
The BirdLife Strategy 2013-2020

Approved by the BirdLife Partnership, June 2013

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BIRDLIFE'S VISION AND MISSION

BirdLife is a worldwide nature conservation Partnership that works locally, nationally and globally for birds, for nature and for people.

Nature is crucial to Earth's life support systems and for people's well-being and quality of life. Saving nature is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity.

BirdLife's work embraces all nature, with a special focus on birds, which make biodiversity more visible and understandable and inspire positive action.

BirdLife's Vision¹... is of a world rich in biodiversity with people and nature living in harmony, equitably and sustainably.

BirdLife's Mission²... is to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people toward sustainability in the use of natural resources.

BIRDLIFE'S WAY OF WORKING

Three strands run through all BirdLife's work: partnership, science and action.

BirdLife itself is a unique Partnership of national, membership-based conservation organisations in over 115 countries and territories across the world. Partners plan and work together, sharing ideas, information, experience and support. Elected Partner representatives provide governance for BirdLife.

BirdLife's priorities and programmes are based firmly on science, underpinned by the best available evidence. Our work to conserve biodiversity focuses on birds, because they are very good indicators for the natural world as a whole, as well as being important in their own right. Birds are popular, appealing and – as a result – exceptionally well-known, providing an excellent scientific foundation for BirdLife's work. By saving the habitats and ecosystems important for birds, we effectively conserve a much broader array of biodiversity.

BirdLife takes practical action. We work with and for people – to improve their quality of life alongside, and as a result of, nature conservation. We collaborate with others wherever possible, at local, national, regional or global levels, linking with community groups, governments, businesses, Universities and other NGOs to increase the impacts of our efforts.

¹ A short version of BirdLife's Vision, for communication purposes, is *"A world rich in biodiversity, where people and nature live in harmony."*

² A short version of BirdLife's Mission, for communication purposes, is *"Conserve birds and all nature, working with people towards sustainability."*

BIRDLIFE'S STRATEGY 2013-2020

BirdLife's Strategy has four **pillars** – **1 Save Species, 2 Conserve Sites and Habitats, 3 Encourage Ecological Sustainability** and **4 Empower People for Positive Change** – which taken together constitute BirdLife's approach to conservation (Annex I). Each strategic pillar comprises two to three strategic objectives.

The Strategy directly supports the commitment of the world's governments to take urgent and effective action to halt the loss of biodiversity, and to achieve the 20 Aichi biodiversity targets by the year 2020³.

BIRDLIFE'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN SUMMARY

Pillar 1 – Save Species

- 1.1 Prevent extinctions
- 1.2 Keep common birds common

Pillar 2 – Conserve Sites and Habitats

- 2.1 Identify, conserve, restore and monitor the sites and habitats important for birds and other biodiversity
- 2.2 Promote resilient ecological networks

Pillar 3 – Encourage Ecological Sustainability

- 3.1 Demonstrate and advocate nature's values
- 3.2 Promote policies that support sustainability

Pillar 4 – Empower People for Positive Change

- 4.1 Catalyse support for nature
 - 4.2 Promote local conservation action
 - 4.3 Strengthen the global BirdLife Partnership
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BIRDLIFE'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The BirdLife Partnership was founded to conserve nature through a focus on birds. Nature and biodiversity are now endangered on a scale unique in history. As ambassadors for nature conservation, birds are iconic, well recognised and popular indicators of the health of our environment, and its ability to support all life — including ourselves. BirdLife's strategy thus reflects our aim to conserve all of nature, while retaining a practical emphasis on birds, prioritising conservation action on the basis of bird conservation priorities.

³ In the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2012-2020, adopted in decision X/2 by the CBD Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. See www.cbd.int/sp/targets/ and Annex III

Pillar 1 – Save Species

Species are the most visible and familiar element of biodiversity and each has a unique ecological role to play. Conserving species across their full natural ranges is vital to prevent further erosion in their genetic diversity, which provides the basis for long-term survival and increases resilience to environmental change.

BirdLife aims to conserve and restore species' populations across their natural ranges, and maintain genetic diversity, ensuring they can continue to play their role in the web of life and for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.

1.1 Prevent extinctions

Extinction of a species is forever, represents the loss of a unique piece of evolutionary history, and diminishes the richness and diversity of our world. Species loss can also undermine the effective functioning of ecosystems. While extinction as a process is natural, the current very rapid rate of extinctions is not. Threatened species can be saved, but concerted and focused action is needed.

