



for birds
for people
for ever

passionate • a champion for birds • working with young people • APPLYING
practical action • showing people birds • campaigning to protect and restore • taking practical a
IONS • INSPIRATIONAL • protecting countryside • innovative • global scale
determined • conservation • WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP • determined • wide rang
y • protecting biodiversity • APPLYING SOUND SCIENCE • showing
people birds • inclusive • wide ranging advocacy • passionate • creative
solutions • taking practical action • showing people birds • effective a
and practical conservation • creative solutions • INSPIRATIONAL
• stopping climate chaos • expertise and advice • Real World
Learning • global scale

A VOICE FOR CONSERVATION

The RSPB's plans for 2007-2012



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INTRODUCTION

We base our work on good analysis of the threats facing birds and the environment and a thorough assessment of possible solutions: we see a problem, work out what is causing it, and find ways to put it right. Our record of success suggests we are doing many of the right things in the right way. But we take nothing for granted. Conservation is rarely straightforward and is becoming ever more demanding – particularly in the face of climate change and all too frequent damage to the environment in the name of economic development.

New directions are important and are signalled throughout this strategy. For much of our conservation work, however, the overriding needs are to be ever smarter at what we do, and to do more.

We can only do more for birds and the environment if we can inspire more people to give us their support. As conservation is the RSPB's reason for being, so support is our lifeblood. We will sharpen our focus on recruiting new members and other committed supporters.

These are challenging times, but the RSPB will be a powerful voice for nature.

WHAT IS THE RSPB?

What the RSPB exists for

The RSPB is a charity that works for a better world for birds and people.

Why

We passionately believe that:

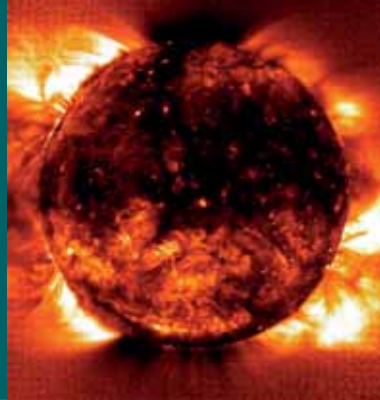
- conservation of biodiversity is a moral imperative
- the health of bird populations reflects the health of the planet, on which the future of the human race depends
- birds and other wildlife enrich people's lives.

What we do

- we inspire the public to support conservation of the natural world
- we research problems and promote realistic solutions
- we manage more than 200 nature reserves for the benefit of wildlife and people
- we champion birds and the environment to decision-makers through advocacy and campaigning
- we work with a wide range of partners to deliver wildlife conservation
- we work internationally through a global partnership of like-minded conservation organisations called BirdLife International
- we share our enthusiasm and knowledge to help as many people as possible enjoy the natural world.

Some defining characteristics

- The RSPB's success is possible only because of the commitment and generosity of its million plus members, volunteers and supporters.
- Our work is based on sound science and rational analysis.
- The RSPB works across the UK at local, regional and national levels, and internationally through the BirdLife International Partnership.
- We deliver an ambitious conservation programme by combining practical action on the ground and wide-ranging advocacy.
- Our junior membership, Wildlife Explorers, is the largest club of its kind in the world.
- We are determined in pursuit of our objectives and stick to a task for as long as it takes.



MAJOR CHALLENGES

1 Biodiversity and the political agenda

Nature needs a stronger voice. While the environment is now high on the political agenda, we face as tough a challenge as ever in advancing the cause of wildlife conservation. There are several reasons for this.

Climate change is the biggest environmental issue facing the planet and all the species that live on it. Increased understanding of the reality of climate change and the threats that it poses is a major advance. Paradoxically, however, the prominence of this issue risks other urgent environmental concerns being pushed down the political agenda.

Some people see protection of the environment as a barrier to economic growth. As well as frustrating conservation progress, this can lead to calls to weaken existing environmental laws and policies, which would mean stepping backwards.

