



Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management

Department of Sustainable Development

Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative WHMSI -FEMCIDI Phase III

In response to a call from the Heads of State of the Western Hemisphere countries to "advance hemispheric conservation of plants, animals and ecosystems through...the development of a hemispheric strategy to support the conservation of migratory wildlife throughout the Americas", wildlife directors responsible for the management of flora and fauna and other senior officials have developed the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI). Encompassing 35 nations, this project addresses issues from several mandates, endorsements and resolutions by the countries in the Western Hemisphere, including the 1940 Western Hemisphere Convention, the 1996 Santa Cruz Sustainable Development Summit and Santa Cruz +10 Ministerial, and the 2001 Summit of the Americas.

WHMSI is building country capacity to conserve and manage migratory wildlife. It improves hemispheric communication on conservation issues of common interest and provides training in priority areas. WHMSI strengthens the exchange of information needed for informed decision-making, and provides a forum to address emerging issues such as new threats to migratory species, or the connections between wildlife disease and human diseases. Through



WHMSI builds on migratory species efforts to significantly enhance the conservation of shared migratory species throughout the Americas. This done by strengthening institutional and human capacity, political commitment, international cooperation, and public-private partnerships at regional, national and local levels

WHMSI, all countries in the Western Hemisphere benefit from strengthened cooperation among nations and other stakeholders on migratory species conservation.

At the ministerial level, the agencies designated to protect wildlife have stated that the need to work collaboratively on a regional basis has

escalated in the last century as threats to wildlife populations in the Western Hemisphere become more complex, with greater impacts on biodiversity operating across broader geographic scales. Modern threats to marine and terrestrial wildlife in the Western Hemisphere such as habitat loss and pesticide use, present challenges that can only be addressed effectively by the strategic alignment of stakeholders in wildlife conservation throughout North America, Latin America and the Caribbean.

From the Arctic to Antarctica, fish, birds, mammals, sea turtles, cetaceans, bats, insects and other migratory species provide ecological and economic services shared by the countries and people of the Western Hemisphere. They are sources of food, livelihood and recreation, and have important scientific, economic, cultural, aesthetic and spiritual value. Despite these benefits, many migratory wildlife species are increasingly threatened by uncoordinated national level management, habitat loss, invasive alien species, pollution, over hunting and fishing, by-catch, unsustainable aquaculture practices and illegal harvesting and trafficking.

The Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) Caribbean Waterbird Census (CWC) Training Workshop: Increasing Capacity for Caribbean Wetlands Conservation

The Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) Working Groups (including Monitoring, Migratory Birds, Waterbirds and Seabirds) have been working since 2003 to identify gaps in regional monitoring strategies for birds. Through three phases of FEMCIDI funding, SCSCB established the Caribbean Waterbird Census (CWC), a region-wide waterbird and wetland monitoring program. Twenty-two participants from 14 Caribbean islands took part in SCSCB's five-day CWC training workshop, held at the Bahamas National Trust in Nassau, Bahamas on February 23-27, 2011.



areas. Greater knowledge and awareness of the most important sites aid in sites' protection efforts.

The CWC provides information on overwintering sites for migratory waterbirds and resident species by having participants count waterbirds using standard methods at least once a year during a three-week period in January. Counts at other times, particularly during fall and spring, help identify the critical stopover sites used by migratory waterbirds during their long migrations between breeding and wintering

The objectives of the CWC are to:

- Promote inventories, surveys and censuses of waterbirds and their habitats in all Caribbean countries
- Encourage broad-based participation in waterbird counts including NGOs, governmental agencies, Institutions, communities and volunteers
- Ensure that as many internationally and nationally important wetland sites as possible are conserved and monitored and
- Increase awareness of conservation issues related to wetlands and waterbirds.

American Bird Conservancy: Training Local Stakeholders in Reforestation and Land Management for Neotropical Migrants in Colombia, Nicaragua and Peru

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and its in-country partners are currently working cooperatively to protect and reforest or restore more than 1,000 acres with 250,000 trees for significant wintering habitat in Colombia, Nicaragua, and Peru for more than 20 neotropical migratory bird species including over 35 globally threatened bird species. An integral part of this reforestation



project is engaging local stakeholders in the protection of habitat for migratory songbirds.

In order to do so, ABC with the three partner local organizations, trained 150+ people in six workshops to engage local coffee growers and cattle ranchers in the region in improving the productivity of their lands for birds.

