



EAST ATLANTIC FLYWAY YOUTH FORUM

9 - 10 JULY, 2022

Progress report 2022

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INTRODUCTION

In 2021, young people from over 30 countries came together for the first East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum under the theme **'Taking off #ForNature from Africa to the Arctic'** to explore the challenges that migratory birds and their wetlands habitats are facing. They discussed how greater communication and cooperation between youth and across generations can help wetlands, migratory waterbirds, and youth across the flyway. The EAFYF 2021 demonstrated a lot of commitment by young people along the East Atlantic Flyway and the Declaration prepared by a dedicated group of young conservationists as a follow up to the forum revealed: **Young people are ready to take action!** Many forum participants already volunteered their time for research and monitoring activities or organising campaigns to raise awareness for flyway issues. However, the discussions regarding future activities made clear that funds are urgently needed to ensure activities and outcomes are sustainable.

Funding for conservation activities is limited and as a result competition for grants is often high. The aim of the East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum 2022 was therefore to increase the youths' capacity to write a successful grant proposal. How do you develop a realistic project idea? What problems are you planning to tackle and how? How do you translate these ideas into a proposal which will convince the donors?

In July, young people from along the East Atlantic Flyway met to learn about grant writing in conservation and to hear inspiring stories from fellow youth who have made their conservation plans a reality through effective fundraising. A selection of donors shared their experience with successful fundraising proposals.

To put the learned skills into action, forum participants had the opportunity to apply for a small grant to implement activities around World Migratory Bird Day in autumn 2022. In addition, they had the opportunity to join the Migratory Birds for People (MBP) meeting in Senegal and receive extra training in how to raise awareness for flyway issues, working with different audiences.

The outcomes of these activities are briefly summarised in this report, highlighting the eagerness and enthusiasm of many young conservationist along the flyway to take action and become involved in the protection of our migratory bird species. They need our continuous support, and this report should thus not only illustrate the achievements of the last year, but also encourage future supporters/donors to reach out and become involved in creating opportunities for the flyway youth!





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OUTCOMES

The three main activities conducted under the umbrella of the East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum included 1) online training in fundraising, 2) the participation of young conservationists in the annual meeting of the Migratory Birds for People network and the provided CEPA training and 3) the EAFYF grants for participants of the fundraising training course.

1) Flyway Youth Forum – Fundraising training

On July 9 and 10, 30 young participants (aged 18 – 30) from the East Atlantic Flyway met online to learn in a compressed online course. We were delighted to have **Maaïke Manten** supporting this year's EAFYF with her extensive experience in conservation fundraising. Trained as a political scientist in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Maaïke started working for BirdLife International in the year 2000. Since then, she has worked for BirdLife in the UK, Kenya, Fiji and Rwanda, first as the institutional fundraiser, and later as the Regional Implementation Team leader for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)'s investment programmes. Maaïke has been a trainer for the Conservation Leadership Programme since 2009, providing project design, proposal writing and fundraising training to young conservationists in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and in Latin America and the Caribbean. She is also the co-author of the 'Institutional Fundraising for Conservation projects' manual that is available in five languages [here](#).

The main topics of the training she provided at the 2022 EAFYF were project design, proposal writing and fundraising. An outline of the training is given below:





