



National Audubon Society

16 July 2025



Wilson's Plover
Photo: Jean Hall/Audubon Photography Awards

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

Audubon works throughout the Western Hemisphere with active programs and partnerships in Canada, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, Chile, and 14 U.S. states to protect birds and the places they need to thrive.



Our Niche

We leverage an exceptional ability to convene stakeholders and scale solutions across borders and sectors. We engage businesses creatively and empower communities to lead shorebird and seabird conservation through threat reductions, habitat protections, and policy advocacy.



Example Wins

Our work spans novel partnerships with rice-farmers managing water in the Central Valley of California to supporting shorebird nesting protections at beaches across the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast. We work for mangrove protection in Panama, resiliency planning in Washington, and estuary restoration in Chile.



Ongoing Work

We advance climate-resilient habitat strategies while supporting partners with funding, training, and tools to protect vital shorebird sites from Alaska to Chile. We are building the funding partnerships needed to scale impact and sustain local leadership.



American Oystercatcher
Photo: Raymond Hennessy/Audubon Photography Awards

Our Mission and Vision

Audubon protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow. Our vision is a thriving, interconnected hemisphere where birds and people flourish together through shared stewardship of vital habitats.

Our Focus

Where we work

Audubon’s Pacific shorebird strategies currently span 14 U.S. states and five additional countries – Canada, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, and Chile – and our century-old Coastal Bird Stewardship Program impacts more than 500 sites across the United States and Chile. Recognizing the vital importance of Canada and the Arctic to migratory birds, Audubon is expanding efforts in these regions to protect critical coastal and marine habitats. Additionally, Audubon leads the Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative, connecting over 50 organizations in 13+ countries to advance shorebird conservation across the hemisphere.

Audubon’s Priority Geographies*

*This map represents Audubon’s priority geographies for all 188 Indicator bird species, including shorebird and other birds.

“Protecting estuaries means protecting the nurseries for fish that feed communities and economies across the hemisphere.”



Outcomes



• **Birds and Habitat:** Audubon’s [Flight Plan](#) set an ambitious goal to conserve 300 million acres of quality, connected and climate-resilient habitat from Canada to Chile, including 55 million acres of coastal and marine areas, recognizing the essential role of marine ecosystems in reaching this goal.



• **People:** We protect the habitats and infrastructure human communities rely on for food, recreation, climate resilience, and the coastal economy.

Niche



Coordinated Conservation Action and Knowledge Sharing: Audubon’s conservation work doesn’t stop at borders. We unite over 50 organizations to scale shorebird protection across the hemisphere, while connecting local and community-led initiatives to global conservation efforts. Our strength lies in blending the deep expertise of Audubon’s science and conservation teams with the trusted, long-standing partnerships built by our 15 regional offices across the U.S. and dedicated teams in Canada, Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Chile. Audubon is also a driving force behind [Conserve Aves](#), a regional initiative partnering with 60+ local organizations to protect over 2 million hectares of critical bird habitat in Latin America. And through Audubon’s Seabird Institute – famous for restoring Atlantic Puffins to Maine’s islands – we shared our restoration techniques with 17 countries, gathered vital data on seabirds, and inspired hundreds of thousands of people to stand up for birds and the places they need.

Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat: Coastal and marine habitat conservation	Higher	Coastal habitat: Audubon works to conserve and protect coastal and marine habitats while also protecting vulnerable human communities. We have a storied history of deploying nature-based solutions to guide on-the-ground restoration and conservation planning. Successes include the restoration of critical urban wetland habitats in California in areas where habitats are under severe pressure from development and habitat loss, and the Blue Natural Heritage project that created a scientific baseline to protect and conserve mangrove ecosystems in Panama. In Latin America, with Conserve Aves, we are collaborating to protect over 5 million acres of critical bird habitat by 2028 through the creation and effective management of new local protected areas. Marine habitat: Through science, communications, and advocacy, Audubon supports the establishment of marine protected areas across the Western Hemisphere. Given the Arctic’s importance to nesting, we are expanding work in Canada to help advance 50 million acres of proposed Indigenous Marine Protected Areas. We work directly with Indigenous communities leading these efforts, including in California – the Northern Chumash Tribal Council’s campaign for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary and Canada – the Omushkego Cree’s initiative to protect 91,000 sq km of Weeneebeg (James Bay) and Washaybeyoh (Hudson Bay).
Reduce threats, track, and engage: Coastal bird stewardship	Medium	Audubon’s Coastal Bird Stewardship Program began in 1923 on the Texas Coast and today we deploy staff and volunteers across over 500 sites around the United States and Chile. Through long-term monitoring, signage and fencing, beachgoer education, and community engagement, our coastal stewards ensure that birds on our beaches have the space they need during nesting, wintering, and migratory seasons. Birds such as terns, plovers, and pelicans rely on beaches and barrier islands to rest and nest, and they’re vulnerable to disturbances, such as human development and sea-level rise. Coastal stewardship works. At sites where Audubon stewarded birds on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, we’ve found that the populations of four species of vulnerable coastal birds grew 34 times faster at stewardship sites compared to birds in protected areas without known stewardship.
Scale: Advancing coastal restoration, management, and marine policy and public funding	Higher	Restoration and management: Audubon is scaling our collaborative restoration and conservation planning work. We are currently engaged in more than 30 sites throughout the Western Hemisphere. Policy: When we bring the right policies together, we create an agenda that has a catalytic effect on our work. Our policy priorities include working with agencies to prioritize the funding and implementation of nature-based solutions in coastal areas and advancing comprehensive coastal zone planning efforts that account for rapidly changing conditions. We also support policies that account for the needs of birds in fishing, development, and offshore wind siting.
Research: Advancing actionable science	Lower	We work across the hemisphere to share restoration methods that benefit rare and endangered birds worldwide. We listen and amplify what birds tell us about climate change, forage fish management, proposed offshore wind development, and other ocean conservation challenges.

Stakeholders

Building on 120 years of coastal conservation, Audubon unites partners, governments, businesses, and communities to protect shorebirds and the habitats we all depend on. We are expanding international marine work and partnerships.



Sanderlings
Photo: Matthew Mullin/Audubon Photography Awards



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

Collaboration is the heart of our strategy. We convene partners across NGOs, governments, Indigenous communities, and industries to align action. Guided by the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, the National Conservation Plan for Chilean Birds, and Audubon's Flight Plan, we facilitate shared decision-making and resource-sharing. Whether it is helping shrimp farmers adopt bird-friendly practices or implementing policy with national agencies, we connect diverse actors around a shared goal: protecting shorebirds and seabirds and the ecosystems that sustain both wildlife and human well-being across the hemisphere. We bring all stakeholders to the table and create forums where every voice can shape how wildlife and landscapes are managed and protected for birds and people. Our role also supports groups behind the scenes by providing grant support, facilitating engagement in shrimp aquaculture, and organizing recreation disturbance working groups. We also translate science into practical solutions.

Government



National

In the US, we partner with agencies like the US Fish & Wildlife Service and National Ocean & Atmospheric Administration to implement habitat conservation and fund science-based coastal waterbird conservation.



Across the flyway

Across the Pacific Flyway, we collaborate with ministries and municipalities to align national bird strategies and protect critical wetland ecosystems.

Business



Agriculture and Aquaculture

We work directly with rice farmers to fine-tune water depths and monitor conditions to maximize habitat value for shorebirds during migration. We partner with shrimp farmers to reduce impacts on shorebird habitat, exploring sustainable practices and certification pathways.



Ecotourism

Audubon serves as a convener for bird-based tourism, developing birding trails and making the business case for conservation-aligned infrastructure. In Chile, we support ecotourism development that aligns conservation goals with economic opportunity in coastal towns and fishing communities.



Energy and Developers

We engage energy companies on bird-safe offshore wind siting, coastal resilience, and climate-smart strategies that protect habitat and support local economies. Through programs such as the Americas Flyways Initiative, we help municipalities and developers integrate bird-friendly design into large-scale urban and coastal infrastructure.

Local communities and others



Communities

We collaborate with Indigenous communities in Alaska, Chile, and Panama who steward lands vital to coastal waterbirds and subsistence livelihoods. By investing in leadership, access to resources, and inter-generational knowledge, we support conservation rooted in sovereignty, food security, and cultural resilience.



Local stewards

Across the Americas, we train seasonal beach stewards and community scientists to reduce human disturbance, protect nests and resting coastal birds, and educate beachgoers. This measurably improves breeding success, increases site use by birds, and builds grassroots ownership of conservation.



Other partners

The Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative works closely with over 70 partner organizations to create technical, financial, and operational capacity for implementing effective local coastal waterbird conservation programs.

