

Administration News

Associated members – new district level NGO has joined GCCW as an associated member – Kvareli Nature Protection Society. Currently the GCCW associated members cover the following districts of Georgia: Telavi, Kvareli, Lagodekhi, Akhaltsikhe, Batumi, Poti and Kazbegi.

Membership – the number of members have exceed 1,000 for his period.

New staff – three new people have joined the GCCW staff: Nutsa Megvinetukhutsesi as a GIS operator; Nata Dolidze as an Administration Assistant and Maia Papidze as an accountant.

Trainings – the Director and Development manager of GCCW are participating in the Building on Experience training modules initiated and organized by Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), BirdLife International and BL partners in Ghana, Jordan, Paraguay and Indonesia.

Involvement in National Biodiversity Conservation Activities

During the fall 2003 and spring 2004, GCCW has been actively involved in the following national activities:

- ◆ Ecosystem Profile for Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot – Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), Conservation International (CI)
- ◆ Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources of Caucasus Eco-region: WWF Caucasus Program office
- ◆ Self Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental facility: UNDP and Ministry of Environment.

Environmental Education News

Schools for Nature Program – the completion were organized among Tbilisi high-school students on writing essays on nature related fields. More than 200 students from 60 schools have participated in this event. 50 best essays were chosen and a publication was produced - “My First Book about Nature” containing these essays. Similar activities are planned at district levels. Besides, the assistance was provided to several schools to obtain materials and organize various environmental oriented events. It was also decided to assist biology teachers in establishment of wildlife clubs for students: the guidelines are in preparation and after its completion the special training seminars will be conducted for teachers.

Media relations – regular press-realizes are distributed to Georgian mass media and there are articles about GCCW and its activities in national newspapers almost at weekly bases. Besides, two press conferences were organized during the fall 2003 and spring 2004.

Bird of the Year Campaign – Campaign on Caucasian Black Grouse was successfully completed in 2003 resulted in raising public awareness on this species and increasing available funding for its conservation. The Griffon Vultures is declared as a bird of 2004 in Georgia and campaigning is in progress: the calendar and tee-short is produced and distributed widely, a book on vultures is under development.

Books and other publications – two books are published during this period: “Caucasian Black Grouse” and “My First Book about Nature”. Several other books are in preparation – “Birdwatching Guide for Georgia”, “Galliforms of Georgia”, “Scavengers of Georgia”, “Field Guide to the Raptors and Owls of Georgia”, “Field Guide to the Birds of Kolkheta Wetlands”, “Wildlife of the Caucasus and its History” and “Field Guide to the Birds of Georgia”. It was also produced a new poster – “Raptors of Georgia”.

Library – the GCCW library was systemized and became publicly available. More than 750 books in Georgian, Russian and English are presented in the library and electronic database is prepared.

Projects News

Important Bird Areas (IBA) - This is one of the main strategic programs of GCCW that was initiated in 2001 in a close partnership to BirdLife International and SVS-BirdLife Switzerland. Program is in progress: New field data are being collected to complete identification and delineation of IBAs; New local groups are established and regular training is provided to develop IBA caretaker network; IBA promotion materials are being developed; IBA concept is promoted at national and international levels: wetland and mountain IBA conservation is included as a priority in the Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources of Caucasus Eco-region; and several funding proposals are developed and submitted to various donors for priority IBAs management planning.

Caucasian Black Grouse Conservation – new funding was obtained for this project through Environmental Investment Program (EIP) initiated and funded by BP and its partners in Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and South Caucasus Pipelines (BTC Co. and SCP Co. Ltd.). The principle objective of the EIP is to promote and conserve biodiversity. The EIP is divided into a number of different themes, which were identified during a process of consultation with national and international stakeholders. The Caucasian Black Grouse Research, Monitoring and Conservation Management project is one of the EIP themes. The project is based on previous activities conducted by GCCW in Georgia and intended to develop species national monitoring and management plans. This is two years long project and GCCW implements it in partnership to BirdLife International (European division), World Pheasant Association and University of Idaho (Fish and Wildlife Department).