BirdLife aims to implement effective conservation actions, including policy interventions, for species that are globally threatened or near-threatened with extinction according to the BirdLife/IUCN Red List. This includes urgent and targeted conservation work to save severely threatened (Critically Endangered and Endangered) bird species.

1.2 Keep common birds common

Healthy bird populations are a sign of a healthy environment. Action needs to be taken to help declining species before they become threatened with extinction. Early warning systems can alert us to the initial signs of problems, so we can act in good time.

BirdLife aims to prevent and reverse declines, and restore depleted populations, of non-threatened bird species (except for invasive alien or pest species) that are characteristic of particular habitats, including productive landscapes and urban areas.

Pillar 2 – Conserve Sites and Habitats

Some places are especially important for nature. Focusing efforts on the sites and habitats where biodiversity is especially concentrated, unusual or threatened is a well-tested and cost-effective conservation approach.

BirdLife aims to ensure effective conservation, through action and advocacy, of the most important sites and habitats for nature across the world.

2.1 Identify, conserve, restore and monitor the sites and habitats important for birds and other biodiversity

Many approaches are available for site and habitat conservation. According to circumstances, interventions can be chosen from a wide range of management, policy, legal, communications and community mechanisms. Urgent actions are needed for highly threatened sites and habitats where the risk of significant biodiversity loss is greatest.

BirdLife aims to identify and document the most important sites and habitats for birds and biodiversity and ensure they are effectively protected, managed, monitored and where necessary restored.

2.2 Promote resilient ecological networks

Connectivity is essential to ensure resilience to pressures, and especially to allow future adaptation to climate change and other threats. Different species and situations call for different approaches. Highly mobile migratory birds may need a network of suitable sites and habitats covering the species' requirements at every stage of their lives. For more sedentary species, connections may be affected by human land- or sea-use in the surrounding matrix. Altitudinal gradients may also be important in responses to climate change.

BirdLife aims to link key sites and habitats across the wider landscape and seascape, building resilience for successful long-term conservation.

Pillar 3 – Encourage Ecological Sustainability

Sustainability means meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do so. The economic, social and ecological dimensions of sustainability are closely linked – so that ecological sustainability underpins social sustainability, which in turn underpins economic sustainability. BirdLife's strategic focus is on the ecological dimension.

Addressing sustainability is crucial as it tackles the root causes of biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. Work under this pillar includes BirdLife's ongoing policy and advocacy across a range of sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy, mining and climate, and on safeguards, as well as assessment of ecosystem services, investment needs for conservation, and the importance of nature for human health and well-being.

BirdLife aims to promote sustainable management of our planet and its natural resources so as to secure a future for birds, biodiversity – and ourselves.

3.1 Demonstrate and advocate the values of nature

Nature is extremely valuable, both in its own right and because of the many goods and services it provides for people. These values are often taken for granted, in part because they are not well understood and can be difficult to calculate in economic terms. This needs to change.

BirdLife aims to show clearly how nature is both intrinsically valuable and fundamentally underpins our livelihoods and well-being.

3.2 Promote policies that support sustainability

Political and corporate accounting and decision-making must fully take into account the values of nature, and the need for ecosystem services – underpinned by biodiversity – to be sustained into the future. This also requires investment, which presently falls far short of requirements, to maintain the planet's 'ecological infrastructure'. Currently, people are consuming the Earth's resources faster than these can be renewed – meaning that we are eating into natural capital. This is not sustainable.

BirdLife aims to ensure that nature is fully incorporated in political and corporate accounting and decision-making, promoting policies that ensure the long-term provision of ecosystem services, underpinned by biodiversity conservation; that encourage sustainable patterns of production and deter wasteful consumption; and that reduce dangerous climate change.

Pillar 4 - Empower People for Positive Change

People are central to all of BirdLife’s work – and this pillar supports all others in the Strategy. The destinies of people and of nature are inseparable. Birds in particular have played a central cultural role in societies across the globe since ancient times. In a world where people are increasingly cut off from nature, birds provide a wonderful window into wildlife, and a way of reconnecting.

People’s quality of life and well-being benefit from nature conservation. In many cases their livelihoods, health and security depend on it directly. Human development needs, especially the eradication of poverty, are a key consideration in any conservation activity. The cultural and spiritual values of people, often linked closely to the places where they live, also must be respected and maintained. In BirdLife’s work, nature conservation and human development need to be mutually reinforcing.