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Topic	Description
Intro	The trainer started with a bit of context: what is a project, why do we work in projects, and what are the tools we need for good project design.
Stakeholder Analysis	One of these tools is the stakeholder analysis. The trainer gave a short lecture on why stakeholders are important, and who our stakeholders are (i.e. everybody with <i>an interest in</i> our project, who <i>will be affected by</i> our project, and who has <i>the ability to influence</i> our project). The lecture also introduced the Stakeholder Analysis Matrix. We discussed some of the stakeholders that we usually work with and stressed the importance of being specific in the identification of these stakeholders.
SWOT Analysis	The trainer provided a lecture on SWOT Analysis (internal/external context using Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Strengths), followed by a plenary BINGO game.
Problem analysis and problem trees	The trainer provided a lecture on problem analysis. Using a case study (the coffee bar) she showed how to build a problem tree, with a starting problem, the identification of causes and root causes (keep asking 'why'), and effects. The problem tree shows a ' <i>cause-to-effect</i> ' relationship from the bottom to the top. The participants were divided into two groups (one in English and one in French) and both groups worked on a problem analysis exercise on Miro, creating a problem tree for the Eastern Imperial Eagle in Georgia.
Objective trees and intervention strategies	On day 2 (after a quiz with a 'recap' of day 1), the trainer used the same case study of the coffee bar, to show how the problem tree depicts the 'current situation' (what and why), while the objective tree shows what the world would look like if all these problems are addressed (our 'future desired situation'). The objective tree shows a ' <i>means-to-an-end</i> ' relationship from the bottom to the top and is the basis for our intervention strategy (the 'plan' that explains how to get from the current situation to the desired situation, by means of activities, results, project purpose and overall goals). The intervention strategy is the first column in the logical framework. She went through all parts of the intervention strategy in detail, and showed the links between the problem tree, objective tree and intervention strategy for the Eastern Imperial Eagle case study, on Miro.
Proposal writing	This session started with an exercise about the importance of reading guidelines: do this carefully and completely. Then, once you have read these guidelines (twice), you stick to them – this may increase your chance of success with 50%. Donor application forms are all different, but if you have already done your project design well (problem tree, objective tree, intervention strategy), completing these forms will be much easier (including complying with different terminology for the intervention strategy, used by different donors). The presentation also included some top tips on how to write proposals, and a checklist to be used during the application stage.





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In the session 'Youth Voices', young conservationists Paul Ngafack (Ramsar Secretariat) and Walona Sehularo (Elephants for Africa) shared their experiences in applying for conservation grants. They provided insights into the development and implementation of specific projects for which they have received funding while also sharing some experiences they made developing a career in conservation.

Simon Mickleburgh (Grant Manager, The Rufford Foundation) and Sherilyn Bos (Programme Officer, Conservation Leadership Programme) shared their perspectives in a session called 'Donors Voices'. Receiving a large number of applications each year for their respective funding programmes, they were in a unique position to give the young participants insights into the details that can make a project stand out from the multitude of other project applications.

2) MBP meeting with CEPA training

Migratory Birds for People (MBP) is a voluntary network of wetland visitor centres and educators on the East Atlantic Flyway. To take note of the increasing number of wetland centres in Africa, the annual meeting 2022 took place in Senegal. It brought together experts from various member organisations to share their current experiences in wetland conservation and to identify how to improve wetlands education in the region. Lead local partners included Wetlands International West Africa, PRCM, Rampao, DPN and DAMPC, with additional support by the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative.



The meeting provided a unique opportunity for young people in the region to meet relevant stakeholders and thus expand their professional network. In addition, the meeting format in 2022 included a series of workshops which examined how best to implement CEPA, in particular when it comes to migratory birds in West Africa. Thus, the youth participants gained practical knowledge on





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how best to develop and implement communication, education, and awareness projects. Thanks to funding from the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative and LifeIP Deltanatuur we were able to cover the costs for the participation of seven young conservationists from The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Cabo Verde and Senegal. Their participation not only in the training, but also in the discussions at the meeting, contributed to the identifications of some key topics for the next years: empowering more young people, in particular young women; raising their status in environmental decision making; developing sharing platforms in-person and online; and providing resources.

Asked about their experience at the meeting, all supported participants appreciated the open dialog between experienced conservationists and themselves, who were representing the next generation. Receiving support, guidance and training is key to increase youth involvement in wetland and migratory bird conservation. Further, many stated that one of the key lessons they learned was that conservation action needs to involve people and especially the communities relying on the natural resources we aim to protect. Education through wetlands centres is an important step in this context which was reflected in the many ideas for activities and hopes for future engagements expressed by the young participants.