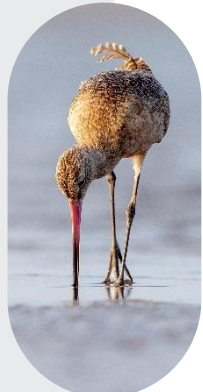
"We work with people to conserve birds."

Key Successes and the Future

Coastal Stewardship in Rocuant-Andalién Important Bird Area in Chile

Outcomes: The Isla de Los Reyes beach, part of the greater Rocuant-Andalién Wetland Important Bird Area near the city of Concepción in Chile, is a critical habitat area, providing nest sites for 120 breeding pairs of American Oystercatchers and approximately ~5% of the global bird population during their nonbreeding season. Despite the importance of the site for migratory and nesting shorebirds, the popular beach location is heavily used by local tourists, abandoned or loose dogs, and motor vehicles – leaving little room for the birds to nest and raise their young. Audubon created a waterbird [stewardship manual](#) for coastal communities in Latin America that provides a roadmap in Spanish for community leaders and volunteers to implement impactful actions to protect nesting coastal birds (e.g., fencing nesting sites and educational signage). We are replicating the success of the program across priority shorebird areas in Chile as identified in the Chilean Shorebird Conservation Action Plan.

How we got there: We started with a pilot project at Isla de Los Reyes beach. The intense use of the site inspired the community to collaboratively manage the area and mitigate threats to this important wetland. We then created the stewardship manual. By fostering opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and implementing an innovative conservation action plan, we are joining forces with local business to protect the beach for birds and people to enjoy.



Marbled Godwit
Photo: Tim Timmis/
Audubon Photography
Awards

Pacific Shorebird Disturbance Working Group

Audubon works closely with partners to implement effective methods to reduce disturbance on nesting beaches. Seasonal staff across 25 sites engaged beachgoers, built public awareness, and strengthened local stewardship, creating safer shorebird habitat and growing community pride in protection.

Mangrove Protection in Panama

We supported mangrove protection to safeguard key stopover and wintering sites for shorebirds, while advancing climate resilience, coastal protection, and blue carbon strategies. This work provides vital roosting habitat for migratory shorebirds and buffer coastal communities from storms and sea level rise.

Bird-based Ecotourism in Chile, Alaska, and The Bahamas

Among the fastest-growing segments of nature-based tourists are birders, who tend to have a light footprint on ecosystems and are invested in protecting natural areas. We completed several bird trails across the Americas including new routes in coastal southcentral Chile, northern Alaska, and The Bahamas.

Restoring Eelgrass in Richardson Bay

We are working to restore and enhance eelgrass beds in the San Francisco Bay area by protecting existing habitat, improving water conditions, and promoting science-based restoration efforts to support marine biodiversity and climate resilience.

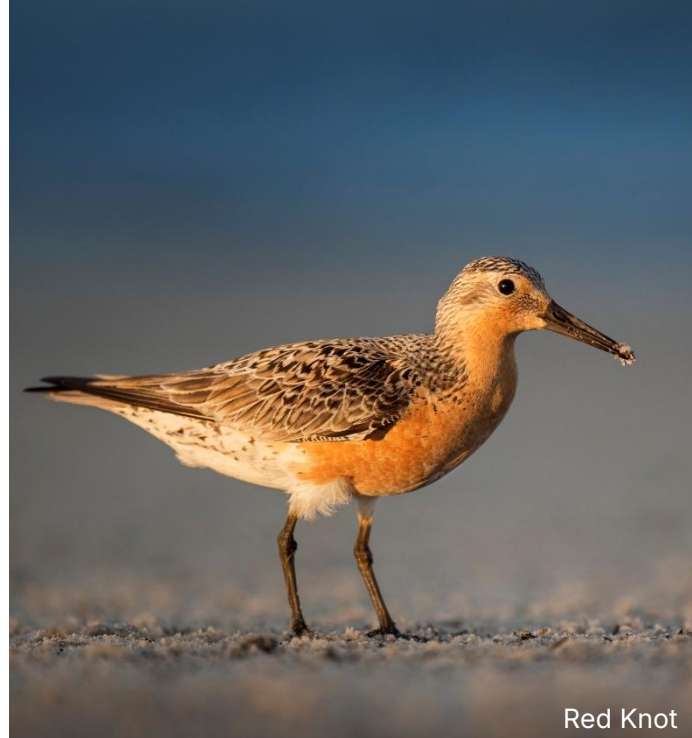
MOVING FORWARD

Audubon is focused on scaling what works and deepening the impact of locally grounded, flyway-wide conservation. We built strong partnerships and capacity from Alaska to Chile and now there is a great opportunity to expand investment across this network, especially in estuaries and stopover sites where threats from development and climate change are intensifying. Science is clear, and so is the need: to reverse coastal shorebird declines, we must protect and restore habitat, and ensure communities are resourced and empowered to lead.

The Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative and other working groups across the Americas give us the roadmap. Audubon's strength is helping partners put that map into action. Looking forward, our work will protect essential habitat through innovative ways, reduce existing and emerging threats, and scale the work across the Flyway, working collectively with governments, businesses, and communities. We will continue to show how conservation, economies, and people can thrive. We will make the case clear that protecting birds protects the fisheries, coastlines, and communities people rely on. We can preserve species while we build resilient landscapes and communities. With renewed support, we can turn ambition into results and ensure that the birds we love still have a place to land, rest, and thrive for generations to come.

Manomet Conservation Sciences

16 July 2025



Red Knot

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

Manomet works across the Western Hemisphere, protecting flyways that stretch from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego. Key countries include Mexico, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Honduras. We also work with critical sites such as Bahía Lomas in Chile, the most important wintering area in South America for the Red Knot.



Our Niche

We are the connective tissue between committed partners for long-term conservation. As the steward of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), we connect over 125 sites to shared goals and global strategies.



Example Wins

We secured lasting protections for critical sites such as Bahía Lomas, in Tierra del Fuego, where thanks to the voluntary management of the National Petroleum Company, it was possible to halt the operation of three oil platforms in the area. We built trusted partnerships with governments, industries, and the scientific community to help integrate shorebird conservation needs into aquaculture practices.



Ongoing Work

Across the Pacific Flyway, we are addressing emerging threats such as wind energy, supporting local partners with training and fundraising, and scaling up the work with national strategies and international collaboration. We continue to champion solutions that advance biodiversity and community well-being.



Snowy Plover
Photo: Diego Luna Quevedo

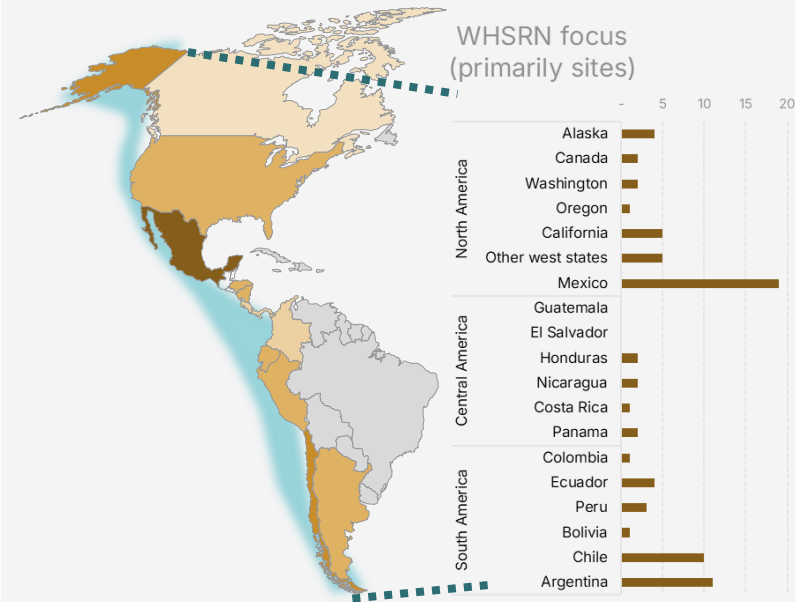
Our Approach

Manomet's mission is to apply science and collaboration to sustain healthy natural and human systems. Our vision is a thriving world where nature, ecosystems, and communities flourish together through long-term, locally grounded conservation.

Our Focus

Where we work

Manomet coordinates a network of WHSRN sites across 20 countries that are part of the Pacific, Atlantic, and Midcontinent Flyways, supporting shorebird conservation where it matters most and covering more than 15 million hectares. The Arctic and Pacific coast of the Americas are priorities due to their shared species, ongoing national shorebird plans, and high conservation value across the full annual lifecycle.



