



The Africa Report
2022



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CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

Abdul Dumbuya | Adama Sidibe | Ahmed Diame | Alex Ngari | Andrew Mbenjile Blessings Chingagwe | Brian Abong | Cheikh Bamba Ndao | Christina Hagen | Christian Morais | Clara Mallah | Claudia Fletrup-Azafaf | Djibril Diallo | Edward Kamugisha Geoffroy Citegetse | Idrissa Zeba | Jacob Tukai | Jean-Baptiste Deffontaines | John Mwacharo Joseph Bizimungu | Julia Pierini | Khadija Bourass | Keider Neves | Ken Mwathe | Liz Mwambui | Lovelater Sebele | Mami Rasamoelina | Mamadou Diawara | Mamadou Ndiaye | Mpho Williart | Narcisse Tehe | Oladapo Soneye | Tariq Abdalla Tharcisse Ukizintambara | Thierry Runghen | Vania Trovoada | Vony Raminoarisoa

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EDITORS:

Lewis Kihumba & Fleur Ng'weno

COVER PHOTO:

Adult penguins at De Hoop Nature Reserve, South Africa © Christina Hagen



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Find out more at www.birdlife.org/africa

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Message from the Chair, CAP



In 2022, the BirdLife Partnership marked 100 years of delivering conservation outcomes around the world. The year was a testament to the critical role the partnership has played in conserving Nature.

The 100th year celebrations also provided an opportunity to launch the BirdLife 10-year strategy, which will guide our conservation work for the next decade. With nature on the decline, and biodiversity loss at an all-time high, coupled with climate change, the strategy will be a critical foundation in addressing these challenges. We also welcomed the newest member of the BirdLife flock, Nature Tanzania, as we continued to spread our wings across Africa.

Lastly, I commend the BirdLife Africa Secretariat, which has been instrumental in supporting African Partners in delivering impactful conservation outcomes across the continent. As the 2022 Africa Report illustrates, the BirdLife Africa Partnership is well placed to continue championing the protection of nature in the next decade.

Julia Pierini
Chair, BirdLife Council for the Africa Partnership (CAP)

Message from the Regional Director, Africa



In 2022, the BirdLife Africa Partnership made great strides nationally and on the global stage. Some highlights include: contribution towards mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and monitoring in the Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative in the Sahel; conclusion of the highly successful seabirds and marine conservation projects in West Africa funded by the MAVA Foundation; forest restoration in many countries; enhanced BirdLife Africa Partner involvement in policy at national level, as well as united advocacy against destruction of nature at important places for birds and people; and expansion of areas covered by Vulture Safe Zones across southern Africa.

In this report, we showcase BirdLife Africa Partnership's work in 2022, highlighting key achievements over the past year that illustrate the BirdLife approach. During the year, the BirdLife Africa Partnership expanded, welcoming Nature Tanzania as the 26th and newest member in the continent. Indeed, 2022 has been truly inspiring.

As we celebrate these achievements, I take this opportunity to applaud the BirdLife Africa Partners. To our donors and strategic partners, we are immensely grateful for your support. Finally, I would like to share my deepest gratitude to all our staff around the continent whose diligence and dedication were instrumental to our success. As we continue working towards transformational change for nature and people, guided by our new BirdLife Strategy (2023- 2032) and the associated Africa Regional Implementation Plan (2023-2027), the BirdLife Africa Partnership is poised to make a difference in the coming decade.

Dr. Kariuki Ndong'ang'a
Regional Director, Africa - BirdLife International

2022 in Numbers

700

Size in hectares being restored in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania under the Trillion Trees Restoration Programme

315

Fisheries observers trained in West Africa as part of the MAVA Foundation supported bycatch mitigation work in the region.

9

Partners benefitting from organization capacity development on the Hatch platform in 2022

135,000

Indigenous and agroforestry tree species being planted by ABN as part of restoration efforts in Burundi

500

Seychelles Magpie Robins on five islands in the country in 2022

10,000

Individuals to be impacted by NCF's Nature-based recovery and climate resilience project in the River Kampe Forest Reserve in Kwara State, in Nigeria

120

Youths empowered by the Society for Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) as part of its Youth EcoBrigade Initiative

1,000,000+

Hectares of Vulture Safe Zones established in Southern Africa by the end of 2022

40

Artisanal fishermen benefitting from Biosfera's sustainable fisheries project.

500

Community members in five community groups established by Nature Uganda as part of the AfriEvolve project, who benefitted from training on climate smart agriculture practices in 2022.

115,000

Trees planted by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) across Malawi in 2022

259,230

Amount of income (in USD) realized by 11 Site Support Groups (SSGs) in Kenya from Nature-based enterprises as at October 2022.



Key Highlights



BirdLife Africa Partnership at the BirdLife Centenary Celebrations © Salisha Chandra

Celebrating 100 Years of BirdLife



BirdLife celebrated 100 years at its World Congress in September 2022 in Cambridge, UK. Celebrations included Partnership regional meetings; launching of the inaugural BirdLife International Youth Leaders; a Partnership Fair where Partners showcased their work; and stocktaking of BirdLife's achievements between 2013-2022. The Future of Our Planet conference brought together speakers from diverse fields to discuss topics touching on Nature, including Nature & Business; the Value of Nature; Funding Nature; Philanthropy, Public Funding and Beyond; and Nature, Arts, Culture and Education.

The BirdLife Council for the Africa Partnership (CAP) meeting was part of the BirdLife World Congress, a hybrid session that included BirdLife Africa Partners, supporting Partners and Secretariat staff. The achievements of the BirdLife Africa Partnership in implementing the 2019-22 Regional Plan were recognized, and the 2023-2027 Africa Regional Implementation Plan was presented and adopted, including confirming partner high level activities and exploring potential funding opportunities for its implementation. Other highlights included achievements and plans for Network and Capacity Development; presenting the 2020 Quality Assurance System (QAS) results and discussing revision of the QAS in line with the new BirdLife Strategy; and election of the Africa Regional Committee (ARC) members.



Fisheries Observers in Senegal with sea turtle bycatch © BirdLife

Taking stock of MAVA Foundation's Legacy in West Africa

Marine conservation was the cornerstone of MAVA's support to BirdLife as they worked hand-in-hand over the last ten years in West Africa. Seven countries benefitted from the MAVA-driven Coastal & Marine conservation program (Mauritania, Senegal, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone). In 2022, the BirdLife Partnership has grown, with four new partners and two potential partners organisations, ensuring presence in the seven countries. MAVA supported efforts in building this network of strong local non-governmental organisations, local leaders, scientists, acting together for nature and people, before MAVA Foundation closed in 2022.

The Conservation of Migratory Birds (CMB) project ran from 2010 to 2018 and strengthened BirdLife Partners including Nature Mauritanie, Nature-Communauté-Développement (NCD) in Senegal, and Organização para o Desenvolvimento das Zonas Húmidas (ODZH) in Guinea Bissau, who are now experts in waterbird monitoring and environmental education in their respective countries. Since 2013, a common approach and tools for waterbird monitoring have been put in place, allowing information to be exchanged along the Flyway, informing regional and international conventions like the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), and supporting the designation of Ramsar sites.

The CMB project supported the development and implementation of species action plans for Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*),

Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*) and Black Crowned Crane (*Balearica pavonina*) in six countries; and the research of six young graduates through their Masters and PhD programs funded by BirdLife – all of them now working in conservation. On top of significant capacity development efforts, this project laid the ground work for landscape-scale, multi-stakeholder action along the East Atlantic Flyway. A concept note aiming at securing management, restoration and preservation of a climate-resilient network of critical sites for migratory birds along the East Atlantic Flyway was developed, building on MAVAs legacy, and involving all actors: governments, NGOs, multilaterals, and academia.

The MAVA Outcome Action Plan on coastal seabirds, focusing on key sites overlapping with the flyway approach, led to a huge capacity building action, through subsidised master's degrees for seven local students; creation of a Masters programme in marine sciences and technology – the first of its kind in Guinea Bissau; and trainings, especially training of trainers on subjects such as protected areas management and monitoring, to managers, conservationists and others – benefiting more than seventy-five professionals making a difference on the ground.

Ecotourism was promoted as a local economic alternative – training a network of eco-guides and supporting the development of a regional ecotourism strategy – although this was hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project supported monitoring – producing data – and promoted innovative monitoring and surveillance tools such as drones, reducing disturbance in counting. This data will support the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) review processes for Cabo Verde, Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea Bissau. Additionally, studies and plans were developed to support management of sites and response to threats such as coastal erosion.

MAVA was instrumental in supporting Seabird Bycatch mitigation work in the region. Bycatch of seabirds in fishing gear is a burning issue, as it kills hundreds of thousands of adult birds and directly impacts the population viability of threatened species. Mitigation has come a long way in the region, starting from scratch, met by defiance from the actors, and replaced with sufficient trust – from opposition, to information, to implementation. The first regional and historical analyses on bycatch, species spatiotemporal distribution, and overlap with fisheries are now completed.

For the first time in West Africa, BirdLife and its partners involved in the Bycatch project shed light on the extent and nature of the bycatch of seabirds and sea turtles in the industrial fisheries of the region. This involved at-sea bycatch data collection with well-trained fisheries observers from six out the seven countries of the Subregional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), except Cabo Verde. This data collection programme, combined with innovative scientific research, has been a cornerstone of the bycatch project, improving knowledge on bycatch rates and risks, fishing efforts, species distribution, and the most impactful fishing gears.

A total of 315 fisheries observers (52% of the whole region) were trained, and a regional bycatch database is up and running. Seven Masters and two PhD graduate students were supported to undertake studies on fisheries and bycatch of seabirds and sea turtles. Bycatch mitigation measures are now included in Senegal and Cabo Verde fishing agreements with the European Union, and the national fisheries legislation of Senegal now includes sea turtle bycatch mitigation provisions for tuna fisheries. A regionally agreed roadmap to address bycatch is now available, showing the way forward. Now, BirdLife plays a leadership role to a broader consortium of actors, composed of NGOs, academia and governments, expanding from commercial to artisanal fisheries, and from a focus on seabirds and sea turtles to other taxon such as sharks and rays.

The fruits of intensive outreach efforts includes five manuals: seabird, sea turtle, and shark identification guides; an Ecosystem Approach to fisheries; and a manual on influencing skills, produced in French, English, and Portuguese, as well as advocacy workshops in five countries, posters, articles, exchange visits and fairs, among others.

Another key achievement of MAVA support is the establishment of the new fisheries observers programme in Cabo Verde. Seabird species were tracked, with BirdLife deploying more than 2000 geolocators, with data from this tracking informing marine spatial planning. The first National Action Plan for Seabird Conservation in Cape Verde, using science-based evidence, working with local communities and users, and covering all seabird species present in the archipelago, was developed and is in the final phase of approval. The Cabo Verde terrestrial IBA network was updated, and a new legal regime for the protection of species, including seabirds, was adopted. More than 55 field assistants from NGOs and governmental institutions, from all islands, were continuously trained, monitored, and evaluated. Over 20 of these professionals are currently involved in seabird conservation, and six professionals undertook and completed four MSc and two PhDs programmes.

