

INTERNATIONAL BLUE SWALLOW

(*Hirundo atrocaerulea*)

ACTION PLAN



**FINAL REPORT
FROM THE
WORKSHOP
HELD IN
JUNE 2002
KAAPSCHEHOOP
SOUTH AFRICA**



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BLUE SWALLOW

(Hirundo atrocaerulea)

International Action Planning Workshop

10 – 14 June 2002

Kaapsehoop, South Africa

FINAL WORKSHOP REPORT

Sponsored by:

**Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
The Mazda Wildlife Fund
The Endangered Wildlife Trust's Blue Swallow Working Group
BirdLife South Africa**

In collaboration with

**BirdLife International – African Species Working Group
The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) South Africa
The Endangered Wildlife Trust**

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Kaapsehoop South Africa

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10 – 14 June 2002
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Edited by

**S. Evans, L. Cohen, E. Sande, A. Monadjem, D. Hoffmann,
H. Mattison, P. Newbery, K. Ndanganga and Y. Friedmann**



SECTION 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

The Blue Swallow (*Hirundo atrocaerulea*) has a range of ten African countries including South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. The distribution of the Blue Swallow is fragmented over much of its range and the migratory or dispersal behaviour of this species is sparsely documented and unclear. The global Blue Swallow population is classified as Vulnerable under IUCN/BirdLife International threat criteria, and its habitat is disappearing rapidly (BirdLife International 2000). The South African and Swaziland population is classified as Critically Endangered (Barnes 2000) and the East Africa population as Endangered.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust, one of the largest, most established conservation non-governmental organisations in southern Africa, coordinates the Blue Swallow Working Group (BSWG) which aims to conserve the Blue Swallow and its habitat in South Africa. The African Species working Group in conjunction with the BSWG organised an International Action Planning workshop for the Blue Swallow which was held in June 2002 and which was facilitated by the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) South Africa.

The primary aim of the International Blue Swallow Action Planning Workshop was to assess the threats to Blue Swallows and to prioritise required actions in a cohesive conservation action plan in order to improve the survival chances of this species. The workshop ran over four days and was well attended by 23 participants representing nine of the ten African range states for this species (Mozambique was not represented).

The Action Planning Workshop process comprised a series of plenary and working group sessions in which working groups worked through tasks designed to facilitate free thinking, brainstorming, discussion and debate, issue tackling and finally, consensus building. After an initial group brainstorming session, the key issues facing the survival of the Blue Swallow were listed and this gave rise to the establishment of the following four working groups:

- Policy and Legislation
- Blue Swallow Ecology and Biology
- Education and Awareness
- Habitat and Land Use

Working groups tackled the issues facing their group, drafting a situation overview, compiling problem statements, developing and prioritising solutions and goals and finally, working out detailed action plans and steps that will result in achieving the goals developed. Plenary sessions enabled working groups to present the results of their discussions to the whole group and obtain the input of all participants, which resulted in much debate and insight from members of other working groups. At the end of each day, each working group submitted a report on their discussions and results, which formed the bulk of the final workshop report.

On the final day, a group integration exercise was performed and common themes across all the groups' solutions and goals were identified. These common themes included lobbying for increased funding for Blue Swallow conservation projects, the establishment of the African Blue Swallow Working Group and the identification of all possible breeding, migratory and non-breeding sites along with the development of a uniform monitoring system so that comparable data can be entered into the central database.

The African Blue Swallow Working Group was established and tabled at a meeting held by the group participants the day after the workshop and was already an active group within a week of the workshop's closure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES OF THE FOUR WORKING GROUPS

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY AND LEGISLATION WORKING GROUP:

This working group comprised five members and they dealt with broad issues of legislation across the different range states. They considered current international policies and conventions (including RAMSAR, the Convention on Migratory Species [CMS] and the BirdLife Important Birding Areas [IBAs]) and focussed on the enforcement and ratification of these conventions by the Blue Swallow range states.

Their solutions and goals included the distribution of this International Blue Swallow Action Plan to the relevant government bodies and conservation organisations in not only Africa, but also to other influential countries in order to ensure that the Action Plan reaches every possible stakeholder group. The group further planned a full review and documentation of the relevant legislation and its enforcement in relation to Blue Swallows and their habitats in all range states as well as the promotion of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for all planned development projects in and around Blue Swallow habitat. The integration of conservation and sustainable development was identified as being important as was raising the profile of birds as indicators and flagships for habitats and ecosystems.

The group also planned to promote the ratification of the CMS by all range states, to promote the development of memorandum of understanding on the conservation of Blue Swallows amongst all range states and to identify and promote the registration of relevant Blue Swallow sites as Ramsar sites.

They also dealt with issues pertaining to the promotion of Blue Swallow habitats as Important Birding Areas (IBAs), and the lobbying of governments to consider all IBAs as priority conservation areas. This group tabled the development of the African Blue Swallow Working Group which was endorsed and supported by all other groups and individuals.

ECOLOGY AND BIOLOGY WORKING GROUP:

The Ecology and Biology Working Group comprised six individuals. Their solutions and goals revolved around undertaking botanical surveys at breeding sites in South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe and in one non-breeding site (Uganda) to survey all the breeding and non-breeding areas within five years. Ultimately, they want to undertake insect/prey surveys in all the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas. They realised that they require baseline information on the environmental factors (basic climatic data and other factors like fire incidence and the presence and rate of spread of invasive species) through collating existing information, identifying gaps in the data and when possible filling these gaps in the data). They plan to set up a monitoring programme in each of the three areas (breeding, non-breeding and migration sites) to determine the relative importance of environmental factors.

They furthermore suggest establishing a checklist of the chemicals (forestry and agriculture) used in and immediately adjacent to the Blue Swallow sites in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Swaziland and to provide guidelines on best practice for land management to minimise the negative effects of some of the environmental factors. They considered looking at extinct

populations to determine what factors caused the extinction and to identify the vulnerable populations through an assessment of threats.

Also planned, is the identification of all possible breeding and migratory sites and the evaluation of all sites against IBA criteria. Regular counts of the birds present in these sites was also identified as important and as part of this, an investigation of the methods of mark-recapture of the birds to establish the link between the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas (radio or satellite tracking, radio isotopes) is planned.

Finally, the group plans to work towards increasing the isolated population sizes by recreating or restoring suitable habitat including the nesting sites in adjacent areas and to establish the potential of rehabilitating former suitable habitats.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS WORKING GROUP:

The Education and Awareness Working Group comprised five members. They began by identifying the various stakeholder and target groups of an education and awareness drive and identified these as being politicians and policy makers, community / religious leaders, the media, tour operators, the general public, education institutions, conservation groups and NGOs, funding agencies, commercial interests and landowners / managers.

The goals for these various groups included supporting the lobbying of government departments and organisations at an appropriate level (National/Provincial/District) in range states to effect change to legislation relating to school curricula and to ensure the inclusion of habitats and biodiversity in the curricula. They plan to build capacity in local champions / role models within the communities in all Blue Swallow sites to act as educators, to promote environmental clubs and ecotourism and to increase the profile of nature conservation and Blue Swallows in particular throughout the Blue Swallow range. Involving community / religious leaders in planning stages of future potential projects (ecotourism, income generating schemes etc.) at all Blue Swallow sites and gaining support and action for Blue Swallow conservation from landowners with Blue Swallows known to be on their land is also planned.

The group further plans to lobby all commercial interest groups at sites under threat and potentially threatened sites, to gain support for Blue Swallow and habitat conservation. The media is to be approached to increase the profile of the Blue Swallow and its habitat within the Blue Swallow range and tour operators are to be encouraged to adopt appropriate ecotourism measures to realise the benefits in Blue Swallow areas.

HABITAT AND LAND USE WORKING GROUP:

This working group comprised six people. The goals set for this group included carrying out an inventory of Blue Swallow habitats across the species range and promoting the undertaking of comprehensive EIAs before any land conversion in Blue Swallow habitats. They intend encouraging integrated conservation and development activities that enhance both timber production, agriculture and Blue Swallow conservation and the support of conservation legislation by appropriate policies. Alien invasive species and the extent of their encroachment in Blue Swallow habitats are to be identified.

Stringent measures to deter the spread of alien species in natural environments are to be prescribed as is the practice of good livestock husbandry such as rotational grazing and

keeping livestock herds that do not exceed the carrying capacity of Blue Swallow habitats. Detailed ecological studies on the relationship between grazers and Blue Swallows are to be commissioned and the reintroduction of recommended numbers of both domestic and wild grazers in areas where they have been excluded is to be supported in order to create appropriate habitat parameters for Blue Swallows.

The group further suggested creating awareness with the local communities about the need to adopt appropriate fire management regimes. The aardvark's role as a keystone species in Blue Swallow range is to be promoted. In the local communities, the group intends to create community-based natural resources management committees/groups to facilitate the formulation of natural resource management guidelines and to develop a list of chemicals that are environmentally friendly and to encourage and support their use. They also plan to encourage the use of biological control of insects as opposed to the use of chemicals. Mining companies are to be approached to develop working relationships with conservation organisations to develop and adopt guidelines that minimise environmental impacts.

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SECTION 2

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Introduction and Overview

BACKGROUND:

The protection offered by national parks and other protected areas, and the identification by BirdLife International of Important Bird Areas (IBAs), provides the basis of strategies for bird conservation that are site based.

However, some species occur largely outside protected areas, are present in low densities over very large areas, or face threats that site protection alone cannot address. For such species, site-based strategies must be complemented by a targeted single species approach.

Species based conservation, particularly for species that occur in more than one country, require strategic planning to achieve maximum benefits from restricted resources. This strategic approach led to the development, during the last decades, of Species Action Plans. These are scientifically authoritative and provide the relevant agencies with specific objectives and activities for the conservation of priority species. To be successful, they require extensive consultation and agreement with all relevant stakeholders.

Of the world's 1186 species defined by BirdLife International as "Globally Threatened", over a quarter occur in Africa. Many of these species need a species-based approach. However, existing species action plan formats and processes have been developed specifically for use in Europe and North America and might not work well in Africa. In addition, there is a need to develop capacity within Africa of preparing single-species conservation strategies particularly those needing a multi-national approach.

To address this problem, the BirdLife Africa Species Working Group, in collaboration with the RSPB initiated a three-year project to promote participative action planning for globally threatened bird species in Africa. The project "Action Plans for the conservation of Globally Threatened Birds in Africa" will produce cross-border species action plans for eight of the 354 globally threatened bird species in Africa. The target species have been selected to ensure that they provide practical training for more than 100 African conservationists, scientists and government representatives from more than 20 countries. The species that were selected are: Spotted-ground Thrush *Zoothera guttata*, Grauer's rush Warbler *Bradypterus graueri*, Rufous-fishing Owl *Scotopelia ussheri*, Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea*, Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas*, White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus*, Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* and Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata*.

The project is co-ordinated, on behalf of the BirdLife International Africa Species Working Group by **Nature**Uganda and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the BirdLife Partners in Uganda and the UK respectively. The project is supported and implemented by 17 African BirdLife partner organisations and RSPB and co-funded by the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under the Darwin Initiative for the survival of Species.

This Blue Swallow action planning workshop is the first species action plan workshop under the above project and was a collaborative effort between BirdLife International, the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group South Africa and the Endangered Wildlife Trust's Blue Swallow Working Group. BirdLife's Africa Species Action Plan format and process is still

developing. In order to benefit from CBSG experience in the field, the planning workshop was facilitated by the CBSG and followed the CBSG species action planning process.

The RSPB works for a healthy environment rich in birds and wildlife. It depends on the support and generosity of others to make a difference. With over one million members, it is the largest conservation charity Europe. Internationally, we work with BirdLife Partners for the conservation of natural resources through the empowerment and involvement of local people. The RSPB is the BirdLife International Partner in the UK.

The Darwin Initiative for the survival of Species seeks to safeguard the world's biodiversity by drawing on British strengths in this area to assist those countries that are rich in biodiversity but poor in financial resources. It helps these countries to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was announced at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and is funded and run by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, DEFRA.

INTRODUCTION:

The Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* is an intra-African migrant with breeding populations in South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania (Turner & Rose 1989). From throughout their breeding range the Blue Swallows migrate in the non-breeding season to Uganda, Kenya, DRC and Tanzania (Earle 1987, Oatley 2001). The furthest north that a Blue Swallow has ever been recorded is Kidepo Valley National Park that has its north-western boundary on the border between Uganda and Sudan in the north-eastern part of Uganda (Butchard 1996).

The Blue Swallow is considered to be most closely related to the Black-and-rufous Swallow *Hirundo nigrorufa* (Hall & Moreau 1970; Turner & Rose 1989). The Black-and-rufous Swallow inhabits seasonally flooded grassland in Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Malawi. The migratory or dispersal behaviour of this species is sparsely documented and unclear (Turner & Rose 1989).

The distribution of the Blue Swallow is fragmented over much of its range. The global Blue Swallow population is classified as Vulnerable under IUCN/BirdLife International threat criteria, and its habitat is disappearing rapidly (Collar et al 1994; BirdLife International 2000). The South Africa (including Swaziland) population is classified as Critically Endangered and the East Africa population (including Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania) is classified as Endangered under East Africa regional red data criteria (Bennun & Njoroge 1996, Evans & Barnes 2000).

TAXONOMIC NOTES:

Class: Aves
Order: Passeriformes
Suborder: Passeri (the Oscines)
Family: Hirundidae
Genus: Hirundo
Species: *H. atrocaerulea*

Although considered a member of the genus *Hirundo* by most authorities (Maclean 1993; Allan & Earle 1997; Clancey 1985; Turner & Rose 1989), Austin Roberts originally erected the genus *Natalornis* for this species in 1922. It lacks red in the plumage and white spots in the tail feathers. It is the only old world swallow to have sexually dimorphic plumage and it is the only mud-nest building swallow that does not use pellets of mud for building; it lays down layers of premixed mud and straw (Brooke 1984). This suite of features run contrary to its inclusion in *Hirundo*, and this species may be an isolated member of a unique lineage, with added phylogenetic conservation significance. A phylogeny of the swallows would be well placed to elucidate its affinities and taxonomic uniqueness.

DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION STATUS:

The Blue Swallow is endemic to sub-Saharan Africa and is an intra-African migrant (Turner & Rose 1989). It breeds in eastern South Africa, north-western Swaziland, eastern Zimbabwe and adjacent Mozambique in Southern Africa (Irwin 1981), see Table 1. In Eastern Africa the Blue Swallow breeds in northern Malawi, north-eastern Zambia, south-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and south-western Tanzania (Turner & Rose 1989). The birds arrive on their breeding grounds in September to October, and depart again in April (Keith et al. 1992). From throughout their breeding range the Blue Swallows migrate in the non-breeding season to southern Uganda, western Kenya, north-eastern DRC and north-western Tanzania in central Africa but do not breed there (Earle 1987).

In 1998 the total breeding population was estimated to be c. 2000 pairs or 4000 adult birds and declining (BirdLife International 2000). The estimate has subsequently been refined further and the breeding population is currently believed to be c. 1500 pairs or 3000 adult birds and still in decline (Evans *pers comm.*).

The largest breeding populations of Blue Swallows currently in protected areas are Nyanga National Park (580 km²) in Zimbabwe (estimate of 200 breeding pairs) and Nyika National Park (3134 km² - with ca 1800km² of montane habitat) in Malawi (conservative estimate of 260 breeding pairs) (Childs 2001, Holroyd & Quinni *in prep.*). All other known Blue Swallow populations are small, isolated and many are believed to be close to the minimum for long – term viability.

It is only in Zimbabwe and Malawi that a large proportion of individuals occur within protected areas. In South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Uganda, existing populations occur almost entirely in unprotected areas (Appendix 1).

Table 1. Population, distribution and seasonal occurrence of Blue Swallow (see Table 2 for more detailed distribution within countries).

| Country | Population (plus quality code) | Distribution | Population trend (plus quality code) | Breeding or non-breeding range | Notes |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| South Africa | 2001/2002 data: MP = 26 pairs, KZN = 51 pairs (39 active), LP = | Fragmented, patchy and localised within remaining | Decreasing slowly. | Breeding | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| | 5 pairs (1 active) = Total 82 pairs (66 active). 164 individuals. | grassland patches along the eastern escarpment. | | | |
| Swaziland | 20-22 pairs (estimated in Swaziland RDB, in press), 40-50 individuals. | Fragmented, patchy and localised within remaining grassland patches within the north- western highlands. | Decreasing slowly. | Breeding | |
| Zimbabwe | 300 – 400 pairs, 600 - 800 individuals. | Fragmented, patchy and localised within remaining grassland patches along the eastern highlands. | Decreasing slowly. | Breeding | (Childs 2001) |
| Mozambique | 50 – 100 pairs, 100 – 200 individuals. | Birds have not been seen in Mozambique in over 30 years. Espungabera to the headwaters of the Pungwe River (Clancey 1971). | Unknown. | Breeding | More recently, its presence in Mozambique is inferred from birds observed in Zimbabwe very close to the border with Mozambique. |
| Malawi | 300 – 400 pairs, 600 – 800 individuals. | Generally common on highland montane grassland in north and south with some birds on passage at lower altitudes. | Probably stable. | Breeding | |
| Zambia | 50 – 100 pairs, 100 – 200 individuals. | | | Breeding | |
| Tanzania | 300 – 400 pairs, 600 – 800 individuals. | Breeding in the southern highlands. Non- breeding in the seasonally flooded grasslands in the north-west. | | Breeding & non- breeding | |
| DRC | 100 – 150 pairs, 200 – 300 individuals. | Fragmented, localized in east. Breeding in south-east highlands (Marungu). Non- breeding in north-east (Lendu). | Unknown | Breeding & non- breeding | |
| Kenya | | Scarce bird | Major decline | Non- | A 32 day |

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--|--|--|--------------|---|
| | | recorded from April to September in open grasslands in Lake Victoria basin and peripheral areas in Western Kenya, in particular Bungoma, Mumias and Busia Districts and in Ruma National Park. | | breeding | survey done in 1996 did not record the species, but records of up to 6 individuals per sighting have recently (2000-2001) been made during visits by birdwatchers and ringers to Busia grasslands |
| Uganda | 500 individuals in seasonally flooded grasslands in north western part of L. Victoria. | Recorded in the Busia grasslands. | | Non-breeding | |
| TOTAL | 1202 – 1654 pairs, 2404 – 3308 individuals. | | | | |

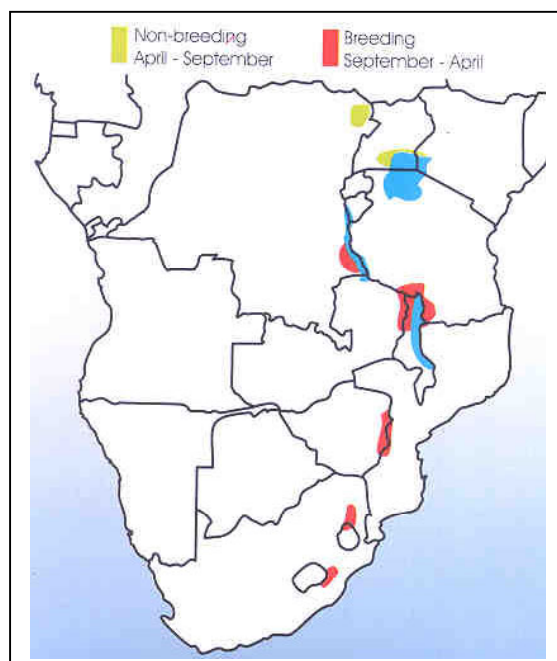


Figure 1. Total Blue Swallow distribution range. Breeding areas indicated in dark grey and non-breeding range (north-eastern DRC, north-western Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya) indicated in light grey.

MOVEMENTS:

The Blue Swallow is an intra-African migrant with breeding populations in eastern South Africa, north-western Swaziland, eastern Zimbabwe, western Mozambique, northern Malawi, north-eastern Zambia, south-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and south-western Tanzania (Turner & Rose 1989). The birds arrive on their breeding grounds in September to October, and depart in April (Keith et al. 1992). From throughout their breeding range the Blue Swallows migrate in the non-breeding season to southern Uganda, western Kenya, north-eastern DRC and north-western Tanzania (Earle 1987). The birds are present on the non-breeding grounds from May to August and in some areas early September.

PROTECTION STATUS:

The global Blue Swallow population is classified as Vulnerable under IUCN/BirdLife International threat criteria (A1c,e; A2c,e; C1) (BirdLife International 2000). This generally means that, the species is considered to have suffered or likely to suffer a maximum of a 20% population decline in 10 years or over the next three generations. This is mainly due to a decline in the extent of occurrence, area of occurrence and/or quality of habitat, and, this decline is likely to continue in the future (A1c,e). The decline is further known to be due to the effects of introduced taxa and the resultant decline is likely to continue in the near future (A2c,e). The total population is thought to be less than 3000 individuals and that there is likely to be continuing decline of more than 10 to 20 % of numbers of mature individuals in 10 years or over the next three generations (BirdLife International 2000). The Blue Swallow is listed on Appendix I and II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS or Bonn Convention).