There are increasing calls to justify environmental protection in economic terms. Natural assets such as wildlife, which cannot always be valued in monetary terms, are the most vulnerable.

The RSPB will:

- be bolder in making the moral and cultural case for conservation – a civilised society does not carelessly allow habitats to be fragmented and destroyed, and species to drift towards local or global extinction
- promote the economic and functional value of healthy ecosystems
- encourage more supporters to demonstrate to politicians that taking conservation seriously makes electoral sense – whether politicians value the environment or not, large numbers of voters do
- vigorously defend the ground won over the past 25 years, both in the UK, and through helping to develop the capacity of the BirdLife International Partnership
- promote an ambitious programme for wildlife conservation and environmental enhancement.

When a million people care, they can make a difference.

2 Climate change

Climate change sets huge new environmental challenges and compounds many of those we already face. Impacts on wildlife provide excellent examples to show people what climate change is already doing to the natural world and to make them care about it. When a million people care, they can make a difference, through both personal action to 'green' their lifestyles and by campaigning with the RSPB.

The RSPB will:

- continue to press decision-makers to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to reduce the scale of future climate chaos
- implement policies that will allow nature to adapt to the challenges of climate change
- involve our membership in the fight to reduce climate chaos.

However seriously the world now takes the problem, significant change is inevitable during our lifetimes. We will make the countryside more resilient for wildlife as conditions change. In particular, we will promote the need for habitat restoration and re-creation to provide more and bigger stepping stones to help species to disperse to new areas of habitat.

3 Landscape-scale conservation and restoration of a countryside rich in wildlife

Until very recently, conservation has been nearly all about slowing down and stopping the loss of wildlife and wild places. With greater success in strengthening the laws and policies that protect nature, we should now be able to divert more of our effort and energy into restoring and recreating wildlife habitats.

The fight against habitat destruction and degradation goes on, and will continue to take a lot of our resources. But in the UK, we have the capacity to begin to undo some past damage, in some places. This is where our work on nature reserves and on countryside policy all comes together to maximum effect in a positive, forward-looking agenda.

We will extend existing schemes and embark on many others.

Current examples of landscape scale habitat restoration on RSPB nature reserves include the magnificent open peatlands at Forsinard Flows in the far north of Scotland and, at the other end of Britain, chalk grassland full of wildlife at Winterbourne Downs in Wiltshire. We will extend existing schemes and embark on many others.

The high quality habitats that result will be even more valuable if set in a countryside where farming, water and planning policy encourage land use that respects the environment and leaves space for wildlife. And truly landscape-scale conservation can only come from many landowners and managers working towards a common goal.

4 International growth

The world is still extraordinarily rich in wildlife, although human pressures are daily eroding that richness.

The contribution that the RSPB can make to help stem the loss of species and habitats is magnified many fold by working through the BirdLife International Partnership. We spend about 10% of our resources on international work, and recent successes provide a compelling case for doing more. We will do this without reducing our ambitions for conservation in the UK; the challenge is to expand the RSPB as a whole and to use our amazing work with BirdLife Partners to inspire additional support.

5 Policy into practice

The RSPB is unusual among environmental organisations in both carrying out a wide range of hands-on conservation projects and lobbying governments to influence land use and other policies.

Our practical experience informs our policy development and advocacy.

Our practical experience of conservation, particularly through land management, informs our policy development and advocacy. The RSPB not only thinks about how the world should be, but also can show people those ideas and ideals being put into action. We will do more to provide practical examples to illustrate wildlife friendly and environmentally sustainable practices to decision-makers, land managers, our members and the public.

6 Birds to biodiversity

Our conservation action benefits wildlife as a whole, not just birds. Starting with birds, we do much for all wildlife, for the environment and for people.

All wildlife is better off because of the RSPB.