To raise awareness on the urgency of creating a national movement for conservation of Cabo Verde seabirds, a massive, successful communication campaign was carried out. The campaign included involvement of famous Cabo Verdeans in TV shows, the contest “vencedor pela natureza” (winner for nature) broadcast on national TV, a radio show series of a hundred and fifteen episodes, live streaming of Fea's Petrel during its breeding time in the Natural Park of Fogo to the public, and a carnival parade featuring all Cape Verde's seabirds at the famous Mindelo Carnival. All these efforts led to the establishment of a conservation movement made of passionate conservationists working for a strong and organised civil society network.

This ten-year investment in coastal and marine conservation, together with other MAVA-driven outcomes such as the recent publication of the “Atlas of ecological and biological sensitivity in coastal and offshore areas of West Africa”,

providing guidelines for good practices for oil and gas exploration in the marine environment or further work in the Mediterranean basin, has now been capitalized as the recently launched BirdLife Africa marine conservation strategy.

Expectations are high. BirdLife has secured and continues seeking resources to roll out the strategy beyond the closing of MAVA Foundation in 2022. It has been a beautiful conservation journey, and after this first stop, with the experience and skills we have gained, BirdLife and its partners will go on to do more to promote the MAVA heritage.



Species

A key pillar of the BirdLife strategy is preventing extinctions. In 2022, the BirdLife Partnership in Africa continued taking action to halt decline of endangered species and keeping common birds common through conservation action to tackle threats and raise awareness in addition to continuous monitoring of populations.



School kids leading the awareness march through Otse village © BirdLife Botswana

Partner Highlights

A key pillar of the BirdLife strategy is preventing extinctions. In 2022, the BirdLife Partnership in Africa continued taking action to halt decline of endangered species and keeping common birds common through conservation action to tackle threats and raise awareness in addition to continuous monitoring of populations.

BirdLife Botswana is collaborating with BirdLife Zimbabwe and BirdWatch Zambia on a two-year project funded by the European Union through the BIOPAMA programme to address wildlife poisoning in three adjacent protected areas in Hwange, Kafue, and Chobe National Parks in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana respectively, in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA).

BirdLife Botswana initiated the establishment of a National Wildlife Poisoning Committee through which National Wildlife Poisoning Response Protocols are being developed to achieve a standardised, coordinated and timely response to poisoning; and a national vulture poisoning database is under development to help document poisoning incidents. A regional Vulture Poisoning Committee was established to engage communities around Chobe National Park, and five village-level Anti-Poisoning Teams were organized to handle poisoning incidents and vulture monitoring. Seven information boards relaying anti vulture poisoning messages were produced and installed in strategic places around Chobe National Park and in the Makgadikgadi wetlands system.

As part of International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD) 2022, BirdLife Botswana in collaboration with stakeholders including the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Elephants Without Borders and Moklodi Nature Reserve, organized an awareness march under the theme ‘Save our Vultures from Poisoning: Stop misuse of Agrochemicals’ with 12 schools and more than 400 school children engaging in the march. BirdLife Botswana also participated in a Voice of America (VOA) [vulture feature](#) as part of the celebrations.

Citizen science is a key pillar of BirdLife Botswana’s species conservation work. In 2022, BirdLife Botswana continued running its Bird Population Monitoring (BPM) Programme, held in February and November every year. A total of 120 participants monitored 108 transects across the country and at least 338 bird species were recorded during counts. A poster on the BPM programme was presented at the Pan African Ornithological Congress in November 2022.

BirdWatch Zambia successfully branded two Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) in Mwomboshi and Amadeus Farms mixed farms in central Zambia under the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) project. This brings to nine the number of Vulture Safe Zones (VSZ) in the country – 474,700 hectares of VSZs. In June, BirdWatch Zambia (BWZ), in partnership with the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), conducted a wildlife poisoning response training in Kafue National Park. A total of 40 wildlife law enforcement officers benefitted from this training, with BWZ also providing poisoning response kits.

Partners (BCP). A total of 20 satellite units were successfully fitted on 19 White-backed Vultures (*Gyps africanus*) and one Lappet-faced Vulture (*Torgos tracheliotos*). With BCP, three White-backed Vultures were fitted with tracking units. This initiative is aimed at expanding the already tagged vulture population to get a broader understanding of the movement and ecology of vulture groups whose movement has not been studied extensively. In 2023, tagging of vultures will be expanded in two areas and repeated in some, depending on the number of tags supported. An analysis of movement data will be led by BWZ and disseminated via a scientific paper.



Global Big Day & Spring Alive activity in Kabwe Vulture Safe Zone © BirdWatch Zambia



Merlin lecture at the BWZ office © BirdWatch Zambia

In 2022, BWZ expanded the sample satellite tracking of African vultures in collaboration with Caring 4 Conservation (C4C), Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), and Bio-Carbon

BWZ continued its waterbird counts in Kafue Flats, conducted twice a year in Lochinvar and in Blue Lagoon. As part of the Spring Alive 2022 campaign, BWZ celebrated the Global Big Day of birding and World Migratory Day by engaging young learners through classroom presentations in addition to bird walks. With support from Elephant Charge, leaflets and posters were distributed and three Birds of Zambia pocket guides given out. BWZ is also involved in the control of an invasive alien plant species, *Mimosa pigra*, and the establishment of long-term monitoring of key bird species with a focus on cranes for improved biodiversity and livelihoods in Zambia’s Barotse Floodplain. BWZ conducted a perception survey in collaboration with WWF Zambia’s Mongu office. Priority control points for the weed were identified, and 35 field workers recruited to clear *Mimosa pigra* in the floodplains. BWZ will conduct sensitization meetings among community members while implementing control interventions.

In Zimbabwe, vulture populations have declined drastically over the last few decades, driven by various factors including poisoning and belief-based use. BirdLife Zimbabwe (BLZ) is at

the forefront of tackling these declines. Under its Preventing Extinction Programme, BLZ established Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) in Save Valley Conservancy, spanning over 913,000 square km in southeastern Zimbabwe, and another VSZ in western Zimbabwe, spanning over 12,000 hectares in the Gwayi Environmental Conservation Area.

BirdLife Zimbabwe established a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association (ZINATHA) – the largest association of traditional healers in the country with a membership of over 50,000 practitioners. This engagement is very beneficial in gaining insights into the vulture trade in Zimbabwe and identification of alternative substitutes to vulture parts.



Adult penguins at De Hoop Nature Reserve, South Africa
© Christina Hagen

African Penguins ([Spheniscus demersus](#)), categorised as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, are undergoing dramatic population decreases. The population has decreased by over 60% in the last 30 years. The cause of the decrease is thought to be a lack of available prey (sardine and anchovy), caused by a shift in the distribution of fish and competition with the fishing industry. Other threats include predation, oiling, diseases, and noise pollution from increased shipping traffic. BirdLife South Africa, CapeNature and the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) have been working to re-establish a penguin colony in the De Hoop Nature Reserve in South Africa to allow breeding penguins better access to moving fish stocks.

In 2022, the project reached an important milestone with the first penguin pair successfully hatching and raising two chicks, providing new hope for the future of African Penguins. This is a world first, marking the first time that humans have assisted African Penguins to establish a new breeding colony. The African Penguin breeding colony at Stony Point, 200 km west of De Hoop, started naturally with very few birds and is now a flourishing breeding colony.

A small number of penguins started breeding on a peninsula on the eastern edge of the De Hoop Nature Reserve in 2003, possibly in response to the shift in the distribution of their main food supply – anchovy and sardine. By 2008, there were at least 18 pairs breeding and larger numbers of penguins roosting at the site. Unfortunately, predation by caracals caused the penguins to abandon the site. In 2015, BirdLife South Africa in partnership with CapeNature began investigating whether the colony could be re-established there. In 2018, a predator-proof fence was constructed, and penguin decoys and a speaker playing penguin calls were installed.

Over 140 juvenile penguins, hand reared by SANCCOB from abandoned eggs and chicks, have been released from the site since 2021. These birds were released at the new site to encourage them to return to breed when they have matured in 3-6 years.

“This success of the project is an important step in the conservation of the Endangered African Penguin,” says Mark D. Anderson, Chief Executive Officer of BirdLife South Africa. “It has created a new safe breeding habitat in an area of good food availability and proves that it is possible to establish new land-based African Penguin colonies, something that has never been done before.”

Mark Anderson, CEO, BirdLife South Africa

The White-winged Flufftail (*Sarothrura ayresi*) is listed as a globally Critically Endangered bird endemic to Africa. It is considered one of the rarest and most threatened waterbirds on the continent. The global population was estimated at no more than 250 breeding adults in 2013. Ethiopia and South Africa, are the only two countries where White-winged Flufftail are known to breed. Population abundance and distribution have likely decreased over the years due to wetland destruction and degradation by various anthropogenic activities such as mining and agriculture.



White-winged Flufftail, Middelpunt Nature Reserve © Kyle Lloyd

Little was done to conserve the species in South Africa until 1992 when a group of citizen scientists formed the Middelpunt Wetland Trust to safeguard the only known site where the bird was regularly seen. BirdLife South Africa began administering the Trust in 2011 and has since made leaps in studying and understanding the ecology of this cryptic bird. The project is now in the phase of implementing conservation tools at a local scale through applied research and adaptive management. BLSA's White-winged Flufftail conservation work is supported by the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and guided by the White-winged Flufftail International Working Group Implementation Plan for 2020-2022.

In 2022, the Middelpunt Wetland was declared a private nature reserve, to formally protect the only confirmed breeding site of White-winged Flufftail, with over 300 letters of support from the public and stakeholder groups. Officially declared as the Middelpunt Nature Reserve in October 2022, a management plan is being drafted with the provincial conservation governing body, Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, to ensure that best practice guidelines are adopted and maintained. Additionally, landowners have formed a management authority and entered into a co-management agreement with BirdLife South Africa and Middelpunt Wetland Trust.

The White-winged Flufftail Wetland Priority List developed by BirdLife South Africa was updated and distributed to stakeholders of the White-winged Flufftail National Working Group coordinated by the South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. This provides recommendations to management authorities about how to improve the conservation status of wetlands historically or currently inhabited by the species.

Collaborations were established with universities to assist in processing the vast amounts of passive monitoring data and investigate the habitat requirements of the species. The 30th anniversary of White-winged Flufftail conservation in South Africa was celebrated through a presentation delivered at the 1st Southern African Mountain Conference. In recognition of its work, BirdLife South Africa was the recipient of the AEWA Conservation Award in the institutional category for the achievements in White-winged Flufftail conservation, which was awarded at the Meeting of the Parties (MOP8), in Hungary in September 2022.

The BirdLife Partner In Sierra Leone, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), with support from the MAVA Foundation through the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone (PRCM), developed a White Paper on the country's oil and gas sector, with key recommendations for future actions. Sierra Leone is expected to begin drilling for oil in its offshore waters in the near future, and this drilling is likely to have negative social and environmental impacts, including on marine life.



Oil recycling outfits destroying the environment in Sierra Leone © A. K. Dumbuya

In the White Paper, CSSL highlighted major issues affecting and affected by the country's nascent oil and gas industry, including threats, challenges, and key recommendations for national institutions, based on information captured over the years through engagement with stakeholders and coastal communities. CSSL had developed and administered questionnaires to stakeholders in the oil and gas sector, on key challenges facing the sector and how they could be minimized. In September 2022, CSSL organized a review and validation meeting, before the report was launched in October 2022 and distributed widely to various stakeholders including government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, oil companies, media, and civil society.

