

# ACHIEVING the VISION: SUMMARY of STRATEGIES and OUTCOMES

## Vision

The vision of the Waterbird Conservation for the Americas initiative is that the distribution, diversity, and abundance of populations and habitats of breeding, migratory, and nonbreeding waterbirds are sustained or restored throughout the lands and waters of North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

## Species and Population Goal

**GOAL:** *To ensure sustainable distributions, diversity and abundance of waterbird species throughout each of their historical or naturally expanding ranges in the lands and waters of North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.*

### Strategies

- ❖ Determine population status for all species of waterbirds throughout North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.
- ❖ Institute a large scale, dispersed, partnership-based population monitoring system.
- ❖ Initiate monitoring of demography, habitats, wintering range, and important threats, such as seabird bycatch, as appropriate for species and areas.
- ❖ Develop analytical tools and analytical schemes to determine and assess population trends against trend thresholds for each species.
- ❖ Define sustainable population goals for all species, at regional scales as possible and as needed, and eventually at the continental scale.
- ❖ Determine the extent and root causes of public perception of waterbirds, particularly locally abundant species, and develop programs that help bring public perception in line with scientific and economic findings.
- ❖ Energize JVs and agencies to take responsibility for setting and achieving population goals through appropriate management.
- ❖ Develop a global perspective on populations to aid in interpretation of population trends.
- ❖ Synthesize information to identify key factors affect-



Blue-footed Booby

ing populations in order to take appropriate conservation action.

### Desired Results

- ❖ Waterbirds, their habitats, and threats are monitored with sufficient intensity and coordination to accurately determine population size, trend, causes for trends and distribution changes.
- ❖ Factors influencing waterbird populations are sufficiently understood to take conservation action.
- ❖ The influence of wetland complexes at different spatial scales on breeding and dispersal dynamics is better understood.
- ❖ Public perception is coherent with scientific and economic findings on waterbird impacts.
- ❖ Management plans are in accord with technical findings.
- ❖ Habitat sources and sinks are recognized.
- ❖ Species of concern are identified, status assessments

conducted, sustainable goals developed, management plans enacted, and populations restored to appropriate sustainable levels.

## Habitat Goal

**GOAL:** *To protect, restore, and manage sufficient high quality habitat and key sites for waterbirds throughout the year to meet species and population goals.*

### Strategies

- ❖ Identify key marine, freshwater, and terrestrial habitats for waterbirds, including breeding, wintering, migratory, roosting, and foraging habitats.
- ❖ Implement conservation and management actions that secure important habitats.
- ❖ Increase understanding of waterbird habitat requirements, threats to habitat quality, and habitat interaction at different scales.
- ❖ Develop and implement habitat management plans for waterbirds for each planning unit.
- ❖ Identify, inventory and document key sites that potentially qualify as global, continental, national, or state IBAs and other key sites for waterbirds.
- ❖ Refine and continually update the list and description of IBAs for waterbirds.

- ❖ Develop and maintain a communication network among habitat managers, including IBAs for waterbirds.

### Desired Results

- ❖ Important waterbird habitats are secured and habitat programs are properly managed.
- ❖ Important marine areas are identified and fisheries managed at levels that promote sustainable seabird populations.
- ❖ Key factors affecting waterbird habitat requirements are understood.
- ❖ Best practices are identified to integrate waterbird habitat needs with other uses of the landscape/seascape and with other bird conservation initiatives.
- ❖ New programs are developed and implemented to protect and manage important waterbird habitats at multiple scales.
- ❖ IBAs and other key sites for waterbirds are identified and catalogued.
- ❖ IBAs and other key sites are secured through stakeholder engagement, legislation and/or site management programs.
- ❖ Threats affecting IBAs and other key sites are documented, understood and managed and a network of area managers exists.



Little Blue Herons

## Education and Information Goal

**GOAL:** *To ensure that information on the conservation of waterbirds is widely available to decision makers, the public, and all those whose actions affect waterbird populations.*

### Strategies

- ❖ Ensure that information on waterbird conservation is available in a form that is useful for planning, implementation, and management purposes.
- ❖ Increase effectiveness of communication by partnering with outreach activities for other birds and for other environmental programs.
- ❖ Develop relationships with educators of all levels and participate in programs that increase awareness and improve education.
- ❖ Develop and widely distribute educational information on habitat conservation strategies.
- ❖ Work with users of waterbird habitats to promote practices and policies that reduce impacts on the birds.

### Desired Results

- ❖ Decision makers and regional planners incorporate waterbird needs into their plans and actions.
- ❖ Citizens, conservationists, and resource managers are made more aware of conservation problems relating to waterbirds.
- ❖ Increased public awareness and appreciation of waterbirds is generated.
- ❖ Best practices and policies for the conservation of waterbirds are known, accepted and widely used.

## Coordination and Integration Goal

**GOAL:** *To ensure that coordinated conservation efforts for waterbirds in the Americas continue, are guided by common principles, and result in integrated and mutually supportive waterbird conservation actions.*

### Strategies

- ❖ Establish cooperative actions with organizations concerned with the conservation, research, and management of waterbirds and their habitats.
- ❖ Establish cooperative actions with other bird conservation initiatives, particularly through common goal setting, and multispecies approaches such as advocated by NABCI.



**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**

- ❖ Establish cooperative linkages with other bird conservation initiatives concerned with aquatic habitats.
- ❖ When initiatives for other aquatic bird groups are not underway, catalyze simultaneous planning and conservation of all water-dependent bird species.
- ❖ Seek to achieve integrated bird conservation action that incorporates the needs of waterbirds.
- ❖ Exchange information and expertise with international, national, regional state/provincial and local partners, and establish networks between conservationists, scientists, and habitat managers.
- ❖ Develop waterbird plans, where appropriate, at national, regional, JV, and state/provincial levels.
- ❖ Influence environmental policies and programs to positively affect waterbird conservation.
- ❖ Participate in international programs in ways that enhance the conservation of waterbirds.
- ❖ Increase human and financial resources available for waterbird conservation.

### Desired Results

- ❖ Waterbird conservation plans are in place and coordinated at the continental, national, regional, state/provincial, and local levels as appropriate.
- ❖ Common principles that support waterbird conservation are incorporated into international, national and state/provincial legislation, agreements and partnerships.
- ❖ Waterbirds are fully integrated into all bird conservation programs continentally, nationally, regionally, state/provincially and locally.
- ❖ Non-government groups play an active role in promoting and implementing waterbird conservation activities.
- ❖ Priority conservation action is not hindered through lack of human or financial resources.