HABITAT REQUIREMENTS OF THE SPECIES:

The primary habitat on the breeding ground is a combination of highland grassland areas interspersed with drainage lines in gullies and valleys; and other wetland systems such as pans and small dams (Keith et al. 1992). In the upper catchment of rivers, the start of a river is referred to as a drainage line and is simply a narrow long wetland. The birds select suitable grasslands - not for their foraging properties - but for their importance for nest building - sink-hole creation, Aardvark burrows etc. They also select suitable wetlands (drainage lines and other wetlands) amongst the grassland patches for foraging (Msuha & Sutherland 2001). The Blue Swallow prefers high altitude, high rainfall (> 1000 mm p.a.), undulating, open, primary mist-belt grasslands (Allan et al. 1987). The preferred sour grasslands generally have a sward height of <0.5 meters. In South Africa and Swaziland the Blue Swallow breeds exclusively within North-eastern Mountain Sourveld (Acocks veld type 8) and Natal Mist Belt (Acocks veld type 45) (Acocks 1975). Both of these grassland types are in urgent need of conservation (Duthie 1994; Louw & Rebelo 1996). No information is available on the wetland characteristics preferred by the birds. A piece of grassland with no drainage lines or other wetlands is unlikely to support any Blue Swallow pairs as there is insufficient food available and therefore the birds cannot breed in an area that is all wetland.

The results of a study currently being completed in South Africa has indicated that the way in which grasslands are managed does not play a role in how many Blue Swallow pairs an area can support (O'Connor *in prep.*). This supports the idea that wetlands are important for foraging in and not the grasslands component of Blue Swallow habitat. A follow-up study will be looking at the wetlands component of Blue Swallow habitat and how they are affected by

grassland and wetland management practices. This will be combined with an extension of the Blue Swallow dietary study (Hawks 2000).

The primary habitat on the non-breeding range includes moist grasslands (Kenya) and seasonally flooded edges of permanent wetlands (Uganda) (Nasirwa & Njoroge 1996; Evans & Byaruhanga *in prep.*).

Apart from the contribution that wetlands make to Blue Swallow food supply results from a Blue Swallow dietary study from one site in South Africa indicated that the wild horses that are present undoubtedly play a role in maintaining this relatively high Blue Swallow population (1 pair in 52 ha). The horse manure provides a favourable breeding ground for many of the flies and dung-eating (coprophagous) beetles on which the Blue Swallows have been found to feed (Hawks 2000). Two nature reserves proclaimed for the Blue Swallow in Kwa-Zulu Natal have experienced a loss in the number of pairs of Blue Swallows breeding on the properties since management of the reserves was changed. One of the changes included the exclusion of cattle from both reserves. The Blinkwater Nature Reserve, previously supporting a population of 4 pairs, no longer has Blue Swallow breeding on the property. The Impendle Nature Reserve used to support 8 breeding pairs and in 2002 is now down to 3 pairs. The loss of large mammals in certain areas may impact on food supply to Blue Swallows and consequently may result in local declines in Blue Swallow populations (Evans *in prep.*).

BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY:

Blue Swallows build a cup-shaped nest composed out of a mixture of mud and grass. The mud is applied in layers and not in the form of pellets as other swallows do (Snell 1963; 1969, 1970, Evans & Barnes 2000). Both the male and female contribute to nest building although the female does most of the work. If a nest site remains suitable Blue Swallows return year after year and repair the nest for use in that season. It takes the birds 14 to 20 days ($n = 4$) to build a new nest. The birds spend more time undertaking repairs to a nest at between 17 to 23 days ($n = 22$) (Evans *in prep.*).

Blue Swallow nests are located in riverbanks, road cuttings, sink holes, Aardvark burrows and disused prospecting and mine shafts (Snell 1969, Allan et al. 1987). There is usually only one nest per site. The birds do not nest colonially. Nest density in South Africa ranges from 1 pair in 52 ha to as little as 1 pair in 300 ha (Allan et al. 1987). Blue Swallows arrive on the breeding grounds in September to October and depart after the breeding season in April. They breed between October and March.

There are suggestions that under highly unusual circumstances Blue Swallows breed co-operatively, but for most of the time the birds are monogamous (Du Plessis, Siegfried, & Armstrong, 1995). Breeding males take ownership of their nest site and defend it from intruding males (Snell 1970). In areas where suitable nesting sites outnumber male birds and each therefore has access to a nest site; ownership disputes are almost never witnessed. In areas where males outnumber suitable nest sites disputes between the resident male and intruder are regularly observed. Disputes involve the birds aggressively chasing each other around with much vocalising.

Three eggs (seldom 2 or 1, extremely rarely 4) are usually laid with a mean of 2,83 eggs for 17 clutches in Zimbabwe (Keith *et al.* 1992). A mean of 2,64 eggs ($n = 119$ clutches) recorded between 1995 and 1998 in Mpumalanga South Africa. Only the female incubates for 14-16 days (Tarboton, 2001). Nestlings hatch blind and naked and are fed for 23 – 26 days by both parents. At fledging their wings are approximately 33% shorter than the

average adult wing length (Evans *in prep.*). After fledging they still depend on the parents for food for approximately three more weeks and during this time, the fledglings return with the parents to the nest and nest area to roost at night. Over this time period the fledglings are fed progressively less by the parents until they are self sufficient. In very good seasons the birds occasionally raise two and very occasionally three broods (Snell 1969).

Long term monitoring (1986 – 2001) (Evans *in prep.*) studies in Mpumalanga, South Africa show that mean productivity is 3,841 eggs/nest, 2,164 nestlings/nest and 1,334 fledglings/nest (n = 94). These same studies have shown that productivity is relatively low as 1,936 eggs/nestlings, 1,706 nestlings/fledgling and as many as 3,404 eggs/fledgling are needed. There is thus a higher proportion of eggs not hatching compared to nestlings fledging. Nesting attempts are often terminated by prolonged periods of mist and rain (Evans & Bouwman 2000, Childs 2001). Studies in Zimbabwe obtained in the late 60's and early 70's showed mean productivity levels of 2,64 eggs/nest, 2,07 nestlings/nest and 1,92 fledglings/nest (n = 14). The same studies have shown that productivity is relatively high as 1,276 eggs/nestling, 1,07 nestlings/fledgling and 1,37 eggs/fledgling (Snell, 1969, 1970, 1979). Although less eggs/nest were produced in Zimbabwe compared to the Mpumalanga study more nestlings/nest fledged in Zimbabwe than in Mpumalanga. The conversion of eggs to nestlings and to fledglings was much more efficient in the Zimbabwe study compared to the Mpumalanga study. Considering the time difference in the two studies the decreasing productivity trend may have less to do with differences in geography and more to do with a poor habitat quality in Mpumalanga in recent times (1986 – 2001) compared to a much better habitat quality in Zimbabwe in the 1960's and early 1970's when the study was completed there. Grafton (1997) reports that at least 37 fledglings were produced from 10 known breeding pairs during the 1996/97 breeding season in KwaZulu-Natal. During the 2000/2001 breeding season; 34 pairs observed, 22 active nest sites, 79 eggs, 75 nestlings and 65 fledglings. During the 2001/2002 breeding season; 51 pairs observed, 39 active nest sites, 168 eggs, 121 nestlings, 103 fledglings (Mattison *pers comm*).

Known causes of nest losses (eggs and nestlings) involve predation by Fiscal Shrike and humans. Snakes have also been found in Blue Swallow nesting sites but no confirmed case of egg or nestling predation exists. In KZN, at least four nests (eggs and / or nestlings) have been lost due to fine red sand filling the nest (possibly created by some burrowing insect??) and the contents subsequently being eaten by red ants (Mattison *pers comm*).

Nests occasionally flood or wash away during seasons with high rainfall. In KwaZulu-Natal South Africa during the 2001/2002 breeding season, at least 9 nesting attempts were negatively affected by the huge amount of rain during the November period (Snell 1969; Evans *in prep*; Mattison *pers comm*.)

On the breeding grounds Blue Swallows are often recorded grouping together in loose groups. A group is defined as being composed of three or more individuals exhibiting a basic cohesion, by proximity, social organisation or shared attraction to a food source or water site (Evans *in prep.*). The mean number of Blue Swallows comprising a group was four (n = 34) with an equal number of males and females. The birds behaviour within these groups suggested that the function of these groups is predominantly nest site selection and possibly included mate selection. The birds comprising a group were usually observed flying in unison in and out of prospective nesting sites. No trend could be obtained for the changes in the group dynamics throughout the season even when dividing and analysing the activities and composition of groups early (before nest repair and during nest repair), middle (during the egg-laying period) and at the end of the breeding season (nestlings and no further breeding activity). Even once all breeding activity had ceased group formation still occurred with the same activities before and during the breeding season. This formation of groups at nesting sites was superseded by the formation of groups of 12 to 13 individuals flying relatively high. The function of these latter larger groups appeared to be preparation for the migration back to central Africa. In KwaZulu-

Natal; landowners report of groups of 20-30 Blue Swallows flying around, late March and early April - all flocks of this number were seen on Highover and Roselands Farms in the Richmond area (Mattison *pers comm.*) Only on the non-breeding range have the birds been recorded roosting communally in areas of tall and short grassland (Zimmerman, Turner & Pearson 1996, Byaruhanga *pers comm.*).

Blue Swallows forage on aerial arthropods by flying 0,5 to 1 m above the mean vegetation height at a mean speed of 14,01 kmh⁻¹ (3,89ms⁻¹). When not foraging the birds fly higher, much faster and straighter at a mean speed of 21,18 kmh⁻¹ (5,88 ms⁻¹) (Evans *in prep.*).

THREATS AND POTENTIAL THREATS:

◆ = low threat, ◆◆◆◆ = high threat.

1. Habitat degradation and conversion mainly as a result of the following:

- 1.1) *Commercial Afforestation* ◆◆◆◆: This involves converting large areas of grasslands into plantations of exotic eucalyptus, pine and wattle trees.
- 1.2) *Invasion of exotic eucalyptus, pine and wattle trees* ◆◆◆: The exotic trees self-seed themselves into the adjacent grassland areas. The commercial companies are not taking any responsibility for controlling these renegade trees (Childs 2001).
- 1.3) *Large scale agriculture (e.g. sugarcane, potatoes)* ◆◆◆:- Political and economical pressures are increasingly forcing private landowners to transform virgin grassland to more economically viable land-uses in order to survive.
- 1.4) *Rural population growth and clearing for subsistence (small-scale agriculture)* ◆◆◆: most important habitats usually fairly inaccessible and not therefore suitable for cultivation. However, this is becoming increasingly important as rural populations expand. Inappropriate farming methods lead to soil erosion.
- 1.5) *Intensive livestock farming and overgrazing* ◆: Recent research by O'Connor (in prep) is indicating that this may not be a direct threat. Hawks (2000) indicated that, in at least one study site, Blue Swallows depend on food sources (flies and beetles) that require a source of dung to complete parts of their life-cycle. The removal of large mammals (dung machines) and not replacing them with any equivalents may be the real threat.
- 1.6) *Inappropriate management and drainage of wetlands* ◆◆◆: The extent of inappropriate management of wetlands as a threat is unknown. Drainage of wetlands for cultivation and road construction is a serious threat (Nasirwa & Njoroge 1997).
- 1.7) *Intensive grassland burning* ◆. Recent research by O'Connor (in prep) is indicating that the manner in which the grasslands are managed (burning, grazed or bailing) may not have any impact on Blue Swallow populations.
- 1.8) *Mining* ◆◆: Gold, manganese and possibly diamond mines in certain areas are known to be a threat in South Africa.
- 1.9) *Urbanisation* ◆: some of the nest sites in Swaziland are under threat of the rapidly spreading capital city of Mbabane.
- 1.10) *Permanent removal of livestock (or other large ungulates) from a Blue Swallow area.* ◆: This appears to have contributed to the loss of Blue Swallows from at least two areas in South Africa and contributes to the high density of Blue Swallows in one area in South Africa.

2. Local hunting ◆: This is probably a low level opportunistic activity occurring when young herd boys looking after the cattle get bored and climb in and out of sink-holes and other holes they find. This inadvertently disturbs breeding Blue Swallows and removing nestling for

use as bait for fishing. We do not know whether or not Blue Swallows are targeted by any traditional healers across its range.

3. Uncoordinated eco- tourism developments ◆. Small-scale eco-tourism development that does not take into account all impacts has resulted in the loss of Blue Swallow nesting sites in South Africa (Evans. 1997). Eco-tourism is seen as an alternate source of income for poor communities. Developments need to take into account all potential impacts and mitigations.

4. Specialised habitat requirements ◆◆: The distribution of Blue Swallows was naturally fairly limited. This was made substantially worse in more recent times by habitat destruction and conversion. Inadequate suitable nesting sites may lead to increased competition for nests and mates than would otherwise occur under natural conditions. The process of sinkhole formation may be negatively affected due to timber drying out underground streams. Fragmentation of grasslands (a result of grassland transformation) may result in Aardvark *Orycteropus afer* not getting to potential suitable sites to dig holes for the birds. Snaring of Aardvark has led to a decline in the Aardvark population, thereby also influencing the number of holes available for the birds.

5. Insecticides and pesticides use in agriculture?: In areas where Blue Swallows coexist in close proximity to agricultural crops such as potatoes, sugarcane, tea, maize etc. the use of insecticides may affect the prey availability for Blue Swallows?

6. Wars and conflicts (especially in the DRC) ◆: Internal, regional wars/conflicts have led to habitat degradation and increased illegal activities (farming, mining, settlement and agriculture) even within protected areas. Blue Swallow breeding and non-breeding ranges are confined within a troubled region on the near borders with east African countries.

Targets Recommended in BirdLife International (2000)

- Identify key non-breeding sites and conserve them.
- Survey and monitor breeding population size and trend at less well-studied sites.
- Control and remove non-native (exotic) plants at breeding sites.
- Assess effects of grassland fires on spread of non-native plants.

Additional Recommended Targets:

- Assess impact of regional conflicts on suitable habitats in DRC

OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS OF THE SPECIES ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

OPPORTUNITIES:

Population densities are low and populations are small but some of these small populations have existed for a long time, so in some parts of the range (e.g. South Africa) populations are declining very slowly.

Due to its scarcity, Blue Swallow is fascinating to birdwatchers, tourists and scientific researchers. Since the 1980s, it has become a symbol and flagship species for grassland conservation in South Africa.

Local expertise and interest (ornithologists and game rangers) exists in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia. A Species Interest Group for Blue Swallows (African Blue Swallow Working Group) is functioning with representatives from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. The group is expanding its activities to include representation from Swaziland, Mozambique, DRC and Malawi.

There is comprehensive, up to date information on the species in South Africa. One PhD (almost complete) and one masters degree (Tanzania), James Wakelin's Honours and several other studies have been completed on the species in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda. In Uganda, two of the strong holds are IBAs but more information on population estimates is required.

In Zimbabwe and Malawi a large proportion of individuals occur within protected areas.

National law in South Africa, Uganda and Swaziland protects the Blue Swallow. The Wildlife Act in Kenya protects all wild birds with a few exceptions.

The civil war in Mozambique is over, allowing careful access to areas previously inaccessible.

Risks:

In South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya and Uganda, existing populations occur almost entirely in unprotected areas. (>30% of Swaziland population breeds in a protected area).

Political and economical pressures forcing landowners to convert their remaining grassland areas e.g. (the proposed increase of tax rates on "unproductive land" in the farming areas by local municipalities)

The demand for resources by poor local communities with no alternate sources of income is very large.

The species has not been seen in Mozambique and the DRC for over 30 and ?? years respectively.

Protective legislation enforcement is nominal.

Capacity to maintain and adequately manage the protected areas in which the species occurs is currently weak.

Recent civil war and unrest in the DRC makes survey and other basic conservation work difficult and dangerous. National scientists can have access to a number of sites for preliminary work; dangerous places are some forests used by militiamen as hiding-places. Even in rebel-held areas, permission can be granted to carry out surveys if the application is well motivated.

Table 2: Local distribution, numbers & protected area status of Blue Swallow sites within range states.

| Country | Region/ Province | Site (IBA site no. if applicable) | PA status | No. of known nests (pairs) | References |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| South Africa | Limpopo (Northern) | 004 Wolkberg Forest Belt IBA | SNR; FR; SF | 2 | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | Mpumalanga | 008 Blyde River Canyon IBA | SNR | 1 | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 009 Graskop Grasslands IBA | Unprot. | 14 | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 011 Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site IBA | NHS | 10 | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | KwaZulu- Natal | SA 013 Misty Mountain Natural Heritage Site Sub-Regional IBA | NHS | 2 | Barnes 1998 |
| | | 057 Impendle Nature Reserve IBA | SNR | 5 prs (3 active) (01/02 data) | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). (Mattison pers comm.) |
| 058 KwaZulu- Natal Mist-belt Grasslands IBA. | Unprot. | 46 prs (36 active) (01/02 data) | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). (Mattison pers comm.) | | |
| Swaziland | Hhohho | 001 Malolotja Nature Reserve IBA | NR | 8 | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| Zimbabwe | Manicaland | 001 Nyanga Mountains IBA | NP | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 002 Nyanga lowlands / Honde valley IBA. | PNR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 003 Stapleford Forest IBA | SF | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 004 Bvumba Highlands IBA | BR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| | | 006 Chimanimani Mountains IBA | NP | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). (Barnes 1998). |
| Mozambique | Manica | 006 Chimanimani Mountains IBA | Unprot. | Unknown | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Sofala | 008 Gorongosa mountain and | Unprot. | Unconfirmed | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |

| Country | Region/ Province | Site (IBA site no. if applicable) | PA status | No. of known nests (pairs) | References |
|----------|---------------------|---|--------------|----------------------------------|---|
| | | National Park IBA | | | |
| Malawi | Northern | 001 Misuku Hills Forest Reserve IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | | 002 Nyika National Park IBA | NP | 260 possibly 300 pairs | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Central | N. Viphya (Chimaliro) | FR | Small numbers | (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett In prep.) |
| | | 006 South Viphya Forest Reserve IBA | FR | Small numbers | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | | 010 Ntchisi Mountain Forest Reserve IBA | FR | Vagrant (on passage) | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Southern | Kirk Range, Mwanza | Unprot | Small numbers | (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett In prep.) |
| | | 018 Mount Mulanje Forest Reserve IBA | FR, BR | Small numbers | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| Zambia | Eastern | 022 Nyika National Park IBA | NP | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| Tanzania | Iringa | 058 Livingston Mountains forests IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | | 061 Njombe forests IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Mbeya | 065 Mount Rungwe IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Morogoro, Iringa | 066 Udzungwa Mountains IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Mbeya | 069 Umaliila Mountains IBA | FR | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Mbeya, Iringa | 073 Kitulo Plateau IBA | Unprot. | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| DRC | Katanga | 017 Upemba National P ark IBA | NP | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | | 007 Lendu Plateau IBA | Unprot | | (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| Kenya | Nyanza | 040 Ruma National Park IBA | NP | | (Bennun & Njoroge 1999) (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |

| Country | Region/ Province | Site (IBA site no. if applicable) | PA status | No. of known nests (pairs) | References |
|---------|---------------------|---|--------------|----------------------------------|--|
| | Western | 057 Busia Grasslands IBA | Unprot | | (Bennun & Njoroge 1999) (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| Uganda | Rakai | 013 Sango Bay area IBA | Unprot | | (Byaruhanga <i>et al</i> 2001) (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | Mpigi | 017 Mabamba Bay IBA | Unprot | | (Byaruhanga <i>et al</i> 2001) (Fishpool & Evans 2001). |
| | | Nabugabo area IBA | Unprot | | (Byaruhanga <i>et al</i> 2001) |

Key:

SNR = Strict Nature Reserve
 PNR = Private Nature Reserve
 BR = Botanical Reserve
 NHS = Natural Heritage Site
 FR = Forest Reserve
 SF = State Forests
 NP = National Park
 WHS = World Heritage Site
 BR = Biosphere Reserve
 Unprot = Unprotected

THE CBSG ACTION PLANNING PROCESS :

Trying to save all the world's biodiversity at one time is impossible. A more realistic approach, however, is to save a single threatened species and its corresponding habitat. Population and Habitat Viability Assessment and Action Planning Workshops attempt to bring together biologists and other professionals with relevant expertise in a collaborative effort to assess the extinction risk and develop better management strategies for particular endangered species. Computer modelling tools, using all available data for the species in question, are utilized for this process. These workshops are held in the countries which the plants and animals inhabit. Moreover, decisions are made by the corresponding country's wildlife officials allowing practical and expedient implementation of the resulting management plan.