As part of its Species Programme in 2022, GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco, registered two breeding pairs of Griffon Vultures (*Gyps fulvus*) at Jbel Moussa, following the introduction of the species at the site after a 40-year absence. In June 2022, GREPOM's Marrakech-Safi regional unit discovered a breeding colony of Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) at Khnifiss lagoon, in the southwest of the country. Greater Flamingoes, mainly found in Mediterranean wetlands, have not bred in Morocco for more than 50 years, with the last known breeding site being Iriki desert lake between 1957 and 1968. The discovery was made as part of GREPOM's participation in the East Atlantic Flyways Initiative, following years of research and monitoring of Moroccan wetlands.

Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*) is a migratory raptor that arrives in Morocco each year to breed on the island of Mogador in the Essaouira archipelago in western Morocco. To create awareness, GREPOM in collaboration with local and international partners organised the first "Eleonora's Falcon festival" at Essaouira, near Mogador which hosts the biggest breeding colony of the species in world. The event reached thousands of people in the town, and millions of viewers on the two main national TV stations, in addition to radio listeners.



First edition of the Eléonora's Falcon festival © GREPOM

Seabirds are one of the most threatened groups of birds, with 43% out of 362 species classified as either Threatened or Near Threatened according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List criteria. In Mauritius, seabirds nest on several islets around the main Island, including Round Island, located 22.5 km off the northeast coast of Mauritius. Round Island is one of the richest seabird islands in the region, hosting species such as Round Island Petrel (*Pterodroma* spp.), Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*), Red-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon rubricauda*), White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) and Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Ardenna pacifica*), among others. Poaching of seabirds in the island in the 1800s and 1900s significantly reduced seabird diversity and numbers, but since poaching ended in 2002, seabird numbers have been building up.



Adult Masked Booby with chick on Serpent Island © Dr. Nik Cole

The Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) is one of the largest Mauritian seabirds, nesting in only two locations within the republic, with only about 250 pairs in the country. Historically, this species had a much larger nesting range within Mauritius, including in Round Island, but suffered from human and invasive species predators. To bring back the Masked Booby to Round Island, three organisations, namely Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and the National Parks and Conservation Service of Mauritius, are collaborating on a project led by Dr Nik Cole, Durrell/MWF Island Restoration Manager.

The team worked on innovative aspects of the project, including construction of decoys (artificial birds used to attract live birds), which were then placed in suitable habitats facing Serpent Island. Given the harsh climate of Round Island, the decoys were made of materials that would withstand strong winds and salt erosion and placed in various positions on the ground: 'nesting', sitting and standing. A solar powered speaker system that plays the calls of nesting boobies was placed nearby.

Camera traps were placed throughout the decoy colony to detect any interest from the Serpent Island colony that fly by daily.

This project is part of a much larger program to restore Round Island's ecosystem, but it has been a true achievement for the team to finally implement the seabird attraction devices. Based on the results of similar systems elsewhere, it may take a few years to attract Masked Boobies, although a very small number of other seabird projects have attracted birds back within months! Whenever it happens, the benefits will be worth the wait.

In 2022, Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE), with support of the Ministry of Environment, launched the Galala Bird Observatory, which aims at establishing a permanent station to monitor bird migration. Egypt lies on one of the most important flyways for bird migration – the African-Eurasian Flyway. The location of the Galala mountains allows an overview of the thousands of migratory birds that visit Egypt each Spring from a distance that may be the closest in the world to birds in flight.

In March 2022, NCE started the Galala Raptor Count, supported by the EV (Egyptian Vulture) Newlife Project. Within six weeks, the monitoring team had counted more than 350,000 migratory birds of 29 species, including more than 1200 Egyptian Vultures. According to the 2022 data, Galala Bird Observatory is the ideal place to record a significant proportion of the global population of Lesser Spotted Eagle ([Clanga pomarina](#)) 25–37%, Steppe Eagle ([Aquila nipalensis](#)) 23–32%, Steppe Buzzard (*Buteo buteo vulpinus*) 6–11%, White Stork ([Ciconia ciconia](#)) 10%, Egyptian Vulture ([Neophron percnopterus](#)) 3–10%, Short-toed Snake Eagle ([Circaetus gallicus](#)) 3–6%, Black Stork ([Ciconia nigra](#)) 2–4% and Black Kite ([Milvus migrans](#)) 2–4%. Two – Egyptian Vulture and Steppe Eagle – are globally threatened.

Long-term monitoring at Galala will facilitate the understanding of population trends and evaluate the potential benefit of conservation actions along the flyway. Among the raptor migration observatories along the Flyway, Galala's results may indicate the highest number of Egyptian Vultures and the second highest of Steppe Buzzard and Black Kite after Batumi in Georgia. And NCE is seeing far beyond a research station: The Observatory's facilities are planned to be divided into several categories including training and awareness, education, birdwatching tourism, and research and monitoring, allowing visitors to embrace a unique, informative, serene, dazzling experience.



© Nature Conservation Egypt

Conservation of vulnerable species is a key pillar of Nature Mauritania's conservation efforts. In August 2022, Nature Mauritania, took part in a workshop on the conservation of marine turtles. The aim was to analyse available data on pressures and threats facing marine turtles, and to develop a participatory program of monitoring and conservation of marine turtles at the national level which will be a prelude to a national action plan for the conservation of marine turtles.

For almost 17 years, Nature Mauritania has been carrying out monitoring and participating in annual waterbird counts in the Diawling National Park, Banc d'Arguin National Park, Lac de Mal and Lac d'Aleg. In 2022, the annual waterbird count in Lake Aleg yielded 179,038 individuals of 43 species, compared to 41,600 individuals of 24 species in 2021. Stable rains in the recent past contributed to food availability for the birds and the consequent increase in numbers.

BirdLife Partner NATURAMA in Burkina Faso developed landbird inventories that confirmed the existence of migratory species of the East Atlantic Flyway in four regions, including Common Whitethroat ([Curruca communis](#)), European Bee-eater ([Merops apiaster](#)), Bonelli's Warbler ([Phylloscopus bonelli](#)), Willow Warbler ([Phylloscopus trochilus](#)), and Montagu's Harrier ([Circus Pygargus](#)).

Nature Kenya carried out a number of initiatives under its Species protection work in Kenya. A vulture population recovery and conservation action plan was drafted, and species recovery plans for Pangolins and the Grey Crowned Crane ([Balearica regulorum](#)) were developed. Detailed monitoring was carried out for six bird species of concern: Clarke's Weaver ([Ploceus golangi](#)), East Coast Akalat ([Sheppardia gunningi](#)), Fischer's Turaco (*Tauraco fischeri*), Taita Apalis ([Apalis fuscigularis](#)), Taita Thrush ([Turdus helleri](#)) and Hinde's Babbler ([Turdoides hindei](#)).

Nature Kenya carried out waterbird counts at numerous sites including Rift Valley lakes, Sabaki River Estuary, Tana River Delta and wetlands near Arabuko-Sokoke Forest; common

bird monitoring in 13 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs); and detailed monitoring in 20 KBAs. Some 23 predator-proof bomas were constructed to reduce human wildlife conflict – and thus vulture poisoning – in Kajiado County.

The Seychelles Magpie Robin ([Copsychus sechellarum](#)) is one of Seychelles' most famous birds. Although historically present on at least seven islands of the Seychelles archipelago, the world population of the magpie robin came very close to extinction. Only 12 birds remained on Frégate Island in the 1990s. The introduction of rats and cats, as well as the loss of its lowland forest habitat, caused its decline.

To save the Seychelles Magpie Robin, BirdLife International and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) initiated the ambitious and highly successful Seychelles Magpie Robin Recovery Program in the 1990s. The program included conservation measures such as intensive habitat rehabilitation, eradication of alien predators, supplementary feeding, establishment of nest boxes and habitat restoration. In 1998, Nature Seychelles, which took over the program, received a large grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and began extensive habitat restoration, particularly on Denis Island.

Birds were relocated to Aride Island in 2002, and to Denis in 2008. The outlook for the bird greatly improved and in 2005 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) downlisted the Critically Endangered bird to Endangered. Five Seychelles Magpie Robins were also translocated to Cousin Island, where a self-sustaining breeding population has developed all over the Island. In 2022, the number of birds has grown to 500 on five islands, with 69 Seychelles Magpie Robins on Cousin Island - the highest tally ever!



Seychelles Magpie Robin
© Nature Seychelles

“This is just an incredible achievement considering this bird was once restricted to just 1 island and only 12 existed worldwide. The success can be attributed to intensive conservation management by Nature Seychelles working with BirdLife International and the RSPB and with private island owners.”

Dr. Nirmal Shah, CEO of Nature Seychelles.

As part of a partnership with IUCN and Porini Foundation, Nature Seychelles launched the Seychelles Magpie Robin nature collectible in 2021 – a first-of-its-kind digital NFT (Non-fungible token) for conservation, which raised nearly \$10,000 for their continued monitoring. To manage the populations of the bird on the various islands, Nature Seychelles set up and facilitates a local stakeholder group called the Seychelles Magpie Robin Recovery Team (SMART). It is comprised of managers and conservation officers from Cousin, Aride, Denis, and Frégate, as well as the Department of Environment. It takes conservation actions and makes management decisions for the bird, though individual islands have overall management responsibilities for their bird population.

A key pillar of Nature Tanzania – BirdLife Partner in Tanzania – is species conservation. In January 2022, Nature Tanzania supported the International Waterbird Census (IWC) coordinated by the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI). Nature Tanzania also participated in the launch of a transboundary conservation program for the Grey Crowned Crane, hosted by the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association (RWCA), in collaboration with other partners including Nature Uganda and the International Crane Foundation (ICF). Nature Tanzania has signed an MoU with RWCA on enhancing conservation of Grey Crowned Crane in the wetland ecosystem on the Tanzania-Rwanda border.

Outreach activities in Malawi by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) included producing 500 copies of Birds of Malawi, with a focus on parrots; 1000 copies of How to Run a Wildlife Club; 500 awareness posters on invasive alien species; three television programs on Pangolin trafficking; and 11 radio programs on Critically Endangered species like the Chapman's Pygmy Chameleon (*Rhampholeon chapmanorum*), and human-wildlife conflict issues.



New power pylons erected in Ethiopia near the Metehara Export Abattoir, a reliable food source for vultures © S. Oppel

Programme Highlights

Migratory Birds and Flyways Programme

The phenomenon of bird migration has drawn awe and amazement from people for millennia. There is still much to learn, while migrating species continue to face a range of challenges that jeopardize their future. Migratory birds connect the world in extraordinary ways and are important components of global biodiversity. Their conservation continues to be a high priority action area for BirdLife in Africa. Here are some of the key programme highlights:

Energy is a key development sector that is receiving a lot of attention in Africa. Although Africa has huge renewable energy resources, it has the lowest access to electricity per capita; demand outstrips access, leading to more than 600 million people without connection to electricity, or just over 40% access rate. This situation impacts economic growth negatively. Secondly, the quest to fight climate change has induced the world to increase investments in renewable energy generation, which has seen an uptake of 60% in Africa in the last 15 years.

For example, Ethiopia has a major ambition to increase energy generation capacity for both regional and national power transmission and distribution. Ethiopia is one of the most important countries for migratory birds in Africa. It has the biggest congregation of migratory, soaring Egyptian Vultures ([Neophron percnopterus](#)) ever recorded in their wintering grounds. For a long time, however, migratory soaring birds including storks and raptors have died from collision or

electrocution from energy infrastructure. This scenario provokes one of the biggest conservation challenges across the continent.