Outcomes

- **Healthy Habitats and Birds, Thriving Communities:** We maintain and restore resilient habitats across the full lifecycle of birds to stabilize populations and protect key species, benefiting both wildlife and human communities.
- **Priority flagship species** include migratory birds such as the Hudsonian Godwit and Red Knot, resident birds such as the Snowy Plover, and threatened species such as the Magellanic Plover and Rufous-chested Dotterel.



Niche

- **Working at multiple scales:** Our work ensures site efforts contribute to larger global goals. We connect local conservation with national policy, flyway strategies, and global agreements, advocating for site-based action to drive systemic changes.
- **Monitoring and Governance:** We help communities build durable management systems, including local leadership, long-term monitoring, and tools to respond to threats.



"We invest in people and processes."

Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat	Higher	We support the designation and management of key WHSRN sites that are key for protection of critical shorebird habitats. This is an important first step to formal site protection, offering a voluntary commitment that lays the groundwork for future legal designation as an official protected area. We continue to invest in partnerships, governance, and practical solutions that integrate shorebird protection with economic activities.
Reduce threats	Higher	We address historical and emerging threats from development (for example, coastal infrastructure and ports), energy (such as oil, wind, green hydrogen, and lithium mining), aquaculture (shrimp), and climate change. Today, when conservation funding is limited, our highest priority remains working with businesses to ensure that development is as respectful and bird-friendly for migratory birds as possible. We address growing threats by creating safe corridors for birds, restricting vehicle access on beaches, and advocating for more protections in high-risk areas.
Scale	Higher	We develop national shorebird plans that connect local sites to flyway-scale strategies (e.g., Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy) and other broader policy frameworks that help to replicate successful existing models. We also facilitate governments sharing experiences across countries, such as Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and others.
Monitor and research	Lower	We lead long-term population monitoring of species at breeding and stopover sites, such as in the Arctic, through the International Shorebird Survey, to inform science-based conservation decisions. Our research includes shorebird conservation, fisheries management, and climate change impacts.
Engage public	Lower	We aim to grow the public interest in shorebirds. Strategic outreach includes local and national press campaigns and creative media, such as multilingual social media content with engaging visuals and eye-catching photos, to make shorebird stories accessible and convey the urgency of their conservation to local audiences.

Stakeholders

Manomet facilitates participation with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that shorebird conservation is integrated into governance, development, and community life.



American Oystercatcher
Photo: Diego Luna Quevedo



Collaboration and Hemispheric Coordination

"We work every day to connect the key points across the network. We are conservation process facilitators."

Manomet hosts the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). This network brings together governments, communities, NGOs, researchers, and the private sector. Local communities are involved in management and decision-making to ensure conservation is rooted in place. We facilitate conservation as an ongoing, adaptive, long-term process rather than a one-time intervention. By helping local actors articulate their needs and align with national and international frameworks, we aim to strengthen action at the local level. This connective work builds long-term trust, supports shared learning across countries, and ensures that conservation is grounded in local needs alongside private sector development. We work to be influential in global decision-making spaces, such as Flyway-scale conservation strategies.

Government



National

We contribute to environmental ministries in Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and elsewhere. We integrate shorebird priorities and actions into national conservation plans.



Across the flyway

We help governments collaborate across borders and align their conservation agendas for the benefit of the entire Flyway.

Business



Aquaculture and Salt

We collaborate with shrimp and salt producers to reduce resource-use tensions, promote sustainable best practices, and build trust through practical, mutually beneficial solutions. We work with certification programs to expand conservation priorities.



Energy

We dialogue with the energy sector to ensure that projects are designed and implemented in ways that minimize impacts to birds and protect critical habitats.



Real-Estate Developers

We engage real-estate developers in innovative management approaches to make projects more integrated, bird-friendly, and landscape-sensitive.

Local communities and others



Local

We invest deeply in local processes and people, supporting volunteer groups, fishing guilds, and local networks (e.g., offering training). We engage local residents to lead outreach, monitoring, and management. This fosters grassroots conservation driven by a deep sense of place.



Communities

We work closely with communities living near Bahía Lomas and Chiloé in Chile to build governance mechanisms, support local leadership, and embed shorebird protection in everyday decision-making. These efforts help make significant sites relevant to the local areas and resilient to outside threats.



NGOS and Academia

Academic institutions and other NGOs (such as, for example, Red de Observadores de Aves (ROC), Network of Bird and Wildlife Observers, the Bahía Lomas Center in Chile) are key allies in advancing science-based management and expanding conservation impact.

Successes and the Future

Bahia Lomas Official Protection (Chile)

Outcomes: Manomet helped secure protection of Bahía Lomas, the most important wintering site in all of South America for the threatened Red Knot. It was first designated as a WHSRN site and later became a national protected area, officially recognized as a Nature Sanctuary. Along the way, Chile's National Petroleum Company (ENAP) voluntarily halted the operation of three platforms in the area. A governance mechanism is now in place to guide the protection and management of the site.

How we got there: In over 15 years of sustained work, we facilitated dialogue between the national oil company (ENAP), government agencies, scientists, and local stakeholders. We built trust, supported an evidence-based management plan, and helped establish a local stakeholder committee. Establishing credibility and consistent presence on the ground were some of the keys to advancing both conservation and political agreements. As new threats such as green hydrogen and wind energy emerge, we continue to remain committed to dialogue and seek solutions that integrate conservation with development.



White-rumped Sandpipers
Photo: Diego Luna Quevedo

Engaging Shrimp Producers (Mexico)

Outcomes: Manomet built strong relationships with shrimp producers in the Gulf of Fonseca and in Mexico to promote shorebird-friendly practices in coastal production sites. These partnerships opened doors to participate in industry events and conversations about best practices and sustainability certification. Our efforts shifted perceptions of shorebirds from being seen as a nuisance to being recognized as part of sustainable production systems.

How we got there: Manomet began engaging with this issue through one-on-one conversations and by attending events organized by the sector. We gradually earned producers' respect by listening, offering practical solutions, and demonstrating how shorebird-friendly practices could benefit shrimp farms. Collaborating with both landowners and workers, questions and concerns about birds were addressed. As more shorebird species became red-listed as endangered, we aligned that data with certification frameworks to gain the sector's acceptance.



Snowy Plover
Photo: Getty Images

MOVING FORWARD

Manomet is entering a critical phase in our work. The urgency to protect key shorebird sites is intensifying under growing development, the energy transition, and climate pressures, coupled with political uncertainty and declines in conservation funding. That's why we are advancing bold coordination and renewing our long-term commitment that trust that is built over time. Our role as joint facilitators that connect people, sites, and policy is more essential than ever.

Moving forward, we will continue investing in local leaders, capacity building, collaborative planning, and science to ensure communities are equipped to lead in conservation processes. We will deepen our focus on national shorebird plans, addressing coastal development and international cooperation. We will also expand work with sectors such as renewable energy and aquaculture, recognizing that conservation must integrate into a rapidly shifting economic and ecological landscape. By aligning local action with global strategies, Manomet is helping ensure that shorebirds and coastal communities can thrive together in a changing world.

"This is a race against time to protect critical sites for shorebirds against many threats."



Point Blue Conservation Science

16 July 2025



Marbled Godwit
Photo: R. Miro

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

Building on decades of experience, Point Blue leads the Migratory Shorebird Project (MSP), a 13-country network that connects over 100 partners across the Pacific Americas Flyway, from Alaska to Chile.



Our Niche

MSP serves as the Pacific Flyway's crucial science and monitoring engine to inform conservation actions. We monitor species population trends that are only possible to accurately quantify at the Flyway-wide spatial scale. We are a leader turning data into action.



Example Wins

We informed changes in conservation status for several shorebird species in multiple U.S. states, driving conservation for years. Data are leading to habitat designations in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Chile, and Peru. Practical actions address recreational disturbance in our toolkit that is informing land management at dozens of sites.



Ongoing Work

We continue to coordinate shorebird monitoring across the Flyway, develop science-based solutions, and support local conservation through MSP+ grants. We have a deep commitment to delivering MSP data to local and regional conservation efforts. We collaboratively address climate-smart adaptation.