The CBSG Workshop Toolkit

Our basic set of tools for workshops include small group dynamic skills, explicit use in small groups of problem restatement, divergent thinking sessions, identification of the history and chronology of the problem, causal flow diagramming (elementary systems analysis), matrix methods for qualitative data and expert judgements, paired and weighted ranking for making comparisons between sites, criteria, and options, utility analysis, stochastic simulation modelling for single populations and metapopulation and deterministic and stochastic modelling of local human populations. Several computer packages are used to assist collection and analysis of information with these tools. We provide training in several of these tools in each workshop as well as intensive special training workshops for people wishing to organize their own workshops.

Integration of Science, Management, and Stakeholders

The CBSG Action Planning Workshop process is based upon biological and sociological science. Effective conservation action is best built upon a synthesis of available biological information, but is dependent on actions of humans living within the range of the threatened species as well as established national and international interests. There are characteristic patterns of human behaviour that are cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural which affect the processes of communication, problem-solving, and collaboration: 1) in the acquisition, sharing, and analysis of information; 2) in the perception and characterisation of risk; 3) in the development of trust among individuals; and, 4) in 'territoriality' (personal, institutional, local, national). Each of these has strong emotional components that shape our interactions. Recognition of these patterns has been essential in the development of processes to assist people in working groups to reach agreement on needed conservation actions, collaboration needed, and to establish new working relationships.

Frequently, local management agencies, external consultants, and local experts have identified management actions. However, an isolated narrow professional approach which focuses primarily on the perceived biological problems seems to have little effect on the needed political and social changes (social learning) for collaboration, effective management and conservation of habitat fragments or protected areas and their species components. CBSG workshops are organised to bring together the full range of groups with a strong interest in conserving and managing the species in its habitat or the consequences of such management. One goal in all workshops is to reach a common understanding of the state of scientific knowledge available and its possible application to the decision-making process and to needed management actions. We have found the decision-making driven workshop process with intensive deliberation among stakeholders is a powerful tool for extracting, assembling, and exploring information. This process encourages developing a shared

understanding across wide boundaries of training and expertise. These tools also support building of working agreements and instil local ownership of the problems, the decisions required, and their management during the workshop process. As participants appreciate the complexity of the problems as a group, they take more ownership of the process as well as the ultimate recommendations made to achieve workable solutions. This is essential if the management recommendations generated by the workshops are to succeed.

Workshop Processes and Multiple Stakeholders

CBSG Workshop processes provide an objective environment, expert knowledge, and a neutral facilitation process that supports sharing of available information across institutions and stakeholder groups, reaching agreement on the issues and available information, and then making useful and practical management recommendations for the taxon and habitat system under consideration. The process has been remarkably successful in unearthing and integrating previously unpublished information for the decision making process. Their proven heuristic value and constant refinement and expansion have made the CBSG CAMP and PHVA / Action Planning processes two of the most imaginative and productive organizing forces for species conservation today (Conway, 1995).

CBSG participants have learned a host of lessons in more than 100 workshop experiences in 40 countries. Traditional approaches to endangered species problems have tended to emphasize our lack of information and the need for additional research. This has been coupled with a hesitancy to make explicit risk assessments of species status and a reluctance to make immediate or non-traditional management recommendations. The result has been long delays in preparing action plans, loss of momentum, dependency on crisis-driven actions or broad recommendations that do not provide useful guidance to the managers.

CBSG's interactive and participatory workshop approach produces positive effects on management decision-making and in generating political and social support for conservation actions by local people. CBSG participants recognise that the present science is imperfect and that management policies and actions need to be designed as part of a biological and social learning process. The CBSG Workshop process essentially provides a means for designing management decisions and programmes on the basis of sound science while allowing new information and unexpected events to be used for learning and to adjust management practices.

BLUE SWALLOW

(Hirundo atrocaerulea)

International Action Planning Workshop

Held 10 – 14 June 2002

Kaapsehoop, South Africa

Edited by

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SECTION 3

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Policy and Legislation Working Group

PARTICIPANTS:

Steven Evans (South Africa): is the IBA Programme Manager at BirdLife South Africa and has been involved in Blue Swallow conservation for the past 7 years. He is presently the chair of the BirdLife African Species Working Group and Endangered Wildlife Trust Blue Swallow Working Group.

Dieter Hoffmann (United Kingdom): is Head of the Global Programmes Department at the RSPB, the BirdLife partner in the UK. He is an agriculturist and ecologist and has more than 20 years experience of working in developing countries.

Mathew Kiondo (Tanzania): is a Wildlife Research Scientist working with Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) for 11 years. He holds a BSc. and an MSc. in Wildlife Ecology.

Aggrey Rwetsiba (Uganda): is a Monitoring and Research Co-ordinator for the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). He is an ecologist and has been working in conservation for more than 8 years

Eric Sande (Uganda): is the Africa Species Working Group Co-ordinator, based at Nature Uganda, the BirdLife Partner in Uganda. He is an ornithologist and has been in the present position for 2 years.

ACRONYMS:

- **RSPB:** Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- **NGO:** Non-governmental organisation
- **UNEP:** United Nations Environmental Programme
- **UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme
- **ABSWG:** Africa Blue Swallow Working Group
- **EIA:** Environmental Impact Assessment
- **Ramsar:** Convention on wetlands of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitat.
- **CMS:** Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals
- **IBA:** Important Bird Area
- **NBSAP:** National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
- **COP:** Conference of the Parties

SITUATION ANALYSIS:

The policy and legislation group consisted of 2 government and 3 NGO representatives. There was a lack of knowledge about the situation in some of the 10 Blue Swallow (BS) range states. The group took the decision that CITES is not relevant (there is no trade in the species). The Ramsar Convention is relevant, because it deals with wetlands and Blue Swallows depend on wetlands. Ramsar is not ratified by Swaziland, Zimbabwe and

Mozambique. Additionally we don't know the BS non-breeding sites which would qualify as Ramsar sites. Governments are reluctant to designate Ramsar sites. The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS / Bonn Convention) is also relevant, but the Convention has not been ratified by Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia & Malawi. Other conventions (the Convention on Biodiversity / CBD, World Heritage, Africa Convention) were considered but their usefulness for BS was not apparent.

ISSUES:

The group pair-ranked the issues facing Blue Swallow conservation as related to the subject matter of this working group. The total scores are recorded in brackets, which led to a prioritised list.

1. Inadequate (and conflicting) national legislation / enforcement in Zimbabwe, Tanzania (23)
2. BS conservation is not a priority for governments (23)
3. Poorly co-ordinated network of BS "conservationists" (all involved in BS conservation) (national, international, regional) (19)
4. Many populations outside protected areas (18)
5. Incomplete protection by CMS (11)
6. Incomplete protection by Ramsar (7)
7. Local hunting (nestlings and adults) (4)

In order to develop problem statements, the group discussed the underlying causes for each issue:

I. There is inadequate national legislation in all 10 Blue Swallow range-states

- 1.1 Not a priority for governments/ NGOs.
 - 1.1.1 Poverty and other higher priorities
 - 1.1.2 Weak lobby for BS conservation
 - 1.1.3 Lack of capacity/ resources
 - 1.1.4 Poor political will
 - 1.1.4.1 Poor management and planning
- 1.2 Conflicting legislation
 - 1.2.1 No integration
 - 1.2.2 Weak conservation ministries
- 1.3 Political instability
- 1.4 Certain laws are difficult to enforce
 - 1.4.1 Law enforcement more difficult outside protected areas
- 1.5 Legislation outdated
 - Costly to update laws

II. Poorly co-ordinated network of conservationists

- 2.1 BS not seen as priority by individuals, NGOs, governments

- 2.2 Not many experts/ conservation NGOs in some range countries
 - 2.1.1 Limited capacity and resources
 - 2.2.1 Political instability
 - 2.2.2 Difficult to fundraise for single species conservation
 - 2.2.2.1 Funders take a habitat or ecosystem approach
 - 2.2.2.2 Species not seen as flagships for habitat conservation (also relevant to 2.1)

III. Many populations outside protected areas

- 3.1 Small and scattered populations
- 3.2 Protected areas traditionally selected using large mammals (not birds)

IV. Incomplete protection by CMS

- 4.1 CMS not ratified by Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi.
- 4.2 BS not a priority for governments/ NGOs

V. Incomplete protection by Ramsar

- 5.1 Not previously aware that Ramsar identification was applicable to some BS non-breeding sites
- 5.2 Ramsar not ratified by Swaziland, Zimbabwe & Mozambique
- 5.3 BS not a priority for governments/ NGOs
- 5.4 Reluctance of governments to register Ramsar sites

VI. Local hunting (nestlings and adults)

- 6.1 Nestlings removed for fishing bait by children (Swaziland, South Africa, others?)
- 6.2 Adults captured for food (Uganda and possibly Kenya and others)

PROBLEM STATEMENTS, SOLUTIONS AND ACTION STEPS:

(We considered political instability but decided that we can't do anything about it)

PROBLEM STATEMENT 1.

THERE IS INADEQUATE NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR BLUE SWALLOW CONSERVATION IN SOME RANGE STATES DUE TO IT NOT BEING A PRIORITY FOR GOVERNMENTS AND NGOS. THIS IS INFLUENCED BY POVERTY AND OTHER PRIORITY ISSUES, WEAK LOBBYING FOR BS CONSERVATION AND POOR POLITICAL WILL. THIS IS EXACERBATED BY POOR MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING AND LIMITED RESOURCES.

SOLUTION 1.

Distribute and promote the implementation of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan.

Minimum goal: 10 range countries, 5 international agencies
Maximum goal: 10 range countries, 10 international agencies.

The following action steps are the same for Solution 1 & 2 for Problem Statement 1 & 4 respectively.

ACTION STEP 1:

Distribute the International Blue Swallow Action Plan in all 10 range-states to governments and NGO's and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Responsibility: Steven Evans for international distribution.
BirdLife partners (workshop participants) for national distribution.
None-BirdLife partner countries (workshop participants)
Resources Needed: 110 copies of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan, postage.
Timeline: Mid-July 2002 to end of August 2002
Obstacles: None
Collaborator: All workshop participants
Measurable Outcome: Distribution list

ACTION STEP 2:

Distribute the International Blue Swallow Action Plan to International Agencies (CMS, BirdLife International, UNDP, UNEP [New York], Ramsar). Inform participants where copies have been sent.

Responsibility: Steven Evans
Resources Needed: 5 copies of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan, postage.
Timeline: End of July 2002.
Obstacles: None.
Collaborator: None.
Measurable Outcome: Distribution list.

ACTION STEP 3:

Country representatives to call a meeting with government/NGOs to present results of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan.

Responsibility: Country representatives in International Blue Swallow Action Plan workshop.
Resources Needed: Staff time (1-day), travel cost, subsistence.
Timeline: September to October 2002.
Obstacles: None.
Collaborator: Other NGO's and invited officials
Measurable Outcome: Minutes of the meetings from at least 6 of the 10 countries.

SOLUTION 2.

Proper review and document relevant legislations and enforcement in relation to Blue Swallow and its habitats in all range states.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

Lobby governments to draft and enforce legislation.

Minimum goal: 5 countries, (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 1, Solution 2 are the same for Problem Statement 2, Solution 1, Problem Statement 3 Solution 1 & Problem Statement 8 Solution1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Fundraise for and collate, review, identify gaps in current legislation and document the results.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be investigated by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Consultant, 2 months. Need terms of reference

Timeline: September 2002 to September 2004.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: At least five reports.

ACTION STEP 2:

Seek advice on who to target, submit draft report, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: September 2003 to September 2005.

Obstacles: Depends on completion of action one.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: Draft legislation / bye-laws/ amendments.

SOLUTION 3.

Promote selection of all Blue Swallow sites as IBAs. Include other bird species

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 range states.

The action steps for Problem Statement 1, Solution 3 are the same for Problem Statement 3, Solution 4, Problem Statement 5, Solution 3 & Problem Statement 7, Solution 1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify all Blue Swallow sites and evaluate against the IBA criteria.
cf. Ecology group.

SOLUTION 4.

Lobby government to consider all IBAs as priority conservation areas.

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 1, Solution 4 are the same for Problem Statement 3, Solution 3 & Problem Statement 5 Solution 2

ACTION STEP 1:

Seek advice on who to target, distribution of IBA directories and updated national inventories, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Obstacles: Time and funding.

Collaborator: Government, NGO's & Research Institutions.

Measurable Outcome: IBAs recognised in National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP).

SOLUTION 5.

Promote and contribute to EIAs for all developments in all Blue Swallow sites. Depending on the situation, could involve both national and international lobbying

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 range states

ACTION STEP 1:

Monitor all Blue Swallow sites for impending developments and engage the EIA process as appropriate. If necessary involve appropriate international lobby groups.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Appropriate contact people for all Blue Swallow sites. Library of information on all Blue Swallow sites.

Timeline: Established by the end of 2003 and then ongoing.

Obstacles: Identification of the appropriate contact people. Maintaining a network of contact people.

Collaborator: Governments, NGO's, local communities, local wildlife clubs.

Measurable Outcome: Early warning system of developments and EIAs.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 2.

THERE IS INADEQUATE NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR BLUE SWALLOW CONSERVATION IN SOME RANGE STATES DUE TO OUTDATED LEGISLATION. THIS IS BECAUSE IT IS GENERALLY COSTLY TO UPDATE LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENTS LACK POLITICAL WILL AND RESOURCES (CF 1.).

SOLUTION 1.

Proper review and document relevant legislations and enforcement in relation to Blue Swallow and its habitats in all range states.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

Lobby governments to draft and enforce legislation.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 2 Solution 1 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 2, Problem Statement 3, Solution 1 & Problem Statement 8, Solution1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Fundraise for and collate, review, identify gaps in current legislation and document the results.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be investigated by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Consultant, 2 months. Need terms of reference

Timeline: September 2002 to September 2004.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Government.
Measurable Outcome: At least five reports.

ACTION STEP 2:

Seek advice on who to target, submit draft report, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: September 2003 to September 2005.

Obstacles: Depends on completion of action one.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: Draft legislation / bye-laws/ amendments.

SOLUTION 2.

Using available data on Blue Swallows, lobby for the appropriate bye-laws.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Fundraise for and collate, review, identify gaps in current legislation and document the results.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be investigated by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Consultant, 2 months.

Timeline: September 2002 to September 2004.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: At least five reports.

ACTION STEP 2:

Seek advice on who to target, submit draft report, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Timeline: September 2003 to September 2005.

Obstacles: Depends on completion of action one.

Collaborator: Government.
Measurable Outcome: Draft legislation / bye-laws.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 3.

THERE IS INADEQUATE NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR BLUE SWALLOW CONSERVATION IN SOME RANGE STATES BECAUSE CERTAIN LAWS ARE DIFFICULT TO ENFORCE. THIS IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT SOME BS POPULATIONS FALL OUTSIDE PROTECTED AREAS. FURTHERMORE, THERE IS CONFLICTING/ COMPETING LEGISLATION DUE TO NON INTEGRATION AND LOW STATUS OF CONSERVATION MINISTRIES.

SOLUTION 1.

Proper review and document relevant legislations and enforcement in relation to Blue shallow and its habitats in all range states.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

Lobby governments to draft and enforce legislation.

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 3 Solution 1 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 2, Problem Statement 2, Solution 1 & Problem Statement 8, Solution 1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Fundraise for and collate, review, identify gaps in current legislation and document the results.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be investigated by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Consultant, 2 months.

Timeline: September 2002 to September 2004.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: At least five reports.

ACTION STEP 2:

Seek advice on who to target, submit draft report, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: September 2003 to September 2005.

Obstacles: Depends on completion of action one.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: Draft legislation / bye-laws.

SOLUTION 2.**Promote integration of conservation and sustainable development.**

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop, implement and promote appropriate site based projects.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners. Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Project manager, vehicle, funds.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Local communities, Government and NGOs.

Measurable Outcome: Five additional site based projects by the end of 2007.

SOLUTION 3.**Lobby government to consider all IBAs as priority conservation areas**

Minimum goal: 5 countries (based on presence of strong BirdLife Partners: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania).

Maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 3 Solution 3 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 4 & Problem Statement 5, Solution 2.

ACTION STEP 1:

Seek advice on who to target, distribution of IBA directories and updated national inventories, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Obstacles: Time and funding.

Collaborator: Government, NGO's & Research Institutions.

Measurable Outcome: IBAs recognised in National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP).

SOLUTION 4.

Promote selection of all Blue Swallow sites as IBAs.

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries.

Include other bird species

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries.

The action step for Problem Statement 3 Solution 4 is the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 3, Problem Statement 5, Solution 3 & Problem Statement 7 Solution 1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify all Blue Swallow sites and evaluate against the IBA criteria.
cf. Ecology group.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 4.

THERE IS A POORLY CO-ORDINATED NETWORK OF BS CONSERVATIONISTS, AS IT IS NOT SEEN AS PRIORITY FOR NGOS AND GOVERNMENTS. FOR THIS REASON, THERE IS LIMITED CAPACITY AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES AS IT IS DIFFICULT TO FUNDRAISE FOR SINGLE BIRD SPECIES CONSERVATION WORK. MOST FUNDERS TAKE A HABITAT AND ECOSYSTEMS APPROACH AS BIRD SPECIES ARE NOT SEEN AS FLAGSHIP FOR HABITAT CONSERVATION.

SOLUTION 1.

Formalise an African Blue Swallow Working Group (ABSWG) involving representatives from all the 10-range states.

Minimum goal: 6 countries (all range countries with BirdLife representation)

Maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Workshop to agree Terms of Reference, representation and communication network of an African Blue Swallow Working Group.

Responsibility: Steven W. Evans.

Resources Needed: E-mail and staff time.

Timeline: End of September 2002.

Obstacles: Communication.

Collaborators: All workshop participants and others as appropriate.

Measurable Outcome: Agreed Terms of References. List of representatives. Group in place.

SOLUTION 2.

Distribute and promote the implementation of International Blue Swallow Action Plan.

Minimum goal: 10 range countries, 5 international agencies

Maximum goal: 10 countries, 10 international agencies

The action steps for Problem Statement 4, Solution 2 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Distribute the International Blue Swallow Action Plan in all 10 range-states to governments and NGO's and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Responsibility: Steven Evans for international distribution. BirdLife partners (workshop participants) for national distribution. None-BirdLife partner countries (workshop participants).

Resources Needed: 110 copies of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan, postage.

Timeline: Mid-July 2002 to end of August 2002.

Obstacles: None.

Collaborator: All workshop participants.

Measurable Outcome: Distribution list.

ACTION STEP 2:

Distribute the International Blue Swallow Action Plan to International Agencies (CMS, BirdLife International, UNDP, UNEP [New York], Ramsar).

Responsibility: Steven Evans

Resources Needed: 5 copies of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan, postage.

Timeline: End of July 2002.

Obstacles: None.

Collaborator: None.

Measurable Outcome: Distribution list.

ACTION STEP 3:

Country representatives to call a meeting with government/NGOs to present results of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan.

Responsibility: Country representatives in International Blue Swallow Action Plan workshop.

Resources Needed: Staff time (1-day), travel cost, subsistence.

Timeline: September to October 2002.

Obstacles: None.

Collaborator: Other NGO's and invited officials

Measurable Outcome: Minutes of the meetings from at least 6 of the 10 countries.

SOLUTION 3.

Raise funds for a regional (BS range states) Blue Swallow project and include core-funding costs.

Minimum goal: 1 project

ACTION STEP 1:

Formulate project and submit to appropriate donors. Proposal based on International Blue Swallow Action Plan.

Responsibility: African Blue Swallow Working Group.

Resources Needed: Staff time.

Timeline: Proposal ready by end of December 2002.

Obstacle: Funders priorities.

Collaborators: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, BirdLife International Africa Division.

Measurable Outcome: The -proposal and obtaining the funding.

SOLUTION 4.

Raise the profile of birds as indicators and flagships for habitats and ecosystems.

Minimum goal: 5 countries

Maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Promote the Blue Swallow as a flagship species for the conservation of grassland and wetland habitats and ecosystems, to governments and funding agencies. Through meetings, workshops, publications and presentations.

Responsibility: National representatives on the African Blue Swallow Working Group.

Resources Needed: International Blue Swallow brochure. Staff time, travel expenses, leaflets and publication costs.

Timeline: International brochure by October 2002. The rest ongoing.
Obstacle: None.
Collaborators: Governments, other NGOs, research institutions.
Measurable Outcome: International Blue Swallow brochure. Additional funding for Blue Swallow conservation work.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 5.

MANY BS POPULATIONS ARE OUTSIDE PROTECTED AREAS. THIS IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT BS HAVE SMALL AND SCATTERED POPULATIONS AND THAT TRADITIONALLY, PROTECTED AREAS HAVE BEEN SELECTED BASED ON LARGE MAMMALS AND OTHER FACTORS.

SOLUTION 1.

Promote integration of conservation and sustainable development.

Minimum goal: 5 countries
Maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop, implement and promote appropriate site based projects.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners. Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Project manager, vehicle, funds.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Local communities, Government and NGOs.