We promote actions to produce a better world with less waste, a safer climate and more sustainable, less destructive, human lifestyles. On the ground, our practical work benefits a huge range of threatened species. All wildlife is better off because of the RSPB and we will continue to ensure that our work benefits the natural world as a whole.

7 More support from more people

Expanding our conservation programmes depends mainly on increasing our resources.

We have benefited from a near doubling of our income from grants over the last five years, and from the increased generosity of individual donors. But we can still do much more to save our threatened wildlife if we inspire more people to support us, emotionally, practically and financially.

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OUR CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Stop extinction!

As part of the global partnership of BirdLife International, the RSPB aims to save birds from extinction. One in ten of the world's birds is in danger of global extinction.

We will concentrate our efforts on vultures in India, albatrosses threatened by long-line fishing in the Southern Oceans, the bald ibis in Morocco and Syria and the aquatic warbler in Eastern Europe. For these species, because of our skills and experience, we can make a real difference on a global scale.

Several bird species have come close to disappearing from the UK – birds such as the curlew, bunting, corncrake and stone-curlew were reduced to a few hundred individuals, and bitterns and breeding black-tailed godwits were reduced to only a few tens of individuals.

Thanks to RSPB efforts, their numbers are now increasing steadily. We aim to make further progress with these rare species and to set them firmly on the road to recovery.

The species whose status we wish to improve over the next five years:

Internationally:

vultures, albatrosses, aquatic warbler and bald ibis

In the UK:

bittern, black grouse, black-tailed godwit, capercaillie, chough, curlew, corn bunting, corn crane, crane, hen harrier, house sparrow, lapwing, skylark, stone-curlew, tree sparrow and white-tailed eagle

On our nature reserves:

bittern, black grouse, black-necked grebe, capercaillie, chough, curlew, corn crane, crane, Dartford warbler, golden oriole, hen harrier, lapwing, redshank, snipe and stone-curlew.

Other birds, while not yet coming close to disappearing from the UK, have declined dramatically in numbers – even the common house sparrow and skylark are much rarer than just 20 years ago, and numbers of lapwings, yellowhammers and tree sparrows have tumbled. We aim to stop these declines before they lead to real risk of UK extinction. Many of these birds are suffering widespread loss across Europe – by stemming their declines in the UK, we are contributing to their survival in Europe as a whole.

For some species, we can dramatically restore their ranges by reintroducing them to areas from which they have disappeared. We are making great progress with the red kite and white-tailed eagle and we will make further great strides over the next few years.

Our ambitious reintroduction programmes for curlew buntings and corn crakes will expand. We will start a reintroduction project for cranes, in order to help re-establish this charismatic species of large wetlands.

We aim to stop these declines long before they lead to real risk of UK extinction.

Protecting the best places

Although wildlife is everywhere, some places are especially rich. Formal protection for the most important wildlife sites is a mainstay of nature conservation, whether it be for tropical rainforests or the UK's seabird colonies and estuaries full of wintering waders, ducks, geese and swans.

The BirdLife International Partnership has identified the most important sites for birds across the world. The ever more urgent task is to ensure that these Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are protected against destruction and degradation.

We will work with other BirdLife International Partners to establish strong national legislation to protect Important Bird Areas across the world. This is an essential foundation for global conservation. Money must be forthcoming to ensure that protected areas remain protected – both because of their global importance as wildlife havens and because of their economic value to us, through providing carbon storage, flood risk reduction and a range of other ecosystem services.

We need to understand the impacts of climate change on the existing network of protected areas, so that we can conserve wildlife under a rapidly changing climate.

The RSPB is active across the UK, and increasingly works with BirdLife International Partners around the world to help them to counter development threats. We will continue to strive to make sure that the best places for wildlife are protected for future generations of wildlife and people.

Over the next few years, this casework load will increase both in the UK and elsewhere. We will face more cases and more complex and challenging ones.

We need to understand the impacts of climate change.

Working with BirdLife International Partners, we can protect significant expanses of globally important habitats. We will secure the future of Sumatran rainforest, Sierra Leonean rainforest and Polish wetlands and, if resources permit, we will seek other similarly ambitious projects.