Workshops were held with coffee growers and cattle farmers in the buffer zones of reserves, and Spanish-language technical guides and promotional materials were provided to landowners to improve the productivity of their agricultural lands for migratory birds. They were attended by 39 people in Nicaragua assisted by 2 staff of the Jaguar Reserve, 79 people in Peru assisted by 2 staff of ECOAN, and 27 people in Colombia with 3 staff members of ProAves, and 2 technicians from the cacao federation.

Consejo Nacional de Areas Protegidas (CONAP): Training Activity on the Migration of the Humpback Whale in the Western Pacific of Guatemala

Humpback whales migrate from feeding areas (high latitudes) to breeding areas (tropical latitudes). Although Guatemala's Pacific coast is used as breeding grounds for humpback whales during the northern winter, studies of cetaceans in general are scarce. There are no courses or trainings in this issue at a professional level and the coastal communities are unaware of the value and importance of whales. The project integrates research and

education at a scientific and community level to promote the long term conservation and management of the species, relevant at a national and regional level considering they are migratory species.

CONAP trained 70+ people on four workshops and ten navigations covering three different topics:

- One course targeted towards university students with 4 open sea navigations titled "Introduction to Biology and Cetacean Research Techniques" attended by 11 people



- Three workshops titled "Workshop on the importance, conservation and sustainable tourism of Cetaceans, emphasizing humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)" targeted towards 12 local communities attended by 71 people and
- One research study with six navigations and 86 effort hours titled "Analysis of the distribution and behavior of humpback whales *Megaptera novaeangliae* in the west-central Pacific of Guatemala".



World Wildlife Fund (WWF): Incorporating Climate Adaptation into Marine Turtle Conservation - Capacity Strengthening for Planning and Implementation

As part of the WHMSI - FEMCIDI Phase III capacity building program, WWF trained decision makers of relevant government agencies in Latin America and the Caribbean in climate vulnerability assessment, monitoring techniques and adaptation planning for coastal habitats essential to marine turtles following up on the FEMCIDI Phase II: "Adaptation to Climate Change for Marine Turtles Project" which



included the Adaptation to Climate Change Toolkit held in 2009-2010.

The program focused on Incorporating climate adaptation into marine turtle conservation, 15 participants from 10 countries attended the 3 day workshop held at the 63rd Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Annual Meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico (1-3 November, 2010) hosted by WWF. The

participants included managers of marine turtle programs, marine parks and resource managers, government representatives, educators and students. The workshop, lead them through the steps involved in incorporating climate adaptation into their ongoing programs. Participants explored methods and tools for vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning through presentations, exercises, discussions and practical training.





Asociación Guyra Paraguay: Capacity Building to Join Efforts on Grassland Migratory Bird Conservation in the South America Southern Cone

The Southern Cone Grasslands of South America known as “Plata Grasslands or Pampas” which originally covered 100 million hectares in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay currently cover only around 50% of this area with negative implications on native wildlife, especially on the migratory species. The project’s goal is to facilitate methodologies for the conservation of migratory species at a local, regional and hemispheric level.

Asociación Guyra Paraguay and Audubon trained 22 government and NGOs representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay, on the Conservation Adaptive Management methodology and the use of the MIRADI Software Tool. The workshop developed a Grassland Migratory Birds Action Plan using MIRADI, where the team develops specific “views” of their project including conceptual models showing their biodiversity targets, key threats, and the potential strategies that can be taken to counter these threats. MIRADI also helped the team to identify monitoring indicators needed to determine the effectiveness of these strategies.



The Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) supports OAS member States in the design and implementation of policies, programs and projects oriented to integrate environmental priorities with poverty alleviation, and socio-economic development goals. DSD supports the execution of multiple-country projects in such diverse areas as integrated water management, renewable energy, land-titling, natural Hazards-climate change adaptation, biological diversity and environmental law and policy.

WHMSI supports migratory species capacity building efforts financed by the FEMCIDI fund of the Organization of American States. FEMCIDI provides financing for development projects to OAS member states in their efforts to reduce poverty and inequity providing opportunities through capacity building of human resources and strengthening of institutions. For 2011, 5 subprojects valued at over \$100,000.00 were awarded competitively with over \$300,000.00 in co-financing.



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