



# Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative Update

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**December 2009**

Dear WHMSI colleagues:

I apologize for the long hiatus in updating you regarding developments on the WHMSI frontier. Hopefully many of you have kept track via the web page or other electronic communications. Nevertheless, silence in this case does not indicate a lack of activity. Movement has occurred on a number of fronts, the most important of which are summarized in this update. I do hope you will find this summary informative and should you have questions or comments regarding any of these items, please contact me or any member of the Interim Steering Committee.



Sincerely,

Herb Raffaele  
Chair of the WHMSI Interim Steering Committee

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## **In This Update:**

The WHMSI Interim Steering Committee met March 24-25, 2009 at the Organization of American States in Washington, DC. The meeting served to follow-up on pending matters following WHMSI 3. The following items were discussed at the meeting;

- [OAS WHMSI Training Projects](#)
  - [Endorsements](#)
  - [WHMSI Web site](#)
  - [New Migratory Species Brochure](#)
  - [Discussion of the WHMSI "Purpose and Organization" Document](#)
  - [Planning for WHMSI 4](#)
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## OAS WHMSI Training Projects

The OAS WHMSI capacity building initiative is focused on three subregional training workshops per year, addressing a selection of the capacity building needs for the conservation of migratory species identified in prior WHMSI Conferences. The organizations that conducted the training workshops in Year 1 were selected through a Request for Proposals made in 2008 and distributed to all WHMSI partners.

Governmental representatives of WHMSI's Interim Steering Committee reviewed proposals, and all WHMSI country focal points were invited to serve as reviewers as well. The results of this first review were announced to WHMSI partners prior to the Conference in Paraguay.



At the Paraguay meeting, a working session was held to further refine each training program. Participants divided into three subregional working groups: Mesoamerica, Caribbean, and South America. These groups developed recommendations on the content and duration of the selected proposal for their subregion, as well as a training agenda, additional partners, etc., based on available funds. Each group also had an opportunity to begin discussion of priority audiences and training themes subject to funding availability in years 2 and 3. The results of each working group were presented to the plenary at the end of this session. Download the session report at: [http://www.eco-index.org/search/pdfs/OAS\\_workshops.pdf](http://www.eco-index.org/search/pdfs/OAS_workshops.pdf).

### **Early Results**

The Interim Steering Committee received an update on the delivery and results of the first year's projects during its March meeting:

- **"Analysis of Effectiveness of the Implementation of Environmental Policy for Conservation of Migratory Species"** – NatureServe.

NatureServe held a formal five-day training course at the Hotel Portal del Sol in Asuncion, Paraguay on March 9-13, 2009. This course provided concepts and tools to measure the effectiveness of environmental policy implementation as a key factor for biodiversity conservation, particularly for migratory bird species. This training activity was developed for 17 decision-makers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela.

- **"Long-term Bird Monitoring in the Caribbean—Why, What, Where, When, and How?"** - Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB).

The overall goal of this project is to initiate and promote a coordinated regional bird monitoring network as a means to improve science-based conservation planning and adaptive management of birds and habitats in the region. The project emphasizes practical training in simple, standard protocols for monitoring landbirds, waterbirds, seabirds and shorebirds, and their habitats. It promotes the formation of a coordinated regional monitoring network so that information can be shared and used to support local and regional conservation efforts.



The project is collaboratively developing a capacity building strategy and has begun to implement it, starting with a regional Bird Monitoring Training Workshop held in Nassau, Bahamas, February 19-23, 2009. The objective of the training workshop was to provide citizens from across the Caribbean with equipment, materials, training and skills to apply basic bird monitoring protocols.

- **“Establishing a Central America Trainers Network, Module 1. Community sustainable tourism and best practices for migratory species”** - Pronatura Chiapas, on behalf of the Alliance for Capacity Building in Natural Areas (ADESCAN) and BirdLife International

This project began the process of establishing a Central America Trainers Network, for future expansion of capacity building strategies for communities, technicians and decision makers in the conservation of migratory species. The first training course was designed to integrate community development and conservation of migratory species in Central America. It included two training components: an online training program and a 5-day workshop that was conducted in Costa Rica. Seventeen participants completed the on-line training and 15 completed the workshop in Costa Rica. Project products include course materials, strategy and action plans. Participants will continue sharing experiences through the establishment of an electronic network.

Find additional details on the 2009 OAS WHMSI training projects and their results at: [www.eco-index.org/migratory/documents/WHMSI.OAS.pdf](http://www.eco-index.org/migratory/documents/WHMSI.OAS.pdf) and [www.oas.org/dsd/WHMSI/English/Indexv2.htm](http://www.oas.org/dsd/WHMSI/English/Indexv2.htm).

### ***Looking Ahead***

Lessons learned from the first year of training projects were incorporated into a second Request for Proposals funded by the Organization of American States in the second half of 2009.