In Sumatra, together with our Indonesian partner and the BirdLife Secretariat, we will restore 100,000 hectares of previously logged forest. The area, one of the few remaining fragments of the once vast Sumatran lowland forests, still holds hundreds of bird species as well as tigers, tapirs and gibbons and, with our help, will flourish again.

In the Gola Forest in Sierra Leone, we are working with the Government and our BirdLife Partner to ensure the protection and sustainable management of one of West Africa's richest forests. In Poland, we will be working with our Partner to secure the future of extensive fens that are essential for many rare species, including the threatened aquatic warbler. In all cases, working closely with local communities will be critical to success.

Nature reserves

In 2006, the RSPB acquired its 200th nature reserve – we now manage an area larger than Bedfordshire. Reserves are varied in size and habitat and in length of RSPB involvement, but each contributes to protecting and enhancing the wildlife of the UK. As a network of sites, they contribute more than the sum of the parts.

Our nature reserves provide havens for threatened species and act as launch pads for such birds to re-colonise the countryside beyond. Species whose status we are determined to improve over the course of this strategy include some with very small populations, such as the bittern and black-tailed godwit, whose future as UK breeding species depends on our success

In all cases, working closely with local communities will be critical to success.

Our nature reserves demonstrate very clearly that our work benefits all wildlife and not just birds.

in managing our nature reserves. Without RSPB nature reserves, these birds would face a very bleak future. We also help commoner, but declining, species. For example, in the lowlands, wading birds such as the lapwing, snipe and redshank nest on wet grasslands in grazing marshes and floodplains, and nature reserves are more and more vital for their survival, particularly in the south of England, in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our nature reserves demonstrate very clearly that our work benefits all wildlife and not just birds. Our management plans take full account of the wonderful array of wildlife present on our reserves.

We will continue to add to our nature reserves network, extending existing sites to get the best from them. Adding to these sites makes sense for ecological reasons (large sites are more resilient to threats) and financial reasons (management cost per unit area decreases as sites grow).

The land we manage shapes many people's perceptions of the RSPB. Our reserves will continue to bring people closer to wildlife and the RSPB by inspiring them, giving them opportunities to volunteer and by informing them of our work.

Landscape-scale conservation

The scale of our ambition should be large. The UK has greatly degraded natural ecosystems. Climate change will make it even more difficult for wildlife to survive.

To meet these challenges, we need to recreate wildlife-rich habitats on a large scale. We do some of this on our own nature reserves. At Abernethy Forest, we will restore and recreate native pinewood for the capercaillie, red squirrels and a host of threatened invertebrates. At Forsinard Flows, we continue to restore the open peatlands of

the Flow Country, which are so rich in wildlife, from tiny sundews to elegant wading birds such as greenshanks. At Hesketh Outmarsh on the Ribble, in Lancashire, we will restore saltmarsh vital for thousands of wintering ducks, geese and wading birds from Arctic Russia. At Winterbourne Downs, we will re-establish chalk grassland full of flowers, butterflies and stone-curlews.

Government should do more to ensure that wildlife-rich sites are set in a countryside that is more benign for wildlife. We wish to see an environmental renaissance in the UK; we can help turn the tide of habitat loss and start rebuilding a richer countryside.

More wildlife around us

It would be disastrous if even more species were restricted to nature reserves and other protected areas, but that is, sadly, the direction in which we are heading.

Across the world, but very noticeably in Europe, the pressures of land drainage, simplified cropping systems, intensive forestry, pesticide use, fertilisers and urbanisation are causing massive declines in wildlife. The economics of land use force species out of the countryside and we are handing on a diminished resource to future generations.