Shorebird Survey in Guatemala
Photo: V. Sagastume



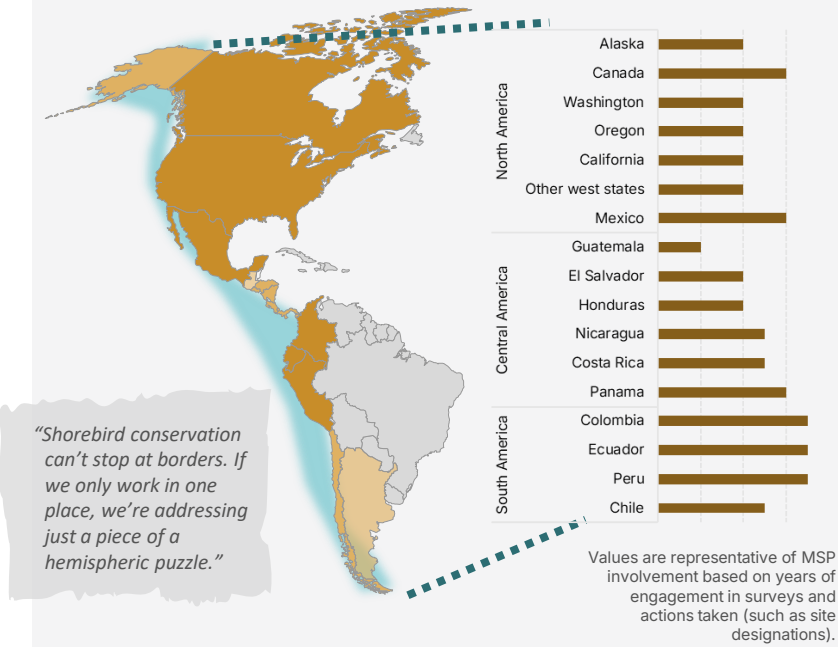
Our Mission and Vision

Point Blue Conservation Science's mission is to conserve birds, other wildlife, and ecosystems through science, partnerships, and outreach. We envision a future where collaborative, climate-smart conservation ensures ecosystems support thriving birds, other wildlife, and human communities well into the future.

Our Focus

Where we work

Through the [Migratory Shorebird Project](#), we work across 13 countries covering diverse ecosystems, from mangroves and mudflats to inland wetlands and rice fields. We engage in working landscapes where conservation intersects with fisheries, farming, and coastal development. We use shorebirds as indicators for coastal wetlands and mudflats in San Francisco Bay, Puget Sounds, Morro Bay, Salton Sea, and more.



Outcomes



- **Protected shorebird habitat and coastal ecosystems** across the Flyway and implement adaptive, Flyway-scale conservation.
- **Reversed shorebird declines for important species.** As one example, the Black-bellied Plover is a declining and wide-ranging species that relies on mudflats, beaches, and shorelines throughout the Flyway.



“This is research at a scale that matches the movements of shorebirds. We span diverse sites with varying conditions that evolve over time, just like the shorebirds themselves.”

Niche



- **Coordinating Robust, Flyway-Wide Shorebird Monitoring:** To achieve flyway-scale conservation success, a network and collaborative approach is critical. MSP provides the science and monitoring that ties everything together. Over 13 years, we worked through surveys (now in 13 countries) with over 750 volunteers at 360+ sites to learn where the birds are, what their threats are, and what solutions are working.
- **Turning Science into Action:** Our science is key to understand population status and trends, which is the foundation for identifying threats, putting local data into context, informing on-the-ground conservation efforts, creating tools, and advancing conservation actions. As an example, we co-created multilingual toolkits on recreational disturbance management tailored to address real-world threats.
- **Scaling Work:** MSP data directly informed IUCN Red List updates, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network designations, and national and regional shorebird plans.
- **Powering Local Leadership:** We are building a new generation of conservation leaders rooted in coastal and Indigenous communities. Our MSP+ program grants give funds to Latin American partners and others to lead.



Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Track and research	Higher	Across 13 countries, our research and monitoring network collects long-term data on shorebird populations across the Flyway, habitats and threats, and how they are changing over time. This science guides conservation priorities and informs policy decisions. Point Blue provides protocols, data systems, training, and support.
Reduce threats	Higher	We support solutions that address threats such as climate change impacts, habitat loss, and recreational disturbance, putting local population trends into a flyway context. We work to understand how habitats can adapt to future threats such as sea-level rise, floods, and drought. Through toolkits, community partnerships, and land-use planning, we help mitigate risks.
Scale	Medium	We build networks to scale conservation from site-level to flyway-wide impact. Starting in 2024, five MSP+ grant partners were supported to participate in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group conference, a biannual gathering that provides a platform for learning and connection. Attendees shared lessons from the field and built relationships with other shorebird conservation leaders across the hemisphere.
Protect habitat	Medium	We empower local and regional institutions to protect habitat by providing robust science and a gateway to conservation networks that can provide resources to support them. The institutions we support help multiple habitats across the Pacific Flyway, including wetlands, estuaries, and coastal zones. Our work prioritizes sites that support multiple species at once.
Engage public	Lower	We co-create tools, maps, and messages that make science accessible to communities. Storytelling, peer exchange, and regional convenings help translate data into local action and global collaboration.

Stakeholders

We provide science-based information on shorebirds to support collaboration across communities, governments, researchers, NGOs, and businesses.



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

We have a long-term commitment to building strong, data-driven conservation networks. Launched in 2011, the Migratory Shorebird Project grew from a small U.S.-Mexico effort into a hemisphere-wide network. Through the MSP, we developed a robust network of partners and now bring together input from over 100 partners across 13 countries, including local communities, Indigenous groups, scientists, non-profits, academic institutions, and government agencies. We share data, co-develop tools, and guide strategies through inclusive working groups and regular convenings.

"No single community can do this alone—migratory species demand collaboration across borders, sectors, and entire ecosystems."

Government



National

We work with national governments to provide science, technical guidance, inform shorebird policies, and help designate protected areas.



Local

Shorebird data inform coastal planning and zoning that protects key habitats in growing places such as Panama, Colombia, and Chile.

"This is not just a monitoring program. We are about understanding threats on a flyway scale and turning science into meaningful conservation action."

Business



Aquaculture and Agriculture

During high tides along the coast, shorebirds often move to nearby salt ponds, shrimp ponds, or rice fields to rest, conserving energy before returning to forage as waters recede. We work with partners to identify critical refuge areas and explore water management strategies and other best practices.



Ecotourism

Partners work with tourism operators to generate income while minimizing disturbance to birds.

"We look for win-win solutions. We create habitat in ways that support shorebirds without disrupting business operations, and often bringing unexpected benefits. We link shorebird protection to sustainable livelihoods, such as avitourism and small-scale fishing."

Local communities and others



Local input

Communities are essential partners in our work, contributing on-the-ground knowledge. Locals lead and participate in monitoring. We support communities through training, small MSP+ grants, and collaborative planning. We empower them to co-design solutions that reflect local values and knowledge.



Community benefits

We prioritize conservation actions that support community well-being, cultural heritage, and sustainable livelihoods, such as through community-managed wetlands. We quantify ecosystem services including food, carbon storage, coastal erosion protection, tourism, biodiversity support, and more.

"When you tie conservation to local priorities and create multiple benefits, that's when it really succeeds."

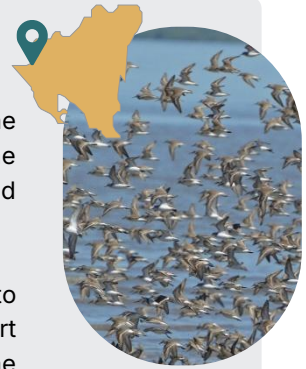
Key Successes and the Future

Nicaragua WHSRN Site Designation and Other Habitat Designations

Outcomes: The Delta de Estero Real in Nicaragua was designated as the country's first site in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). The site supports over 10% of the biogeographic population of Wilson's Plover. This designation secures international recognition and long-term habitat protection for critical intertidal mudflats, shrimp ponds, and mangroves.

How we got there: Point Blue and MSP partners (Quetzalli Nicaragua) conducted multi-year surveys to document shorebird populations. Local organizations led the nomination process, with technical support from MSP. Community outreach brought together shrimp farmers, landowners, communities, and the government (Nicaraguan Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources) to protect the site.

Other places protected: MSP data also contributed to the successful nomination of WHSRN sites in Costa Rica (Golfo de Nicoya), Ecuador (Canal de Jambeli), and Chile (Humedal Marino de Chamiza) and a Ramsar site in Peru (Estuario de Virrilla).



Shorebirds at the Delta
Photo: [Dorlando Jarquin](#)

Species Threat Lists

MSP data were used in reclassing several shorebird species on the IUCN list and Species of Greatest Conservation Need in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and others. These lists are drivers of conservation on the ground for years to come.

Recreational Disturbance Toolkit

Outcomes: MSP and the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Initiative developed a [bilingual toolkit](#) to help reduce recreational disturbance. Solutions address the threats of dogs, beach users, vehicles, and 18 others. It includes real-world mitigation actions (signage, citizen campaigns, awareness, monitoring, restricted access, and plans), as well as educational materials and case studies. The toolkit is used at dozens of sites to inform land management and public engagement.