Preparation of a field guide to the Birds of Kolkheti Wetlands – project is initiated and funded by the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Center (ICZM) to promote birdwatching in Kolkheti Area and popularize Kolkheti National Park at international level. GCCW implements this project with the following specific activities: information analysis about the birds associated with Kolkheti wetlands; Preparation of the text of a field guide (description of 170 species) in Georgia and English languages; Preparation of the illustrations for each species; and assistance to identify a publishing firm. This project is in its final stage – text and illustrations are already prepared and a publishing firm will be identified soon to produce the guidebook.

Vulture studies – the satellite tracking of Vulture species and their conservation studies are in progress. New funding is obtained for this project from Darwin Initiative/RSPB and Wildlife Conservation Society in addition to the project funded by Georgia Research and

Development Foundation (GRDF). Project is implemented in partnership to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary (USA), Natural Research (Austria), Imperial College London (UK), and partners in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

Promotion of Wildlife-Watching Tourism in Georgia – the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has provided funding for this project through the EBRD Business Advisory Services (BAS) Programme, acting on behalf of the European Commission. As a result of this project, the most important wildlife-watching sites in Georgia are identified, the description of these sites with photo materials is prepared and a database and web site is developed (<http://www.gccw.org/WWSG/index.htm>). Based on this project, GCCW plans to produce a book “Birdwatching in Georgia with other wildlife species”.

Field Guide to the Raptors and Owls of Georgia - the field guidebook “Raptors of Georgia” is produced by GCCW in 2002 with support from SVS-BirdLife Switzerland and BirdLife International. Book became very popular in Georgia and it was decided to produce its second edition by adding Owl species and translating it in English too. To produce this publication jointly the memorandum was signed with Georgia Protected Area Development Center (GPADC) funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the World Bank (WB). GCCW takes responsibility to prepare this publication, while GPAP will cover the publishing costs.

Wildlife Monitoring Along the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline – in January 2004, the contract was signed with Dzelqva Ltd. (a contractor of BTC company on biodiversity monitoring in Georgia) to conduct wildlife monitoring along and within impact area of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline. The project objective is to monitor and analyze the impact of construction and operation of this pipeline on selected species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. Based on these studies, the recommendations will be developed to mitigate the revealed negative impacts.

Migratory Raptors Monitoring – 75,625 raptors were counted from September 1 to October 30, 2003 at the village of Makhinjauri, near Batumi city. The project is initiated in 2000 and takes place at Georgia Black Sea coast at the fall of each year. The funding for this year was provided by Mr. Urs Kägi (LANIUS) through SVS - BirdLife Switzerland, and it was implemented in partnership to Adjara Nature Protection Society “Fsovi” and Falconers Association of Georgia. A poster and articles in local newspapers were produced as promotional materials for this project.

GCCW donors for the period of Fall 2003 – Spring 2004:

BirdLife International/ SVS – BirdLife Switzerland
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)/Darwin Initiative
Regional Environmental Center for the Caucasus (REC-Caucasus)
Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC)
WWF Caucasus Programme Office
BP and its partners in BTC and SCP Pipelines (BTC Co. and SCP Co. Ltd.)
The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
The European Commission
The EBRD Business Advisory Services (BAS) Programme
Wildlife Conservation Society
Mr. Mike Hirschler
Dr. Keith Bildstein
Mr. Urs Kägi (LANIUS)
Dzelqva Ltd.
Integrated Coastal Zone Management Center (ICZM)
Georgia Research and Development Foundation
Georgia Protected Area Development Project (GPAP)/ GEF/ WB

Become a Member of GCCW

The membership in GCCW supports conservation activities of globally significant biodiversity in Georgia and brings you:

Privileged access to GCCW programs and events
Publications with 10-20 % discounts
Birding trips with 10-20 % discounts
Newsletter (two issues) plus periodic releases relating to programs and events
Annual Report
Full time staff to respond to your questions and represent your interest in Georgia

YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS VITAL!

Because it supports research, education and conservation efforts to save nature in Georgia
For YOU and for future generations

Membership application forms will be available at our website soon
Before that, please contact us at address below

**GCCW produces this newsletter in Georgian and English twice per year
It is distributed electronically or, on request, via mail**

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