A total of seven proposals were submitted for consideration in the second round. Proposals selected for funding were:

- **“Capacity strengthening in the Western Hemisphere for adaptation of coastal habitats for marine turtles and shorebirds to the impacts of climate change”** - World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN).

The objective of this project is to build capacity for climate change adaptation of coastal areas used by migratory sea turtles and shorebirds. Activities include collaborative finalizing of an adaptation measures tool kit, and several training workshops: in Costa Rica, for turtle conservationists; in Argentina, for shorebird specialists; in the Caribbean, for decision-makers of the Western Hemisphere. The project will also digitally disseminate tools including manuals and software to assess vulnerability of coastal sites to climate change and to design, implement and monitor adaptation measures.



- **“Increasing capacity for Caribbean wetlands conservation: a training workshop for monitoring, education and conservation”** - Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB)

This workshop will provide training in bird surveys, threats assessment, outreach and education, and the application of data to wetland management. It will seek to provide participants with the skills needed to promote and apply the provisions of the Ramsar Convention and Special Protected Area and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocols. Target audiences will include senior decision-makers, protected area and project managers, field biologists, educators, volunteers, and international organizations. Products will include a training manual for the CWC and new approaches for promoting wetland conservation to decision-makers.

- **“Endangered and Migratory bats in Latin America, a Common Strategy for their conservation through capacity-building: The Latin American Network for Bat Conservation, (RELCOM)”** - Programa para la Conservación de los Murciélagos de México (PCMM) - Bioconciencia.

This project will support the development of a first meeting of the Latin American Network for bat conservation, which will take place in La Tirimbina Reserve, Costa Rica. The meeting will include a capacity-building program to provide attendees tools and methodologies to develop research, conservation, and environmental education plans, based on successful bat conservation initiatives in Mexico. The project will also use a participatory process to establish a Latin American Strategy for Bat Conservation, focused on the conservation of ecologically and economically important species of bats.

See additional details on these proposals at:  
[www.oas.org/dsd/WHMSI/Proposals/Proposals.htm](http://www.oas.org/dsd/WHMSI/Proposals/Proposals.htm)



## Endorsements

In July, the WHMSI Interim Steering Committee issued an endorsement of World Wildlife Fund's efforts "to strengthen capacity, improve the knowledge base and implement measures in the field of adaptation to climate change for marine & coastal ecosystems in the Western Hemisphere." It is hoped that more such regional efforts will emerge for this global threat of particular significance for migratory species. In May, The American Bird Conservancy prepared an informational letter to key U.S. decision-makers regarding the significance of Congressional appropriations for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) as agreed by consensus of the Plenary at WHMSI 3.

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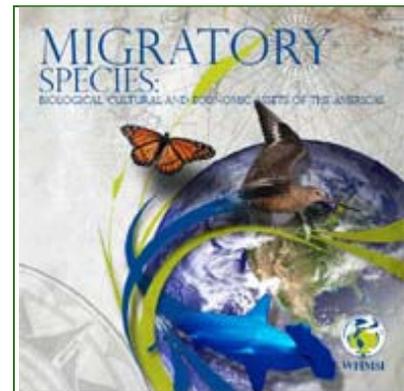
## WHMSI Web site

WHMSI.net has gone live! This site will be a principal hub for communication with and among WHMSI participants, and for outreach to the wider conservation community. Please visit often as the site will be updated frequently. The English language address is: [www.whmsi.net/index.php?lang=en](http://www.whmsi.net/index.php?lang=en).

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## New Migratory Species Brochure

A new brochure entitled "Migratory Species: Biological, Cultural, and Economic Assets of the Americas" was published in April 2009. This informative and engaging 14-page brochure includes detailed information about the importance of migratory species, WHMSI and its products to date, migratory species conventions, conservation challenges and solutions. The document is currently available for download in PDF format in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [French](#) at the [Eco-Index WHMSI Pathway Web site](#). Printed copies are also available in all three languages. Email [Brian\\_Hayum@fws.gov](mailto:Brian_Hayum@fws.gov) to request yours.



## Discussion of the WHMSI "Purpose and Organization" Document

At WHMSI 3, a process was identified to further develop the WHMSI document "Purpose and Organization" (formerly called "Terms of Reference"). At its March meeting, the Interim Steering Committee addressed a number of key issues related to the document, including the nature of WHMSI; strategic planning; resources (including finance); and the importance of constructive, purposeful language. The English-language version was further edited, translated into Spanish, and distributed in June 2009. WHMSI participants were invited to review this draft and respond with any questions or comments (to [Brian Hayum](#)). Comments were compiled and reviewed in September 2009. The Interim Steering Committee will subsequently consider all substantive comments received.

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## **Planning for WHMSI 4**

Planning for WHMSI 4 is in the initial stages, with a view towards holding the meeting in a Caribbean country in 2010. Additional information will be provided through these updates and through [WHMSI.net](http://WHMSI.net).

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