birds and Flyways	3,253	2,431
- Marine	3,026	2,716
- Invasive Alien Species	372	731
- Forests of Hope	3,214	3,212
- Climate Change	269	189
- Local Engagement and Empowerment	586	688
- Capacity Development	2,360	1,467
- Conservation Science	1,026	1,123
- Conservation Policy	2,068	1,641
Total	23,120	20,628



Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus* © Wang LiQiang/Shutterstock

Together we are BirdLife International

Partnership for nature and people



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BirdLife International is the world's largest nature conservation partnership. Through our unique local-to-global approach, we deliver high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of nature and people