Key statements from their workshop reports reflect the enthusiasm of the new generation to take part in tackling the many challenges of flyway conservation, for which they need continuous support:

“The opportunity of meeting fellow committed young people around the world who are tirelessly doing their part in protecting the ecosystem despite the uncountable challenges we come across in our daily lives was an inspiration.” Awa Joof – The Gambia

“The world needs to come together to speak one language, so that our voices can be heard.” & “We need more women in the field of conservation. We need motivational support encouraging us. Anytime you call us, we will be answering you and our doors are open for any development.” Mariama Sanneh – The Gambia

“Seeing such a number of young people and older people come together to deliberate on conservation issues gave me hope. We need concerted efforts to achieve our conservation goals.” Emmanuel Taye – Ghana

“Looking back on every aspect of the meeting from discussions to group work and fieldwork has really empowered me, even more, to be better at my conservation strategy. In the end, my involvement in this successful conference motivated me to consider further actions.” Chukwuike Ebuzome – Nigeria

“I left the training session extremely enriched. My mission now is to draw the attention of governments and the population to the importance of wetlands. Now it's time to find a way to raise awareness among government officials, they are the key to conservation in my country because we need authorization to act.” Ariana Augusta Tavares Cabral – Cabo Verde

“ This experience allowed us to reinforce our passion for conservation.” Nancy Sow & Ndomo Diaw – Senegal





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3) EAFYF grants

To directly put their newly gained knowledge and skills into practice, participants of the East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum 2022 were able to apply for a small grant to implement activities along the flyway around World Migratory Bird Day at 8 October 2022. Eligibility was limited to people who participated in the EAFYF 2022, were aged 18–30 years old and planned to implement activities with a direct link to the East Atlantic Flyway.

The specific theme of this year's WMBD was 'Light pollution', but proposals which aimed to raise general awareness for migratory birds and their wetland habitats or plan to address local threats in specific areas were also considered. Funding for these projects was provided by the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative and LifeIP Deltanatuur, as part of the EAFYF efforts to increase youth engagement along the East Atlantic Flyway.

The application process was meant as an opportunity to raise funds for a specific project, as well as a learning opportunity. The reviews were therefore shared with the applicants to help them improve preparations of future grant applications.

In total, five projects were supported by the funds. A short summary of each project can be found below. Pictures were provided by the lead applicants for reporting purposes.

Dembo Jatta & team - Monitoring the Emerging Threat of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in The Gambia and Senegal.

The likelihood of HPAI spreading to Africa through migration is currently unknown, so research in this area is vital. Many Palearctic birds migrate in large numbers to West Africa for the winter to escape the colder weather in Europe. Their tendency to congregate in large numbers at roosting locations, sometimes alongside local species, can exacerbate the spread of disease in the same and other species. In addition to infecting and killing a significant number of wild birds, some HPAI strains can also infect humans when they come into contact with saliva, mucus, or feces from sick birds. This project was prompted by the potential of HPAI rapid transmission between migratory species and the possibility that it could infect other local bird species and, potentially, people. The earlier the presence of HPAI can be identified, the better the chance of finding a solution and reducing its impact on migratory and resident birds.

Monitoring of known roosting areas and protected areas for sick and dead birds in The Gambia and Senegal, which are well-known migratory hotspots, was a practical approach to collating the evidence of HPAI in the region. The project consisted of a standardized survey of binding sites as its primary objective. However, the project also provided an excellent opportunity for raising awareness amongst the local public about bird migration and the challenges they encounter on their long journeys north and south along the flyway. Moreover, the project allowed information to be shared with the public





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about the danger of HPAI spreading and offered guidance on what to do and what not to do when they encounter dead birds, especially seabirds.



Alusine Kargbo & team - Education and public awareness campaign for the protection of the Goliath Heron migratory bird species into inland valley swamps of Lungi and its environs (Sierra Leone).

The Goliath Heron species is one of the world's largest herons, with a long neck, bill and legs. The BirdLife International (2022) IUCN species factsheet put the heron among the Red list of globally threatened species of migratory birds. Habitat destruction has decreased its nesting areas in many parts of the world, including Sierra Leone. Its disappearance from the coastal region of Sierra Leone, specifically at Lungi community, is mainly due to human encroachment onto the wetlands and hunting of birds for ceremonial use on wedding days by the groomsmen to welcome his bride into a home of peace and love.

The aim of the project was a public education and sensitisation campaign for the protection of the Goliath Heron in the inland valley swamps of Lungi with billboards being set up at key traffic points within the area. A total of 75 youths took up the task to take photographs of the Goliath Heron for the benefit of the project. The project team was able to organise and hold formal meetings with the Chieftdom leaders, youth groups, marine staffs, farmers of sea food and travellers within settlements along Lungi. Two representatives from each of the 15 villages participated in a workshop on World Migratory Bird Day 2022, to launch the education and public awareness campaign for the protection of the Goliath Heron. The meeting included participants from different sectors to discuss the threats and conservation solutions needed to sustain this endangered species in Sierra Leone.