Land and marine use are driven by economics and government incentives and regulation. The RSPB seeks to influence government policy through developing options that are better for wildlife and where possible deliver other public benefits. We work with a range of interested parties in this – other NGOs, statutory agencies, businesses, our members, the public and individual landowners. Increasingly, the growing strength of the BirdLife International Partnership means that we can influence EU policies that form the framework for government action in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

To meet these challenges we need to recreate wildlife-rich habitats on a large scale.

The RSPB seeks to influence government policy through developing options that are better for wildlife and where possible deliver other public benefits.

The widespread and severe declines of farmland birds, such as the skylark, in the UK and across much of Europe, remain of very high concern to us. One of our highest priorities is to influence farming practices to become more wildlife-friendly. Real progress has been made but farmland birds are still at a very low ebb.

Working with BirdLife International Partners, we have already had some influence on the shape of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, so that it rewards more sustainable land management. Further opportunities will arise in 2008 and beyond, but our work is basically never-ending on this subject. Whatever future reforms might bring, we need to ensure that policy gains of recent years are not lost – and that, in each country of the UK, agri-environment schemes are well designed and adequately funded for maximum impact. The threat of large scale planting of bio-fuel energy crops, potentially hostile to wildlife, will be a significant new area of activity for us.

We will continue to work closely in partnership with hundreds of individual land managers across the UK to achieve recoveries of bird populations on their farms. Such partnerships have already benefited species such as the stone-curlew and corncrake and our aim is to replicate these successes for more widespread declining species such as the lapwing, skylark, tree sparrow and corn bunting.

Wetland species, such as the snipe and lapwing, are threatened by drainage and insensitive flood defence measures. Too often, decision-makers treat water as though it is a problem in the countryside, to be removed as quickly as possible. This approach causes as many flood defence problems as it solves and is disastrous for wildlife. We will use the opportunities of the EU Water Framework Directive to secure more wildlife-rich watercourses and wetlands.

The seas around us are rich in wildlife, yet there is a dismal lack of government measures to protect them

We may not get a better opportunity to take a massive step forward for marine biodiversity in our lifetimes.

and to ensure sustainable harvesting of marine resources. The prospect of a UK Marine Bill, and legislation in the devolved administrations, is a great opportunity to introduce better protection for marine wildlife, through protecting wildlife-rich areas, planning to guide economic activities and more sustainable marine use. We may not get a better opportunity to take such a decisive step for marine biodiversity in our lifetimes.

A more sustainable world

The six billion people on the planet are using more and more land for food, housing, energy production and transport. Wild places are under constant and growing threat. Water resources are becoming dangerously scarce in many parts of the world, including south-east England, and many are increasingly polluted.

Our dependence on fossil fuels alters the world's climate in ways that are unpredictable, but certainly spell bad news for people and all those species with which we share the planet. In the world's oceans, fish species that could be sustainably harvested are more often than not over-fished.

The RSPB and BirdLife International will argue for a more sustainable human existence in the UK and across the globe. Most of the threats to wildlife ultimately stem from the way our species carelessly damages rather than actively nurtures the planet.

Basing our success on science

Much of our success to date has been based on our strong science base. We will continue to monitor species and habitats, research the problems they face, propose and implement practical and effective solutions to their problems and then monitor again, to ensure that remedies are working.

We will continue to publish summaries of species' status. We will work within BirdLife International to produce authoritative accounts of the state of the world's birds and to identify threatened species and the most important places for birds. In the UK, we will work with partner organisations to ensure that our knowledge of bird distributions, population levels and population trends is good. We will continue to promote the use of 'wild bird indicators' at national, UK, EU and global level as a measure of the sustainability of human activities. We need to find out why the woodland birds of the UK and Europe are declining, and why many long-distance migrants that breed in the UK and Europe and winter in Africa south of the Sahara are declining. A better understanding of the causes of population declines will lead to more certain remedies.

Climate change is happening, with unpredictable consequences for our wildlife. We aim to be at the forefront of researching and understanding the impacts of climate change on birds and other wildlife.