How we got there: Partners across the Flyway shared challenges and tested solutions in 28 diverse settings. Point Blue facilitated the process, compiling examples into a user-friendly guide. Spanish-speaking partners shaped the content to reflect local realities and practices.



MOVING FORWARD

Point Blue Conservation Science is focused on leveraging the strength of the Migratory Shorebird Project (MSP) network to address urgent challenges facing shorebirds and coastal communities across the Pacific Americas Flyway. By investing in flyway-scale strategies rooted in local science and knowledge, we aim to halt and reverse population declines while building more resilient ecosystems and communities.

Our priorities include enhancing data-driven decision-making through ecosystem service valuation, supporting adaptive habitat management in the face of accelerating climate threats, and expanding the MSP+ Science to Action grant program. We also recognize that sustainable, long-term conservation requires continued investment in people. Point Blue is committed to strengthening the capacity of our partners through training, mentoring, and cross-regional learning. We will continue to support Indigenous and coastal communities to lead site-based conservation and ensure that their voices shape regional strategies. As public funding becomes more uncertain, philanthropic support will be essential to sustaining the momentum we built. The foundation laid by historic work has catalyzed a powerful network; The next chapter is about sustaining and transforming that foundation into enduring impact. This phase is critical for ensuring previous investments are leveraged into conservation actions on the ground – we are now publishing Pacific Flyway population trends that have great potential for driving action and putting local data into context.

"With the funding landscape changing, this is a really intense time for all partners working on shorebirds. But the community is ready for a great return on investment. Partners are connecting, learning from one another, and tackling shared scientific questions and threats together. We're poised to deliver real impact."

Pronatura Northwest Mexico

16 July 2025



Dunlin (R. Carmona)

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

Northwest Mexico holds global significance as a key region. Our work focuses on 20 priority wetlands across the Baja California Peninsula and the coastal states of Sonora, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco and Colima – critical habitats that support more than 1.6 million migrating shorebirds.



Our Niche

Grounded by the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, our work includes critical habitat protection using flexible conservation tools, scientific research, tracking and monitoring, community-based site conservation, and international collaboration, targeting threatened shorebird species.



Example Wins

We lead community-based site conservation, improving shorebird survival across key wetlands. We have advanced subnational and private protected areas, secured legal status for species under Mexico's endangered list, and gained international recognition for critical shorebird habitats.



Ongoing Work

We address human-driven threats to shorebird habitats by enhancing nesting sites, preventing disturbance and predation, leading community-based conservation, turning wastewater plants into shorebird refuges, and using tracking technology to assess how shorebirds respond to our efforts.



Pacific Red Knot (G. Marron)

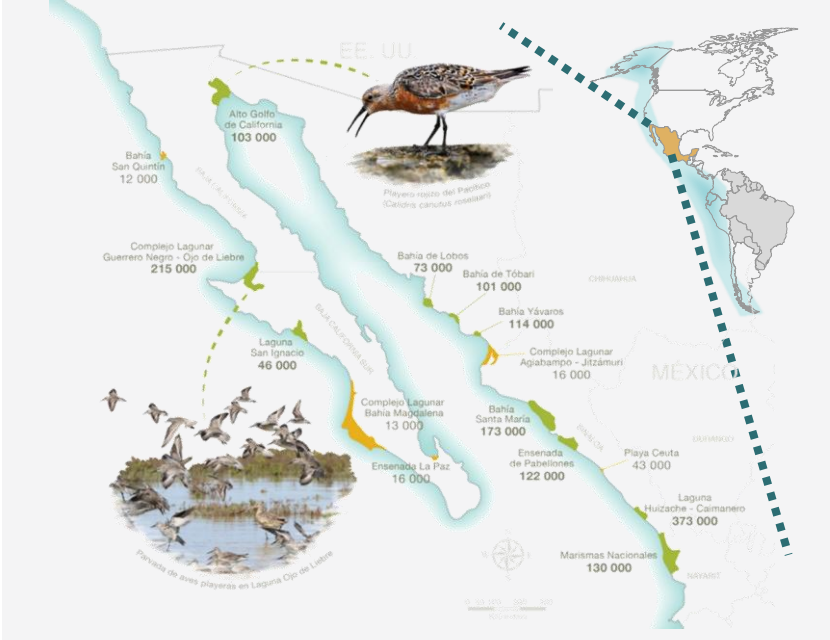
Our Mission and Vision

The *Mission* of Pronatura Noroeste is the conservation of the flora, fauna, and priority ecosystems of Northwest Mexico, to promote the development of society in harmony with nature. In our *Vision*, terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems in this region, as well as communities that depend on them, are healthy, resilient and thriving.

Our Focus

Where we work

We work across 20 priority wetlands in Northwest Mexico, including the Guerrero Negro Wetland Complex (Baja California Sur), Tobarí Bay (Sonora), Santa María Bay (Sinaloa), and the Upper Gulf of California, each supporting over 5% of the global population of key shorebird species. These sites are globally significant, selected for their high species density, vital role in migration, and vulnerability to increasing environmental threats.



Outcomes



- **Critical habitat protection:** Pronatura Noroeste secures vital wetlands and stopover sites in northwestern Mexico that are essential for migratory shorebirds. We have secured and improved the management of habitats for over 1.6 million migratory and resident shorebirds, including threatened species.

Niche



- **Flexible protection tools:** We apply legal protections, sustainable land management, land easements, and direct restoration to protect and improve habitat.



- **Research, tracking and monitoring:** Through robust research, tracking and monitoring, we provide essential data that guide local and regional conservation strategies for priority shorebird species. Using advanced technology such as [Motus](#) (miniature automated radio telemetry to track bird movements), the team tracks migration and habitat use. We uncover critical inland migration routes and unexpected habitat use.



- **Community-based site conservation with local presence:** Local communities are engaged in stewardship and education, promoting shared responsibility for protecting shorebird habitats. We have a highly trained team with boots on the ground at nearly all priority sites.



- **International collaboration:** Working with partners across the Americas, Pronatura Noroeste supports full life-cycle conservation for migratory shorebirds. By engaging communities and partnering across the Pacific Flyway, Pronatura Noroeste drives coordinated actions that support shorebird conservation throughout their migratory journey.

Strategies

Pronatura Noroeste implements the [Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy](#) in northwestern Mexico.

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat and reduce threats: Manage, enhance and conserve habitats	Higher	We support the conservation of key wetlands on public and private lands by working with communities and agencies to protect critical habitat, prevent disturbance and predation, and enhance nesting and wintering sites in changing climate conditions, improving habitat quality and adaptability across the region. Considering sea-level rise and species response, we are implementing nature-based solutions to create foraging and resting areas. We address pollution, coastal real-estate development, and tourism pressures through behavior change and site-specific mitigation measures.
Track and research: Improve knowledge of shorebirds and their habitats	Higher	We conduct applied research, tracking, and long-term monitoring to better understand how shorebirds use key habitats. By generating site- and species-specific data, the organization supports science-based conservation planning, adaptive management, and more effective shorebird conservation strategies.
Scale: Increase partner and stakeholder capacity	Medium	We work at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Through training, knowledge exchange, and collaborative initiatives, we help create a strong, cross-sector network that brings together diverse actors – including those not traditionally involved in shorebird conservation – to support coordinated action in northwestern Mexico and across the Pacific Flyway.
Develop support: Develop protection policies	Lower	We foster a broad base of support for shorebird conservation by engaging local communities, landowners, educators, and decision-makers. Through outreach, environmental education, and collaborative initiatives, we build awareness and shared responsibility. We strengthen the social and political backing needed to advance shorebird conservation actions.

Stakeholders

Pronatura Noroeste brings together communities, scientists, governments, conservationists and entrepreneurs to build a shared vision for thriving coastal ecosystems and resilient shorebird populations across northwestern Mexico and the Pacific Flyway.



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

We build, promote, and facilitate collaboration across sectors and countries to implement conservation grounded in site-level action. We co-develop projects with communities and local leaders, combining scientific knowledge with community priorities and government-supported protection.

"The complexity of shorebird conservation makes partnerships and stakeholder involvement essential – lasting results can only be achieved through collective effort."

Government



National

Pronatura Noroeste and the Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) collaborate on shorebird conservation through joint monitoring, environmental education, habitat management, and training of local promoters. We are dedicated to community engagement in priority shorebird habitat within federal natural protected Areas and Ramsar sites.



Local governments

We partner with municipal and state governments to create locally enforced protected areas, influence coastal zoning, manage tourism and other sources of disturbance, and implement site-specific habitat protection strategies.

Business



Developers

We identify and promote the use of best practices with real estate and coastal developers to minimize disturbance in critical shorebird nesting and roosting zones.