Measurable Outcome: Five additional site based projects by the end of 2007.

SOLUTION 2.

Lobby government to consider all IBAs as priority conservation areas

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 5 Solution 2 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 4 & Problem Statement 3, Solution 3.

ACTION STEP 1:

Seek advice on who to target, distribution of IBA directories and updated national inventories, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Obstacles: Time and funding.

Collaborator: Government, NGO's & Research Institutions.

Measurable Outcome: IBAs recognised in National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP).

SOLUTION 3.

Promote selection of all Blue Swallow sites as IBAs.

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries

The action step for Problem Statement 5 Solution 3 is the same for Problem Statement 1 Solution 3, Problem Statement 3 Solution 4 & Problem Statement 7 Solution 1.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify all Blue Swallow sites and evaluate against the IBA criteria.
cf. Ecology group.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 6.

BLUE SWALLOW IS INCOMPLETELY PROTECTED BY CMS, AS NOT ALL GOVERNMENTS HAVE RATIFIED THE CONVENTION AND BS CONSERVATION IS NOT SEEN AS A PRIORITY FOR GOVERNMENTS/ NGOS. EVEN IF GOVERNMENTS HAVE RATIFIED CMS, ITS IMPACT IS LIMITED DUE TO FEW RESOURCES FROM THE CONVENTION.

SOLUTION 1.

Promote the endorsement of the International Blue shallow action plan by the CMS.

ACTION STEP 1:

Send International Blue Swallow Action Plan to the CMS secretariat, follow-up meetings with secretariat staff, attend CMS Conference of the Parties (COP).

Responsibility: Steven W. Evans and John O;Sullivan (RSPB).

Resources Needed: Travel costs to CMS COP.

Timeline: From now to end of 2003.

Obstacles: None.

Collaborator: Range-states governments.

Measurable Outcome: Official CMS endorsement. Inclusion of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan on the CMS website.

SOLUTION 2.

Promote the development of memorandum of understanding on the conservation of Blue Swallow amongst all range state and CMS.

ACTION STEP 1:

Draft Memorandum of Understanding and lobby CMS secretariat and range-state governments.

Responsibility: Steven W. Evans and John O'Sullivan (RSPB).

Timeline: Starting in September 2002, complete by 2007.

Resources Needed: Staff time.

Obstacles: Bureaucracy of procedures.

Collaborator: Range-states governments.

Measurable Outcome: Memorandum of Understanding in effect.

SOLUTION 3.

Promote the ratification of the CMS by all range states.

Minimum goal: 1 non-signatory country

Maximum goal: 4 others? (Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi?).

ACTION STEP 1:

Promote the advantages of ratifying the CMS to the appropriate government representatives through meetings.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners. BirdLife global and regional CMS focal points.

Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries.

Resources Needed: Staff time and travel expenses.

Timeline: Starting in September 2002, complete by 2007.

Obstacles: Bureaucracy of procedures.

Collaborator: Range-states governments.

Measurable Outcome: Ratification by applicable range-states.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 7.

THE POTENTIAL OF USING THE RAMSAR CONVENTION AS A TOOL FOR BS CONSERVATION, PARTICULARLY FOR NON-BREEDING SITES, IS NOT FULLY USED. THIS IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT ITS RELEVANCE IS NOT IMMEDIATELY APPARENT. FURTHERMORE, SOME RANGE COUNTRIES HAVEN'T RATIFIED THE CONVENTION AND GOVERNMENTS ARE GENERALLY RELUCTANT TO LIST SITES UNDER THE RAMSAR CONVENTION.

SOLUTION 1.

Promote selection of all Blue Swallow sites as IBAs.

Minimum and maximum goal: 10 countries

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify all Blue Swallow sites and evaluate against the IBA criteria.
cf. Ecology group.

SOLUTION 2.

Identify and promote registration of relevant Blue sites as Ramsar sites.

Minimum and maximum goal: 4 (all non-breeding countries)

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify all IBAs that qualify as Ramsar sites and contain Blue Swallows, and lobby government to propose as Ramsar sites (cf Solution 1).

Responsibility: Steven W. Evans, Martin Sneary and John O'Sullivan.

Resources Needed: Staff time and IBA database.

Timeline: September 2002 and ongoing.

Obstacles: None.

Collaborator: BirdLife International.

Measurable Outcome: List of IBAs containing Blue Swallows that qualify Ramsar sites.
Inclusion of sites on government proposals to Ramsar.

SOLUTION 3.

Promote the ratification of Ramsar by all range state governments.

Minimum goal: 1 non-signatory country

Maximum goal: 4?

The action step for Problem Statement 7 Solution 1 is the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 3, Problem Statement 3, Solution 4 & Problem Statement 5 Solution 3.

ACTION STEP 1:

Promote the advantages of ratifying the Ramsar convention to the appropriate government representatives; through meetings.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners. BirdLife global and regional Ramsar focal points.
Workshop participants for none-BirdLife partner countries.

Resources Needed: Staff time and travel expenses.

Timeline: Starting in September 2002, complete by 2007.

Obstacles: Bureaucracy of procedures.
Collaborator: Range-states governments.
Measurable Outcome: Ratification by applicable range-states.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 8.

INDIVIDUAL BIRDS ARE LOST DUE TO REMOVAL OF NESTLINGS FOR FISHING BAIT IN SOME COUNTRIES AND HUNTING FOR FOOD IN OTHERS.

SOLUTION 1.

Proper review and document relevant legislations and enforcement in relation to Blue Swallow and its habitats in all range states.

Minimum goal: 5 countries
Maximum goal: 10 countries

Lobby governments to draft and enforce legislation.

Minimum goal: 5 countries
Maximum goal: 10 countries

The action steps for Problem Statement 8 Solution 1 are the same for Problem Statement 1, Solution 2, Problem Statement 2, Solution 1 & Problem Statement 3 Solution 1

ACTION STEP 1:

Fundraise for and collate, review, identify gaps in current legislation and document the results.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be investigated by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Consultant, 2 months.

Timeline: September 2002 to September 2004.

Obstacles: Funding.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: At least five reports.

ACTION STEP 2:

Seek advice on who to target, submit draft report, organise follow-up meetings, workshops as appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife partners (workshop participants). Workshop participants for non-BirdLife partner countries. Malawi, National Research Council (to be followed up by Potiphar Kaliba).

Resources Needed: Local travel, subsistence, staff time.

Timeline: September 2003 to September 2005.

Obstacles: Depends on completion of action one.

Collaborator: Government.

Measurable Outcome: Draft legislation / bye-laws.

Ecology and Biology Working Group

PARTICIPANTS:

Peter Newbery (United Kingdom): RSPB, UK. Experience in compiling species action plans for birds in Europe. Co-facilitated SAP training workshops organised the BirdLife International African Species Working Group (Uganda and South Africa)

Ester van der Westhuisen (South Africa): University of Potchefstroom M.Sc student working on the ecology Whitebacked Nightheron in the Middle Vaal region in the Free state South Africa.

Achilles Byaruhanga (Uganda): IBA Coordinator in Uganda. Conducted some surveys of the Blue Swallow localities in Uganda and have been involved in ornithological surveys for over 8 years with NatureUganda.

Byamana Kizungu (DRC): Chairman of NGO **OBICOK (Organisation of Information about Biodiversity and Conservation in Congo- Kinshasa)** and Ornithologist Researcher.

Susan Childes (Zimbabwe): Blue Swallow co-ordinator for BirdLife Zimbabwe (volunteer). Consultant Ecologist. Executive Manager, Crocodile Farmers Association of Zimbabwe.

Ara Monadjem (Swaziland): Department of Biological Sciences, University of Swaziland. Currently conducting research on community structure and breeding ecology of savanna birds, and monitoring of raptor nests.

NB: It was recognised that we do not have full representation from range countries.

INTRODUCTION / SITUATION OVERVIEW:

The Blue Swallow occurs in low numbers in restricted areas of habitat over a wide geographic range. Population numbers are only well-known in South Africa and Swaziland. There are population estimates based on incomplete surveys for Zimbabwe, Malawi and Uganda. Population numbers have been guessed, based on the extent of apparently suitable habitat, in Mozambique, Zambia, DRC, Kenya and Tanzania.

The Blue Swallow has a specialised habitat, breeding and feeding requirements (grassland with intermixed areas of wetland/drainage channels). The types of habitat occupied are different in the breeding and non-breeding areas. These requirements will inevitably prevent it from ever being a widespread species.

It is a small, not easily identifiable, species that nests individually, often underground and out of sight – therefore it is not well known by the general public.

The current lack of knowledge is a problem because we have few clues about where to direct our conservation actions for the Blue Swallow:

a) we don't know which are the most vulnerable sites where site-based conservation measures should be targeted.

- b) we don't know if any of the key stages in the life cycle are being affected by environmental and intrinsic factors, to the extent of impacting upon the population dynamics.

We discussed briefly the issue of climate change – in the long-term the Blue Swallow is likely to be adversely affected, but we felt that it was beyond the scope of this action plan.

ACRONYMS:

- **ABSWG:** African Blue Swallow Working Group
- **CBSG:** Conservation Breeding Specialist Group
- **NSAPC:** National Species Action Plan Co-ordinator (nominated by BirdLife partners)
- **OBICOK:** Organisation of Information about Biodiversity and Conservation in Congo- Kinshasa
- **CRSN:** Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles
- **MVP:** Minimum Viable Population
- **DRC** Democratic Republic of the Congo
- **SA:** Republic of South Africa
- **UCT:** University of Cape Town (South Africa)

PROBLEM STATEMENTS, SOLUTIONS AND ACTION STEPS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT 1.

THERE IS INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE BIRD'S HABITAT AND NICHE I.E.: THERE IS NO BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION (QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE) AND VERY LIMITED INSECT/PREY SURVEY INFORMATION.

SOLUTION 1.

Within two years, undertake botanical surveys at breeding sites in South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe and one non-breeding site (Uganda). The maximum aim will be to survey all the breeding and non-breeding areas within five years.

ACTION STEP 1:

Botanical survey at breeding sites in South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Responsibility: Ester van der Westhuisen, Sue Childes, Ara Monadjem

Resources needed: Botanist (post-graduate student)

Timeline: Fieldwork January 2004 (4 weeks?), preparatory work during 2003, report July 2004

Obstacles: 'Selling' the project

Opportunities: Discovering new species or new records of rare species, will improve knowledge of montane plant communities, interaction with other taxon interest groups, collaboration with other Universities / research institutions

Collaborators: Botanical Research Institute, Universities (Natal, Potchefstroom, Pretoria), Grassland Society of SA?, 'orchid specialist group'

Measurable Outcome: Plant checklist, relative abundance of plant species, basal cover and vegetation structure

ACTION STEP 2:

Botanical survey at non-breeding sites in Uganda and DRC

Responsibility: Achilles Byaruhanga, B. Kizungu

Resources needed: Botanist (post-graduate student)

Timeline: Fieldwork August 2004, preparatory work 2003, report December 2004

Opportunities: Discovering new species or new records of rare species, will improve knowledge of lowland permanently or seasonally-flooded grasslands, interaction with other taxon interest groups, collaboration with other Universities/research institutions

Collaborators: Makerere University, Nature Uganda, Uganda Wildlife Authority, Wetlands Inspection Division (Uganda), CRSN, OBICOK

Measurable Outcome: Plant checklist, relative abundance of plant species, basal cover and vegetation structure

ACTION STEP 3:

Within 5 years, carry out botanical surveys of breeding/non-breeding sites in all remaining countries (Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya)

Responsibility: Potiphar Kaliba, Maurus Msuha, Kariuki Ndanganga

Resources needed: Botanist (post-graduate student)

Timeline: Before end of 2007

Obstacles: None

Opportunities: Improved botanical knowledge/plant distribution

Collaborators: National Parks, IBA officers, herbaria

Measurable Outcome: Plant checklist, relative abundance of plant species, basal cover and vegetation structure

SOLUTION 2.

In the long term, undertake insect/prey surveys in all the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas.

ACTION STEP 1:

Carry out surveys of potential aerial insect prey species at Blue Swallow localities in each country supporting populations of the species

Responsibility: National Species Action Plan Co-ordinators (NSAPCs)

Resources needed: Entomologist

Timeline: Up to ten years

Obstacles: Limited capacity in some countries? Difficulty of identification of insect species.
Opportunities: Link with current studies on faecal remains
Collaborators: To be identified
Measurable Outcome: Checklist of potential prey species

PROBLEM STATEMENT 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECT BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND WHOLE POPULATIONS, IN BOTH THE BREEDING AND NON-BREEDING GROUNDS. THESE FACTORS CAN BE BRIEF, RANDOM, PERIODIC EVENTS OR LONG TERM / PERMANENT CHANGES. BECAUSE THE BIRD OCCURS IN SUCH SMALL NUMBERS, A RANDOM EVENT ON AN INDIVIDUAL BREEDING PAIR OR ON A FEW INDIVIDUALS CAN HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON THE POPULATION. THERE IS A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF SUCH EVENTS BECAUSE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT MONITORING AND IT IS CONCENTRATED (AT THE MOMENT) IN ONLY ONE COUNTRY.

SOLUTION 1.

Establish baseline information about the environmental factors - basic climatic data (e.g. rainfall, temperature, wind, cloud/mist cover) and other factors (such as fire incidence and the presence and rate of spread of invasive species) - through collating existing information, identifying gaps in the data (and when possible filling these gaps in the data).

The relative importance of the different environmental factors may only emerge as a result of rigorous scientific studies

ACTION STEP 1:

Find and collate existing information on environmental factors

Responsibility: Steven Evans
Resources needed: One research person as co-ordinator, NSAPCs in each country
Timeline: By end of 2003
Obstacles: Non-availability of data in some countries
Opportunities: Better knowledge and understanding of environmental factors
Collaborators: Meteorological, geological/soil agencies
Measurable Outcome: Collated report on what data on environmental factors for Blue Swallow localities exists. Gaps identified.

SOLUTION 2.

Set up a monitoring programme in each of the three areas (breeding, non-breeding and migration sites). Measure basic climatic data (e.g. rainfall, temperature, wind, cloud/mist cover) and other factors (such as fire incidence, presence of other swallow

species, swifts and martins, and the presence and rate of spread of invasive species) in order to determine the relative importance of the environmental factors.

Minimum goal: Establish the programme in at least one locality in the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas.

Maximum goal: Monitor these factors in all localities.

Setting up monitoring programmes can be a valuable means of increasing awareness locally.

ACTION STEP 1:

Design a programme for monitoring basic environmental factors at Blue Swallow localities, which is repeatable at all sites.

Responsibility: Chairman of ABSWG
Resources needed: African Blue Swallow Working Group
Timeline: End of 2004
Obstacles: None
Opportunities: Encouraging other researchers, getting additional data from relevant agencies
Collaborators: Meteorological and geological/soil agencies, forestry departments, national parks staff
Measurable Outcome: The programme.

ACTION STEP 2:

Set up monitoring stations at a minimum of one breeding site in Tanzania and one migration / breeding site in Malawi and one wintering area in either Uganda or DRC. The ideal long-term goal will be to set up monitoring stations in all known localities.

Responsibility: Maurus, Portiphar, Achilles and Kizungu
Resources needed: A reliable local person at each chosen locality who would be prepared to take daily/weekly measurements.
Timeline: End of 2005
Obstacles: Finding the right person to monitor, equipment,
Opportunities: Link into the existing IBA monitoring
Collaborators: National Parks, IBA officers, University of Kisangani, (other universities?), CRSN, OBICOK, site support groups
Measurable Outcome: Regular and comparable runs of data from a variety of sites

SOLUTION 3.

Establish a checklist of the chemicals (forestry and agriculture) used in and immediately adjacent to the Blue Swallow sites in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Swaziland (the countries in which pesticide use is known to be widespread).

The Habitat Group is promoting the use of environmentally-friendly methods of pest-control. This approach to be adapted if necessary in the light of results coming from this study.

ACTION STEP 1:

Contact or visit users and/or distributors of pesticides in and adjacent to Blue Swallow nesting localities, to establish the type and quantities of pesticides used.

Responsibility: NSAPCs
Resources needed: Environmental Sciences student
Timeline: 3-6 months during 2003
Obstacles: Reluctance to provide full or accurate information
Opportunities: Lobbying and raising awareness of the issue
Collaborators: Timber Producers' Federation, forestry associations, chemical companies, agricultural science officers
Measurable Outcome: Written report

SOLUTION 4.

Provide guidelines on best practice for land management, in order to minimize the negative effects of some of the environmental factors. Examples would be wetland management, fire management, the removal of alien species and rotational cropping. Minimum requirement is a set of guidelines for breeding areas, maximum would also include guidelines for non-breeding localities.

NB: Publication and dissemination covered under Education and Awareness Action (see section 3 under Education and Awareness, problem 1, solution 1 action 2)

ACTION STEP 1:

Compile information on best practice that can be used for the production of brochures/leaflets as part of awareness-raising programmes in Blue Swallow localities.

Responsibility: ABSWG
Resources needed: Environmental manager
Timeline: Up to 6 months during 2004
Obstacles: Lack of information on some environmental factors. Different laws/policies in different countries
Opportunities: Co-ordinated approach to raising awareness
Collaborators: Education and Awareness Group
Measurable Outcome: Background information

PROBLEM STATEMENT 3.

THE BIRD IS A SPECIALIST SPECIES, HAS A NARROW ECOLOGICAL NICHE AND RESTRICTED HABITAT. THIS HABITAT IS PATCHY AND SCATTERED OVER A WIDE RANGE WHICH MEANS THAT THE BIRD HAS A LIMITED ABILITY TO MAINTAIN / EXPAND ITS POPULATION. CURRENTLY IT HAS LOW NUMBERS AND A PATCHY DISTRIBUTION OVER A WIDE GEOGRAPHIC RANGE. THE NATURE AND PATCHINESS OF THE HABITAT MAKES THE BLUE SWALLOW VULNERABLE.

SOLUTION 1.

We will look at extinct populations to determine what factors caused the extinction. Within well known areas, identify the vulnerable populations through an assessment of threats: immediacy, intensity, type of threat.

This piece of work will inform the Policy Actions over which sites require legislation or byelaws

ACTION STEP 1:

Collate all known information on extinct populations with respect to the factors that are associated with the extinction.

Responsibility: H. Mattison
Resources needed: Ecologist
Timeline: 1 year (already on-going, mid 2003)
Obstacles: Locating the information, and finding evidence for cause for the extinction
Opportunities: Better understanding of extinction processes
Collaborators: T. O'Connor and James Wakelin (KZN Wildlife)
Measurable Outcome: report

ACTION STEP 2:

Research study of population size, structure and status and assessment of threats. From this information, the most vulnerable sub-populations will be identified (i.e. small, declining sub-populations with a skewed population structure, and those in areas where threats are increasing).

Responsibility: ABSWG
Resources needed: Ornithologist / Ecologist
Timeline: 1 year (2003 - 2004) Project planning to start earlier (Jan 2003).
Obstacles: Above report not done
Opportunities: Population biology and modelling
Collaborators: T. O'Connor, H. Mattison
Measurable Outcome: Report from each country and therefore a focus for immediate conservation effort.

SOLUTION 2.

Identify all the possible breeding, migratory and non-breeding sites (areas). NB: Evaluate all sites against IBA criteria. Develop uniform monitoring system so comparable data can be entered into the central database. Make regular (annual if possible) counts of the birds present. Compare these results with any previous surveys that may have been undertaken.

A comparison may be made using museum collections between the previous surveys to determine the changes over time between current and previous numbers.

NB: The following three Action Steps overlap with Action Steps 1 and 2 in Problem 1, Solution 1 listed by the Habitat Group.

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop a uniform population census and monitoring form, including training for observers.

Responsibility: Chairman, ABSWG and NSAPCs
Resources needed: International Co-ordinator (computer person)
Timeline: 1 year, ending 2003
Obstacles: Finding observers
Opportunities: Raising awareness
Collaborators: Bird clubs
Measurable Outcome: Agreed system and recording form and trained observers

ACTION STEP 2:

Undertake comprehensive surveys of populations in all known Blue Swallow countries. Collate survey data for entry into BS Database and BLI World Bird Database. Initially the survey will:

- a) explore all possible areas within each country, particularly those countries that have not yet been fully surveyed (presence/absence)
- b) get an indication of population size during the above surveys (numbers seen)

Responsibility: Chairman, ABSWG and NSAPCs and workshop participants
Resources needed: International Co-ordinator, observers, vehicles, binoculars, GPS, maps
Timeline: 1 year starting in 2004
Obstacles: Funding and observers
Opportunities: Raising awareness
Collaborators: Land owners in each place and local bird/ conservation groups where appropriate
Measurable Outcome: Published internal report and international conservation journal

ACTION STEP 3:

Undertake simultaneous counts that will be co-ordinated in the breeding and non-breeding areas. If possible these will be done annually.