Farmland birds remain a high priority. Our research has shown what the problems are, and for some species provided solutions, but there is more to do – more solutions to test, monitoring those that we have already put into action and further development of policy to respond to continuing land use change.

Most of the threats to wildlife ultimately stem from humans trashing the planet.

Increasingly, both in the UK and globally, the role of natural ecosystems in providing services of value to people is being recognised. Reedbeds remove pollutants from water, coastal saltmarshes protect coastal areas from flooding, and wetlands store water and reduce flood risk. The uplands of the UK hold huge stores of carbon in their peaty soils and gather 70% of our drinking water. These 'free' services provided by nature need to be evaluated more effectively if decision-makers are to take them into account in future policies. We need to understand this subject and contribute to its development.

Working as part of the BirdLife International Partnership

BirdLife International aims to achieve effective worldwide bird and habitat conservation, is the world's leading authority on the status of the world's birds, their habitats and the issues and problems affecting them, and is one of the world's leading conservation practitioners.

The RSPB is the UK partner of BirdLife International. We will help to nurture this partnership of like-minded, strong and active locally-based bird and habitat conservation organisations. National Partners work with their governments, other local organisations and local people to achieve conservation and also work together internationally to tackle the many conservation issues that transcend national boundaries.

Supporting a Secretariat that brings partners together as a cohesive network is an essential part of our approach. We contribute to the preparation of BirdLife's plans, and their implementation is fundamental to the achievement of our aims.

The EU is of the highest importance to us as its policies and legislation influence the wildlife of the UK as well as the rest of the continent. We will seek to maintain the strength of the Birds and Habitats Directives and to influence the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies through working with our strong network of BirdLife International partners across Europe. Outside Europe, we will concentrate our work in the UK Overseas Territories, Africa (where there are strong ties with Britain through human culture and bird migration), the Middle East and selected parts of Asia (India, Indonesia and central Asia).

Wherever we work, we will aim to make nature conservation a stronger force for the future through our intervention.



INSPIRING SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION

We must win people's hearts and minds if we are to achieve our objectives. If decision-makers, landowners, funders and – perhaps most importantly of all – private individuals do not value the natural world, then there will be no political drive or practical means to conserve it.

In a world where people are increasingly urbanised and remote from nature, and where climate change is likely to dominate the environmental agenda, the RSPB has an essential role to play in inspiring more people to value the natural environment.

We need to do this to defend the ground won in establishing nature as important and worth protecting, and to build on this position and move the agenda forward. In summary, our efforts here will focus on the following areas:

- enthusing for conservation
- action for conservation
- inspiring young people
- recruiting more supporters.

Enthusiasing for conservation

Providing as many people as possible with a window on the natural world is vitally important at a time when people have less direct contact with nature and wild places. Only by giving people the opportunities to be inspired by wildlife can we build enthusiasm, which can then be harnessed for conservation action.

Creating high quality nature reserves and exciting visitor centres close to urban areas, such as at Rainham Marshes in Essex, will help us reach larger numbers of people, many of them outside the traditional RSPB membership profile.

We will:

- make the best use of our nature reserves for inspiring visitors
- give people a wildlife experience through face-to-face events, such as our popular Aren't birds brilliant! projects, throughout the UK
- use the web and other media to build on the success of the Big Garden Birdwatch and other participative initiatives.

Action for conservation

The commitment of supporters and volunteers enables the RSPB to have a much bigger impact than is possible through paid staff alone. We gain greatly from time given for a remarkable range of activities, from letter writing and campaigning to office assistance; from survey work and reserves habitat management to recruiting members. Our volunteers programmes are currently supported by more than 13,000 people.

We will involve even more people by:

- finding more ways in which individuals can volunteer and help our work – to meet our target of 15,000 volunteers working a total of 750,000 hours annually by 2012
- making it easier through training for volunteers to contribute effectively to our conservation work
- promoting the contribution of supporters to our conservation campaigns to build on the successes of recent years.