BirdLife aims to restore or strengthen the connections between people and nature, building and consolidating a movement of local and national⁴ civil-society conservation organisations that can provide broad-based support for nature conservation.

4.1 Catalyse support for nature

A biodiversity-friendly future requires strong political will, which must be built on the concern that people have for saving nature. As a Partnership of civil-society organisations, working through engaged and committed memberships and with a strong volunteer tradition, BirdLife is ideally placed to foster wider understanding and appreciation of nature and its importance.

BirdLife aims to engage and motivate a wide spectrum of people and organisations to care about biodiversity and its conservation, including young people, business leaders, policy makers and the ‘general public’ – through education, awareness raising and involvement with nature, especially with birds.

4.2 Promote local conservation action

Millions of people live close to nature, may depend directly on it, and frequently have close cultural and spiritual connections with it. Local engagement can be hugely important and effective for achieving conservation. This engagement can take a wide range of forms, ranging from individual to organisational level, and from local groups focused on ecologically sustainable development projects to networks of site caretakers or urban birdwatchers. Local groups provide a means to recognise and kindle individuals’ passion for birds and the environment, and to support and encourage this to be expressed in tangible conservation activities. In many cases (but depending on the circumstances) activities will have a strong element of promoting sustainable livelihoods and human well-being, and linking these to saving nature.

⁴ ‘National’ means operating across a country (as defined by the UN) or, in certain circumstances, a defined geographical territory, as set out in BirdLife’s Operational Procedures.

BirdLife aims to encourage and strengthen local (including urban) engagement and involvement in nature conservation — supporting and catalyzing these local efforts, including those that promote sustainable livelihoods and human well-being, linking them up where appropriate, and putting them on a sustainable basis.

4.3 Strengthen the global BirdLife Partnership

Strengthening the Partnership is fundamental to achieving BirdLife’s aims. It is important to capacitate and empower both the individual BirdLife Partners and the unique, diverse and productive ways in which we work together, achieving more than any single organisation could possibly do.

BirdLife aims to build a strong, skilled and mutually supportive Partnership of civil-society conservation organisations — national⁵ NGOs and their local conservation groups – that has global reach and capability for concerted action.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMMES TO DELIVER THE STRATEGY

The Strategy is translated into action through a set of BirdLife Global and Region-specific **Conservation Programmes**. Nine Global Conservation Programmes have been developed since the adoption of the last strategy and are already in place for the planning period 2013-2020.

Some are well established (e.g. the Preventing Extinctions programme), others more recent and responding to specific conservation issues and opportunities (e.g. Forests of Hope, which addresses rampant tropical deforestation and its role in global warming, and aspires to use innovative funding mechanisms for better forest protection). These programmes are co-ordinated across all the regions and therefore global in character.

Other programmes may be specific to a region, like the grassland programme in the Americas, or the agriculture policy programme in Europe, appropriately reflecting region-specific priorities and focus.

These Global and Region-specific Conservation Programmes help the Partnership focus and work together around common priorities, communicate our work more clearly and mobilise resources. The Programmes promote coherence and cohesion across the Partnership, and make it easier to explain and demonstrate BirdLife’s work.

By 2020, each Programme is expected to deliver on a set of high-level **Expected Results**. Targets for the Expected Results are in development and will continue to be refined and reviewed.

The Global and Region-specific Conservation Programmes and their Expected Results form the basis for each regional Partnership to choose their priorities and contribution to the global BirdLife Strategy. These priorities are decided by each BirdLife region (Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific) and outlined in Regional Plans, which bring together the collective plans (for the four-year period between World Congresses) of Partners in each region. Annex II shows the relationship between the BirdLife Strategy, Conservation Programmes and Regional Plans.

⁵ See footnote 4.

Global Conservation Programmes⁶

1. Preventing Extinctions
2. Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas
3. Migratory Birds and Flyways
4. Seabirds and Marine Conservation
5. Forests of Hope
6. Climate Change
7. Invasive Alien Species
8. Local Empowerment
9. Capacity Development

Region-specific Conservation Programmes

Programmes developed by and focused on a specific region. Examples include *Farming for Life* (Europe) and *Natural Grasslands* (Americas).