Responsibility: NSPACs and Chairman, ABSWG
Resources needed: Observers, vehicles, binoculars, GPS, maps

Timeline: 2005 onwards
Obstacles: Funding
Opportunities: Network strengthening
Collaborators: Local bird clubs, IBA officers
Measurable Outcome: Regular survey reports from each country

SOLUTION 3.

Establish the potential of rehabilitating former suitable habitats.

ACTION STEP 1:

Look at the information for each site where BS have gone extinct or are in immediate danger of going extinct, and assess whether these sites can be rehabilitated. Then decide on the methods of rehabilitation.

Responsibility: L. Cohen, S. Childes
Resources needed: Ecologist
Timeline: 6 months, by end-2004
Obstacles: Finding information
Opportunities: Better knowledge of restoration of BS habitat.
Collaborators: Forestry companies, National Parks, landowners
Measurable Outcome: List of sites that can be rehabilitated

SOLUTION 4.

Work towards increasing the isolated population by recreating or restoring suitable habitat including the nesting sites in adjacent areas at least on one vulnerable area.

ACTION STEP 1:

Implement appropriate rehabilitation measures.

Responsibility: Landowners
Resources needed: Team of workers, chemicals ? tools
Timeline: Start beginning 2003, and ongoing.
Obstacles: Funding and willingness to do the work
Opportunities: Awareness, "green image" for land owners
Collaborators: Forestry Stewardship Certification
Measurable Outcome: Rehabilitated sites

SOLUTION 5.

In the long term, work towards increasing the patchy habitats suitable for the Blue Swallow throughout its range.

ACTION STEP 1:

Advise national policy makers and invoke CMS to gain international agreement. Use the results from the above action to encourage similar actions elsewhere.

Responsibility: NSAPCs
Resources needed: Advocacy person in government
Timeline: On going – at least 10 years
Obstacles: No suitable person
Opportunities: Increased awareness within government
Collaborators: Each country's environmental ministry
Measurable Outcome: Ratification of CMS

SOLUTION 6.

Investigate the minimum viable populations for the species within a meta-population structure (in relation to habitat quality and taking account of the possibility of recruitment from other neighbouring colonies)

ACTION STEP 1:

Determine the MVP for the Blue Swallow

Responsibility: Steven Evans
Resources needed: Population biologist
Timeline: 6 months, during 2003?
Obstacles: Finding a suitable person. Adapting an existing programme (e.g. Vortex) to fit the Blue Swallow
Opportunities: MSc opportunity. Gives time frame for compiling and implementing National Blue Swallow Action Plans.
Collaborators: CBSG
Measurable Outcome: Production of various management options for BS populations and habitat

The issue of captive breeding was discussed, but it was agreed that direct conservation measures for wild populations should be the focus of action.

The Blue Swallow is not thought to be a suitable species for a captive-breeding programme – it is an insectivorous aerial feeder, has relatively small clutches, and is a long-distance migrant.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 4.

WE HAVE A POOR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE LINKS BETWEEN BREEDING, NON-BREEDING SITES AND THE MIGRATION ROUTES. WE ALSO KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE PHYLOGENIC AND GENETIC DIVERSITY OF THE SPECIES, BETWEEN AND WITHIN SUB-POPULATIONS. WITH RESPECT TO THE INTERNAL BREEDING

POTENTIAL : WE DON'T KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE THE 'BOTTLENECKS' ARE IN THE BIRDS' LIFE CYCLE, OR WHETHER PESTICIDES AFFECT BREEDING SUCCESS. WE WANT TO KNOW IF THE SUB-POPULATIONS ARE MIXING. HOW CRITICAL ARE THE INDIVIDUAL BREEDING AND NON-BREEDING SITES TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL SUB-POPULATIONS?

SOLUTION 1.

Investigate the methods of mark-recapture of the birds in order to establish the link between the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas (radio or satellite tracking, radio isotopes)

ACTION STEP 1:

Investigate suitable methods of mark – recapture or tracking the bird.

Responsibility: Steven Evans
Resources needed: Engineer / Scientist
Timeline: Begin 2003 and then on-going (depending on technological developments)
Obstacles: Finding the right person
Opportunities: Potential development of new technology
Collaborators: Companies that specialise in tracking devices
Measurable Outcome: Determination of migration routes and degree of mixing of subpopulations

SOLUTION 2.

Develop and undertake DNA analysis to determine the genetic diversity between and within the sub-populations to establish the phylogenetic relationships. This will help to establish the migratory route and whether there is mixing of different sub-populations or in-breeding.

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop techniques of DNA analysis suitable for the Blue Swallow.

Responsibility: Steven Evans, Kizungu Byamana
Resources needed: DNA/ Molecular biologist and genetics expert
Timeline: Begin 2003 and then on-going
Obstacles: Funding
Opportunities: Development of new molecular techniques
Collaborators: University of Pretoria, Makerere University
Measurable Outcome: Genetic profile of different subpopulations

PROBLEM STATEMENT 5.

LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE LIFE CYCLE , AND WHICH STAGES MIGHT BE REDUCING BREEDING PRODUCTIVITY AND LEADING TO POPULATION DECLINE.

SOLUTION 1.

Study the breeding biology in at least two more breeding areas (in addition to current studies already under way in South Africa). Topics to include reproductive effort (number of breeding attempts in a season, number of eggs laid, number hatched), reproductive success (number of young fledged successfully) and recruitment (number of 1 year old birds joining the breeding population). The results may lead to study of internal factors (body condition, hormone levels, toxin residues) if problems with any of these issues are discovered.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify appropriate areas for the study. Agree on methods of recording data. Train observers if necessary.

Responsibility: ABSWG
Resources needed: Project Co-ordinator
Timeline: 2 months by mid-2004
Obstacles: None
Opportunities: Strengthening the ABSWG network
Collaborators: Country NSAPC's, BirdLife partners
Measurable Outcome: List of sites and study methods

ACTION STEP 2:

Undertake the study

Responsibility: The ABSWG
Resources needed: Keen reliable observers and fibre-optics / camera if possible
Timeline: Starting in the 2004 breeding season, and on-going
Obstacles: Finding observers and funding of expensive equipment (camera)
Opportunities: Increased knowledge of the bird's behaviour; potential eco-tourism; awareness
Collaborators: Fitzpatrick Institute
Measurable Outcome: Report

ACTION STEP 3:

Undertake physiological studies if results from above work indicate that it is necessary.

Responsibility: The ABSWG
Resources needed: Eco-toxicologists, veterinarian
Timeline: 12 months by end-2008 (only if necessary) and ongoing if necessary
Obstacles: Appropriate technology may be required

Opportunities: Research
Collaborators: EWT, Onderstepoort Veterinary Faculty, Rand Afrikaans University,
Potchefstroom University
Measurable Outcome: Fat indices and hormone levels

SOLUTION 2.

Study the extent of intra-specific competition for nest sites

The group originally intended to include studies of inter-specific competition for food, but it was decided that this was not feasible at the moment, and of less value than concentrating on intra-specific competition for nest sites.

ACTION STEP 1:

Set up a research study into inter- and intra-specific competition for nest sites at as many breeding localities as possible.

Minimum goal: One study site.

Responsibility: Steven Evans/Sue Childes/Maurus Msuha

Resources needed: Good research student (Masters/PhD project?), with input from reliable birders, ornithologists and interested individuals.

Timeline: Project fieldwork to commence September 2004, minimum 1 season, maximum 3 seasons

Obstacles: Finding a suitable student, identification of individual Blue Swallows.

Opportunities: New behavioural/reproductive information on the Blue Swallow

Collaborators: Other fieldworkers studying reproductive biology of the species, UCT

Measurable Outcome: Published research report

SOLUTION 3.

Investigate and map the number of potential nest sites in breeding areas.

Minimum goal: One locality in each country

Maximum goal: All breeding localities

ACTION STEP 1:

Investigate and map the number of potential nest sites in breeding areas.

Minimum goal: One locality in each country, maximum all breeding localities.

Responsibility: Steven Evans/Sue Childes/Maurus Msuha

Resources needed: Good research student (Masters/PhD project?), with input from reliable birders, ornithologists and interested individuals.

Timeline: Project fieldwork to commence September 2003, minimum 1 season, maximum 3 seasons

Obstacles: Finding a suitable student, identification of individual Blue Swallows.
Opportunities: New behavioural/reproductive information on the Blue Swallow
Collaborators: Other fieldworkers studying reproductive biology of the species, UCT
Measurable Outcome: Published research report

SOLUTION 4.

Collect addled eggs to establish baseline information on pesticide residues.

Minimum goal: **One locality in each country, maximum all breeding localities.**

ACTION STEP 1:

In conjunction with the above two solutions, collect addled eggs

Responsibility: As above
Resources needed: As in solution 3, Action Step 1 above
Timeline: As above
Obstacles: Lack of controls (e.g. egg shells from unpolluted environments)
Opportunities: Research
Collaborators: As above, and Museums
Measurable Outcome: List of pesticides, level of toxins present, egg shell thickness indices

SOLUTION 5.

Investigate nest site fidelity (through mark-recapture at nest site), individual longevity (e.g. ultrasound scans of ovaries), population structure (adults/juveniles in non-breeding areas, males/females in breeding areas).

Minimum goal: One study of each issue.

Parts of this solution will be covered in the study Problem 5, Solution 1, Action Step 2.

ACTION STEP 1:

Investigate whether ultra-sound is an appropriate technique for ageing female birds.

Responsibility: Steven Evans
Resources needed: Veterinarian
Timeline: 6 months from 2005 onwards if possible
Obstacles: Appropriate technology and equipment
Opportunities: Potential for research degree
Collaborators: Onderstepoort Veterinary School, Pretoria University
Measurable Outcome: Ageing criteria

Education and Awareness Working group

PARTICIPANTS:

Kariuki Ndong'ang'a (Kenya):

Research scientist at the Ornithology department, National Museums of Kenya. Has 5 years experience in bird research and conservation through the museum and Nature Kenya. Has had wide interaction with local communities. With no experience in Blue Swallow work.

Charles Kahindo Muzusangabo (DRC):

Research Biologist working with higher education and research institutions in eastern DRC. Over 10 years experience in teaching and research in areas of Conservation biology, Ecology and Environment Education. Very little experience with Blue Swallows.

Daniel Mwizabi (Zambia):

Two years work experience as Law Enforcement Officer with Zambia National Parks and Wildlife Services. Seven years under Research division in the same institution. Two years as liaison officer under Zambia Wildlife Authority.

Ian Barber (Malawi):

Spent seven years as a Conservation Officer with the RSPB (UK) and last two years has been Chair Lilongwe Branch of the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi.

Sandile Gumedze (Swaziland):

Organisation is the Swaziland National Trust Commission - Spent two years working as a wildlife nature reserve park warden coupled with over a year duties as a National Environmental Education Officer.

Helena Mattison (South Africa):

Worked in crane conservation (1994-2000) doing research, education / awareness and captive breeding. Currently National and KwaZulu-Natal Coordinator for the EWT-Blue Swallow Working Group. Has a BSc in Zoology and a course in Environmental Education.

ACRONYMS:

- **KEN** Kenya
- **ZA** South Africa
- **DRC** Democratic Republic of Congo
- **SD** Swaziland
- **ZM** Zambia
- **Moz** Mozambique
- **KN** Kariuki Ndong'ang'a
- **HM** Helena Mattison
- **CKM** Charles Kahindo Muzusangabo
- **GS** Gamedza Sandile
- **WESM** Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi
- **WESSA** Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa
- **KZNCF** KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation
- **OWG** Oribi Working Group
- **ABSWG** African Blue Swallow Working Group

- **WBLTC** Wakkerstroom BirdLife Training Centre
- **PBEATRA** Programme Biodiversité des Ecosystèmes Aquatiques et Terrestres dans le Rift Albertin
- **ICCN** Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature
- **OBICOK** Organisation de l'Information sur la Biodiversité et la Conservation au Congo- Kinshasa

SITUATION ANALYSIS:

The Blue Swallow is a small bird with little charisma. As such it is often considered insignificant and does not easily grab the attention of stakeholders. Generally speaking, the public also tends to lack an understanding of the value and benefits of biodiversity. There is also a general ignorance and a lack of understanding of the value and benefits of biodiversity. The results of this are that people are not becoming active in conservation and environmental issues. This can lead to negative effects on the Blue Swallow and its habitat for example disturbance and inappropriate activities, which may lead to its decline.

The Education and Awareness Working Group includes a trained teacher, someone with a qualification in Environmental Education, two people with experience in environmental education outreach work and several have worked at community level.

After looking at the issues surrounding education and awareness and Blue Swallows the decision was taken to look at target groups or stakeholders and rank them and rather than the issues.

ISSUES:

The main issues are identified as:

1. Due to its small size, relatively dull colour and the fact that it is found in inaccessible or unpopular areas, the Blue Swallow is poorly known and rarely seen as charismatic, resulting in poor support from all necessary stakeholders.
2. There is insufficient interest and awareness of nature conservation and environmental issues, which makes it difficult to promote single species conservation.
3. The potential benefits and values (economic, ecological, cultural) of the Blue Swallow are unknown to the various stakeholders, resulting in lack of support for the species and habitat conservation projects and missed opportunities in terms of benefits.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS, SOLUTIONS AND ACTION STEPS:

THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT EDUCATING OR RAISING THE AWARENESS OF BLUE SWALLOWS AND THEIR HABITATS WILL BE (WITHIN EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP) THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM STATEMENTS:

1. DECISION AND POLICY MAKERS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A LOW PRIORITY GIVEN TO BLUE SWALLOWS AND THEIR HABITATS, WHICH WILL IMPACT ON FUNDING, LEGISLATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT.

SOLUTION 1:

Support the lobbying of Government Departments and organisations at an appropriate level (National/Provincial/District) in all range states, or in all BirdLife partner states, in order to effect change to legislation relating to school curricula. Ensure the inclusion of habitats and biodiversity in the curricula.

It was decided that the Policy and Legislation Group would handle all other change to and lobbying of legislation, the Education and Awareness group would concentrate on effecting change to school curricula only.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify and make contact with appropriate bodies involved in curriculum development to establish what environmental education material is included in existing curricula.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPC), ABSWG, Ara Monadjem, Ian Barber, Charles Muzusangabo, Mozambique?

Resources needed: Office overheads

Timeline: December 2002

Obstacles: None

Collaborators: Environmental NGO's, Govt Education Officials, WESSA

Measurable Outcomes: Contact list, and assessment report

ACTION STEP 2:

Collate existing resources relating to biodiversity and habitat management and where appropriate promote the inclusion in curricula.

Minimum goal: 6 Blue Swallow range states with BirdLife partners

Maximum goal: 10 Blue Swallow range states

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners, ABSWG, Ara Monadjem, WESM, Charles Muzusangabo, Mozambique?

Resources needed: Appropriate experts to assess curricula materials, office overheads

Timeline: December 2002 to ???

Obstacles: Political will, political unrest.

Collaborators: Environmental NGO's, Education and other relevant Ministries, WESSA.

Measurable Outcomes: Inclusion of EE in curricula including habitat and biodiversity issues.

2. LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY / RELIGIOUS LEADERS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT.

POSSIBLE PERSECUTION AND EXCESSIVE DISTURBANCE AT SITES AND HABITAT TRANSFORMATION. THE COMMUNITIES MAY ALSO LOSE POTENTIAL ECOTOURISM OPPORTUNITIES. UNINFORMED LOCAL LEADERS MAY MISINFORM COMMUNITIES ON LAND MANAGEMENT.

a) Community / Religious Leaders

SOLUTION 1.

Involve community / religious leaders in all planning stages of future projects i.e. ecotourism, income generating schemes etc. at all Blue Swallow sites or at least in the most vulnerable sites.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify communities, initiate and maintain contact with leaders in areas impacting on Blue Swallow sites. Provide with relevant information pertaining to Blue Swallow conservation.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG , Community Outreach Officers (GS - SD), CKM - DRC, Swaziland National Trust Commission, Malawi and Zambia sites are in protected areas.

Resources needed: Funding for field officers and transportation

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Possible mistrust & reluctance from communities/leaders, funding

Collaborators: IBA Site Support Groups (KN - KEN), KZN Wildlife, KZNCF & OWG (ZA), OBICOK and ICCN (DRC),

Measurable Outcomes: List of supportive local leaders.

b) General Community

SOLUTION 1.

Build the capacity of local champions/role models or existing networks/organisations and community-based groups e.g. women, church groups, within the community in all Blue Swallow sites or at least in the most vulnerable site. These can act as educators and can promote environmental clubs, ecotourism etc.

ACTION STEP 1:

Work with leaders to help identify potential local champions or use existing community based groups.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPC), ABSWG , Community Outreach Officers (GS - SD), KM - DRC, Swaziland National Trust Commission, Malawi and Zambia sites are in protected areas.

Resources needed: Support and funding for local champions, field officers and transportation

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Possible mistrust & reluctance from communities/leaders and funding

Collaborators: IBA Site Support Groups (KN - KEN), KZN Wildlife, KZNCF & OWG (ZA), OBICOK and ICCN (DRC), NGO's working in same area.

Measurable Outcomes: Local champions in place

ACTION STEP 2:

Initiate and develop links with capacity building organisations and establish relevant training programmes for the local champions or community-based organisations.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG, Community Outreach Officers (GS - SD), KM - DRC, Malawi and Zambia sites are in protected areas.

Resources needed: Funding for training programmes

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Mistrust & reluctance from communities/leaders and funding

Collaborators: WBLTC (ZA), Ed Dept NMK (KEN), Higher Ed Institutions, PBEATRA (DRC) and NGO's working in the same area.

Measurable Outcomes: Local champions trained

ACTION STEP 3:

In collaboration with the community and champions, develop and distribute suitable education materials to use with the communities and leaders.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), the ABSWG, Community Outreach Officers (GS - SD), CKM - DRC, Malawi and Zambia sites are in protected areas.

Resources needed: Funding for development and printing of materials

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Translation into local language

Collaborators: Local champions

Measurable Outcomes: Materials produced and used

ACTION STEP 4:

Generate media coverage as appropriate (radio and newspapers)

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG

Resources needed: Office overheads

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Lack of media coverage in remote areas

Collaborators: Local champions

Measurable Outcomes: Articles and radio interviews.

3. LANDOWNERS / MANAGERS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

POSSIBLE HABITAT DESTRUCTION OR TRANSFORMATION AND DISTURBANCE AT SITES. CONVERSELY, THERE MAY BE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES TO REHABILITATE HABITATS. THE BENEFITS OF ECOTOURISM WILL NOT BE REALISED AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING WILL BE MISSED.

SOLUTION 1.

Gain support and action for Blue Swallow conservation from all landowners in the range states or at least those landowners with Blue Swallows known to be on their land.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify and initiate contact through personal visits to appropriate landowners/managers.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Funding for field officers and transportation
Timeline: December 2005
Obstacles: Possible mistrust & reluctance from landowners, funding and political conflict
Collaborators: IBA Site Support Groups (KN - KEN), KZN Wildlife, KZNCF & OWG (ZA), Farmers Associations, OBICOK and ICCN (DRC)
Measurable Outcomes: List of and support from landowners

ACTION STEP 2:

Develop and distribute suitable materials i.e. "*Best Practice Guidelines*" relating to habitat management, ecology of Blue Swallows, etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife South Africa and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Funding for development and printing of materials
Timeline: Development by December 2002 (timing dependent on completion of research carried out by Ecology and Biology Group)
Distribution by December 2005
Obstacles: (see obstacles from Ecology Group)
Collaborators: Grassland/wetland experts, KZN Wildlife and WESSA
Measurable Outcomes: Materials produced and distributed

ACTION STEP 3:

Arrange visits to a demonstration sites where appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Transportation
Timeline: December 2002 - 2005

Obstacles: Funding, no demonstration sites available and political conflict
Collaborators: Local champions and site managers
Measurable Outcomes: Demonstration sites identified and visited.

ACTION STEP 4:

Involve all landowners or at least those at the most vulnerable sites in all planning stages of all Blue Swallow projects.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG
Resources needed: Office overheads, funding for workshops/meetings
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Mistrust and apathy from landowners, political conflict
Collaborators: The ABSWG and other interested organisations
Measurable Outcomes: Support and involvement of landowners in BS conservation.

ACTION STEP 5:

Provide appropriate recognition for conservation efforts i.e. publicity, certificates etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Office overheads, funding for certificates, awards etc.
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of funding
Collaborators: None
Measurable Outcomes: Happy landowners ☺

SOLUTION 2.

Build the capacity of local champions or existing networks/organisations in the range states or at least of landowners with Blue Swallows known to be on their land to gain support for further action within their own communities.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify a champion and provide necessary technical information and support.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partner and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Funding for fieldworkers, transportation, office overheads
Timeline: December 2002 - 2005
Obstacles: Lack of funding and resources and political conflict
Collaborators: KZN Wildlife and other capacity building organisations
Measurable Outcomes: Local champions in place.