BirdLife believes a win-win solution can be achieved if the concerned stakeholders can work together, guided by fundamentals that guarantee sustainability. Through the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) / United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding and co-funding via a European Union (EU) funded project, BirdLife and **Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society**, (BirdLife Partner) have embarked on a journey to bring harmony between the two sectors so people can be connected to electric power without endangering nature. We are implementing approaches that embrace **mainstreaming of bird conservation into the energy sector**.

A lot has been achieved to make energy development safe for birds in Ethiopia, thus laying a foundation for sustainability in the sector. In 2022, EWNHS signed a collaborative long-term agreement with the national power utilities and the national conservation authority to facilitate mainstreaming of bird conservation considerations into the energy sector. A capacity needs assessment was conducted and a Capacity Improvement Strategy in wildlife and power infrastructure management completed for both Ethiopia Electric Utility (EEU) and Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) personnel.

Training on the use of bird identification kit and sensitivity mapping tool was conducted for at least 70 stakeholders in both energy and conservation sectors. **Mapping of dangerous power infrastructure** was conducted in priority parts of the country through joint field missions, with powerline retrofitting material (834 pieces of insulation components and 660 pieces of bird diverters) procured to mitigate some 20 km of killer powerlines in 9 black spots identified during a rapid powerline survey.

Increased awareness activities were rolled out focussing on migratory bird conservation, such as marking the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) and through popular national events like the Great Ethiopian Run. An analysis of Ethiopian national laws in relation to bird protection from energy infrastructure was conducted and recommendations for improvements made, in addition to development of **best practice guidelines on protecting birds in power sector developments**. A multi-stakeholder Energy Working Group for Ethiopia to promote best practices in the sector was established during the year.

The experience in Ethiopia to mainstream bird conservation in the energy sector revealed several challenges that need to be overcome to reconcile energy and conservation sectors in the country. Awareness about the importance of creating harmony between the energy and nature conservation sectors, backed by pragmatism, is a key ingredient needed in energy sector development to avoid future bird deaths.

Key stakeholders in the energy sector need to embrace nature protection as a shared call of duty; and to embrace functional partnerships with relevant entities to make energy development sustainable.

Despite the challenges, there is hope that it is possible, using the capacity built so far, tools developed and knowledge gained during the mainstreaming efforts, to secure a future for vulnerable migratory birds. The international community, through mechanisms such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), encourages nature safe energy deployment in member countries including Ethiopia, and serves as an important reference point going forward. Species (CMS), and African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), encourages nature safe energy deployment in member countries including Ethiopia, and serves as an important reference point going forward.

The BirdLife Partnership is implementing the 'East Atlantic Flyway Initiative' to conserve sustainable populations of migratory birds along the East Atlantic Flyway. A successful collaboration with Wetlands International and Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative on monitoring of shorebirds and their habitats in 18 countries covering 36 sites was organised with BirdLife Partners, National Park authorities and local people in the 18 countries.

BirdLife Partners implemented activities to support management of the sites and keep the flyways safe for migratory birds. **Nature Mauritania** restored mangroves in Diawling, while in **Senegal**, **Nature Communautés Développement** worked with local communities to safeguard Tocc Tocc Community Nature Reserve, the Saloum Delta and Niamone Kalounayes Marine area in Casamance. **Organização para o Desenvolvimento das Zonas Húmidas (ODZH)** trained people and raised awareness to conserve Mansoa Wetlands in **Guinea Bissau**, while **SOS-Forêts** developed livelihood activities including salt production and beekeeping to support communities in **Cote d'Ivoire**.

Support to the Great Green Wall (GGW) Initiative

The Great Green Wall (GGW) is a pan-African initiative for the restoration and sustainable management of land in the Sahel and Saharan region to fight land degradation and poverty. The GGW initiative is composed of eleven countries: Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. The GGW initiative seeks to improve the resilience of human and natural systems in the Sahel-Saharan countries to climate change, through sound management of ecosystems and sustainable development of natural resources, protection of tangible and intangible rural heritage, creation of rural production and sustainable development policies, and improvement of people's livelihoods.

In 2019, GGW and BirdLife signed a technical and scientific collaboration agreement to achieve common objectives in conservation, protection and support of targeted biodiversity, particularly birds, which are indicators of the general health of ecosystems, while strengthening socio-economic development and the improvement of the livelihoods of the populations in the GGW countries. In 2022, the GGW/BirdLife collaboration achieved some notable successes.

BirdLife contributed to the GGW residential seminar for the development of operational planning in 2022 and 2023 in Widdou Thingholy, Senegal. It was an opportunity for BirdLife to reinforce the relevance of this collaboration, underlining the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity protection in the National Action Plans of the GGW countries. In April 2022, BirdLife and the Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAGGW) renewed the MoU up to 2030, to match with the ten-year Priority Investment Plan (DPP), in a meeting held in Nouakchott, Mauritania with the support of Nature Mauritania. BirdLife participated in the Baseline Assessment and Perspectives workshop in line with the UNEP/GEF Project "Harnessing the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) for a Sustainable and Resilient Sahel" in Niamey, Niger. During the workshop, countries presented preliminary results of the baseline collected, and deliberated with the GEF Secretariat on new developments in the implementation of the GGW Initiative, including the BirdLife concept "Make Sahel Greener and Greater for Nature & People".

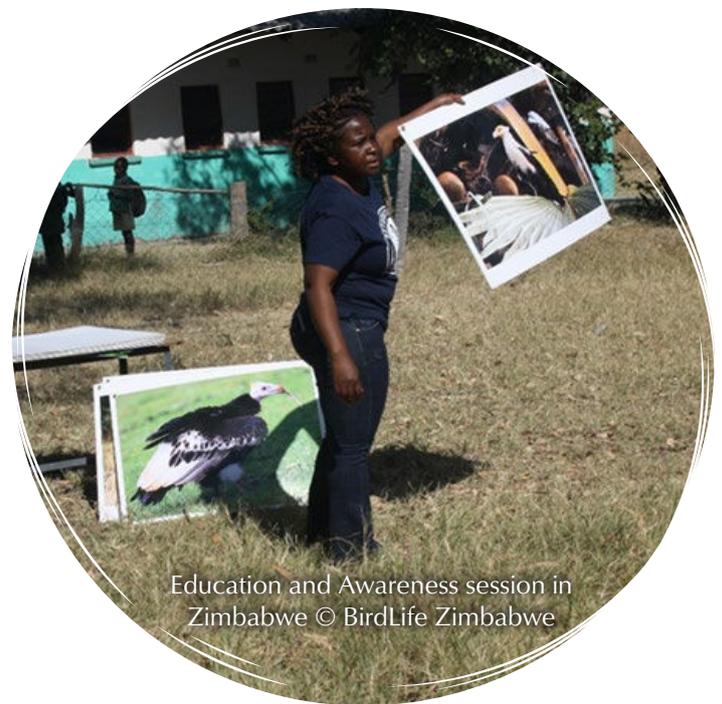
BirdLife and partners took part in a workshop held in Abuja, Nigeria, aimed at strengthening collaborations with the National Agencies of the GGW, on integrating and mainstreaming biodiversity in the GGW programmes. The workshop drew more than 34 people and was widely covered in 10 countries. BirdLife also participated in the 8th Ordinary session of the Council of Ministers of the GGW, held in Abuja.

Saving Vultures in Africa

Africa's vultures are some of the most endangered birds globally. Seven of Africa's vulture species are on the edge of extinction, categorised as globally Endangered or Critically Endangered by BirdLife, as the authority for birds, on the IUCN

Red List of Threatened Species. Six vulture species only occur in Africa, nowhere else in the world. Over the last 50 years, African vulture populations have declined by between 80 and 97% (over 92% for five species), driven by a myriad of factors including poisoning (responsible for 61% of recorded vulture deaths across Africa), killing for belief-based use (29%), and electrocution by poorly sited energy infrastructure (9%).

BirdLife Africa's vulture conservation strategy is built on four pillars and focused on addressing threats through building knowledge and understanding, raising awareness at all levels, advocating for policy and legislative changes, and implementing direct conservation actions on the ground. In 2022, the programme made a number of achievements as highlighted below:



Education and Awareness session in Zimbabwe © BirdLife Zimbabwe

Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs), which are areas where landowners commit to vulture friendly practices, more than doubled to over 1,000,000 hectares across Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Mozambique. BirdLife is beginning to see positive attitude changes and recognition of the role and value of vultures, with both an increase in interest in establishing these zones and also in maintaining them. The BirdLife Partnership is developing guiding principles and a branding strategy to clarify and strengthen the VSZ establishment, certification, and adoption.

In March 2022, BirdLife hosted the second BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum Meeting, which brought together 35 representatives from the BirdLife Africa Partnership to discuss progress in implementing the **Multi Species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP)**. Regional representatives are organising sub-regional follow-up meetings. A [BirdLife documentary](#) was developed showcasing the programme's efforts and needs.

Through conservation action on the ground and strategic collaborations, thousands of people have been reached across the region through documentaries, community events, podcasts, and sponsored events by BirdLife

In Southern Africa, thanks to project funding from the Isdell Family Foundation, key activities on the development of an integrated vulture protection network in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) linked to regional networks and involving various stakeholders continued to be carried out. Through this project Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) and Vulture Support Groups (VSGs) – voluntary community groups responsible for vulture monitoring and education and awareness, were formed. The groups have been an asset to vulture conservation outside of protected areas.

“We wish for this vulture conservation programme to go forward. We started off as volunteers and it looks like people in the area enjoy it, as the numbers in the group are continually increasing. We would love for the programme to be extended into schools in the area so that we can teach them about the value of vultures in the environment.”

Bekezela Sibanda, Sithanda Amanqwe Vulture Support Group, Gwayi, Zimbabwe.

A key driver of vulture population declines is the deliberate collection of vultures for belief-based use by traditional healers, especially in West Africa. The BirdLife Partnership, including the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) and BirdLife Zimbabwe, continued tackling the belief-based use of vultures in West Africa and in Zimbabwe.

Through the project, the two BirdLife Partners engaged traditional healers in their countries. It has led to the development of lists of plant alternatives to use of vulture parts for traditional medicine in both countries. Joint efforts between traditional healers, NCF and law enforcement stakeholders in Nigeria have contributed to a notable reduction in vulture parts being traded in the wildlife markets, with 65% of the healers in the target group switching to alternatives. A new handbook on plant-based alternatives for traditional medicine was produced. In October 2022, NCF facilitated the West Africa Vultures Action Planning workshop, attended by 35 key stakeholders from 13 countries across West Africa. The resulting West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan is in its final drafting stages.

Wildlife poisoning – lacing carcasses of livestock killed by a predator with poison (usually pesticides) to kill the predator returning to feed – is one of the most severe threats to vultures in Africa, accounting for 61% of fatalities. In 2022, BirdLife received a Darwin Grant to expand successful initiatives to reduce poisoning in the Mara and Serengeti transboundary areas in East Africa. The project will collaborate

with communities to address the factors that endanger vultures and have a negative impact on communities, aiming to improve livelihoods through better livestock protection and enhancing sustainable livelihood options.

In the Makao Wildlife Management Area in Tanzania, the project is collaborating with communities to address the threat of trade in vulture parts caused by belief-based use. It works to implement rapid response mechanisms for wildlife poisoning and to improve livelihoods through a community-led and managed community revolving fund pilot programme. On the Kenyan side, anti-poisoning measures with coordinated stakeholder response have led to a decrease in mortality at poisoning incidences, with at least one vulture being saved per incident, where none were being saved before.