Other activities

The Global and Region-specific Conservation Programmes are a planning, communications and fundraising tool. They are not intended to cover all of BirdLife's work comprehensively. Thus, additional activities will be identified and undertaken regionally and globally to ensure effective delivery of the BirdLife Strategy. An example is the work area of *Sustainable Development and Mainstreaming* (global), necessary to deliver on pillar 3. Annex IV shows the anticipated contribution of the Conservation Programmes and other activities to delivery of the Strategic Objectives.

PROPOSED EXPECTED RESULTS, 2013–2020 FOR THE GLOBAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMMES

These Expected Results set the goals for what should be achieved by 2020, either through BirdLife's direct efforts or through encouraging and advocating action by others, or often both.

Targets for the Expected Results are under development: these will be reviewed and refined periodically.

1 Preventing Extinctions

Through this programme, BirdLife aims to understand the status of all bird species and prevent, halt or reverse the slide to extinction.

- 1a Status of the world's most threatened bird species improved through the work of BirdLife Species Guardians and other effective action
- 1b Overall extinction risk across all bird species reduced

⁶ Names of the programmes may evolve in the future for communications purposes.

- 1c The BirdLife/IUCN Red List for birds regularly updated, improved and promoted with knowledge gaps filled through targeted research and monitoring
- 1d Declines in common bird species prevented, halted or reversed.

2 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas

Through this programme, BirdLife intends to document, monitor and effectively protect and manage the world's most important places for birds and biodiversity.

- 2a Highly threatened Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) saved from damaging development, through co-ordinated advocacy and interventions
- 2b The long-term integrity of IBAs ensured via appropriate protection and management, or other effective means
- 2c Connectivity needs of IBAs assessed and prioritised, and landscape-level work under development to ensure appropriate linkages
- 2d Effective safeguard measures applied at IBAs by Governments, investors and corporates
- 2e IBA documentation regularly updated, including through IBA monitoring, with results compiled in the World Bird and Biodiversity Database; and disseminated widely for action
- 2f Assessment of the ecosystem services and livelihood benefits provided by IBAs underway and enhancing conservation action.

3 Migratory Birds and Flyways

Migratory birds know no boundaries. Through this programme, BirdLife intends to achieve effective conservation along the whole length of migratory species' flyways.

- 3a Status of threatened or declining migratory bird species improved through effective implementation of action plans at appropriate scales
- 3b Networks of critical sites identified, documented, protected, managed and monitored for each major migratory flyway
- 3c International mechanisms for flyway-scale collaboration strengthened and better implemented
- 3d National and regional legislative, enforcement and practical implementation measures in place and effectively addressing key threats to migratory birds
- 3e Policy measures in place to maintain or improve the quality of key habitats for migratory birds at the landscape scale.

4 Seabirds and Marine Conservation

Covering over two-thirds of the Earth's surface, the world's seas and oceans remain poorly-known and poorly protected. Through this programme, BirdLife intends to protect key marine sites, both offshore and on the high seas, and to minimise accidental seabird deaths in fishery operations.

- 4a Coastal and offshore Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) within national jurisdiction identified, delineated and effectively managed, monitored and protected, including through recognition in regional conservation agreements and plans

- 4b Marine IBAs on the high seas identified and delineated, and included within national and international networks and/or plans for protected or environmentally sensitive areas
- 4c Effective mitigation measures adopted and significantly reducing seabird bycatch for long-line and trawl fisheries, and identified and proven for gillnet fisheries.

5 Forests of Hope

Through this programme, BirdLife intends to achieve large-scale conservation and restoration of forests — the most diverse habitats on earth and key to reducing dangerous climate change.

- 5a Effective policy approaches and tools for large-scale, long-term management, governance and financing of forest conservation and restoration developed and successfully advocated
- 5b Innovative approaches used to conserve and restore priority forests, maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services
- 5c Policy approaches developed and advocated to address the drivers of deforestation effectively.

6 Climate Change

Through this programme, BirdLife intends to help minimise the magnitude of climate change and its negative impacts on biodiversity and people.

- 6a International climate-change agreements influenced to strengthen mitigation measures and incorporate ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation
- 6b Climate-change adaptation approaches incorporating IBAs and ecosystems (habitats) are defined, recognised and implemented nationally and internationally
- 6c Impacts of energy developments, including renewables, on birds and biodiversity are recognised, assessed and effectively avoided, mitigated and/or compensated.
- 6d Impacts of climate change assessed and tracked, using birds as indicators.