Communities



Local communities

We prioritize bottom-up approaches that engage communities and seek local solutions that meet the needs of both people and birds in the long term. We involve local schools, Indigenous communities, and civil society groups to foster environmental leadership and grassroots stewardship.

Partners



Universities

We partner with academic institutions to understand and conserve shorebirds and their habitats, including monitoring, migration studies, and habitat assessments. We share data and publish findings. The partnership supports wetland restoration, education, and policy advocacy, while offering training and research opportunities for students, overall enhancing conservation efforts along the Pacific Flyway.



International partners

Collaborative work with international partners help reveal cross-border migratory links, while forums and exchanges in South America allow mutual learning and shape best practices throughout the Flyway. We collaborate with many conservation organizations and academic institutions to coordinate shorebird tracking, research, and conservation. Through a growing network of wildlife monitoring stations, including the first MOTUS network in Mexico, we help expand and connect bird tracking across Latin America, linking wintering and migrating habitats with breeding grounds in Alaska and beyond.

Key Successes and the Future

Community-Based Shorebird Protection

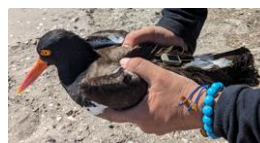
Pronatura Noroeste has a strong track record of effective, site-specific, community-based shorebird conservation in northwest Mexico. Grounded in science and partnerships, our work has enhanced habitat protection, local stewardship, and regional strategies in priority sites. Some examples include Golfo de Santa Clara, Tobari Bay, Santa María Bay, Ceuta Beach, La Paz Bay, the Guerrero Negro wetland complex, San Quintín Bay, and Todos Santos Bay.

Key successes:

- **Long-term conservation impact at priority sites** through adaptive management plans tailored to local ecological and social conditions.
- **Empowered coastal communities** as conservation partners, providing tools, training, and support to foster local stewardship of shorebird habitats.
- **Improved shorebird habitat protection** through collaborations with fishers, local communities, farmers, salt producers, and governments, integrating conservation with sustainable land and resource use.



Beach fence protecting the Red Knot habitat and education activities in **Golfo de Santa Clara**, Sonora.



The Mayo community shorebird conservation group in **Tobari Bay**, Sonora.



Shorebird festival and habitat enhancement in **La Paz Bay**, Baja California Sur.

MOVING FORWARD

Pronatura Noroeste works across nearly half of Mexico's territory to tackle urgent environmental challenges through science-driven, community-led action. With over 70 experts and eight regional offices, we are at the forefront of shorebird conservation in northwestern Mexico – an area critical to the survival of more than 1.6 million migratory shorebirds each year.

As part of our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan and in alignment with the Pacific Americas Shorebird Strategy, our goal is simple but ambitious: to scale up lasting solutions that protect shorebirds and the coastal ecosystems they depend on.

To achieve this, we're focusing on three strategic priorities:

- **Build site-specific climate resilience** through adaptive conservation plans and nature-based solutions that protect habitats from sea-level rise and other climate impacts.
- **Strengthen community leadership** by expanding a regional network of local stewards who actively safeguard key roosting, foraging, and breeding sites.
- **Accelerate collaboration and technological innovation** via bird tracking, hands-on training, and outreach events like bird festivals that raise awareness and celebrate migratory species.

With a proven track record and strong partnerships, Pronatura Noroeste is driving a new era of climate-smart, community-powered conservation.

CECPAN

Center for Study and
Conservation of Natural Heritage

16 July 2025



Hudsonian Godwit (CECPAN)

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

We work across Chile's diverse coastal landscapes – from the wetlands of the Chiloé Archipiélago in the south to the arid shores of Atacama and Antofagasta in the north – in habitats vital to migratory shorebirds.



Our Niche

We combine scientific research and community engagement to protect high-value coastal and wetland habitats, with a focus on empowering Indigenous communities and safeguarding birds.



Example Wins

We advanced ecosystem management in communities, considering multiple uses such as fishing, tourism, and traditional uses. We strengthen leadership and local governance by helping communities protect places of ecological and cultural importance.



Ongoing Work

Moving forward, with our multidisciplinary team, we aim to deepen our support for local coastal governance, expand marine-coastal habitat protections, and establish alliances that contribute to safeguarding ecosystems connecting Chile to the Pacific Flyway.



Whimbrel
(Photo: CECPAN)

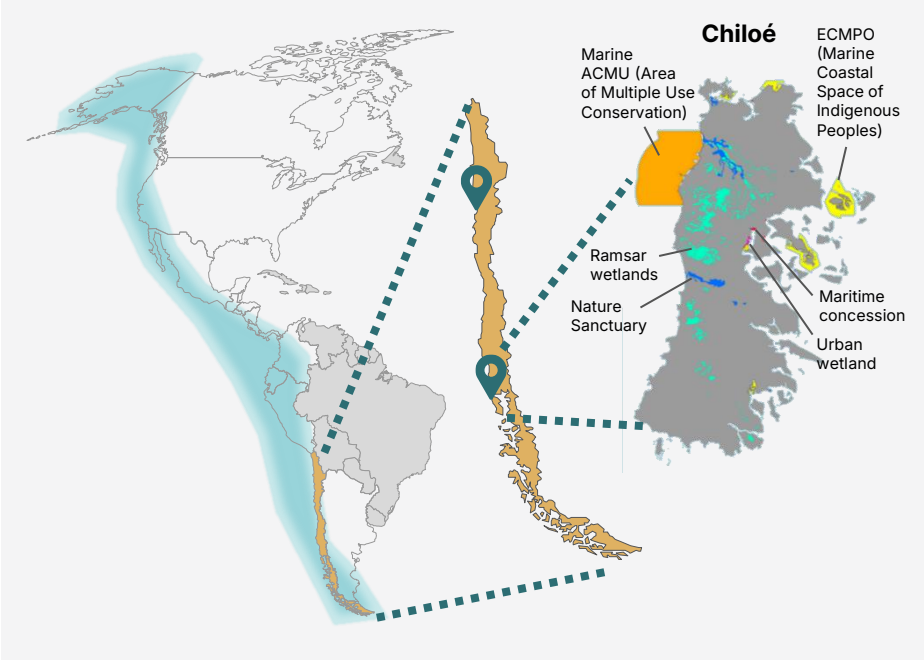
Our Mission and Vision

Contribute to the effective protection of biodiversity and the socio-environmental well-being of communities by protecting their land and managing conservation strategies that are linked to local realities. Biocultural heritage is protected by its inhabitants, who know, value, and respect their territory; achieving fair management and use of biodiversity through participatory, informed and planned decision-making.

Our Focus

Where we work

We work primarily in southern Chile, especially Chiloé Archipiélago in the region of Los Lagos (9,600 hectares of protection, 141,000 proposed). In addition, we develop conservation initiatives in northern regions of the country, such as Atacama and Antofagasta. Our initiatives range from small coastal sites to large marine territories, depending on community needs and ecological value.



Sample Outcomes



• **Conservation mosaic:** We promote conservation mosaics that connect water and land under diverse various categories of protection and management, including nature sanctuaries, marine coastal areas of Indigenous peoples, among others. We strive for ecological resilience and continuity.



• **Birds:** We strengthen habitat protection for key migratory shorebird species such as the Long-billed Curlew, Tawny-throated Dotterel, and Whimbrel.

Niche



• **Tailored approach:** Our interdisciplinary team works across fields and geographies, from social to natural sciences and from sizes of 38 to 80,000 hectares. We tailor action plans to ecological and social context.



• **Indigenous-led:** We support Indigenous communities with technical assistance and training (e.g., mapping, GIS), participatory planning, skills to manage and advocate for their territories, and education programs tailored to community knowledge and needs.

• **Community Empowerment:** CECPAN emphasizes community-led stewardship and locally defined priorities, enabling communities to advance the defense of their territories.

"We try to strengthen governance of the communities so they are empowered and connected with nature."

Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat	Higher	We secure formal protection for high-value wetlands and coastal areas through official designations that include nature sanctuaries, urban wetlands, marine coastal spaces for Indigenous Peoples (ECMPO), coastal edge micro-zoning, and select direct purchases of land or maritime concessions. Supporting protection, we work to create strong and adaptive management or action plans that can be refined as threats change over time.
Track and research	Higher	We conduct long-term bird monitoring (twice yearly bird censuses across 38 sites contributing to the Neotropical Waterbird Census), study assessments, and applied research to guide conservation decisions and evaluate impact. We have carried out more than 1,000 shorebird and waterbird surveys in Chile since 2006.
Reduce threats	Medium	We reduce threats such as industrial fishing and other shipping pollution, aquaculture plastic pollution, unregulated urban development, vehicle access to beaches, energy development (e.g., wind farms), and over-consumption of water. Our solutions span legal advocacy, coastal land-use planning framework, and communication campaigns.
Scale	Medium	A main aim is to influence national conservation policy in Chile, focusing on topics related to the protection of birds, wetlands, and coastal ecosystems. Additionally, we recognize the international movement of the birds we are protecting and are interested in exploring scaling opportunities, especially across Chile by replicating community-led conservation models.
Engage public	Lower	We promote conservation awareness through school programs, outreach campaigns, and audiovisual materials that link community identity to biodiversity protection. Our environmental education emphasizes how healthy shorebird habitats are directly tied to local jobs, food security, and sustainable coastal livelihoods.