Inspiring young people

Young people will define the future of the natural world. Only if the young people of today care about the environment intellectually and emotionally can our conservation legacy be of truly lasting value.

To this end, we will:

- increase the number of young people who enjoy a first-hand experience of nature through participating in our field teaching programmes
- increase membership of Wildlife Explorers, the RSPB's junior membership
- build our contacts with schools in order to increase opportunities for children to participate in nature activities
- urge Government to increase the opportunities for 'out of classroom' learning
- help BirdLife Partners, where appropriate, to develop their youth programmes
- seek ways to engage with the 16–24 age group.

We can encourage young people to care more about the natural world and bring them into a closer, longer-term relationship with us.

If we are to achieve our ambitions, we must inspire more people to join or to support us in some other way.

Recruiting more supporters

Members are the bedrock of the RSPB's work. They provide political, practical, financial and moral support. The political weight afforded by more than a million members will continue to be a cornerstone of our conservation success.

Private individuals are the source of more than 70% of the RSPB's income. Membership remains very strong, at well over 1 million people. If we are to achieve our ambitions, we must inspire even more people to join or to support us in some other way.

In summary, we will:

- increase our efforts at recruiting and retaining members
- increase the proportion of memberships recruited face-to-face
- develop online recruitment further
- develop and test different ways in which people can support us and become members.

Funding our ambitions

We derive great strength and financial stability from having a diverse mix of income sources, and in receiving the lion's share of our funds from very many individual members and supporters.

We intend to fund the RSPB's ambitious conservation programme by increasing income from many sources; particularly important will be the extra resources a membership can provide.

Our large and growing suite of collaborative projects with other organisations means that much of our work is jointly funded and jointly executed. More opportunities exist for intelligent partnerships.

We will present a broader range of the RSPB's exciting work to grant-making trusts, statutory agencies, the corporate sector and other institutions.



DEVELOPING THE ORGANISATION

The RSPB recognises that it can only achieve its aims for conservation through its staff and volunteers, and with the support of the membership. The charity will continue to develop its capacity to adapt, in the light of evolving priorities and changes in the outside world.

Environmental sustainability

To reduce our emissions by 3% per year is a challenging target: we will all need to change our ways of working.

We naturally set high store by the environmental sustainability of our own operations and want our staff to change their habits at home as well. We have set a target of reducing our carbon emissions by 3% per head per year. We strive to reduce our waste and increase the amount we reuse and recycle. We aim to ensure our water usage meets relevant Environment Agency standards for offices and will implement a sustainable sourcing policy for our shops, catalogues and tearooms. We recognise the need for continuous improvement in environmental management and will tackle new areas once we have processes in place for managing these priorities.

Governance

We will attain high levels of accountability and transparency concerning our charitable objectives and governance.

Partnerships

We benefit from working in numerous partnerships. We will continue to work closely with others wherever this helps us to reach conservation goals.

Diversity

We recognise the importance of being accessible to, and inclusive of, all sections of the community. Like many other organisations, we know that much remains to be done in this area. During this strategy

We thank everyone who helped us over the past five years and look forward to equally committed and loyal support over the next five.

period we will strive to increase the diversity of our volunteers, visitors and employees.

Training and reward

We invest in staff and volunteers through training that is tailored to delivery of our objectives, through a range of employee benefits and by rewarding high performance.

We achieved Investor in People status in 1996, and regularly monitor the health of the organisation through a variety of staff surveys.

Organisational development and structures

We work to ensure that we have the appropriate culture and ways of working to enable us to deliver our ambitious programme of conservation work.

As a UK organisation, we pay particular attention to the diversity of cultures, and legislative systems of the four UK countries. We recognise that in England, the regional dimension becomes increasingly important, and we continue to adapt our structures to reflect this.

The last five years have seen a marked growth in the RSPB's work, and in its ability to do more for wildlife. The next five years require a further step, to tackle increasing challenges as unsustainable demands on the planet bite ever harder. We thank everyone – individuals and organisations – who helped us over the past five years and look forward to equally committed and loyal support over the period of this new five-year plan.