7 Invasive Alien Species

Invasive Alien Species pose a serious conservation threat. Through this programme, BirdLife intends to prevent the further spread of Invasive Alien Species and tackle the highest priorities for eradication or control.

- 7a Priorities identified and promoted for eradicating or controlling Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and preventing their spread
 - 7b Effective global, regional and national policy frameworks addressing IAS developed and advocated
 - 7c Capacity developed and strengthened to design, implement and share techniques for IAS eradication or control, and biosecurity
 - 7d IAS eradicated or controlled, and/or biosecurity established, at the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and priority restoration sites where they constitute a major current or potential conservation problem.
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8 Local Empowerment

Through this programme, BirdLife intends to engage, enthuse and activate existing and new constituencies for conservation, including at Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and in towns and cities.

- 8a Interest, concern and commitment to positive action for nature increased worldwide through communication, education and public awareness, including promotion of citizen science and engagement with young people, urban populations, and a diversity of new audiences
- 8b Local groups effectively link nature conservation to improvements in people's wellbeing and quality of life; and promote development of sustainable local livelihoods where appropriate
- 8c Local Conservation Groups⁷ established and active at appropriate IBAs, with capacity to support, influence and monitor the management of natural resources
- 8d Networks of Local Conservation Groups established nationally, as well as regionally and internationally through national Partners, for effective sharing of knowledge and resources and greater impact on decision-makers.