Stakeholders

We work with communities, governments, and researchers to co-create alternative conservation solutions.



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

We work across sectors – partnering with communities, local governments, national ministries, NGOs, and universities – to co-create conservation strategies rooted in science, equity, and territorial governance. This approach allows us to integrate cultural knowledge with ecological data.

Government



National

We engage public institutions to align conservation efforts with Chile's environmental laws, regulations, and protected area frameworks.



Local

We provide support to local governments (municipalities and public institutions) to develop conservation action plans and regulatory protections for ecologically important sites and wetlands.

Private sector



Aquaculture

We work with aquaculture companies to improve their practices by reducing pollution, limiting plastic and other types of waste, using natural materials, and promoting bird- and habitat-friendly methods.

"Activities are aimed at improving what the companies are doing... We want the industry to be conscious about their impact."

Education



Universities

We partner with to build knowledge, coordinate actions, and amplify conservation impact across sectors. Research institutions also support long-term monitoring.



Environmental education

We work directly with educational institutions and others to develop actions related to environmental and heritage education.

Select local communities



Chepu

Chiloé Island

We work in Chepu, which is a coastal and riverine area on the eastern side of the island, known for its rich wetlands, complex aquatic ecosystems, and strong cultural ties to local communities, including Indigenous groups. The Chepu River and its associated wetlands flow into the Pacific Ocean, making it an important ecological zone within Chiloé's largest watershed. *See the next page for more.*



Paposo-Taltal

Atacama Desert

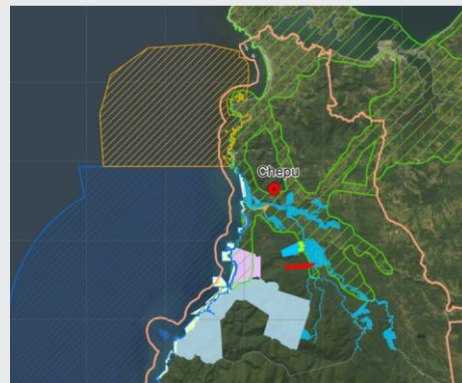
The Atacama region is culturally significant to local communities and Indigenous peoples who engage in artisanal fishing and traditional uses. Our conservation initiatives emphasize protecting the fragile ecosystems, promoting sustainable resource management, and supporting biocultural governance involving local stakeholders.

Key Successes and the Future

Ecosystem Management in Chepu, Chiloé Island

Outcomes: CECPAN's work in Chepu has led to meaningful advances in territorial planning and conservation management. The area is now recognized as a critical site for biodiversity conservation. Local communities successfully integrated sustainable economic activities, including artisanal and sport fishing, tourism, and benthic ocean-floor resource management. Multiple conservation tools have been developed to reflect the region's ecological and social complexity.

How we got there: CECPAN worked closely with communities who live and work across the region's diverse aquatic environments – freshwater, brackish, and marine – to ensure that their practices were reflected in conservation strategies. We helped ensure that conservation and development actions complied with legal and regulatory requirements. This project aims to promote integrated, effective management across legal and institutional mechanisms in Chepu.



CECPAN Conservation and Land Management Initiatives		Other Initiatives	
	Public Land Administration		ZOIT Proposal
	Private Land		National Park
	Nature Sanctuary		Municipality
	ACMU Proposal		ECMPO
	Administration Proposal		AMERB
			Conservation Landscape

ACMU Proposal: Marine and Coastal Area for Indigenous Peoples. ZOIT Proposal: Zone of Tourist Interest. ECMPO: Marine and Coastal Space for Indigenous Peoples. AMERB: Area for the Management and Exploitation of Benthic Resources

Marine Biocultural Governance and Marine and Coastal Areas for Indigenous Peoples

Outcomes: CECPAN has supported marine biocultural governance initiatives based on Marine and Coastal Areas for Indigenous Peoples (ACMU). This work strengthened local Indigenous communities' capacity to govern coastal spaces in accordance with Law 20.249, the Lafkenche Law. We established collaboration networks between Indigenous communities, local authorities, NGOs, and other key stakeholders, facilitating knowledge exchange and joint management of coastal areas.

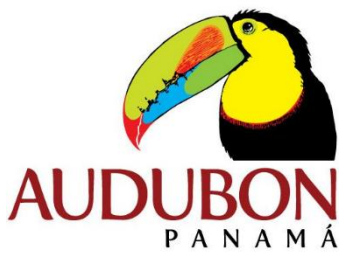
How we got there: Our work focused on three objectives: 1) Training and capacity-building to Indigenous communities about the Lafkenche Law to strengthen their local governance and improve their ability to apply the law in their territories. 2) Fostering collaboration networks by connecting indigenous groups with local authorities. 3) Producing and distributing informational materials (including infographics and videos) aimed at supporting these initiatives from both internal community perspectives and broader communal and regional viewpoints.

MOVING FORWARD

As we look ahead, CECPAN is committed to strengthening the community-led conservation models that have made our work successful. We will continue to support Indigenous and coastal communities secure protections, either through conservation and/or management mechanisms. At the same time, we are expanding our conservation strategies to address threats while promoting solutions that align with cultural traditions, sustainable livelihoods, and ecological integrity. Long-term monitoring will help us stay ahead of emerging threats.

"We detect important areas, create an action plan with the community, and adapt as we go – because flexibility is needed."

We also see growing opportunities to connect our local work to broader migratory bird conservation efforts across the Pacific Flyway. By collaborating with partners in North and South America, we aim to better understand and protect the full journey of birds such as the Straight-billed Curlew. With the continued support of funders, partners, and local leaders, we are building a future where biodiversity and community well-being are interdependent, resilient, and led by those who call these places home.



Panama Audubon Society

16 July 2025



Western Sandpiper
Photo: Ronan Donovan/Audubon Photography Awards

Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

Our work focuses on 12 priority Important Bird Areas (IBAs) across Panama, located within six distinct life and biodiversity zones. Protecting these critical sites not only safeguards key bird populations but also contributes to the broader conservation of local biodiversity.



Our Niche

We blend local grassroots leadership with global strategy, uniting cutting-edge tools, year-round education, and powerful alliances to protect Panama's birds and wetlands. We work with communities to intersect between conservation, climate resilience, and public engagement.



Example Wins

We led the successful fight to restore legal protections for the Bay of Panama, a Ramsar site and migratory bird haven. We have also reached thousands of students through our Aulas Verdes program, building a generation of wetland defenders. We developed Panama's first national Shorebird Conservation Plan.



Ongoing Work

Building on 20 years of experience, we are expanding protected areas, strengthening monitoring, training teachers and community leaders, and pushing for policies that secure Panama's wetlands. We incorporate economic benefits of ecosystem services, such as tourism, fisheries, and natural protection.



Red Knot
Photo: Elizabeth Brensinger/Audubon Photography Awards

Our Mission and Vision

We protect Panama's birds and their habitats through science, education, and community leadership. Our vision is a country where birds thrive and people recognize their value to ecosystems, culture, and climate resilience.

Our Focus

Where we work

We work across Panama's most important bird habitats, from coastal wetlands and mangroves to farmland and forests. Our focus areas cover 12 priority Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and include the Bay of Panama (sheltering 30% of the Western Sandpiper population, 20% of Semipalmated Plovers, and more than 34 other migratory birds), Parita Bay, and other key sites such as Chorrera Bay, La Enea, and the wetlands of Juan Díaz and Playa El Agallito.



Outcomes



- **Rooted in Wetlands:** We led the charge to restore protections for the Bay of Panama, one of the most important migratory shorebird sites in the Americas, among other key habitats in Panama.
- **Priority Species** include the threatened Red Knot and migratory Whimbrel, Wilson's Plover, Western Sandpiper, Short-Billed Dowitcher, and Black-Bellied Plover.