Action steps 2,3,4 & 5 of Solution 1 also applicable.

4. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS (E.G. TIMBER, SUGAR AND MINING COMPANIES):

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

LARGE-SCALE LOSS OF HABITAT AND REDUCED OPPORTUNITIES OF FUNDING FROM THESE COMPANIES.

SOLUTION 1.

Lobby all commercial interests currently threatening existing sites and where possible potential sites, to gain support for Blue Swallow and habitat conservation.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify and initiate contact with appropriate commercial interests.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG
Resources needed: Office overheads
Timeline: Depends on threats and results of ecology group: April 2004-Dec 2004
Obstacles: Conflicts of interests and delays in fieldwork
Collaborators: Permitting organisations
Measurable Outcomes: List of commercial interests

ACTION STEP 2:

Where applicable involve commercial interests in appropriate meetings/workshops regarding Blue Swallow conservation.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Funding for workshops and office overheads
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of interest, apathy and political conflict
Collaborators: Other interested organisations
Measurable Outcomes: Support and involvement of commercial interests

ACTION STEP 3:

Develop and distribute suitable materials i.e. "*Best Practice Guidelines*" relating to habitat management, ecology of Blue Swallows, etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Funding to develop materials
Timeline: Development from December 2002 (timing dependent on completion of research carried out by Ecology and Biology Group)
Distribution as and when appropriate
Obstacles: (see obstacles from Ecology Group)
Collaborators: Grassland/wetland experts/habitat group
Measurable Outcomes: Materials produced and distributed.

ACTION STEP 4:

Arrange visits to a demonstration sites where appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Personnel and transportation
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of demonstration sites
Collaborators: Land managers and local champions other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Demonstration sites identified and visited

ACTION STEP 5:

Explore funding opportunities with commercial interests.

Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel
Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Timeline: Ongoing from September 2002
Obstacles: Lack of fundraising expertise
Collaborators: Other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Funding obtained.

ACTION STEP 6:

Provide appropriate recognition for conservation efforts i.e. publicity, certificates etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Office overheads and funding for certificates, awards etc
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of funding
Collaborators: None
Measurable Outcomes: Happy commercial interests ☺

5. FUNDING AGENCIES:**PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

THE AGENCIES WILL NOT REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF BLUE SWALLOW AS A PRIORITY FOR FUNDING.

SOLUTION 1.

Lobby relevant funding agencies for financial support for Blue Swallow conservation projects.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify and make contact with appropriate funding agencies.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads and training in fundraising
Timeline: Ongoing from September 2002
Obstacles: Lack of fundraising expertise
Collaborators: Other NGO's and fundraising experts
Measurable Outcomes: List of funding agencies

ACTION STEP 2:

Where applicable involve funding agencies in appropriate meetings/workshops regarding Blue Swallow conservation.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG, and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Funding for workshops and office overheads
Timeline: Depends on threats and results of ecology group: April 2004-Dec 2004
Obstacles: Lack of interest
Collaborators: Other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Support and involvement of funding agencies

ACTION STEP 3:

Arrange visits to a demonstration sites where appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Personnel and transportation
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of demonstration sites
Collaborators: Land managers and local champions other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Demonstration sites identified and visited

ACTION STEP 4:

Provide appropriate recognition for conservation efforts i.e. publicity, certificates etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs) and the ABSWG
Resources needed: Office overheads, funding for certificates, awards etc
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of funding
Collaborators: None
Measurable Outcomes: Happy funding agencies ☺

ACTION STEP 5:

Where appropriate provide suitable material to keep potential donors informed of Blue Swallow conservation efforts.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners, ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: None
Collaborators: People involved in Blue Swallow conservation projects.
Measurable Outcomes: Information distributed to funding agencies

6. CONSERVATIONISTS / ECOLOGISTS / NGO's:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ECOLOGY WITH POSSIBLE MISINFORMATION ON THE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION ACTIONS REQUIRED. THIS COULD HAVE LONG-TERM NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE BLUE SWALLOW AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING COULD MISSED. THERE WILL BE A LOW PRIORITY FOR FUNDING, RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION ACTION AND POSSIBLE INAPPROPRIATE USE OF RESOURCES.

SOLUTION 1.

Increase conservationists', ecologists', NGO's etc. knowledge of Blue Swallow ecology and habitat management and ensure the co-ordination of conservation effort among organisations.

ACTION STEP 1:

Link with existing organisations and involve them in appropriate meetings and workshops.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Funding for workshops, office overheads, personnel and transportation
Timeline: September 2002 - December 2005
Obstacles: Lack of interest
Collaborators: Other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Presence and active contribution at meetings and workshops

ACTION STEP 2:

Provide up-to-date technical information i.e. written papers, seminars etc, about conservation issues pertaining to the Blue Swallow.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel
Timeline: September 2002 - December 2005
Obstacles: Waiting for research results
Collaborators: Other NGO's and Government Departments
Measurable Outcomes: Information disseminated

ACTION STEP 3:

Encourage integrated Blue Swallow research and ensure the publication and dissemination of research findings both past and future.

The Ecology and Biology group, as well as Habitat and Land-use group have identified certain research projects that could be offered to this group of publics.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel
Timeline: Ongoing

Obstacles: Lack of funding and other priorities
Collaborators: Other NGO's and bird research organisations
Measurable Outcomes: Research undertaken and results published.

7. EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A LACK OF INTEREST IN NATURE CONSERVATION AND NO INVOLVEMENT OR CONTRIBUTION MADE TO FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.

SOLUTION 1.

Increase the profile of environmental education in school curricula or at least influence the content of relevant courses at the tertiary level.

See: Action steps 1 and 2 for Decision and Policy Makers.

ACTION STEP 3:

Identify relevant tertiary institutions and assess course content.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads, personnel and an Environmental Education curriculum expert
Timeline: Ongoing from September 2002 to December 2003
Obstacles: Lack of EE experts
Collaborators: Other NGO's and Government Departments
Measurable Outcomes: List of tertiary institutions and assessment report

ACTION STEP 4:

Collate relevant environmental education resources relating to biodiversity and habitat management and where appropriate promote the inclusion in tertiary level courses.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads, personnel and an Environmental Education curriculum expert
Timeline: Collate by December 2003, inclusion by December 2005
Obstacles: Resistance to inclusion of new material
Collaborators: Other NGO's and Government Departments
Measurable Outcomes: Environmental Education material included in course contents

ACTION STEP 5:

Where appropriate develop additional educational resources to supplement content of tertiary level courses i.e. "*Best Practice Guidelines*".

Responsibility: BirdLife South Africa, ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Funding for development and printing of materials

Timeline: Developed by December 2005
Obstacles: Resistance to inclusion of new material, (see obstacles from Ecology Group)
Collaborators: Grassland/wetland experts, KZN Wildlife, WESSA, other NGO's and Government Departments
Measurable Outcomes: Environmental Education material included in course contents

SOLUTION 2.

Build the capacity in environmental education of primary school teachers in Blue Swallow areas or at least in the most vulnerable areas.

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify primary schools in Blue Swallow areas and hold training workshops with their teachers to develop educational resources.

Responsibility: BirdLife South Africa, ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Funding for workshops, EE experts, personnel and materials
Timeline: 2010
Obstacles: Lack of funding, apathy and no support
Collaborators: EE Ngo's, Government Education Departments and teachers
Measurable Outcomes: Workshops held and materials developed

ACTION STEP 2:

Arrange visits to a demonstration sites where appropriate.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Personnel, transportation
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Lack of demonstration sites
Collaborators: Land managers and a local champion other NGO's
Measurable Outcomes: Demonstration sites identified and visited

SOLUTION 3.

Increase the profile of nature and the environment in schools within Blue Swallow areas

ACTION STEP 1:

Promote innovative methods to stimulate interest and encourage action for the environment i.e. the formation of environmental/wildlife clubs, competitions, drama, quizzes etc

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads, funding, personnel and transport
Timeline: Ongoing
Obstacles: Lack of funding and lack of interest
Collaborators: Teachers, local champions, other NGO's, existing Clubs, Extension Officers and Government Departments

Measurable Outcomes: Wildlife Clubs formed, etc

ACTION STEP 2:

Presentation by external educator to schools.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: EE Expert, office overheads, transportation, audiovisual equipment and EE resource materials
Timeline: December 2005
Obstacles: Apathy
Collaborators: Teachers, Ed Institutions, NGO's and Government Departments
Measurable Outcomes: Presentations given

ACTION STEP 3:

Field visits to Blue Swallow sites.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Personnel and transportation
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Transportation
Collaborators: Land managers, local champion other NGO's and teachers
Measurable Outcomes: Blue Swallow sites identified and visited

8. MEDIA:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

THE FLAGSHIP STATUS OF THE BLUE SWALLOW WILL BE OVERLOOKED PERPETUATING THE GENERAL APATHY WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WILL CONTINUE TO BE MISSED.

SOLUTION 1.

Lobby appropriate media to increase the profile of the Blue Swallow and its habitat within the Blue Swallow area.

ACTION STEP 1:

Provide press releases and articles and encourage freelance journalists to promote Blue Swallow and habitat conservation through relevant media channels.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: office overheads, personnel,
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Not published by media

Collaborators: Land managers, local champion other NGO's, commercial interest and teachers

Measurable Outcomes: Articles published and interviews given

ACTION STEP 2:

Explore the possibility of producing a Blue Swallow documentary.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants

Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel

Timeline: December 2005

Obstacles: Lack of interest and funding

Collaborators: Land managers, local champion other NGO's, commercial interest, teachers and producers

Measurable Outcomes: Documentary produced

9. TOURISTS / TOUR OPERATORS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

POSSIBLE EXCESSIVE DISTURBANCE AT SITES. CONVERSELY THE BENEFITS OF ECOTOURISM MAY NOT BE REALISED.

SOLUTION 1.

Lobby tour operators to encourage appropriate ecotourism to realise the benefits in Blue Swallow areas.

ACTION STEP 1:

Encourage Tour Operators to work with local communities and landowners to develop income-generating activities.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants

Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel

Timeline: Ongoing until 2007

Obstacles: No interest from Tour Operators, communities or landowners and no appropriate sites

Collaborators: Land managers, local champion, other NGO's and tourism associations

Measurable Outcomes: Income-generating activities initiated

ACTION STEP 2:

In association with Tour Operators develop and disseminate marketing material to promote Blue Swallow friendly ecotourism.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel
Timeline: On-going until 2007
Obstacles: Lack of funding and other ecotourism priorities
Collaborators: Land managers, local champion, other NGO's, commercial interest, tourism associations and marketing companies.
Measurable Outcomes: Materials developed and disseminated

ACTION STEP 3:

Promote Blue Swallow friendly ecotourism through appropriate media.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads and personnel
Timeline: As and when appropriate
Obstacles: Not published by media
Collaborators: Land managers, local champion other NGO's, tourism associations and marketing companies
Measurable Outcomes: Articles published and interviews given

10. GENERAL PUBLIC:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A CONTINUATION OF GENERAL APATHY TOWARDS NATURE CONSERVATION AND BLUE SWALLOWS AND ADDITIONALLY, MISSED OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING.

SOLUTION 1.

Increase the profile of nature conservation and Blue Swallows in particular throughout the Blue Swallow range or at least in the most vulnerable areas.

ACTION STEP 1:

Promote Blue Swallow conservation through the media, tour operators, posters, campaigns, t-shirts, caps, pencils, car stickers, etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners (NSAPCs), ABSWG and the workshop participants
Resources needed: Office overheads, personnel and funding
Timeline: December 2002 ongoing
Obstacles: Lack of funding and not published by media
Collaborators: Land managers, local champion, other NGO's, tourism associations, marketing companies and the business community
Measurable Outcomes: Articles published, interviews given, merchandise produced, etc

Habitat and Land Use Working Group

PARTICIPANTS:

Mr. Maurus Msuha (Tanzania): Holds an MSc. in Applied Ecology and Conservation. Works for the Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania as a BirdLife Officer, IBA Project Manager and National Species Action Plan Coordinator. He has 7 years experience in biodiversity conservation projects and has also worked on Blue Swallows for one year.

Mr. Charles Musyoki (Kenya): Ecologist with Kenya Wildlife Service. Has 9 years experience on forest, wetland and savannah ecosystem management. Is also involved in writing integrated species and ecosystem management plans. Has worked with Aberdare Cisticola, Sharpes' Longclaw, Hindes Barbler and recently involved with stakeholder analysis in the Blue Swallow non-breeding range in Kenya.

Mr. Potiphar Kaliba (Malawi): Research curator on birds in the National Museums of Malawi. Conducts research on birds in forests and wetlands.

Ms. Lientjie Cohen (South Africa): Terrestrial Technician with Mpumalanga Parks Board from 1997 - current. Involved with Provincial Nature Conservation Agencies since 1991. Has dealt with Blue Swallow conservation for the last 1.5 years.

Mrs. Tracey Couto (Zimbabwe): Senior Ranger with the Department of National Parks in Zimbabwe attached to the ornithology unit from 1989 to current. Carried out a survey of Blue Swallows in the Nyanga National Park in early 1998.

Dr. Chip Chirara (Zimbabwe): Holds a PhD in Plant Ecology from Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Works for BirdLife Zimbabwe as Conservation and Development Officer. Previously worked with the Institute of Environmental Studies at the University of Zimbabwe where he was involved in ecological projects.

ACRONYMS:

- NSAPCs: National Species Action Plan Co-ordinators
- CRSN: Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles

INTRODUCTION / SITUATION OVERVIEW:

The group felt that loss of appropriate habitat across the species range in Africa was the main problem affecting the species. This manifests itself in a number of ways that include conversion of grasslands into commercial timber plantations, invasion of exotic plants that are wind dispersed into grasslands, clearance of grasslands for agriculture, overgrazing, drainage of wetlands, fires and mining. The group had the relevant background and experience to address the subject.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS, SOLUTIONS AND ACTION STEPS:

PROBLEM STATEMENT 1:

CONVERTING GRASSLANDS AND WETLANDS INTO COMMERCIAL TIMBER PRODUCTION AND AGRICULTURAL LAND, WHICH ARE MORE LUCRATIVE ECONOMIC VENTURES RESULT IN LOSS OF APPROPRIATE HABITAT FOR BLUE SWALLOW. COMMERCIAL TIMBER PLANTATIONS AFFECT UNDERGROUND WATER SOURCES REDUCING THE FORMATION OF SINK HOLES WHICH CONSTITUTE IMPORTANT BREEDING SITES FOR BLUE SWALLOWS

SOLUTION 1(a).

Maximum goal: Carry out an inventory of Blue Swallow habitats across the species range

ACTION STEP 1:

Design inventory programmes specific to Blue Swallow range states

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group

Resources needed: Existing literature and maps

Timeline: End of 2003

Obstacles: Lack of information, contact persons; and political Instability

Collaborators: Relevant government departments, NGOs and other stakeholders

Measurable outcome: Inventory programs in place in six months

SOLUTION 1(b).

Minimum goal: Carry out inventory of Blue Swallow habitats in poorly known countries across the species range

ACTION STEP 2:

Carry out a survey of Blue Swallows in the areas identified above

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, NSAPCs) National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, CRSN (DRC), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group

Resources needed: Transport, personnel, GPS, binoculars, funds, GIS programs, Camera, camping equipment etc.

Timeline: End of 2003

Obstacles: Funds, expertise, political instability, accessibility etc.

Collaborators: As above including local communities

Measurable Outcome: Survey report

SOLUTION 2.

Carry out comprehensive E.I.A before land conversion

ACTION STEP 1:

Establish existence of EIA legislations and guidelines in range states

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group, contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources needed: Communication facilities, Liaison persons

Timeline: June 2003

Obstacles: Liaison persons

Collaborators: Not applicable

Measurable outcome: List of Blue Swallow countries with or without EIA legislations and guidelines

SOLUTION 3.

Encourage integrated conservation and development activities that enhance both timber production, agriculture and Blue Swallow conservation

Minimum goal: Identification of stakeholders

ACTION STEP 1:

Stakeholder identification

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group, contact persons

Resources needed: Transport, personnel, liaison persons, communication facilities, community entry point

Timeline: June 2003

Obstacles: Liaison persons, accessibility, political instability etc

Collaborators: Local community, local government authority, representatives from industry, agriculture etc.

Measurable Outcome: Checklist of stakeholders

Maximum goal: Establish a forum for stakeholders

ACTION STEP 2:

Establish a forum for stakeholders

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group, contact persons

Resources needed: Funds, transport, resource persons
Timeline: End of 2005
Obstacles: Trust, lack of consensus among stakeholders, high expectations, lack of goodwill etc.
Collaborators: Stakeholders identified above
Measurable outcome: Stakeholders forum reports

SOLUTION 4.

Conservation legislation should be supported by appropriate policies

Refer to policy and legislation group.

SOLUTION 5.

Minimum goal: Explore the possibility of constructing artificial nesting sites for Blue Swallows

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify potential sites for constructing artificial nests in areas where breeding sites are limiting factor

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group, contact persons, local communities

Resources needed: Expertise etc

Timeline: End of 2004

Obstacles: Accessibility, expertise, funds

Collaborators: Blue Swallow working group, BirdLife International, Researchers etc.

Measurable outcome: Report on potential sites in respective countries

Maximum goal: If feasible construct artificial nesting sites

ACTION STEP 2:

If feasible construct artificial nesting sites

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, African Blue Swallow Working Group and contact persons

Resources needed: Funds, expertise, designs, implements etc.

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Expertise, resistance from landowner etc.

Collaborators: Experts, landowners etc.

Measurable outcome: Number of nesting sites constructed as per the recommendation of the survey.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 2:

UNCONTROLLED SPREAD OF ALIEN INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES INTO BLUE SWALLOW HABITAT

SOLUTION 1.

Minimum goal: Identify affected areas and evaluate the extent of encroachment of alien species

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify affected areas and evaluate the extent of encroachment of alien species

Responsibility: Land owners, BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique?, contact persons

Resources needed: Personnel, funds, transport, tape measure, GPS, plant field guides, landowners, expertise etc.

Timeline: End of 2005

Obstacles: Resistance from landowners, expertise, limited resources etc.

Collaborators: Landowners, experts, Relevant government departments etc.

Measurable outcome: Country specific evaluation report

Maximum goal: Encourage removal and eradication of alien species

ACTION STEP 2:

Propose methods/ approaches for removal and eradication of alien species

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources needed: Relevant expertise

Timeline: End of 2004

Obstacles: Lack of appropriate techniques etc.

Collaborators: Relevant government agencies

Measurable outcome: Checklist of recommended methods

SOLUTION 2.

Prescribe stringent measures that deter spread of alien species in natural environments.

ACTION STEP 1:

Review existing legislations in range states

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments
Resources needed: Communication facilities etc
Timeline: June 2003
Obstacles: Liaison persons
Collaborators: Blue Swallow Working Group, relevant government departments
Measurable outcome: Reviewed legislation in range states

ACTION STEP 2:

Lobby for the drafting of appropriate legislations

Resources: Contact persons, legal guidance, funds etc.
Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments.
Timeline: End of 2007
Obstacle: Political will, funds, expertise etc.
Collaborators: NGO, relevant government departments and other stakeholders
Measurable outcome: Draft legislations

PROBLEM STATEMENT 3:

OVERSTOCKING OF LIVESTOCK FOR THE MARKET RESULTS IN OVERGRAZING DEPRIVING BLUE SWALLOWS APPROPRIATE FEEDING, RESTING, ROOSTING AND BREEDING SITES

SOLUTION 1.

Determine carrying capacity of livestock in grassland and wetland areas across Blue Swallow range

ACTION STEP:

Determine carrying capacity of livestock in areas where it is not known in the range states

Responsibility: Relevant Research Centres
Resources: Personnel, transport, literature, equipment, funds etc.
Timeline: End of 2007
Obstacles: Funds, seasonality, expertise, accessibility etc.
Collaborators: Relevant government departments, landowners etc
Measurable outcome: Carrying capacity of livestock known in range states

SOLUTION 2.

Promote good livestock husbandry such as keeping of livestock herds that do not exceed the carrying capacity of Blue Swallow habitats and rotational grazing.

ACTION STEP:

Encourage livestock owners to maintain recommended good livestock husbandry

Resources needed: Livestock extension officers, funds, transport etc.

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Resistance from landowners, cultural barriers etc.

Collaborators: Government departments and various stakeholders

Measurable outcome: Adoption of good livestock husbandry

PROBLEM STATEMENT 4:

INAPPROPRIATE BURNING OF GRASSLANDS AND WETLANDS AFFECTS NATURAL FEEDING, BREEDING, RESTING AND NESTING SITES FOR BLUE SWALLOWS.

SOLUTION 1.

Minimum goal: Establish contacts with persons researching fire as habitat management tool and identify appropriate fire management regime in respective Blue Swallow range.