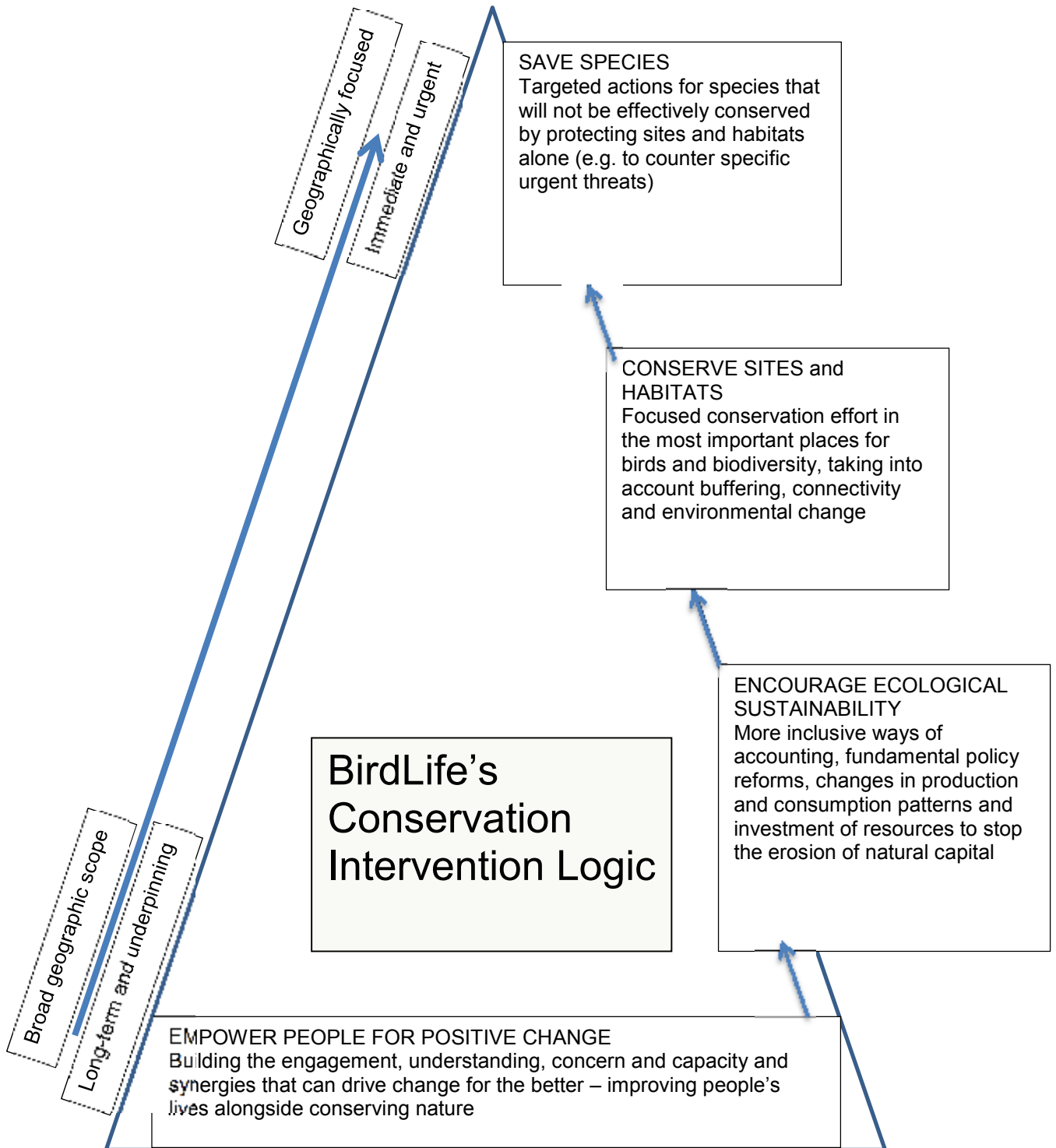
9 Capacity Development

BirdLife is a unique Partnership of civil-society organisations working supportively together towards shared aims. Through this programme, BirdLife intends to strengthen and expand the Partnership, and enhance how Partners work together and with others.

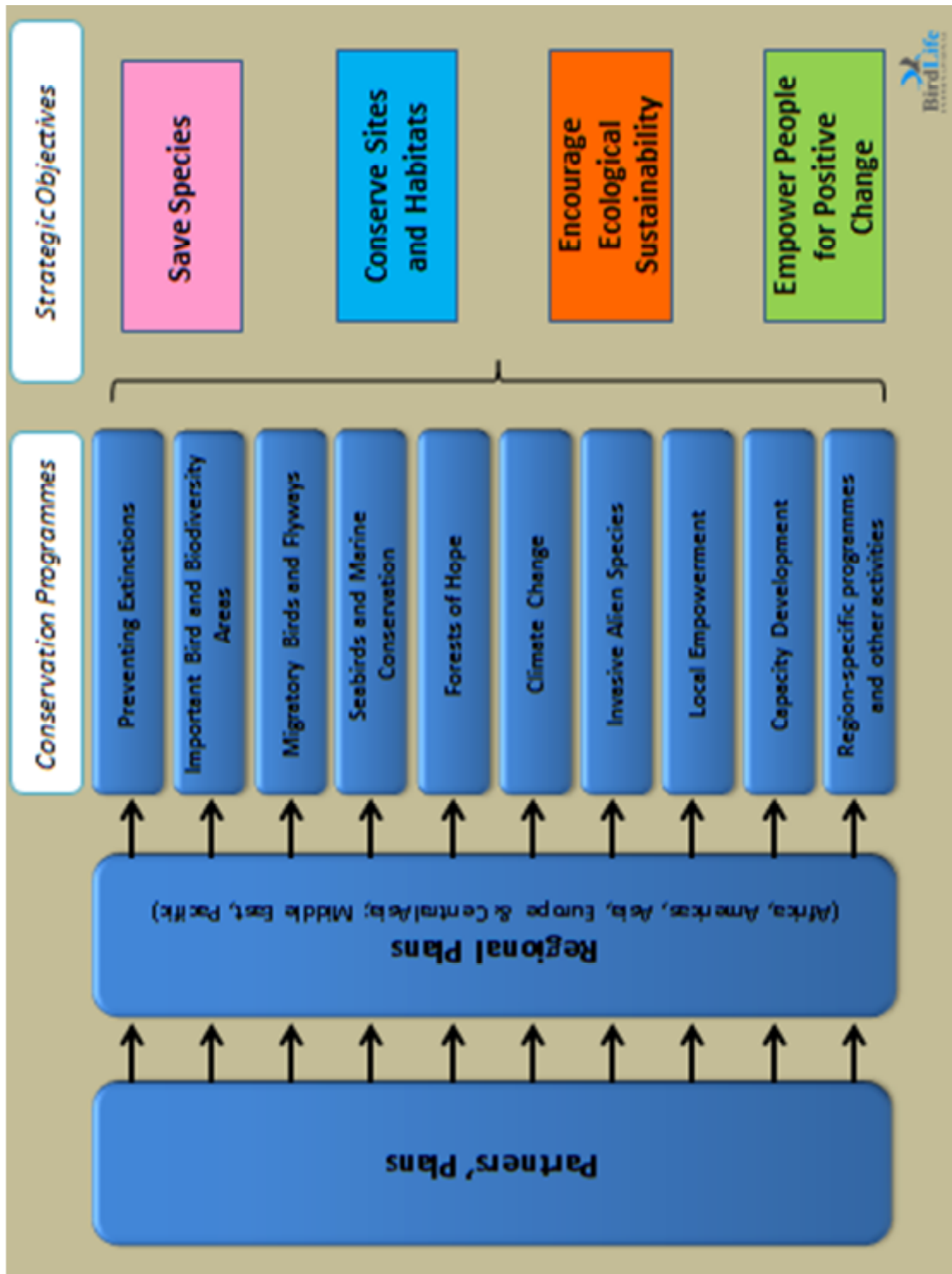
- 9a BirdLife Partnership expanded to cover priority gaps and Partners established as leading membership-based nature conservation organisations in their countries/territories
- 9b Systemic, institutional and individual capacity developed and strengthened across the Partnership in crucial areas, and the next generation of conservation leaders identified and nurtured, including through Partner-to-Partner knowledge sharing, co-operation and support
- 9c All BirdLife Partners are actively engaging with governments, and other stakeholders that impact the environment, to mainstream biodiversity into decision-making and ensure adequate resources are available for conservation.