Vulture Project inception meeting at Makao Wildlife Management Area in Northern Tanzania © Nature Tanzania

A critical report on the use of agrochemicals and VMPs (Veterinary Medical Products) to poison feral dogs and wildlife was produced in Ethiopia, and distributed to various key stakeholders in authority in the hopes of influencing policy changes in the country. Three protocols on the safe handling and disposal of suspected poisoned carcasses, and responding quickly when wildlife poisoning incidents occur, were developed, and distributed for adoption to relevant government authorities, including the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA).

In Ethiopia’s Logia and Metehara regions, 225 pylons covering 17.8 kilometres are set to be retrofitted In 2023. These pylons were identified based on their proximity to abattoirs and garbage dumps, which serve as a reliable food source for vultures. More than a dozen powerline insulator caps and bird flight diverters were purchased through the project for this purpose.

The Egyptian Vulture ([Neophron percnopterus](#)) – a bird that uses tools – is Europe’s only true migratory vulture species. For the past three years, BirdLife International has been implementing the Egyptian Vulture Life Project (EV LIFE Project) in Africa through its partners in Ethiopia and Nigeria, addressing the threats of wildlife poisoning, bird electrocution, and fighting illegal wildlife trade in vulture body parts used in traditional medicine. As the project comes to an end in 2022, a lot has been achieved!

A series of community-level as well as public education and awareness campaigns were implemented in both Ethiopia and Nigeria to inform communities about the Egyptian Vultures’ plight, their importance, and the dangers that wildlife poisoning poses to this globally endangered bird. In Nigeria, two Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) were piloted in two of the country’s States. As a result of these campaigns, communities committed to supporting activities that are beneficial to vulture survival, even adopting plant-based alternatives to vulture parts for traditional medicine. To assist them in their transition, a booklet containing plant-based alternatives for traditional medicine was produced and two networks of volunteers was established to spearhead the change.

Despite the significant progress made in securing the Egyptian Vulture’s flyways in Africa, more needs to be done. In particular, promoting bird-safe energy infrastructure regionally and addressing wildlife poisoning as a major threat to vultures, particularly in Ethiopia, as well as scaling up the VSZ concept in Nigeria.



Dyr El Kef KBA in Tunisia © Hichem Azatfai

Sites

Africa has over 1,200 identified Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). IBAs are also Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): vital habitats for nature, birds, and all species. BirdLife Partners across the continent are ensuring the integrity, protection, conservation, restoration and monitoring of these sites, and establishing National Coordination Groups (NCG) in various Partner countries.



Transplanted seedlings © Joseph Bizimungu

Partner Highlights

In Burundi, the Association Burundaise pour la protection de la Nature (ABN), with support from VBN (Vogelbescherming Nederland, the Dutch BirdLife Partner) was able to monitor five protected areas which are Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) in 2022. ABN engaged with 15 local conservation groups in these areas, which are playing a key role in nature conservation. ABN, in consortium with four other organizations, was able to secure funding from the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) for restoration work in the Kibira National Park, Rewgura sector and its surroundings in northwestern Burundi. Under this project, 55,000 indigenous tree seedlings (*Prunus africana* and *Maesopsis eminii*) and 80,000 agroforestry tree seedlings (*Grevillea robusta*) are being grown.

The native species will be used for restoration and delimitation of Kibira Park, while the agroforestry trees will be used on riparian properties to fight against erosion. A nursery of 20,000 bamboo shoots (*Bambusa vulgaris*) is being installed for the stabilization of rivers that pass through private farms. Working in collaboration with local communities and the local administration, ABN was able to identify watersheds and re-vegetate them over a length of 10km. Local community members are benefiting by being paid for their labour.

In Nigeria, the decline of species within protected areas have prompted the need to pursue species conservation in these areas and surrounding communities. The BirdLife Partner in Nigeria, Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF),

is partnering with the National Park Service to enhance protection of the Kainji Lake National Park (KLNP) and the lions and leopards within the park.

NCF facilitated a workshop titled “Stakeholders Engagement to Identify and Design Solutions for Restricted Ranching to Reduce Livestock Grazing in Kainji Lake National Park” in Niger State, supported by IUCN’s Save our Species and funded by the European Union. The workshop, bringing together more than 200 stakeholders from various organizations including Kainji Lake National Park, the Local Government Council, Miyetti Allah Cattle Rearers Association, Farmers’ Association, Hunters’ Association, Women’s Association, Youth Associations and the media, sought to identify the challenges and solutions to sustainable livelihoods practices in communities around the park.

“NCF is delighted to carry out this project, part of a series of activities being implemented in Kainji Lake National Park aimed at improving the capacity of stakeholders, mainly communities surrounding the park.”

Dr. Stella Egbe, Species Programme Lead, NCF.

“In the build-up to the workshop, sustainability challenges in the communities were identified through a community entry/ awareness exercise, and solutions proposed for possible implementation. Challenges identified include overgrazing, unsustainable farming, illegal logging, poaching, while some of the proposed solutions included restricted ranching, sustainable alternative livelihoods, improved education and awareness, improved farming practices, among others.

In Madagascar, BirdLife Partner Asity continued with conservation efforts aimed at preserving the iconic Tsitongambarika Forest, part of a Biodiversity Offset initiative supported by Rio Tinto. This was done through initiatives such as reforestation and restoration of strategic denuded areas, ecological monitoring by local communities, environmental education and improvement of community livelihoods through development of income generating activities, among others. Between 2016 and 2022 more than 48ha of the forest were restored with 47,806 seedlings planted. To improve natural resources management, Asity has been building the capacity of grassroot communities or Cobas in Tsitongambarika, with the number of people joining the Cobas steadily increasing.

As part of building capacity of local communities and conservationists to protect the environment, Guinée-Ecologie, BirdLife Partner in Guinea, carried out training workshops for 20 conservationists and local communities living around five Tropical Important Plant Areas (TIPAs) in the country. The training was focussed on tools for collecting and monitoring threats in these TIPAs. More than 20 officials from ministerial departments in Guinea and research institutions were also trained on the concept of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) Within the framework of the Bafing-Falémé Landscape Natural Resource Management Project, Guinée-Ecologie conducted an inventory of 10 piloted villages and established an action plan on the transition of these villages to eco villages.

Three KBAs were re-evaluated, with funding from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Following the good results from Guinée-Ecologie’s mangrove restoration project in Tristao Island, a second grant to expand the restoration to Kpatchez Marine Protected Area (MPA) was approved, and further funding received as part of the PAPBio project to build capacity for ecological monitoring of the Tristao MPA and mangrove conservation work.

The UNESCO Biosphere Reserve application for Chimanimani Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) was approved in June 2022. BirdLife Zimbabwe (BLZ) was a key stakeholder in the development of this application. As part of its building capacities initiatives, BirdLife Zimbabwe has been working to capacitate the Chimanimani Tourist Association (CTA) and their eight Mountain Guides (MTGs) who are strategically placed to be part of the Chimanimani Biosphere Reserve management team. It is envisaged that the guides would be able to influence the trajectory of Chimanimani towards ecotourism and Nature-based Solutions (NbS). BLZ, CTA and the guides developed the Mbira Hiking/Birding Trail – a new tourism product aimed at putting Chimanimani KBA back on the Zimbabwe and world tourism maps.

BLZ funded a Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) First Aid Course, and exam fees for the guides to acquire Learners Guides licenses in February 2022. In November 2022, KfW (German bank) approved the financing of the development of the Great Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) Birding Route. With BirdLife Zimbabwe being the project’s lead, other BirdLife partners collaborating in the project include BirdLife Botswana, BirdWatch Zambia and BirdLife South Africa who will bring their expertise in the development of birding routes to the project.



Capacitating Chimanmani KBA Tourist Association Community Mountain Guides © BLZ

Since 2017, GREPOM/ BirdLife Morocco has undertaken site and habitat restoration works in Morocco, including the restoration of the Larache saltpans. In 2022, GREPOM expanded its restoration work to Sebkh Bou Areg in northeastern Morocco, and in Souss Massa National Park on the Atlantic coast. At Sebkh Bou Areg, GREPOM created a floating platform or raft to provide attractive nesting sites for terns and gulls, and built artificial nest mounds to encourage Greater Flamingoes to breed locally. In Souss Massa National Park, GREPOM, in coordination with the park administration, restored a small natural islet at the mouth of the Oued Massa River.

In addition, GREPOM guided renowned Moroccan experts in different fields to update and revise more than 40 continental freshwater Sites of Biological and Ecological Interest (SIBEs), with 10 sites to be designated as new Ramsar Sites.

“My Nature Refuge” was rolled out by Tunisia’s BirdLife Partner, Association Les Amis des Oiseaux (AAO), with financial support from BirdLife international. The project invites owners and users of green spaces to manage them according to a Green Charter set up by AAO, to improve living conditions for wildlife. More than 150 ha of nature refuges have been registered in 2022 with a diversity ranging from a balcony to “The Belvedere” urban park in the centre of Tunis. Although almost half of the spaces are private gardens, schools are increasingly joining the program to transform their recreation yards into biodiversity gardens.

Ghar El Melh, in northern Tunisia, is home to one of the country’s most important wetlands. As part of the Conservation and Sustainable Development of Coastal Wetlands with High Ecological Value (GEMWET Project), Association Les Amis des Oiseaux (AAO) is leading in the collection of household waste from the Jbel Nadhour and Ghar El Melh Lagoon municipalities. With an initial investment of 170,000 Tunisian Dinars (55,000 USD), the amount of uncollected waste around the lagoon has significantly

reduced, which has in turn reduced the cost per ton of waste collected by the local communities. The money saved from this waste collection has been reinvested in other communal environmental projects.

AAO is also working with farmers to ensure agricultural activities are friendly to nature. Under the Together with Locally Committed Farmers in Dyr El Kef for the Restoration of Ecosystems (TREFLE) project, AAO in collaboration with the Association Les Amis du CAPTE (Collectif d’Acteurs pour la Plantation et la Transition Environnementale) in Tunisia (LACT), carried out identification of several endemic wild plants of agricultural use in the Dyr El Kef KBA. The numerous field missions were able to increase the number of species recorded from two before the project to 56, and at the same time to document and monitor the successful breeding of a new pair of Egyptian Vultures, an endangered species whose number of pairs in Tunisia is estimated at less than 25.

As part of its contribution to restoration activities under the Great Green Wall Initiative, Nature Mauritania rolled out restoration activities in Nouakchott in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The campaign included reforestation activities in Male in Mauritania’s southern region of Brakna, and awareness raising activities among local communities in the context of climate change.

BirdLife Partner NATURAMA was involved in the identification and development of 14 Conservation Areas in Burkina Faso’s South-West, Centre-West and Centre-South regions, and in the establishment and training of local management committees and the development of local land charters.