ACTION STEP 1:

Collect and collate available information on the appropriate fire management regime

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments, African Blue Swallow Working Group

Resources: Contact persons, funds, literature etc.

Timeline: June 2003

Obstacles: Limited information, funds etc.

Measurable outcome: Information on appropriate fire regimes availed to stakeholders

Maximum goal: Create awareness with the local communities about the need to adopt appropriate fire management regimes

ACTION STEP 2:

Encourage local communities to use recommended fire management regimes

Resources: Funds, transport, awareness materials etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Timeline: End of 2007
Obstacles: Resistance to change, funds etc.
Collaborators: Local communities and other appropriate stakeholders
Measurable outcome: Local communities use appropriate fire management regimes

PROBLEM STATEMENT 5:

REMOVAL OF GRAZERS FROM GRASSLANDS LEADS TO ACCUMULATION OF MORIBUND PLANT MATERIAL AND A REDUCTION OF DUNG DEPOSIT WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE ATTRACT INSECTS THAT COMPRISE FOOD FOR THE BLUE SWALLOWS

SOLUTION 1.

Commission detailed ecological studies on the relationship between grazers and Blue Swallows

ACTION STEP 1:

Review existing literature and commission studies if necessary institutions

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources: Relevant information and research

Timeline: End of 2007

Collaborators: African Blue Swallow Working Group, Research Institutions, NGOs etc.

Measurable outcome: Report on the relationship between grazers and Blue Swallows

SOLUTION 2.

Reintroduce recommended numbers of both domestic and wild grazers in areas where they have been excluded to create appropriate habitat parameters for Blue Swallows

ACTION STEP:

Encourage introduction of grazers if recommended

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources: Funds and personnel

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Funds, resistance for re-introduction etc.

Collaborators: African Blue Swallow Working Group, NGOs and other appropriate stakeholders

Measurable outcome: Recommended number of grazers re-introduced.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 6:

DECREASING AARDVARK NUMBERS CAUSED BY POACHING AND HABITAT FRAGMENTATION RESULT IN A DECLINE IN BREEDING HOLES FOR BLUE SWALLOWS

SOLUTION 1.

Create public awareness on role of Aardvark as a keystone species in Blue Swallow range and the whole spectrum of other species

ACTION STEP 1:

Identify problem areas

Resources needed: Personnel, transport, funds etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Timeline: End of 2003

Obstacles: Personnel, accessibility, funds etc

Collaborators: African Blue Swallow Working Group, NGOs, land owners and other appropriate stakeholders

Measurable outcome: Problem areas identified

ACTION STEP 2:

Create awareness on role of Aardvark as a keystone species in Blue Swallow range and the whole spectrum of other species

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources: Awareness materials, funds, personnel etc.

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Funds, cultural attachment etc

Collaborators: NGOs, African Blue Swallow Working Group, landowners etc.

Measurable outcome: Awareness materials produced and distributed

Creating awareness on other biodiversity within Blue Swallow Range: This emerged as an issue to be considered when implementing this plan. However this was not one of the problem statements with which our group was dealing

SOLUTION 2.

Refer to problem 1

Minimum goal: Identify potential sites for constructing artificial nests
Maximum goal: Construct artificial nesting sites for Blue Swallows

PROBLEM STATEMENT 7:

INADEQUATE INFORMATION BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF GRASSLANDS AND WETLANDS AS HABITAT FOR BIRDS

SOLUTION 1.

Minimum goal: Carry out training needs assessment on the local community in Blue Swallow range

ACTION STEP 1:

Carry out training needs assessment on the local community in range states

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC (Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles - CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Resources needed: Personnel, funds

Timeline: June 2003

Obstacles: Limited resources

Collaborators: Local communities, landowners, education departments

Measurable outcome: Training needs report

Maximum goal: Conduct awareness and education-extension services on the local community on the importance of grasslands and wetlands as habitat for birds

ACTION STEP:

Conduct awareness and education-extension services on the local community based on needs identified

Resources needed: Personnel, funds, awareness materials

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), Mozambique contact persons, relevant government departments

Timeline: End 2007

Obstacles: Resources may be limited

Collaborators: Communities, education institutions, African Blue Swallow Working Group etc.

Measurable outcome: Reports on training, education and awareness materials produced

SOLUTION 2.

Create community-based natural resources management committees/groups and facilitate formulation of natural resource management guidelines

ACTION STEP 1:

Encourage and support formation of community-based natural resource management committees and development of natural resources management guidelines

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique.

Resources needed: Personnel with relevant expertise, funds etc.

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Personality clashes etc.

Collaborators: Relevant government departments, NGOs, interested individuals, Swaziland National Trust Committee.

Measurable: Community natural resources management committees in place and Functioning.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 8:

USE OF CHEMICALS KILLS INSECTS THEREBY POTENTIALLY REDUCING FOOD SUPPLY FOR BLUE SWALLOWS AND POSSIBLY LEADING TO BIO-ACCUMULATION OF TOXINS IN THE FOOD CHAIN.

SOLUTION 1:

Minimum goal: Develop a list of chemicals that are environmentally friendly

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop a list of chemicals that are environmentally friendly

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique

Resources needed: Communication facilities, literature on chemicals, personnel etc.

Timeline: End of 2003

Obstacles: Trust etc.

Collaborators: Relevant government departments, Chemical manufacturing companies etc.

Measurable outcome: A checklist of environmentally friendly or not chemicals.

Maximum goal: Encourage and support the use of chemicals that are environmentally-friendly versus non-friendly.

ACTION STEP 2:

Advocate for wise use of chemicals that are environmentally-friendly

Resources needed: Personnel, education and awareness materials, funds etc.

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique.

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Landowners preference, cost implications, expertise, insect resistance to chemicals

Collaborators: Entomologists, land owners, chemical manufacturing companies etc.

Measurable outcome: Increased use of environmentally friendly chemicals

SOLUTION 2.**Encourage use of biological control of insects as opposed to the use of chemicals****ACTION STEP:**

Identify and encourage the use of biological control where applicable

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique.

Resources needed: Expertise, funds etc

Timeline: End of 2007

Obstacles: Limited expertise, lack of appropriate biological control agents etc.

Collaborators: Land owners, Research institutions and other stakeholders.

Measurable outcome: Biological control agents identified and used instead of chemicals.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 9:**MINING ACTIVITIES DEPRIVE BLUE SWALLOW OF SUITABLE HABITAT****SOLUTION 1.****Establish working relationship with mining companies****ACTION STEP 1:**

Establish working relationship with mining companies

Responsibility: BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique

Resources needed: Contact persons, transport, funds etc.

Timeline: End of 2005

Obstacles: Trust etc.

Collaborators: Mining companies etc.

Measurable outcome: Minutes of meetings

SOLUTION 2.

Conservation organizations / institutions should work closely with mining companies to develop and adopt guidelines that minimize environmental impacts

ACTION STEP 1:

Develop and adopt mining guidelines that are environmentally friendly

- Responsibility:** BirdLife Partners in partner countries, National Museums of Malawi, Zambia Wildlife Authority, DRC, CRSN), relevant government departments, contact person in Swaziland and Mozambique, mining companies, land owners
- Resources:** Expertise, funds etc.
- Timeline:** End of 2007
- Obstacles:** Resistance, funding, personnel, time etc.
- Collaborators:** Mining Companies, landowners, etc
- Measurable outcome:** Mining guidelines

PROBLEM STATEMENT 10:

MAINTAIN, WHERE POSSIBLE, AT LEAST THE MINIMUM HABITAT REQUIREMENTS FOR BLUE SWALLOW ACROSS ITS RANGE

Refer to ecology group.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 11:

WAR SITUATIONS LEAD TO ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN PROTECTED AREAS SUCH AS FARMING, MINING, SETTLEMENT ETC IN BLUE SWALLOW HABITATS

SOLUTION:

Focus conservation initiatives on Blue Swallow and other biodiversity during the post war period

The group felt that the solution to this problem is out of scope of this forum

Group Prioritisation of Solutions and Recommendations

Each working group brought their top four or five solutions, chosen by means of paired ranking of their group's total list of solutions, to a plenary session where they were combined into a list of twenty (20) solutions for the whole group. Each person then went back and pair-ranked this list of twenty solutions in order to arrive at a prioritised list of solutions for effective Blue Swallow conservation which the whole group had contributed towards and agreed upon. The results were as follows:

| | Solution | Rank | Score |
|---|--|-------------|--------------|
| A | Carry out inventory of Blue Swallow habitats across the species range | 5 | 250 |
| B | Carry out comprehensive E.I.A before conversion of land | 16 | 181 |
| C | Encouraging integrated conservation and development activities that enhance both timber production, agriculture and Blue Swallow conservation | 9 | 201 |
| D | Encourage removal and eradication of alien species in Blue Swallow habitats | 19 | 128 |
| E | Conduct awareness and education-extension services on the stakeholders on the importance of grasslands and wetlands as habitat for birds and other biodiversity components | 12 | 194 |
| F | Investigate the methods of mark-recapture of the birds in order to establish the link between the breeding, migratory and non-breeding areas (radio or satellite tracking, radio isotopes) | 18 | 142 |
| G | Set up a monitoring programme in each of the three areas (breeding, non-breeding and migration sites). Measure basic climatic data and other factors in order to determine the relative importance of the environmental factors. | 6 | 233 |
| H | Study the breeding biology in at least two more breeding areas. Topics to include reproductive effort and recruitment. The results may lead to study of internal factors (body condition, hormone levels, toxin residues) if problems with any of these issues are discovered. | 15 | 184 |
| I | Within two years, undertake botanical surveys at breeding sites in South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe and one non-breeding site (Uganda/DRC). The maximum aim will be to survey all the breeding and non-breeding areas within five years | 11 | 196 |
| J | Identify all the possible breeding, migratory and non-breeding sites. NB: Evaluate all sites against IBA criteria. Develop uniform monitoring system so comparable data can be entered into the central database. Make regular counts of the birds present. | 4 | 285 |
| K | In COMMUNITIES: Build the capacity of local champions/role models or existing networks/organisations and community-based groups e.g. women, church groups, within the community in all Blue Swallow sites or at least in the most vulnerable site. These can act as educators and can promote environmental clubs, ecotourism etc. | 11 | 196 |
| L | Involve community/religious leaders in all planning stages of future projects i.e. ecotourism, income generating schemes etc. at all Blue Swallow sites or at least in the most vulnerable sites. | 14 | 189 |

| | | | |
|---|---|----|-----|
| M | Gain support and action for Blue Swallow conservation from all landowners in the range or at least those landowners with Blue Swallows known to be on their land. | 8 | 227 |
| N | Lobby relevant funding agencies for financial support for Blue Swallow conservation projects. | 1 | 333 |
| O | With regard to LANDOWNERS/MANAGERS; Build the capacity of local champions or existing networks/organisations in the range or at least to landowners with Blue Swallows known to be on their land to gain support for further action within their own communities. | 10 | 200 |
| P | Distribute and promote the implementation of International Blue Swallow action plan. Min 10 range countries, 5 international agencies/ max 10 countries, 10 international agencies | 7 | 232 |
| Q | Establish the African Blue Swallow Working Group | 2 | 311 |
| R | Raise funds for a regional (BS range states) Blue Swallow project and include core-funding costs. | 3 | 298 |
| S | Proper review and document relevant legislations and enforcement in relation to Blue Swallow and its habitats in all range states. Lobby governments to draft and enforce legislation. Min 5/ Max 10 | 13 | 191 |
| T | Raise the profile of birds as indicators and flagships for habitats and ecosystems. Min 5 countries/ max 10 | 17 | 162 |

Order of priority:

- N:** Lobby relevant funding agencies for financial support for Blue Swallow conservation projects.
- Q:** Establish the African Blue Swallow Working Group
- R:** Raise funds for a regional (BS range states) Blue Swallow project and include core-funding costs.
- J:** Identify all the possible breeding, migratory and non-breeding sites. NB: Evaluate all sites against IBA criteria. Develop uniform monitoring system so comparable data can be entered into the central database. Make regular counts of the birds present.

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SECTION 4

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SECTION 5

BLUE SWALLOW ACTION PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

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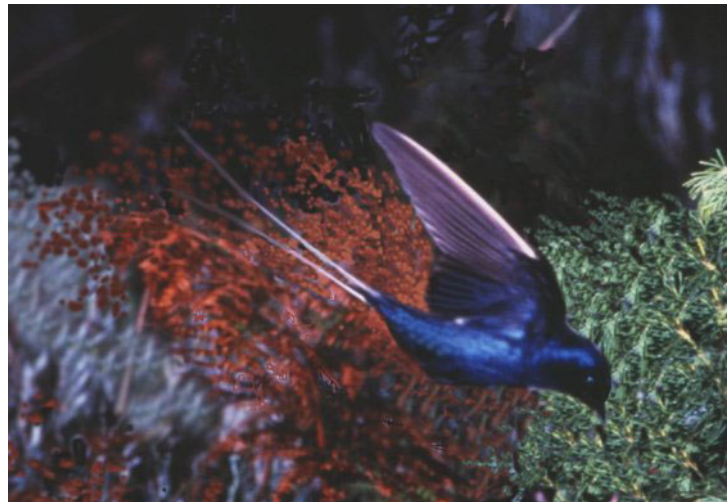
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SECTION 6

BLUE SWALLOW ACTION PLANNING PARTICIPANTS GOALS AND HOPES

Participant Goals and Hopes

Workshop participants were asked to write down the answers to the following two questions:

1. What do you want to accomplish at this workshop?
2. What do you think you can contribute to this workshop?

The answers are as follows:

| | I hope to accomplish | I wish to contribute |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | I hope that the action plans will be done and a practicable one which will conserve the Blue swallow in Africa. | I wish to bring up some ideas which will be workable in all our countries in order to achieve what we are really looking for. |
| 2. | Develop a workable action plan for conservation of the Blue swallow throughout its range. Gain valuable ideas for conserving the species in Kenya from experiences elsewhere. An African reference guide for conserving the Blue swallow. | Conservation challenges for the action species in my country and innovative ideas of tracking conservation of the species from my point of view. |
| 3. | To come up with a detailed international action plan for Blue swallows which will give way for the establishment of national Blue swallow action plans. | Cooperation with other participants and give explanations of any issues concerning policies in conservation from my country related to this workshop and the conservation of Blue swallows. |
| 4. | I hope that this workshop will accomplish the main objectives it has been assigned which are basically 18 national Blue swallow working groups and 8 International. All the resolutions to be implemented carefully in the respective countries in a practical action plan. | I hope to contribute with some information about the status of conservation of the Blue swallow and its habitat in the DRC (Congo). |
| 5. | Formation of a Blue swallow international Action Plan. Test the format of species action planning developed by the African partnership of BirdLife International. Set up a Blue Swallow Africa working group (network). | Knowledge of the species in my country, local situation in my country for action plan implementation and contribution by the stakeholders in my country to species conservation. |
| 6. | A species action plan for the Blue swallow and a way forward. | Developing species action plans and agree on the next steps for the conservation of the species. |
| 7. | An integrated conservation and management plan for Blue swallows that will guide African Blue swallow range states in reversing the downward trend in numbers of the BS. | Experience in single species conservation management, experience in conservation outside protected areas, ideas about biological management of single species, stakeholder participation in conservation management and the need for collaboration between different parties in conservation. |
| 8. | The formulation of an international action plan that will provide a useful framework for putting together national action plans and setting up programmes of work that will improve the status of the Blue swallow. | Experience in compiling large numbers of action plans for priority bird species in Europe. An independent view of the issues around the Blue swallow. |
| 9. | Establish an action plan for the conservation of the Blue swallow and its grassland / wetland | My knowledge as someone that has done research on the Blue Swallow, knowledge and |

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| | habitat that will form the foundations of an African Blue Swallow working group. | experience in establishing and managing species interest groups and knowledge of BS conservation and threats in certain parts of South Africa. |
| 10. | Identify threats to the conservation of the BS and develop the strategies to protect the species and its habitat. Learn from other countries' experience. | Opportunities for implementing the action plan in the DRC (Congo) and background information. |
| 11. | A species action plan for the Blue Swallow | Information on how the action plan can be implemented – for example, the roles of different stakeholders and how they can benefit from conservation of the Blue Swallow. |
| 12. | We will develop a clear workable plan for the active conservation of the Blue Swallow. | Scientific experience and some knowledge of the species. |
| 13. | By gathering representatives of each of the 10 countries in which the Blue Swallow occurs, I am hoping that the “bigger picture” will be emphasised in terms of BS conservation and that there will be more talking and interaction between the countries what what’s happening, so that as can help each other and work in isolation. The development on an international action plan which will be the beginning of the “way forward” for the conservation of the Blue Swallow as a whole | My knowledge and experience in working with Blue Swallows in the SA context. |
| 14. | A practical action plan for the conservation of the Blue Swallow will have been developed. | As a person from a country having Blue Swallows I will be able to explain problems / threats that affect the survival of the BS. |
| 15. | An agreed, well developed species action plan for the BS. The action plan should be achievable, time-bound and should take the views and opinions of all stakeholders into account (not just the workshop participants). | Help to ensure that the plan remains practical. |
| 16. | I hope that with the combined knowledge and expertise of all the participants we will together draft a BS action plan that will be comprehensive and workable. Also to network with African colleagues and learn from each other. | I wish to contribute my knowledge and what little expertise I have to formulate an effective action plan for the BS. |
| 17. | Come up with a practical action plan that is applicable to my country as well as other countries where the BS is found. Improved networking amongst people doing BS work and Government vs. NGO perceptions on BS conservation. | Ideas that help in the conservation of Blue Swallows from the point of view of my country. |
| 18. | To set up an African species action plan for the Blue Swallow which is practical and can be implemented by every country involved with the species. Better cooperation between the delegates of each country in order to conserve this species more effectively. Better / stricter legislative proposals to protect the habitat and the species. | The knowledge of monitoring, problems encountered and possible solutions to solve these problems which can assist in the development of the action plan in order to save this species. |
| 19. | A consensus on how to proceed with action to | A positive contribution that will initiate more |

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| | conserve and enhance Blue Swallow populations. | involvement in bird conservation in Malawi. |
| 20. | Come up with measures that will increase populations of the BS. | Share the Ugandan experience of the Blue Swallow with other colleagues. Ideas that can be used to also save other globally threatened species. |
| 21. | To establish the key issues in saving the BS and to get this plan into action. This workshop cannot only be a workshop but it must become a reality. | Hopefully we can all work together to construct a plan in saving this endangered species. |
| 22. | Integrate Blue Swallow monitoring for the countries where they breed, by hatching out a programme to be followed at critical times periods of breeding – most relevant for Swaziland's breeding site. | Participatory representation of SNTC Ecology Section. |
| 23. | Development of a conservation plan for the BS that is designed on regional and global information, but that is implementable on a national level. | Not sure. My knowledge of the BS is limited. My main contribution may be what I learn during the workshop, rather than what I give. |

BLUE SWALLOW

(Hirundo atrocaerulea)

International Action Planning Workshop

10 – 14 June 2002

Kaapsehoop, South Africa

FINAL WORKSHOP REPORT

Edited by

**S. Evans, L. Cohen, E. Sande, A. Monadjem, D. Hoffmann,
H. Mattison, P. Newbery, K. Ndanganga and Y. Friedmann**



SECTION 7

APPENDICES



P O Box 515 Randburg 2125 South Africa
Telephone (011) 789 1122 or 787 0899
Facsimile (011) 789 5188
E-mail iba@birdlife.org.za

Address line 1
Address line 2

14 April 2002

Invitation to attend an International Blue Swallow Action Plan workshop.

Dear Mr / Ms

You are hereby invited to attend a workshop aimed at compiling an International Blue Swallow Action (Conservation) Plan. The workshop will be jointly hosted by BirdLife South Africa and the Endangered Wildlife Trust Blue Swallow Working Group. It will take place from the 10th - 14th June 2002 at the Kaapsche Hoop Conference Facility, Kaapsehoop, South Africa.

Your attendance at the workshop is fully sponsored. All your travel, accommodation and meals expenses will be covered by the workshop organisers.

This project forms part of a BirdLife African Partnership initiative funded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Darwin Initiative aimed at putting together and implementing 8 International and 15 National Species Action Plans. The Blue Swallow was selected as one of the cross-border species for development of an International Species Action Plan. For the purpose of putting together the Action Plan we are aiming to have two representatives (1 NGO and 1 governmental) from each of the 10 countries in which Blue Swallows can be found.

The Blue Swallow is a globally threatened grassland specialist bird species. In South Africa there are only 80 known nests. Optimistically the EWT-Blue Swallow Working Group in co-operation with other African conservationists estimate that there are less than 1500 breeding pairs left in sub-Saharan Africa. The Blue Swallow is restricted to 10 sub-Saharan African countries. The Blue Swallow was proposed for listing and is as of April 1996 listed on both Appendix I and II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention or CMS). South Africa is a signatory to this convention and as the listing party should take the lead in the conservation of the Blue Swallow and its unique grassland/wetland habitats.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Evans".

