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Waterbirds around the world

A global overview of the conservation,
management and research of the
world's waterbird flyways

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Cover photography: Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* arriving at Martin Mere, England. Photo: Paul Marshall.
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6.4 Financing global flyway conservation: innovation, linkages, options. Workshop Introduction

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It is rare for banks to directly raise awareness of waterbirds, but the States of Jersey have highlighted Light-bellied Brent Geese *Branta bernicla hrota* on their currency, providing a good return for migratory species conservation. Copyright: The States of Jersey.

Funding for migratory bird and flyway conservation is not expected to increase and new approaches are required to meet identified needs. Programs must become inclusive and collaborative, and be broadened through partnerships and networking to include working landscapes where goals can be integrated into general operating procedures of those who influence practices on the land. Financing global flyway conservation must become more than birds. Migratory flyways need to be internalized within the biodiversity and sustainable development context of human well-being and poverty reduction.

Programs for flyway conservation are multi-faceted and delivered by numerous organizations at different spatial scales. A commonality to all is a reliance on government directed and supported funding mechanisms that have bird or habitat conservation as their primary objectives. To respond to increasing and competing demands for limited human and fiscal resources, financing global flyway conservation must become more creative, innovative and inclusive.

Flyway based conservation programs in the North American (Swerdfager) and Asia-Pacific (Watkins & Mundkur) regions were presented alongside an examination of Global Environment Facility (Castro) supported programs. Symposium participants

were challenged to identify and respond to the linkages and opportunities that exist between financing mechanisms and conservation's other "cost elements". These were interpreted to include multi-lateral agreements and conventions, regional and national supporting infrastructure, effective delivery mechanisms and evaluation processes. Speakers identified how these elements (globally or on a flyway basis) contribute to leverage financial and human resources from national and international (government, non-government and business) organizations in support of flyway conservation activities. This symposium explored innovative approaches, opportunities to expand conservation networks, options to refocus and enhance the delivery of conservation activities and access a wider range of funding mechanisms

Although based on different experiences, common themes emerged from the presentations and discussion. Central to the symposium is a recognition that migratory bird and flyway conservation have unmet financial needs. However, budgetary pressures in many developed countries will severely limit their ability to directly target additional fiscal resources to meet this need. Moreover, the increases in funding delivered by development agencies through bilateral and multilateral agreements

during the 1980s and 1990s appear to have reached a stable plateau. The conservation community must apply the synergy that results from greater collaboration among governments, public and private agencies, businesses, and NGOs, through sharing of information and pooling of expertise and resources, and a combining of forces to support specific conservation finance mechanisms on-the-ground.

To achieve this synergy, changes must occur in how we ‘package and deliver’ conservation programs to include solid biological and socioeconomic planning and measurable objectives. This may require organizations to identify and incorporate new ‘skill sets’ into their program development mix. The base of support must broaden to be inclusive and less restrictive to participation by a sometimes diverse stakeholder community.

Flyway conservation initiatives have traditionally focussed on increasing the network of protected areas. Opportunities for new protected areas still exist, but there is also great potential to become actively involved with the ‘working landscape’. Partnerships and networking to engage local communities will build local capacity, heighten awareness and knowledge, and influence how activities are undertaken in working landscapes. By building upon common interests and developing trust among engaging organizations, it is often possible to extend the influence of the project beyond the negotiating table. Program goals can become integrated into general operating procedures of

companies and government agencies, by becoming collaborative partners rather than competing interests.

The financing of global flyway conservation must move beyond seeking funds for migratory birds to become more inclusive of all birds and refocus to embrace the local dimension. A reassessment of program goals should seek to refine priorities in-line with key funding sources such as the GEF, World Bank, and national and international development agencies. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and World Summit on Sustainable Development have defined the key deliverables (human well being and poverty reduction) within which the financing of global flyway and migratory bird conservation could be structured.

Migratory flyways need to be internalized within the broader agendas of biodiversity conservation and issues of sustainable development. We must be able to bridge the needs of migratory birds by responding to the needs and aspirations of society for poverty alleviation, and sustainable development in a growing and diversified economy which includes biodiversity conservation as an integral component of production systems. We need to respond to the CBD and other conventions by shifting our focus to mainstream biodiversity conservation into developing projects which promote poverty alleviation — tackling the cause rather than the symptoms. By addressing the needs of people we will produce an environmental dividend in the conservation of migratory birds.



Male Wrybill *Anarhynchus frontalis* – one of several non-migratory waders which are globally threatened. Photo: Colin Galbraith.