My Nature Refuge project being implemented by AAO © Claudia Feltrup-Azafzaf

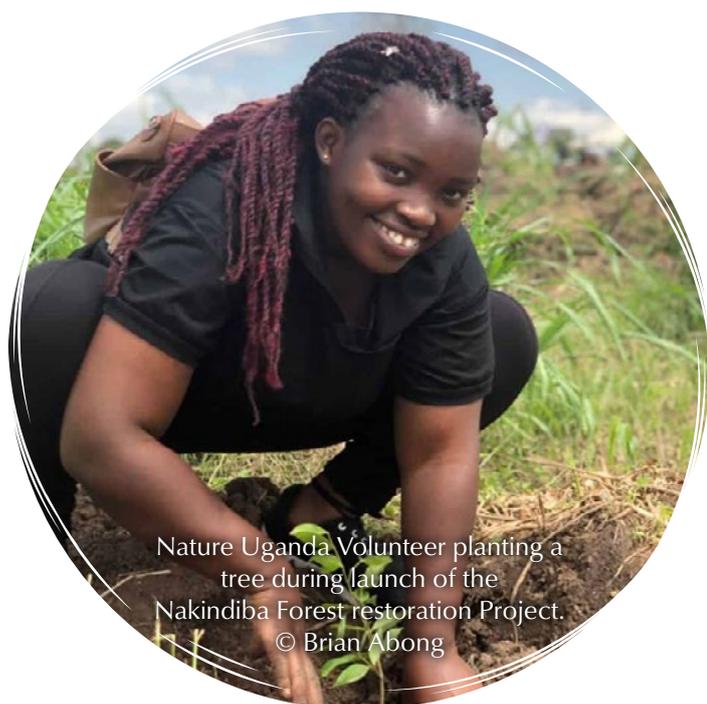
NATURAMA was also involved in the elaboration of the draft inter-ministerial decree on the establishment of a consultation framework for shared governance of the Po-Nazinga-Sissili ecological complex (PONASI), in addition to elaboration of legal texts on the classification of two wildlife migration corridors in the PONASI complex.

Nature Kenya continued its site and habitat conservation work with the publishing of the 2021 KBA Status & Trends Report, with data from 56 of the 67 KBAs. During the year, Gede Ruins KBA was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Working in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Nature Kenya updated information for six Ramsar sites, while Yala Swamp, Sabaki River Estuary and Lake Ol'Bolessat were profiled as new Ramsar sites. Nature Kenya engaged 12 Community Forest Associations (CFAs) to develop and review their Forest Management Plans. Restoration efforts saw 600 ha of degraded landscape restored across the country, while a further 703 ha were secured for conservation through land purchase in Dakatcha Woodland. The National Forest landscape Restoration Plan (FOLAREP) was completed.

To combat the loss of these rich biodiversity areas, NatureUganda undertook several restoration drives under the Trillion Trees initiative to restore Mabira and Nakindiba Forests. Located in the densely populated urban areas of Greater Kampala, these forests have been facing illegal logging and encroachment, posing a threat to flora and fauna and to those dependent on forest resources. Mabira, the largest forest in the country, covers 30,038 ha and is home to 46% of Uganda's forest birds, while Nakindiba covers 140 ha and plays a key role in provision of water, raw materials and microclimate modification. Mabira hosted 2022's most successful forest walk, as part of awareness raising activities, creating an appreciation for it among the people.

Since 2020, NatureUganda, with support from the EU, has been carrying out a project aimed at restoring wetlands in the Albertine Graben (Rift) and West Nile basins, which feed into major river systems in the country, supporting millions of livelihoods in these catchments areas. Working with community members, more than 40 ha of woodlands and five hectares of riverine wetlands have been restored so far. Over 150 farmers have been trained in agroforestry practices and provided with trees, including fruit and restoration species, which have been planted in more than 85ha.

Côte d'Ivoire is home to large forests with vast biodiversity. Kouibly department in the west of the country has suffered from loss of forest cover, which has negatively affected the integrity of ecosystems, resulting in a significant impoverishment of land under cultivation and a decrease in agricultural yields, particularly cocoa, the region's economic mainstay. In 2022, SOS-Forêts began restoration through the AFR100 initiative. The initiative, targeting Makaibly, Pombly, Ouyably-Gnondrou, Taobly and Koulayéré villages in Kouibly, aims at growing 150,000 trees in the Kouibly department by 2027 and provide additional sources of income for local communities through the production of edible mushrooms.



Nature Uganda Volunteer planting a tree during launch of the Nakindiba Forest restoration Project.
© Brian Abong



Five Local Conservation Committees (LCCs) have been established, and more than 40 hectares of fallow land and 135 hectares of cocoa plantation made available by local people for tree planting. Five nurseries with a capacity of more than 5,000 seedlings have been established, and 5,000 forest trees (*Terminalia ivorensis*, *Terminalia superba*, *Ricinodendron heudelotii*, *Khaya ivorensis*, *Mansonia altissima*, etc.) have been planted.

BirdLife Partner Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) planted over 115,000 tree seedlings, mostly indigenous, in water catchments, degraded hills, riverbanks and other places in all regions of Malawi in 2022. Malawi's national survival rate of tree seedlings is low, but with good community approach and support, WESM has registered a 71% survival rate on average and its efforts have contributed heavily to the national landscape restoration strategy and Climate Change management in the country.



Management Plan for the Obo Natural Park delivered to the STP Directorate of Forests and Biodiversity © BirdLife STP

Programme Highlights

Forests Programme

In 2022, BirdLife's West Africa Forest Conservation Strategy was drafted with a focus on the Guinean Forests of West Africa (forest KBAs as core of the priority landscapes). This strategy will provide the roadmap to forest conservation work undertaken by the partnership in the sub-region. A major part of the strategy development was a mapping of the priority forest areas, BirdLife Partner interests and engagements, and opportunities.

Since 2016, BirdLife has been collaborating with the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Regional Implementation Team, supporting the investment of 10.1 million USD in the form of small and large grants to support Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and International NGOs in conserving forests and biodiversity in the Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Hotspot. The collaboration ended in August 2022, with outstanding results, including: Providing 79 sub-grants – more than 65% of them to local civil society organisations; 62 supported organisations successfully demonstrated that hundreds of thousands of hectares within production landscapes could be managed for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources; more than 100 communities were empowered to advocate for and manage these areas, following land-use plans elaborated to facilitate good governance and collaboration.

At least 160 local communities benefitted from livelihood and job creation activities or equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, and a mentorship programme was developed

to assist the local organisations in their mission to continue to confront the challenges facing biodiversity, ecosystem services, and communities in the hotspot today.

As regards **Protected Areas Management**, 2022 saw several successes. Management plans for three Protected Areas (PAs) in the Gola landscape were developed. In Madagascar, a management plan for the Tsitongambarika Forest in Madagascar was revised and validated. The year saw the implementation of Integrated Management Effectiveness Tools (IMET) baseline for four PAs established in the Gola landscape under the EU/ Preservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFor) funded project – ‘Conserving the Gola forest landscape’. IMET trainings were provided to stakeholders, mainly Government agencies and CSOs including BirdLife Partners. Training was also carried out for other PA management tools like [GPS, GIS tools](#), and the use of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) for monitoring involved local community members such as [Ecoguards](#).

On the **degraded forest restoration** front, an overall area of more than 700ha (642 ha in Uganda’s Mabira and Nakindiba Central Forest Reserves and 69ha in Mount Kenya) are being restored via BirdLife’s support through the **Trillion Trees Initiative**.

BirdLife International and several of its national partners successfully became part of the first 100 projects to be funded under the **TerraFund for AFR100**, a financing facility led by World Resources Institute. The fund will support active tree planting in Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Rwanda, aimed at reversing land degradation and deforestation to fight climate change, boost food security, and help rural communities thrive. BirdLife is leading the project in Rwanda and supported the application in Cote d’Ivoire.

The main progress in **Sustainable financing** during the past year includes the completion of two sustainable financing plans, one for **São Tomé and Príncipe**, and another for the **Gola landscape**. Both plans are currently at the beginning of implementation. Support from the [Forest Landscape Accelerator](#) programme is expected to help BirdLife Partners on the road towards sustainable financing of their work. The programme provides tailored financial and technical support, as well as networking opportunities for advancing sustainable financing ideas into implementation. Two initiatives have been selected to be part of the 2022-2023 cohort of the Accelerator programme: a feasibility study for an eventual forest carbon project for Dakatcha Woodland KBA in Kenya and a pilot butterfly farming initiative in São Tomé & Príncipe.

Forest Carbon Finance is an important tool that the BirdLife Forest programme is promoting to ensure long term financing of conservation efforts of the partnership. A feasibility study for a REDD+ project was completed in 2022 for Tsitongambarika Forest (TGK), Madagascar; discussions with the Government and the private sector are advancing for developing the REDD+ project per se. Conservation

efforts for globally important sites for biodiversity cannot realistically succeed unless the landscape is productive enough to provide the basic needs of the people who are dependent on natural resources for their survival. Examples of BirdLife efforts in this area include the support provided to a total of 600 households in TGK, Mahavavy-Kinkony complex, and Mangoky Ihotry Complex in Madagascar on improved agriculture techniques, beekeeping, [raphia and salt value chains](#). Ecotourism, although generating limited direct benefits to the communities, is another option that is being trialled, with concrete examples being the community-run ecotourist site in [Elephant falls](#), Liberia, or the Asity-managed [Ampasy station](#) in Tsitongambarika, Madagascar.

São Tomé and Príncipe

In São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) archipelago, BirdLife International has been actively working for over ten years with local government partners, the private sector, civil society, and local communities, to protect the archipelago’s rich biodiversity including unique bird species. STP’s programme activities are based on eight main objectives described in the BirdLife São Tomé and Príncipe’s Strategic Plan for 2021-2030, translating into actions from a wide scale landscape perspective to local level activities on both islands, in particular the EU funded Landscape Project which focuses on STP’s landscape management; the UNDP-GEF funded Biodiversity Project, directed towards improving biodiversity conservation, and the Darwin Initiative DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) funded project to help regulate hunting in STP. All these projects are executed in collaboration with local partners, consolidating actions initiated from the EU funded ECOFAC6 project, 2018-2022. Thus, 2022 was particularly important as it marked the end of the ECOFAC6 project and the start of the Biodiversity and Landscape projects to build on its successes and lessons learned.



During the year, the management plan for the Natural Obô Park of São Tomé was finalised, approved by the government, and formalised through a decree-law. This process was replicated for the management plan for the Natural Príncipe Park, now in the final stages of validation and approval by the government. These documents will guide management activities for both parks until 2025. A proposal for 21 High Conservation Value (HCV) areas and their legal status, was validated and is now awaiting government approval. And the Sustainable Finance Plan for the Protected Areas of São Tomé and Príncipe was validated and approved. This plan will help identification and implementation of sustainable financing options for biodiversity conservation actions and protected areas management in the archipelago.

Successful partnerships were developed with various organizations including the University of STP, and the CIBIO In-Bio research centre (Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources - InBIO Associate Laboratory) from the University of Porto in Portugal, to support evidence-based conservation and protected areas (PA) management activities. In January 2022, a new project aimed at building capacity to regulate hunting and protect biodiversity in São Tomé, was successfully rolled out, in collaboration with the Forest and Biodiversity Directorate. These achievements are the culmination of much preparation throughout the previous years; at the same time, they are the beginning of new actions that will help secure conservation actions in several social and economic sectors of São Tomé and Príncipe for the near future.

“Our accomplishments this year represent advancements in achieving a comprehensive management of São Tomé and Príncipe’s protected areas with a focus on the balance between people and nature.”

Agostinho Fernandes, Head of Office for BirdLife International in São Tomé and Príncipe.



Systems

Under the Systems Pillar, the BirdLife Partnership in Africa is working to address the systemic drivers of the biodiversity and climate change crises, and promote a nature-positive and carbon neutral world.