The project team recruited volunteers as bird watch guards in each of the 15 villages within Kaffu Bullom Chieftdom, Port Loko District, Sierra Leone to act as voluntary ambassadors for the protection of this species and its habitat in their villages





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Elodiade Houindote & team – Raising awareness of children and young people in the villages along the AHO complex on the conservation of migratory species (Benin).

Despite past and ongoing efforts to make migratory birds known, the level of awareness about migratory birds and their conservation needs remains low in Benin, including among policy makers, journalists, and natural resource users. This leads to many species being subject to alarming poaching activities. The AHO complex (Ramsar site 1017) has been facing a decrease in the population of migratory species for three years. Within the framework of the EAFYF project an awareness-raising campaign was organised for children and young people in the villages bordering the AHO complex on the conservation of migratory species. This sensitisation aimed to make migratory birds known, to understand the importance of these birds and finally to make people aware who are likely to contribute to the poaching of these birds.

A total of 90 pupils and 90 young people from Avlo, Honkihoue and Guezin villages participated in the activities, which included identification and drawing sessions, and the development of documentaries and games on the advantages of protecting wetlands and migratory birds. This awareness-raising also allowed us to have an open discussion with the local residents in the area. It was noted during our communication that some local residents are well aware of the decrease or even the rarefaction of certain migratory birds in the area. Together we identified the main threats to the birds in the area and possible steps in reducing their impact. Thanks to the outreach campaign, local residents have committed themselves to joining our efforts for the protection of their environment and the migratory birds that live there.



Young people and children wanted to become ambassadors for the protection of wetlands and migratory birds in their environment. These children will go on to sensitize their parents and friends on the protection of birds in their area. In addition, various means to safeguard these species were decided upon, including that children can contact or call upon the representative of the NGO Eco-Benin to report cases of poaching that might occur in their area.





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Gervais Muderhwa & team - Let's save the Lake Kivu and Tanganyika coastlines frequented by migratory birds after the Covid-19 period (Democratic Republic of Congo).

This project was the first initiative of its kind in the Province of South Kivu, and even in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Although the threats to migratory birds and their natural habitats in the DRC, particularly in the Uvira and Kalehe Territories of South Kivu, are clearly visible, this project has been a first step in mitigating these threats by gaining commitment from households along the Lake Kivu and Tanganyika coasts to protect and conserve migratory birds and their natural habitats.



A total of 37 people took part in the sensitisation and education sessions in Kalehe Territory, and 50 people took part in the awareness and education sessions on the conservation of migratory birds in the Territory of Uvira. Through the activities carried out in the framework of this project, we have achieved the following results:

- Public access to a first draft of an awareness and education module on the conservation of migratory birds in the Province of South Kivu in DRC and their natural habitats: With this first module, the inhabitants of the Province of South Kivu can gain a preliminary understanding of what migratory birds are, the threats they face and how to recognise them, as well as the importance of their conservation.
- Knowledge of the existence of migratory birds in South Kivu, DRC and the importance of their conservation and protection in their natural habitats: Almost 90% of the participants had never heard of migratory birds and wetland conservation.
- Commitment of the territorial and local authorities and their constituents in the territories of Kalehe and Uvira to the conservation of migratory birds and their natural habitats: After participating in the awareness and education sessions on the conservation of migratory birds,





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the participants committed themselves to changing their behaviour and especially their mentality and to making the conservation of migratory birds one of their priorities by aligning themselves with the path of community tourism and their natural habitats.

- Behavioural change and denunciation of bad practices to local authorities of any act undermining the conservation of migratory birds and their natural habitats: The women farmers, fishermen, herders and environmental civil society actors who took part in these activities decided to block uncivil actions less favourable to the survival of migratory birds, including the destruction of their natural habitats, traps, illegal hunting and many other threats.

Pasco Twinamasiko & team - Biodiversity inventory and awareness at Ekyishanga-Karagala wetland zone (Uganda).