The next five years require a further step in the growth of the RSPB's work, as increasing challenges and unsustainable demands on the planet bite ever harder.



APPENDIX

A summary of what we intend to be different by 2012

A selection of measurable outcomes and outputs for the next five years conveys the diversity of our work and the practical results we plan to deliver.

Working for birds and biodiversity in the UK

1 Improved status for priority bird species

The conservation status of the following species will have improved:

- Bittern
- Black grouse
- Black-tailed godwit
- Capercaillie
- Chough
- Cirl bunting
- Corn bunting
- Corncrake
- Crane
- Hen harrier
- House sparrow
- Lapwing
- Skylark
- Stone-curlew
- Tree sparrow
- White-tailed eagle

2 More land under RSPB management

An extra 16,000 ha of land will be managed for conservation as RSPB nature reserves.

3 All designated land on RSPB reserves in good condition

Where their condition is within our control, all SSSIs (ASSIs in Northern Ireland) on our nature reserves will be in favourable condition or classed as recovering by 2010.

4 Healthier populations of priority bird species on RSPB reserves

On our existing reserve network, the populations of 26 priority bird species will have been maintained or enhanced.

5 Improved status for other special wildlife on RSPB reserves

The conservation status of special animals and plants on our nature reserves will have been maintained or improved.

The RSPB is the UK lead partner for 11 UK Biodiversity Action Plans for non-bird species, and we will strive to improve their fortunes.

Species selected for particular attention include:

Ant lion
Aspen hoverfly
Cut-grass
Dormouse
Fen orchid
Great yellow bumblebee

Heath fritillary
Hedgehog fungus
Pennyroyal
Maid of Kent beetle
Red squirrel
Water vole

6 Futurescapes

We will create nature reserves rich in wildlife from land of low value, and will have developed a series of large-scale reserves, each set within wider landscapes under conservation management.

7 Key sites protected

There will have been no net loss of nationally or internationally important sites for birds.

8 Healthier bird populations in the wider countryside

Farmland bird populations will be stabilised or increasing.

9 Improved marine environment

Important populations of sea ducks, divers and foraging seabirds will be conserved around the UK by 2012, through a network of marine protected areas.

10 Reduced carbon footprint

We will have reduced the RSPB's carbon footprint by 3% per head per year.

Working internationally

11 Extinction stopped

We will have reduced the risk of extinction for:

Albatrosses
Aquatic warbler
Asian *Gyps* vultures
Bald ibis

12 Rainforest destruction prevented

We will have helped protect 260,000 ha of tropical forest with our BirdLife Partners, secured by trust funds.

13 The most important sites for birds in the world secured

We will have increased the number of Important Bird Areas that are legally protected in countries in which we are working.

14 Stronger BirdLife Partnership

We will have helped to build the capacity of BirdLife International Partners in countries in which we are working. These Partners will have more dedicated staff working for conservation.

Enthusiasing people and increasing support

15 More members

The number of RSPB members and supporters will exceed 1,120,000 by 2012

16 More children learning in the natural world

The number of sites for our field teaching operation will increase and numbers of children attending each year will increase to 85,000.

17 More people involved

We will engage in some way with 3,500,000 people a year.

18 More people making a gift of time

We expect to be supported by 15,000 volunteers, working a total of 750,000 hours annually.

19 More money for conservation

We will achieve an increased income for conservation.

Page 2	Peter Cairns and Richard Revels (both rspb-images.com), Hans Christoph Kappel (naturepl.com)
Page 4	Grahame Madge and Ray Kennedy (rspb-images.com), Chris Gomersall (naturepl.com)
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The RSPB is the UK charity working to secure a healthy environment for birds and wildlife, helping to create a better world for us all. We belong to BirdLife International, the global partnership of bird conservation organisations.