A section of local community members taking part in project training © SCNL

Partner Highlights

Located in Kwara State in western Nigeria, the River Kampe Forest Reserve (RKFR) is a critical ecosystem, supporting thousands of people in three Support Zone Communities (SZCs). The Forest Reserve, important for safe drinking water, supports irrigation for crop and livestock farming, but lacks sustainable management practice. Unlawful timber exploitation in buffer zones of the Forest Reserve, wildlife poaching and production of charcoal by merchants persist.



Training on Biochar Production © NCF

In January 2022, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in partnership with the Canadian High Commission's Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, embarked on a Nature-based recovery and climate resilience project in the area. The project aims at building resilience for more than 10,000 individuals in the three SZCs to the impact of climate change through Nature-based Solutions (NbS), while developing a Nature-based Recovery Action Plan for River Kampe National Park to restore its over 65,000 hectares of forest landscape through a community-led approach.

NCF has trained 50 women and youth from the communities on Biochar production from rice waste. The training covered production, packaging, use, and marketing of briquettes, aimed at developing energy security by providing an alternative and sustainable energy source for the communities; climate change mitigation from reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases; and economic development with the improvement of community livelihoods. Participants in this biochar training were organized into a community biochar women cooperative group where they will have access to seed funding to set up the biochar enterprise in the beneficiary communities – Agboro, Latayi and Koro in Pategi Local Government Area of Kwara State.

NCF also established three native and economic tree nurseries, with the planting of locust beans and cashew nut seeds. Through the project 15,000 seedlings have been acquired and planted across the landscapes. NCF will increase the number of seedlings raised to about one million seedlings over the next two years. These fruit trees will provide long term healthy nutrition, economic and environmental support for these communities to address biodiversity loss and climate change.

West Africa is home to some of the most productive marine waters in the world due to a major ocean up-welling system that drives abundant marine life into the area called the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME), which straddles the waters of seven countries including Cape Verde. Biosfera (BirdLife Partner in Cape Verde) undertook the project Empowering Cabo Verde communities towards responsible practices in artisanal fisheries from 2019 to 2022.

The project promoted sustainable fishing practices, supporting artisanal fishermen and developing a certification scheme for restaurants who join the project and agree to follow specific guidelines. A total of 40 artisanal fishermen in 10 boats participated in the project, signed a Memorandum and benefitted from increased income due to increased sustainable fish yield. Biosfera further assisted the fishermen by offering artisanal fishing equipment that helped the fishing association set up a store.



Blue-spotted sea bass, Biosfera's flagship species © Biosfera

The fishermen in the project were able to capture about 43 tons of blue-spotted sea bass, the project's flagship species, respecting its minimum landing size as established by national legislation, and only using recommended fishing methods, in this case only line and hook. Consequently, there has been a reduction in the number of undersize fish caught.

Biosfera rolled out a communication campaign to raise awareness, including four videos, two of which were broadcast on national television, several spots that were broadcast on the radio, plus information posters. A market study was carried out, giving useful information regarding projected fish catches, existing and needed facilities to carry out processing of artisanal fisheries, acceptance by the public, and potential low-value fishes that could have their market value increased after processing. Biosfera was also instrumental in carrying out several workshops in fishing communities, providing training and knowledge on how to fish in a sustainable way. Other trainings revolved around good practices in health and food safety, ensuring fish are preserved in the best possible way to avoid contamination, and increasing value. Some trainings specifically targeted fishermen's wives and fishmongers to help them better manage and maximize their incomes from fishing activities and in setting up small businesses.

Following this successful phase, a new phase of the project, to 2025, was launched with financial support from the Darwin Initiative. This project will focus on more islands and will include other national NGOs and several communities. The aim will be to engage artisanal fishermen in the reduction of by-catch of threatened species such as sea birds and sea turtles; and support an improvement of their livelihoods, while sharing guidelines for a more sustainable exploitation of the fisheries resources.



The Sierra Leone Environment Minister of Environment making a statement at CoP27 © Edward Sesay

Valley Highway Limited, contractor of Nairobi-Nakuru-Mau Summit road project. Nature Kenya also worked with Counties to mainstream biodiversity into County Integrated Development Planning (CIDP) in 25 counties.

In May 2022, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) launched the Food Systems Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) project to promote biodiversity and sustainable food systems for enhanced livelihood opportunities in the northwestern Liberian landscape through land use planning, restoration of degraded lands, and strengthening governance, policies, and market incentives for nationally replicable models of deforestation-free cocoa and oil palm value chains. As part of implementation, SCNL conducted a needs assessment and identified aggregators and smallholder farmers in the communities within the project landscape (districts and clans). Further assessments were carried out in two districts, namely Tewor district (Passawe and Fahnbulleh clans) and Porkpa District (Sokpo and Seimavualla clans)

At the CoP27 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt, Sierra Leone signed a declaration to expand the Africa Sustainable Commodities Initiative. Sierra Leone is one of the ten countries forming the Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI), and the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) has been providing leadership for the national platform, which is co-chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, reflecting the dual focus of both the forest communities and farmers with the private sector. The platform has been involved in setting up five alternative livelihood programmes to reduce dependence on its forests, including beekeeping and aquaculture, and the country's Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) National Interpretation was endorsed in 2021 following public consultation, forming a legal guide for all palm oil producing companies, including smallholders. Programme Manager, Edward Sesay

“This offers a huge hope to our country as we strive for the responsible production of agricultural commodities – all the time protecting our forests and ensuring good governance and transparency, whilst ensuring social benefits for our farmers, communities and marginalized people.”

Edward Sesay, CSSL Programme Manager

The Kenyan Constitution mandates public consultation, and Nature Kenya responded: 12 letters of comments to the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for proposed projects in Siaya, Taita Taveta, Kilifi, Laikipia, Kisumu, Kwale, Samburu and Narok counties; and contributions for an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for two power transmission lines; for Creocan Kenya Business Developer on impacts of Dongo Kundu Special Economic Zone in Mombasa County to biodiversity; and for Rift

Mr. Simon Mziray (wearing a white cap) one of the AfriEvolve project beneficiaries ©Eliya Uziza



Society

Across Africa, the BirdLife Partnership is engaging, influencing and mobilising people to support conservation and contribute to a just, equitable, rights-based society where nature is fundamental to our wellbeing.



Peer-to-peer learning exchange visit in Amani Nature Forest Reserve, October 2022 © Eliya Uzia

Partner Highlights

As part of its mandate of empowering communities living in Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), and through funding from KfW Germany through the KAZA (Kavango-Zambezi) Secretariat, BirdLife Botswana facilitated several livelihood projects targeting communities living within the Botswana portion of Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) in 2022. The projects aimed to relieve communities from the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as capacitate communities to maximise the benefits derived from tourism and diversify their livelihood projects through Community Based Organisations (CBOs).

Community-based ventures were established or resuscitated across the region, with activities such as renovation and construction of infrastructure (e.g. campsites, offices, poultry houses, small stock kraals, etc.), trainings in tourism professions (such as tour guides, hospitality, chefs) and assisted with marketing including websites development, billboards. A total of six projects were supported with about 1451 beneficiaries, including professional guides and CBO staff members, assisted between 2020 and 2022. Further, 30 beneficiaries have been identified to be supported in horticulture and poultry projects, to gain access and benefit from the Tourism value chain in their areas.

After being postponed twice and delayed by two years owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, BirdLife Zimbabwe, as the local organising committee (LOC), hosted the 15th Pan African Ornithological Congress (PAOC) which took place in



Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 21 - 25 November 2022. With 26 symposia running across four parallel sessions, over 220 submitted talks, six plenaries by African and international scientists, 13 round table discussions and many poster presentations, the congress was a resounding success. Close to 300 delegates from 60 countries participated, 35 of which were African countries. Other delegates came from countries including Europe, USA, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Malaysia and India.

Through its Advocacy Programme, BirdLife Zimbabwe (BLZ) received funding of USD490,000 from the TRACE Programme funded by the UK's FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office) and managed by DAI (Development Alternatives Incorporated) UK Global Ltd between 2017 and 2022 for the successful implementation of an on-going Harare wetland advocacy project. This involved the development of national wetland management tools such as national wetland policy, national wetland guidelines, and wetland management plans in association with local and national stakeholders and community groups. Advocacy work by BLZ and its partners including recent submissions made during the Ramsar Convention CoP14 in Geneva in November 2022, contributed to the Government of Zimbabwe officially volunteering to host the next Ramsar CoP in Zimbabwe.

Lake Sonfon is Sierra Leone's largest inland, freshwater lake, in Diang chiefdom, Koinadugu district, northern Sierra Leone. The lake is an IBA and home to a number of rare birds and endangered mammals, including the Iris (or Emerald) Glossy-starling ([Lamprolornis iris](#)), Dybowski's Twin-spot ([Euschistospiza dybowskii](#)), Splendid Sunbird ([Cinnyris coccinigastus](#)), Yellow-Winged Pytilia ([Pytilia hypogrammica](#)) and Pied-winged Swallow ([Hirundo leucosoma](#)); and Pygmy Hippopotamus (*Choeropsis* [or *Hexaprotodon*] *liberiensis*) and Black Duiker (*Cephalophus niger*). Since 2012, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) has been working to protect the lake which is facing an existential

threat from artisanal and industrial gold mining activities, logging and hunting.

Over the years, efforts by CSSL, the government and local communities have ensured that industrial mining is contained outside the lake's buffer zone. However, indiscriminate artisanal mining and hunting, done mostly by residents of communities around the lake, continue adversely affecting biodiversity and sources of potable water supply to surrounding communities. In 2016, CSSL with funding from Bread for the World (BftW) worked with community stakeholders, establishing Community Management Associations (CMAs) to deliver project activities. One such activity has been sustainable honey production, as identified by communities as an alternative livelihood activity to generate income as opposed to the illegal artisanal mining.



The CMAs were trained on organic honey production skills using beehives, and basic marketing skills to enable them to market their produce. Over the last couple of years, honey production has increased the income of targeted bee farmers and CMAs by 50%. About 90% of the honey produced by CMAs is sold in their villages and the local market. In 2021, they generated SLE 35,700,000 (1,814 USD) from 51 jerry cans of honey; and in 2022, they made SLE 43,200,000 (2,195 USD) from the sale of 72 jerry cans of honey. This now has a spill-over effect on non-targeted communities and is also positively impacting on the Lake and its immediate environs. As part of its Society pillar, GREPOM (BirdLife Morocco) has been increasingly incorporating sustainable human development in its projects. In Sebkh Bou Areg and at Essaouira, GREPOM encouraged local fishermen to take up ecotourism activities; while in Jbel Moussa, it built the capacity of local herders and helped to establish a pastoral co-operative.



Environmental education in schools around ZTIP © Guinée Écologie

To strengthen the national legal framework for environmental protection, Guinée-Ecologie through the COMBO (Conservation, Mitigation and Biodiversity Offsets) project, contributed to the Ministry of Environment's development of a national strategy for the integration of the mitigation hierarchy into policies, plans, projects and sectoral programs in Guinea. Environmental education campaigns were used to train about 15 teachers, and an environmental club was established at the elementary school in Katfoura in the Tristao Islands.

In Mauritania, BirdLife Partner Nature Mauritania continued providing support to people living in Dar Salam Village in the peripheral zone of the 16,000 hectares Diawling National Park. Designated as a wetland of international importance, the park has 300 species of birds, including 130 migratory species, and is the only nesting site of the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*) in West Africa. In 2022, Nature Mauritania provided the 100-women Dar Salam cooperative with an equipped borehole for their one-hectare market garden, with a piping structure for drip irrigation, and additional agricultural supplies including batches of seeds.