Ekyishanga-Karagala wetland is one of the biodiversity hotspots in western Uganda. Despite the critical importance of this wetland for many organisms, it is facing many challenges due to great poverty in the region leading to wetland encroachment and over-exploitation of swamp resources, which negatively affects the habitat for birds, both migratory and resident. The bird populations are expected to decrease or change their migration patterns, as encroachment, over-exploitation of wetland resource, poor waste management is ongoing. Managing this situation is difficult due to unavailability of adequate data to calculate statistical trends for migratory bird species in the wetland. To aid management of the area, this project aimed to develop a migratory bird check list, and to spread awareness among the communities around the Ekyishanga-Karagala wetland about migratory bird species and the need to conserve them.



During the inventory more than 200 bird species were identified and added to a catalogue that can be used for future monitoring purposes. In addition, numerous species of mammals, fish and plants were identified. Monitoring not only changes in bird numbers, but also in the natural resources they depend on is key to identify underlying causes of trends. To address these causes, which in the Ekyishanga-





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Karagala wetland are largely man-made, an awareness campaign was conducted in the communities, increasing their capacity to contribute to the conservation of migratory birds and biodiversity in general. One practical initiative was the planting of trees around the Ekyishanga-Karagala wetlands, and around Lake Rwizongo crater lake, with the aim to increase habitat for birds.

CONCLUSION

Among the applicants of the EAFYF 2022 were many young conservationists who had already participated in the first Flyway Youth Forum in 2021. They had stayed in contact with the organisers via email or social media channels and used the opportunity provided by the EAFYF to further advance their voluntary or professional contribution to flyway conservation. The organising team has seen participants grow in confidence, skills, and professionalism, all while maintaining their drive and motivation.

The organising team itself has maintained the same organisations and some core personnel. This continuity has helped building a reliable team that youth can reach out to develop a common trajectory for future activities of the Flyway Youth Forum. The collaboration and exchange with the organisers of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Youth Forum was and is essential to learn from each other's experiences and help establishing the global view of flyway conservation beyond one flyway; hoping this will encourage similar initiatives in other flyways.

The experiences from the past two years have shown that young people are eager to take an active role in flyway conservation, but they need support. From rookies through to the 'veteran' Ambassadors, they want opportunities to connect, learn and develop projects and initiatives that will improve flyway conservation in their respective regions. Professional, albeit compressed, training, has already helped with this. Thus, one of the participants of the fundraising training has developed a project which is currently under revision in the 2nd round of the competitive Conservation Leadership Program. Also, the opportunity given to some of them to meet in person was a huge motivation to the youth and organisers alike. It is necessary to build on these achievements as not to lose the momentum.

YEW stated their interest to keep supporting the EAFYF. They strongly believe it is an initiative that answers to the Youth needs and helps transform not only their lives but also their local communities, as it is shown in this report. The involvement and mentoring of the new generation its fundamental not only for the future but also for our common present. CWSS/WSFI and WWT have both applied for capacity to continue operating the EAFYF in 2023. New partners and new ideas are always welcome.





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organisation of the East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum was once again an enormous collaborative effort, and many people deserve our gratitude. First of all, we need to thank our colleagues at YEW, WWT, and CWSS who helped developing ideas, preparing materials, or assisting with communication before, during and after the forum. Many supporters from other organisations provided guidance on the general concept of the forum and helped to improve the speaker list while also promoting the Forum. Speakers from all over the world agreed to share their experience in fundraising for conservation projects, providing a much-needed practical perspective on the topic. The challenge of working across such a wide geographical scale is the multitude of languages which are spoken in the different countries. We were therefore incredibly grateful for the ongoing support of our amazing interpreters from the ISIT Paris. And last, but not least we want to thank Maaïke Manten who's dedication, inspiration and professionalism made it a joy to work with her. We are hoping for further projects in the future.

The forum was only made possible through the financial support provided by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat funded by the Danish Ministry of Environment, the Dutch Ministry for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection. They deserve special recognition. In addition, we are exceptionally grateful for the support of Life IP Deltanatuur (by Vogelbescherming Nederland and the Dutch Ministry for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality) which allowed us to provide financial support for the further professional development of 12 young conservationists this year.



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Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands



Ministry of Environment of Denmark
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And finally, we want to thank all the participants for their active engagement and their honest commitment to improving the living conditions for migratory birds and people along the East Atlantic Flyway. Your drive and enthusiasm is what keeps us motivated!