⁷ 'Local Conservation Groups' by definition also include IBA Caretakers

Annex I. BirdLife’s Conservation Intervention Logic



Annex II. Relationship between the BirdLife Strategy, Programmes and Regional Plans



Annex III. Contribution of the BirdLife Strategy to the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its 20 Aichi Targets for 2020. Shading shows the extent to which each target is overall addressed by the BirdLife Strategy.

Aichi Goals and Targets	Addressed	BirdLife Strategic Objectives										Totals
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.3		
<i>Strategic Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society</i>												
Target 1 Awareness of biodiversity values and conservation						X		X	X			3
Target 2 Incorporation of biodiversity in planning, reporting and accounting						X						1
Target 3 Harmful subsidies phased out and incentives for conservation increased								X				1
Target 4 Implementation of plans for sustainable production and consumption								X				1
<i>Strategic Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use</i>												
Target 5 Rate of habitat loss at least halved				X	X	X	X					4
Target 6 Sustainable fisheries								X				1
Target 7 Sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry								X				1
Target 8 Pollution controlled								X				1
Target 9 Invasive Alien Species controlled or eradicated, and pathways blocked		X	X	X				X				4
Target 10 Pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized					X			X				2
<i>Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity</i>												
Target 11 At least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas conserved and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.				X	X							2
Target 12 Extinctions prevented and threatened species conservation status improved		X	X	X	X							4
Target 13 Genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives is maintained												0
<i>Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services</i>												
Target 14 Ecosystems that provide essential service restored and safeguarded				X	X	X	X					4
Target 15 Ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks enhanced through conservation and restoration					X	X	X					3
Target 16 Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in force												0
<i>Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building</i>												
Target 17 National biodiversity strategy and action plans developed and implemented						X	X					2
Target 18 Traditional knowledge respected and integrated to implementation of the Convention										X		1
Target 19 Science base improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.						X		X	X	X		4
Target 20 Mobilization of financial resources increased substantially				X		X	X				X	4
Totals		2	2	6	6	8	12	2	3	2		
Directly / substantially addressed												
Indirectly / partially addressed												
Not addressed												

Annex IV. How the Conservation Programmes deliver the Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective	Conservation Programme and Expected Results									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10/11
	Preventing Extinctions	IBAs	Flyways	Marine	Forests of Ho	Climate Chan	Invasive Ali	Local Empowerme	Capacity Development	Other activiti and Regiona
Pillar 1 Save Species										
1.1 Prevent extinctions										
1.3 Keep common birds common										
Pillar 2 Conserve Sites and Habitats										
2.1 Identify, protect, manage, restore and monitor the sites and habitat support for birds and other biodiversity										
2.2 Promote resilient ecological networks										
Pillar 3 Encourage Ecological Sustainability										
3.1 Demonstrate and advocate the values of nature										
3.2 Promote policies that support sustainability										
Pillar 4 Enable Positive Change Through People										
4.1 Catalyse support for nature										
4.2 Promote local conservation action										
4.3 Strengthen the global BirdLife Partnership										