In Cape Verde, BirdLife Partner Biosfera is implementing an innovative citizen science program known as the Guardians of the Sea (GOS), in collaboration with local partners NGOs and local fishing communities. GOS empowers local communities to take a more proactive role in the conservation of the marine environment, helping to monitor marine megafauna by collecting occurrence and distribution data; and by monitoring illegal fishing activities carried out at sea and reporting back to the national authorities. The GOS approach has already recruited, trained, and deployed about 300 fishermen to collect standardized data on bycatch, identify marine species, track artisanal fishing vessels, understand the marine food chain functioning, and report illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. The GOS promotes incentives such as improved safety

systems and fish handling, preservation facilities and training; and will implement bycatch mitigation techniques for marine megafauna. Expanding the program to other coastal countries of West Africa and beyond is among the next steps.

To improve community livelihoods in Tsitongambarika, BirdLife Partner Asity Madagascar has been rolling out initiatives such as development of the honey sector as an income generating activity, improvement of agriculture yields for local communities living around the project area, and entrepreneurial training. Between 2016 and 2022, Asity supported the development of 115 ha of new agricultural land for rice cultivation. Asity was instrumental in providing support to microprojects including small businesses, beekeeping, fish farming, rice farming and handicrafts, with 393 beneficiaries to date, and technical trainings on topics including entrepreneurship, improved cultivation, financial education, with 660 beneficiaries.

On the policy side, Nature Kenya's Executive Director participated in the Open Ended Working Group meeting in Nairobi to advance negotiations on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Nature Kenya also participated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP 19) Kenya preparatory meeting, to prepare country proposals for submission to CITES CoP 19, and as observer in the 3rd Ramsar Centre for Eastern Africa (RAMCEA) governing council meeting.

To empower grassroots networks for nature conservation, Nature Kenya engaged 22 Site Support Groups (SSGs) in policy and advocacy work, environmental education and awareness creation, reaching out to over 5,000 people. Eleven SSGs generated Ksh.34,672,033 (259,230 USD) as at October 2022 from nature-based enterprises such as butterfly farming, beekeeping, sale of tree seedlings, eco-tourism, fish farming, climate-smart agriculture, poultry farming, and papyrus weaving. The SSG network in Kenya is expanding, with new SSGs for Chyulu Hills forests, Shimba Hills and Amboseli National Parks KBAs.

In 2022, Nature Tanzania officially became the BirdLife International Partner in Tanzania, after passing through a rigorous process of quality assurance system assessment. As part of peer-to-peer learning exchange visits, Nature Tanzania hosted three staff from the Society for Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) in February 2022. The SCNL staff sought to learn how Nature Tanzania is implementing the Community Revolving Fund (CRF) – a community financing mechanism that engages and empowers communities to conserve nature and improve community livelihoods through provision of soft loans – and interacted with project beneficiaries on the ground.

In October 2022, Nature Tanzania hosted another delegation from Nature Kenya, Nature Uganda, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), and BirdLife International as part of the AfriEvo project planning whereby each partner within a cluster hosts other partners for sharing lessons on the implementation of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) project activities and discussions on other organizational development aspects such as governance, membership, fundraising, marketing, and communication. The visit provided an opportunity for the local communities delegation to interact and share experiences with the more experienced Partners.

“We are grateful for the AfriEvo – CSA project. Through this project, we have learned so many things, especially about Good Agricultural Practices, Integrated Pest Management, making organic boosters and manure, and value chain addition in spice products, particularly in processing and labelling. Most importantly, we received a loan through CRF, and now we own a spice processing machine.”

Grace Bendera – a member of Mbomole Hill Spice Farmers Group, spoke on behalf of the group.

As part of the AfriEvo project in Uganda, NatureUganda, working with local communities, has established five community groups comprising 500 members. In 2022, the community groups benefited from training on climate smart agriculture practices such as contouring, using locally made or sourced tools, animal rearing, beekeeping and processing. NatureUganda is also piloting agroforestry in the area with species such as Bamboo, Grevillea, Calliandra, Haas Avocado and elephant grass. So far, 7000 Bamboo seedlings & 2500

Avocado seedlings have been handed out, while community members have been trained in beekeeping. It is envisaged that these interventions will play a dual role of saving forests while providing income to the villagers. Community groups have also been provided with financial assistance through a Community Financial Association where they can borrow money at low interest rates. Supported by NABU, the project has also given out 100 energy saving stoves and taught some members how to manufacture them, further diversifying their incomes and reducing pressures on the forest and its resources.



Beneficiary beehives in Rubirizi, Uganda
© Johnathan Onongo

In Liberia, the Society for Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), empowered 120 youths to serve as the Youth Eco-brigade, who were trained in environmental stewardship and small business management, and cleaned up the seashores of Buchanan and Greenville. The Eco-brigades are made up of vulnerable youth volunteers empowered to initiate livelihood and income-generating activities and to conserve the environment and natural resources to help the country build back its economy through youth-driven green recovery initiatives such as providing environmental sanitation services or eco-tourism.

As part of efforts to preserve the Gola Forest, 52 motorbikes were presented to forest edge communities in GrandCape and Gbarpolu Counties through the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP). The motorbikes will be used by cooperatives in the communities to generate funds for forest edge communities as a means of reducing pressures on the forest.

In Malawi, the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) participated in over 10 policy dialogues in both local and international forums, including the development of climate change country position on loss and damage presented at the CoP27 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate. WESM assisted in persuading the Malawi parliamentary committee on natural resources to deliberate and pass the national disaster risk management Bill, and WESM assisted 3,150 community members across the country to acquire alternative livelihoods skills, enabling them to transition from environmentally destructive businesses like charcoal burning to viable non wood forest products.





BirdLife delegation during a panel discussion at CoP15 © Ken Mwathe

Programme Highlights

Partnerships, Communities and Capacity Development (PCCD) Programme

A key highlight under this Programme is peer-to-peer site visits and exchange learning funded by the German Government through NABU (BirdLife in Germany) via the AfriEvolve project that helps local communities to survive in harsh landscapes through the implementation of climate smart agriculture.

In March 2022, BirdLife Partners in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania met in Kenya where the AfriEvolve project is being implemented along the shores of Lake Victoria in Siaya and Busia counties. In these counties, local communities are generating income from selling harvests from vegetable gardens irrigated by a solar powered system, bees, chickens, fish, and baskets weaved using local materials from the Yala Swamp. The visit also saw **Nature Kenya, NatureUganda and Nature Tanzania** establish a joint fundraising plan to capitalize on transboundary landscapes (montane, savanna and watershed hotspots) to attract donors. The same outcome was achieved by the West African Cluster comprised of **NATURAMA, Ghana Wildlife Society and SOS-Forêts** who have been working on an MOU to collaborate on transboundary projects along the Black Volta River and the savanna landscapes shared by the three countries – **Burkina Faso, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire**. Concrete steps were discussed during the site visit in Mole National Park in Ghana in November 2022.



Peer to peer visit under the AfriEvolue project © Tharcisse Ukinzintambara

During the same month, the **Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation (PRCM)** forum was organized in Senegal where Senegal's Nature-Communautés-Developpement (NCD), Nature Mauritanie, Guinée Ecologie, West African Bird Study Association (WABSA) of Gambia, Organização para a Defesa e Desenvolvimento das Zonas Húmidas (ODZH) of Guinea Bissau, Biosfera (Cape Verde) and Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) showcased their success stories in terms of individual and organizational capacity development in their respective countries with the support of the MAVA-Hatch project. The Hatch project supported these NGOs in addition to Association Les Amis des Oiseaux (Tunisia) and Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE).

In these nine countries, the capacity of both individuals and organizations were strengthened in areas of communication, fundraising, financial performance, governance, sustainability, conservation techniques, HR performance, and community engagement and empowerment. Owing to the Hatch project, the restricted and unrestricted funds of these organizations doubled, the number of volunteers increased threefold, and permanent staff doubled over the past five years. The first IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) took place in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2022, with 13 BirdLife Africa Partners taking part. The AfriEvolue peer to peer capacity building system model was shared with other partners during the BirdLife World Congress, where BirdLife celebrated its 100 years anniversary, and inspired Partners to initiate collaborative plans to tackle desert, savanna, forest, marine and flyway issues that are faced by our northern, western, southern, eastern and Indian Ocean Partners.

“BirdLife International’s organisational development support has helped to establish Guinée Ecologie’s governance system and capacity to influence; with the support of Hatch, we have developed a mapping of conservation interventions in Guinea, in order to coordinate actions, develop synergies and facilitate dialogue between actors for a better impact on environmental conservation in Guinea.”

Mamadou Diawara, Executive Director Guinée Ecologie.

The 15th Pan African Ornithological Congress (PAOC) took place in Zimbabwe, with 15 African Partners taking part in the proceedings, together with our European counterparts and supporting partners: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Vogelbescherming Nederland (VBN), Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (DOF) / BirdLife Denmark, NABU (Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union), Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO) BirdLife, Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA) and Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO) were present.

However, the Partnership continued facing challenges in 2022. During the year, the effects of Covid-19 continued to be felt among many of our Partners. Lack of funding pushed many Partners to downsize their staff. The escalation of insecurity in the Sahel where BirdLife Partner NATURAMA cannot access many project sites in the north of Burkina Faso, continues hampering project activity.

Policy and Advocacy

All 26 BirdLife Africa Partners submitted a BirdLife Africa Partners’ Joint Statement on the Development, Threats to and Management of World Heritage Sites on the 50th Anniversary of the Adoption of the World Heritage Convention.

BirdLife Partners participated in many policy meetings, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Montreal, Canada, during which the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was endorsed by governments. The GBF is a roadmap to guide governments to take action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Eight Partner staff from 6 countries participated in lobbying governments to agree on an ambitious GBF, and participated in a number of side events to showcase BirdLife’s work.

At least 5 BirdLife Africa Partners participated in the Climate Conference (CoP27 of UNFCCC) in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt. Hosted by Nature Conservation Egypt, and joined by other BirdLife Partners and staff, the team lobbied for inclusion of ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions in resolving the climate crisis. They also hosted and participated in many side events, notably the energy-biodiversity nexus events and the “handing over the baton to CBD” event led by BirdLife CEO Patricia Zurita and attended by Egypt’s Environment Minister and the CBD Executive Secretary.



The Partnership continued to take action to **safeguard IBAs/KBAs** from damaging development. The Partner-led **Africa Sites Defence Team (ASCET)**, provided advocacy support to at least 30 sites facing damaging developments around Africa. The team also provided advocacy support for 10 sites facing the highest level of threats, including letters, petitions, media briefings and in some cases court action. Examples of these sites are Atewa Forest (Ghana), Batoka Gorge (Zimbabwe/Zambia), Yala Swamp (Kenya), Bugoma Forest (Uganda), Algoa Bay (South Africa) and Lower Zambezi and Lukanga Swamp (Zambia). During the Pan African Ornithological Congress (PAOC15) in Zimbabwe, a round table event was convened that looked at the challenge of conserving KBAs/IBAs, including by securing them through advocacy.

BirdLife Africa Partners



Partnership
for nature
and people



BirdLife International, Africa Partnership Secretariat,
Westcom Point Building
6th Floor Mahiga Mairu Avenue
off Waiyaki Way, Westlands,
P. O. Box 3502-00100 GPO
Nairobi, KENYA



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