Steven W. Evans
IBA programme manager.
EWT-Blue Swallow Working Group manager

INTERNATIONAL BLUE SWALLOW ACTION PLAN

WORKSHOP AGENDA

10th - 14th June 2002
Kaapsehoop, South Africa

| | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Task one: | Current Situation and Issues |) day one |
| Task two: | Root Causes and Problem Statements |) |
| Task three: | Goal / Solution development |) day two |
| Task four: | Action Steps |) day three and day four |
| Task five: | Group Integration and Wrap-up |) day four |

Sunday 9th June 2002 – Day 0

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 08:30 – 13:00 | International delegates arrive in Johannesburg |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | LUNCH |
| 14:00 – 17:30 | Final delegates arrive in Johannesburg Travel to Kaapsehoop (Kaapsehoop Conference Facility) |
| 19:00 – 21:00 | DINNER |

Monday 10th June 2002 – Day 1

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 07:30 – 08:30 | BREAKFAST |
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Welcome and Open workshop – Steven Evans |
| 9:00 – 9:30 | Introduction of participants |
| 9:30 – 10:30 | Introduction to the CBSG, CBSG South Africa Overview of the workshop process, ground rules and participant roles |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | TEA BREAK |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Plenary Session: Brainstorm key issues |
| 12:00 - 12:30 | Formation of Working Groups and situation analysis (task one) |
| 12:30 – 13: 30 | LUNCH BREAK |
| 13:30 – 13:45: | Overview of problem statements |
| 13:45 – 16:30: | Working groups: Situation analysis (task one), issues and problem statements (task two) |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | TEA BREAK (FUTURE BREAKS SELF-REGULATED) |
| 16:30 – 18:00 | Plenary – First Working Group Reports |
| 19:00 – 20:00 | DINNER |

Tuesday 11th June 2002 – Day 2

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 07:30 – 08:30 | BREAKFAST |
| 8:30 – 9:30 | Working groups convene to make changes to first reports |
| 9:30 – 09:45 | Plenary on goals / solutions and filters (task three) |
| 09:45 – 10:30 | Working groups convene and begin third task |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | TEA BREAK and group photos taken |
| 11:00 – 13:00 | Working groups convene and continue with third task |
| 13:00 – 14: 00 | LUNCH BREAK |

14:00 – 15:30 Plenary to present and discuss goals / solutions

15:30 – 16:00 TEA BREAK

16:00 – 17:30 Working Groups convene and finalise third task

19:00 – 20:00 DINNER

Wednesday 12th June 2002 - Day 3

07:30 – 08:30 BREAKFAST

08:30 – 08:45 Plenary to present Strategies and Action plans: task four

08:45 – 10:30 Working Groups convene to begin fourth task

10:30 – 11:00 TEA BREAK

11:00 – 13:00 Working Groups reconvene and carry on with task four

13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00 – 15:30 Working Groups reconvene to carry on with task four

15:30 – 16:00 TEA BREAK

16:00 – 17:30 Plenary Session to report back on task four

19:00 – 20:00 DINNER

Thursday 13th June 2002 - Day 4

07:30 – 08:30 **BREAKFAST**

08:30 – 10:30 Working Groups reconvene to finalise task four

10:30 – 11:00 **TEA BREAK**

11:00 – 12:30 Plenary session for group integration (task five)

12:30 – 13:30 **LUNCH BREAK**

13:30 – 15:00 Final plenary session to present working group reports, discuss management recommendations and report completion

15:00 – 16:30 Working Groups reconvene to make last changes

16:30 – 17:30 Workshop closure and survey

19:00 – 20:00 **DINNER**

Friday 14th June 2002 - Day 5

07:30 – 08:30 **BREAKFAST**

8:00 – 12:00 Visit to the Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site with Mr Edward Themba (local birding guide) and Mr Rudi du Plessis.

12:30 – 13:30 **LUNCH BREAK**

13:30 – 17:00 African Species Working Group and African Blue Swallow Working Group business meeting.

19:00 – 20:00 **DINNER**

Saturday 15th June 2002 - Day 6

07:30 – 08:30 BREAKFAST

07:00 Return to Johannesburg in time for the first flights at 12:30.

* * * * *



Profile of the Endangered Wildlife Trust's Blue Swallow Working Group

Introduction:

The Blue Swallow Working Group (BSWG) is a working group of the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT). The Endangered Wildlife Trust was founded in 1973 as a non-profit, non-political, conservation non-governmental organisation in South Africa. The EWT and its working groups work towards the conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological diversity in southern Africa.

Mission and objectives:

The mission of the Blue Swallow Working Group is *to prevent the Blue Swallow from going extinct throughout its 10 range-states.*

The Blue Swallow is a globally threatened (vulnerable) intra-African migrant. It is restricted to 10 countries south of the Sahara. Blue Swallows breed from September to April annually in South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The birds are present from May to October on the non-breeding range in Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania. The Blue Swallow population is optimistically estimated to number 1500 pairs.

To achieve its mission the EWT-BSWG undertakes the following activities:

- Initiate and support conservation oriented research on the Blue Swallow and its habitat.
- Maintain and improve the ecological integrity and area of Blue Swallow grassland sites.
- Develop ecologically sensible management programmes for commercial afforestation, water resource management, prospecting and mining, to prevent negative impacts on the Blue Swallow and its unique grassland habitat.
- Promote the Blue Swallow as an umbrella species for the maintenance of grassland biodiversity (North-Eastern Mountain Sourveld and Natal Mist Belt).
- Promote the sustainable non-consumptive use of the Blue Swallow grassland areas.
- Develop opportunities for employment that will improve the quality of life of people that will benefit directly and indirectly from the Blue Swallow and its unique grassland habitat.
- Provide opportunities for people to see, understand and appreciate the Blue Swallow and the other animals, plants and processes making up their unique grassland habitats.

Progress and achievements:

National:

- Initiated the first national (South Africa) survey (1986/7) of Blue Swallows.
- Prevented afforestation of the Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site, Mpumalanga.
- Initiated the registration of the Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site for the conservation of the Blue Swallow and its unique grassland habitat.
- Prevented surface and underground mining in the Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site, Mpumalanga.
- Initiated the process to have the Blue Swallow Natural Heritage Site declared a Protected Natural Environment (section 16 & 17 of the National Environmental Conservation act 1989).
- The first to use the Blue Swallow and its grassland habitat as the entry point to creating employment (feasibility assessments, training and after training support) for the first local host birding guide for any Blue Swallow locality in South Africa. This created an employment opportunity for a member of a disadvantaged community.
- Created and maintain a very high public profile for the Blue Swallow and the Blue Swallow Working Group.
- The EWT- Blue Swallow Working Group contracted a grassland/pasture scientist to complete research into the grassland management parameters suited to the conservation of the Blue Swallow. The report will be translated into brochures on grassland management practices that suite Blue Swallows for distribution to land-owners and managers with or that had Blue Swallows on there property. This will prove to be a very useful tool when working on methods to integrate their farming practices (earning a living) with the conservation of the Blue Swallow and grasslands.
- The EWT – Blue Swallow Working Group contracted an Entomologist to examine what Blue Swallows are feeding on and develop preliminary information on how this aerial arthropod community is affected by grassland management practices.

International:

- Initiated the listing of the Blue Swallow on Appendix I and II of the international Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, April 1997.
- Prompted the listing of the Blue Swallow on the list of species in need of concerted action by the scientific committee of the international Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, November 1999.
- Facilitating the development of an African Blue Swallow Working Group which currently consists of representatives from all 10 Blue Swallow countries except Mozambique.
- In co-operation with colleagues from Nature Uganda and six students from the Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources in Kampala, Uganda, completed surveys of Blue Swallows in six sites in Uganda. The survey work was funded by the BP Conservation Programme.

Future priority plans and requirements:

National:

- Continue using the Blue Swallow and its grassland habitat as the entry point to creating employment (feasibility assessments, training and after training support) for local host birding guides for three further Blue Swallow localities in South Africa (Graskop Grasslands, Wolkberg Forest Belt and KwaZulu-Natal Mistbelt Grasslands Important Bird Areas). This will create a minimum of a further three employment opportunities for members of disadvantaged communities.
- The EWT-Blue Swallow Working Group's Environmental Education Programme has been developed. The EWT-BSWG is in the process of looking for funding to develop the

programme resources and hire an EWT-Blue Swallow Working Group Environmental Educator.

International:

- Further development of an African Blue Swallow Working Group through the implementation of the International Blue Swallow Action Plan. Funding is needed for implementation of many components of the plan.
- Increase representation on the African Blue Swallow Working Group by including representatives and projects from Mozambique.

Contact details:

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BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA AND BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

Description and Mission:

BirdLife South Africa is an 8000-member strong nationwide conservation and birding non-government organisation, with 24 branches and 18 affiliates around South Africa. Founded in 1930 as the South African Ornithological Society, it changed its name to BirdLife South Africa in 1996.

The mission of BirdLife South Africa is *to promote the enjoyment, conservation, study and understanding of wild birds and their habitats*. Increasingly, the context of BirdLife South Africa is about taking action for birds through people at all levels of South African society.

History and development:

Founded as a scientific society for the study of ornithology, the membership grew in the 1970s and 1980s to include a huge component of recreational birders, organized through local branches. In 1995, the Council of the Society determined a new direction to develop education and conservation action programmes, to be given effect through the appointment of a professional executive. A full-time director was appointed from 1 January 1996. The impetus and funding for action programmes increased with links to BirdLife International partnership that began in 1996.

The Society has developed rapidly. Since 1996, budgets have grown from about R300 000 annually to nearly R5 million in 2002, from 4 part-time staff members in 1995 to 27 full-time and part-time staff in 2002. Programmes have increased from none to five with a further two currently under development. The Society now plays a significant role in training and education. It operates internationally in Africa and beyond. The Society owns its own headquarters (the Lewis House, donated by the Tony and Lisette Lewis Foundation) in Johannesburg, with an office in Cape Town and second office in KwaZulu-Natal in late 2002.

BirdLife International:

BirdLife South Africa is the South African Partner of BirdLife International, the world's largest voluntary coalition of nationally based conservation organisations, represented by 2.5 million members in 103 countries. A secretariat based in Cambridge United Kingdom provides the central administration for regional partnerships within BirdLife International. The African Partnership, in which BirdLife South Africa plays a vital role, includes 18 African countries.

BirdLife South Africa subscribes to the mission and values of BirdLife International, encapsulated through the themes of "species, sites, habitats and people". BirdLife South Africa is represented by its Director on the African Regional Committee and he represents Africa on the Global Council of BirdLife International. The international links allow BirdLife

South Africa to influence international conservation action through the collective strength of this organisation.

BirdLife South Africa runs the Global Seabird programme for BirdLife International through an office based in Cape Town. BirdLife South Africa is one of the Partners in a ten-country African programme - the Important Birds Areas Conservation programme. A further two programmes the Richards Bay Rio Tinto programme and the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement Wetland Sites of International Importance are two more programmes organised through BirdLife International which are under development.

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - the United Kingdom Partner of BirdLife International) runs an in-country support with BirdLife South Africa, and this is conducted within the context of the BirdLife International Partnership.

Publications and Media:

BirdLife South Africa publishes its own national newsletter four items quarterly to its 8000 members. This is a well-read 40-page A5 word-heavy newsletter with advertising that updates members on all BirdLife's activities. BirdLife South Africa publishes 8 pages in each issue of Africa Birds and Birding. This magazine, which relies on superb illustrations and excellent text, has a current circulation of 16000 with a readership of 100 000, and received the PICA award for best magazine in 1999 and 2000. Since 1930, BirdLife South Africa has published the Ostrich, the premier scientific journal of ornithology in Africa. The ostrich has been the medium of choice for the publication of the Proceedings of the four-yearly Pan-African Ornithological Congress.

BirdLife South Africa also has a website at www.birdlife.org.za, funded by Sasol that contains much information.

BirdLife South Africa has published, with the Avian Demography Unit; the Atlas of Southern African Birds, the Directory of Important Bird Areas in Southern Africa, and the Eskom Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland. There have also been a number of other one-off publications such as the Nature and Value of Birding in South Africa.

Structure:

BirdLife South Africa's constitution designates a Council, which meets 2-3 times annually and includes member representatives and specialised members. Certain responsibilities and financial management have been delegated to the Board of Management, which meets six times annually. Members include branch representatives.

Essentially, branches run recreational birding programmes with central elements of outings, indoor meetings and a newsletter. However many branches make significant contributions to conservation and education action from time to time.

The secretariat provides administration of membership and provides the administration for running national programmes, fundraising, publications and formal meetings.

Programmes:

BirdLife South Africa has five programmes:

1. The Important Bird Areas programme (African NGO-Government Partnerships for Sustainable biodiversity) is a Global Environmental Facility programme which began in

1998. The programme officer is Steven Evans. The programme seeks to improve the conservation status of Important Birds Areas (IBAs) in South Africa.

2. The Learning for Sustainable Living Programme was founded in 1998 and is funded by the British National Lottery fund, sourced by and managed in partnership with the RSPB. Managed by Sibongile Mokoena, the programme has created a resource for all South African 9-13 year-olds using the environment to deliver various learning areas in the context of Outcomes-based education. The programme aims to train teachers and subject advisers to use the resource in schools throughout South Africa.
3. The Wakkerstroom Programme was founded in 1998 with a grant of R1 million from Sappi. The Wakekrstroom programme is a multi-functional conservation, education and awareness programme situated adjacent to the Wakkerstroom wetland in Mpumalanga, in the heart of the proposed Grassland biosphere Reserve. The centre promoted ecotourism and offers accommodation and camping, and is a training centre for the Guide-training programme. Andre Botha currently manages the programme.
4. The Guide-training Programme was founded by funding from Sasol in 1999 and has since trained 72 persons from previously disadvantaged communities as bird guides. The program is evolving very rapidly in association with government-driven imitative to regulate the guiding industry in South Africa. Ecotourism, and bird-guiding in particular is a strong focus of sustainable development programmers in South Africa, and BirdLife South Africa is seeking to involve the broader South African community in bird conservation by creating ownership and economic development relating to birds through birding tourism. The programme is run by Andre Botha and John Isom.
5. The Global Seabird programme, founded in 1997, has now moved directly under the umbrella of BirdLife South Africa in 2001 on behalf of the BirdLife International. It is a truly global programme with involvement by many countries and focussing on international action. Funded initially by the RSPB, then the British Birdwatching Fair, the Global Seabird program is focused on reducing the incidental deaths of albatrosses and petrels as a bycatch of the longlining industry. Principally the programme's focus is on the fisheries in the Southern Hemisphere, although the focus has moved toward Northern Hemisphere fisheries. The programme is viewed as a long-term programme that will evolve to tackle other conservation issues in the course of time. The programme is coordinated by Leon - David Viljoen and Deon Nel is the specialist seabird officer.



Conservation Breeding Specialist Group

Species Survival Commission
IUCN -- The World Conservation Union
U.S. Seal, CBSG Chairman

INTRODUCING: THE CONSERVATION BREEDING SPECIALIST GROUP

Web site at <http://www.cbsg.org>

Introduction

There is a lack of generally accepted tools to evaluate and integrate the interaction of biological, physical, and social factors on the population dynamics of the broad range of threatened species. There is a need for tools and processes to characterise the risk of species and habitat extinction, to plot the possible effects of future events and the effects of management interventions and to develop and sustain learning-based cross-institutional management programmes.

The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) of IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC) has more than 15 year's experience in developing, testing and applying a series of scientifically based tools and processes to assist risk characterisation and species management decision making. These tools, based on small population and conservation biology (biological and physical factors), human demography, and the dynamics of social learning are used in intensive, problem-solving workshops to produce realistic and achievable recommendations for both *in situ* and *ex situ* population management.

The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group mission is *"to conserve and establish populations of threatened species through conservation breeding programs and through intensive protection and management of these plant and animal populations in the wild."*

WHAT DOES THE CONSERVATION BREEDING SPECIALIST GROUP DO?

Conservation bodies, governmental officials and non-governmental agencies invite the CBSG to assist with their conservation efforts. CBSG uses numerous processes and tools it has developed to carry out its globally recognised programme.

Experience: The CBSG has conducted and facilitated more than 140 species and ecosystem workshops in 40 countries during the past 9 years. *Reports from these workshops are available from the CBSG Office.* CBSG has worked on a continuing basis with agencies on some taxa (e.g. Florida panther, Sumatran tiger) and has assisted in the development of national conservation strategies for other taxa (e.g., Sumatran elephant, Sumatran tiger (Indonesia), Blue Cranes (South Africa) and cheetah (globally). CBSG Population Biology

Programme Officer (Dr. P. Miller) received his doctoral training with Dr. P. Hedrick and has experience with the genetic and demographic aspects of a range of vertebrate species. He has worked extensively with VORTEX® and other population models.

Scientific Studies of Workshop Process: The effectiveness of these workshops as tools for eliciting information, assisting the development of sustained networking among stakeholders, impact on attitudes of participants, and in achieving consensus on needed management actions and research has been extensively debated. CBSG initiated a scientific study of the process and its long term aftermath in collaboration with an independent team of researchers (Vredenburg and Westley, 1995). A survey questionnaire is administered at the beginning and end of each workshop and extensive interviews have also been conducted with participants in workshops held in five countries. *Three manuscripts on CBSG Workshop processes and their effects are available from the CBSG office (MN. USA).* The study also is undertaking follow up at one and two years after each workshop to assess longer-term effects. There is no comparable systematic scientific study of conservation and management processes.

CBSG RESOURCES AS UNIQUE ASSET

Expertise and Costs: The problems and threats to endangered species everywhere are complex and interactive with a need for information from diverse specialists. No agency or country encompasses all of the useful expert knowledge. Thus, there is a need to include a wide range of people as resources and analysts. It is important that the invited experts have reputations for expertise, objectivity, initial lack of local stake, and for active transfer of wanted skills. CBSG has a volunteer network of more than 700 experts with about 250 in the USA. More than 3,000 people from 400 organisations have assisted CBSG on projects and participated in workshops on a volunteer basis contributing tens of thousands of hours of time. We call upon individual experts to assist in all phases of projects.

Indirect cost contributions to support: Use of CBSG resources and the contribution of participating experts provide a matching contribution more than equalling the proposed budget request for projects.

Manuals and Reports: Manuals are available to provide guidance on how best to achieve the goals, objectives, and preparations needed for CBSG workshops. These help to reduce start-up time and costs and allow us to work on organising the project immediately with proposed participants and stockholders. Draft workshop reports are prepared during the workshop so that there is agreement by participants on its content and recommendations. Reports are also prepared on the mini-workshops (working groups) that will be conducted in information gathering exercises with small groups of experts and stakeholders.



CONSERVATION BREEDING SPECIALIST GROUP

SOUTH AFRICA



AN ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST PARTNERSHIP
SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION, IUCN – WORLD CONSERVATION UNION

THE ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST AND CBSG SOUTH AFRICA

web site: www.ewt.org.za/cbsg

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is one of the largest non-governmental conservation organisations in Southern Africa and was established in 1973. Widely recognised by its prominent red cheetah spoor logo, the EWT conserves biodiversity through the hands-on conservation of species and their habitats, in a sustainable and responsible manner. Coordinating more than 100 field-based conservation projects and 19 Working Groups operating in Southern Africa, Endangered Wildlife Trust programmes cover a wide variety of species and eco-systems and play a pivotal role in conserving Southern African biodiversity and natural resources.

Eight CBSG regional networks exist worldwide, including CBSG Indonesia, India, Japan, Mesoamerica, Mexico, Sri Lanka and South Asia. Regional CBSG networks are developed in regions requiring intensive conservation action and each network operates in a manner best suited to the region and local species. CBSG tools are adapted according to the needs and requirements of regional stakeholders and species and local expertise is utilised to best effect. Each regional network has developed its own unique conservation identity. The Endangered Wildlife Trust with its access to a rich and diverse range of conservation expertise, established CBSG South Africa in partnership with the CBSG, SSC/IUCN in 2000.

CBSG South Africa's mission is: To catalyse conservation action in South Africa by assisting in the development of integrated and scientifically sound conservation programmes for species and ecosystems, building capacity in the local conservation community and incorporating practical and globally endorsed tools and processes into current and future conservation programmes in Southern Africa.

CBSG South Africa, operating under the banner of the Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, serving the needs of the *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation community in South Africa through the provision of capacity building courses, Action Planning, PHVA and CAMP workshops, communication networks, species assessments and a host of other CBSG processes for species and ecosystem conservation. CBSG South Africa works with all stakeholders in the pursuit of biodiversity conservation in Southern Africa.

Contact CBSG South Africa via + 27 (0) 11 701 3811 / cbsgsa@wol.co.za / www.ewt.org.za/cbsg