Niche



- **Inspiring Action:** Our Aulas Verdes ("Green Classrooms") program reaches 35,000+ students from elementary to high school with year-round, field-based environmental education.
- **Shaping Awareness:** We build political will and public awareness through the development of the National Communication, Education, Awareness and Public Participation Plan (CEPA) for Wetlands in Panama, including journalist trainings and birding field trips.
- **Tracking Birds, Informing Action:** Our national monitoring program has tracked 70+ shorebird species, integrating citizen science. We use cutting-edge tools including Motus Wildlife Tracking and AudioMoth programs. We feed this data into global biodiversity platforms and use it to drive conservation planning at local and hemispheric levels.

"What we teach stays with them for life. Former students still tell us how it shaped them."



Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat	Higher	We work with government and communities to expand and enforce protected areas, especially in Panama's key wetlands and Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). We led Bay of Panama protections and are advancing its management plan (see page 4), considering ecological integrity, sustainable use, and co-management with local groups.
Engage public and educate	Higher	Storytelling, maps, bird festivals, and education make shorebird conservation visible and exciting. We build support through the Green Classrooms program (see page 4) and awareness campaigns that include field trips with journalists, public exhibits, community meetings, media stories, and training sessions for local leaders. This work helped build broad support for wetland protection, educate communities about bird conservation, and influence policy by making nature visible and relevant to everyday life.
Reduce threats	Medium	We address climate through Climate Action Plans, considering the importance of mangroves and ecosystem services such as five times more carbon storage than forests, barriers against wind, stopping erosion, and economic benefits of tourism and fisheries. A new threat emerged as the industrial fishing industry pushes to gain access to fish within Panama's protected areas; We address this through advocacy, education, and science-based planning. Another critical issue is water availability; At the national level, there is an urgent need to ensure the Panama Canal remains operational, and its locks require large, deep lakes to accommodate heavy cargo vessels. Other threats are pollution and habitat conversion. From legal protections to zoning, we push for policies that limit habitat destruction and harmful practices.
Track and research	Medium	We monitor 49 shorebird species using MOTUS (radio receivers tracking miniature tags on individual birds to understand migration and stopovers), AudioMoth (full-spectrum acoustic logger that captures sound in a wide range of frequencies), and community science. Data drive our conservation decisions and strategies.
Scale	Medium	We strengthen environmental governance for priority sites with the support of public participation. In so doing, we improve environmental policies and standards for the protection of biodiversity by working with organizations such as Conserva Aves and other engagement across the Pacific Flyway (e.g., Conservation Investment Strategies for Central America and South America). By training leaders and building networks, we extend our impact beyond borders.

Stakeholders

We unite communities, government, schools, NGOs, and businesses to protect birds, wetlands, and ecosystems.



Whimbrel

Photo: Douglas DeNeve/Audubon Photography Awards



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

For more than 30 years, we have built powerful alliances with government agencies, Indigenous communities, universities, and international partners to protect Panama's most critical bird habitats. We know lasting change happens through collective effort with local authorities, communities, local organizations, and international partners.

"We are a smaller organization, but strength isn't about size – it is about building the right alliances to get the work done."

Government



National

We work closely with Panama's Ministry of Environment and other Ministries and authorities to shape policy, expand protections, and implement national conservation strategies.

"We now have the strongest collaboration with the Ministry of Environment we've had in a decade. We're ready to keep building together."



Across the flyway

We collaborate with partners to align strategies, share data, and amplify bird conservation across the Pacific and Atlantic migratory routes.

Business



Agriculture

We engage farmers to provide crucial habitat and promote sustainable practices, such as water conservation, and build toward ecosystem health.

"Farms along the Bay of Panama are the super glue for shorebirds, they depend on the land as vital stopover points."



Fisheries

We work with artisanal fisheries to allow traditional uses and build a shared understanding of fishery resilience, but challenge illegal use of protected areas by industrial fisheries.

"Industrial fishers burn more gas to fish further out, instead, they fish illegally in the marine protected areas. In the end, it's all about economics."



Ecotourism

We promote ecotourism by encouraging birdwatching trips to raise awareness, attract visitors, and highlight the importance of preserving forests and wetlands.

Local communities and others



Local Engagement

We collaborate with local communities as equal partners in conservation, ensuring decisions reflect local knowledge and needs. Our work is rooted in trust, long-term relationships, and shared commitment to healthy ecosystems and resilient futures.



Community Rights

By engaging local communities in the development of conservation plans for their territories, we help strengthen their capacity and provide tools to advocate for their voices, rights, and livelihoods to be included in decision-making processes. Another benefit of collaboration is when communities and Indigenous groups can co-manage protected areas.



Other Partners

We collaborate with women's networks, teachers, youth leaders, and other groups to expand conservation impact and deepen local ownership. These partners bring insight, cultural connection, and long-term commitment, helping us build inclusive, community-driven solutions that protect both nature and livelihoods.

Key Successes and the Future

Green Classrooms (Aulas Verdes)

We created Green Classrooms in 2009 to fill a critical gap: Environmental education was required by law, but teachers had no support or tools. With backing from the Ministry of Education, we launched weekly, curriculum-based lessons paired with field experiences in Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas such as the Bay of Panama and Parita Bay. Our Green Classrooms program has reached over 35,000 students and teachers across four provinces, inspiring the next generation of wetland and shorebird defenders. It is the only year-round environmental education initiative embedded in Panama's public schools. Students go on field trips to visit wetlands, mangroves, mudflats, and see threats firsthand. Teachers became core collaborators and now many of them train other teachers. We combine hands-on curricula with vibrant bird festivals and national education forums. The program grows every year, creating lasting memories, shifting mindsets, and sparking lifelong conservation values.



Audubon Panama
[Photo link.](#)

Bay of Panama Wetland Protection

In 2012, Panama's Supreme Court removed protections to allow development. We created a powerful local and international alliance that engaged with the IUCN and Ramsar convention to push back. After years of pressure, protections were restored in 2015, benefitting local communities, birds, wetlands, mangroves, and mudflats.

Panama Shorebird Conservation Plan

We developed this Plan in 2021. The Plan drew on international strategies and customized for local threats. It unified conservation groups, expanded monitoring, and informs government protections. Ongoing implementation includes education, research, and engagement with farmers.

Global Big Day – Tracking Birds

Panama was 7th globally in bird species sightings during 2025's [Global Big Day](#), setting records. Over 4,600 observations highlighted its status as a top birdwatching destination. The Ministry of Environment and local communities joined the effort. The map of sightings produced by the Ministry is a powerful tool to protect key areas.

Bay of Panama Management Plan

Industrial fishers threaten the Bay of Panama wetlands, seeking access to protected waters meant for artisanal fishing. The management plan is crucial for zoning, research, and monitoring. Conservationists continue to fight pressures, working with the Ministry of Environment and local fishers to finalize the plan with lasting protections.

MOVING FORWARD

With threats mounting from fishing, unsustainable development, and climate change, we know the stakes are high. But we also know what is possible when communities, science, and policy align. We are advancing the Bay of Panama Management Plan, growing our Green Classrooms program to new regions, and expanding monitoring. We are also investing in young biologists, building coalitions with artisanal fishers and farmers, and developing new ecotourism opportunities that link conservation to economic well-being. Every strategy we pursue is grounded in data, shared leadership, and deep commitment to place.

"Our conservation planning is opening doors. Audubon Panama's leadership is now influencing shorebird protection across the hemisphere."

We see enormous potential for replication and collaboration across the Pacific Flyway and beyond. Our Shorebird Conservation Plan is a national model that has sparked new partnerships and unlocked further funding. Our communication campaigns and journalist trainings are shifting public narratives. And our record-breaking Global Big Day effort proved that even a small organization can unite a country behind its birds. With the continued support, we are ready to grow stronger, reach farther, and keep showing the world what's possible when passionate people come together to protect the places birds and people need most.



CIAM

Panama Environmental
Advocacy Center

16 July 2025



Snapshot of Our Work



Geographic Focus

CIAM works in Panama. We focus on the protection of terrestrial, marine, coastal, and wetland ecosystems, especially protected areas, Ramsar sites, and other places. We defend these against intense human and industrial pressures.



Our Niche

We are the leading environmental law organization in Panama. We are dedicated to litigation and policy advocacy, combining citizen participation and technical expertise to defend wetlands, support vulnerable communities, and prevent environmental damage from large extractive and infrastructure projects.



Example Wins

We successfully stopped a fuel factory near Isla Boná and a stone extraction project in Donoso District of Colón Province that was threatening a key biodiversity area. We advanced responsible fishing that supports 30,000 artisanal fishers, and empowered communities with a citizen science initiative.



Ongoing Work

Threats are intensifying, such as the proposed port in Puerto Barú, which threatens critical mangroves and the mining proposal in Cobre Panamá, which affects local communities. More communities are asking for our support, but we cannot do it alone. The path ahead is challenging, but full of opportunity.



Western Sandpiper
Photo: Getty Images

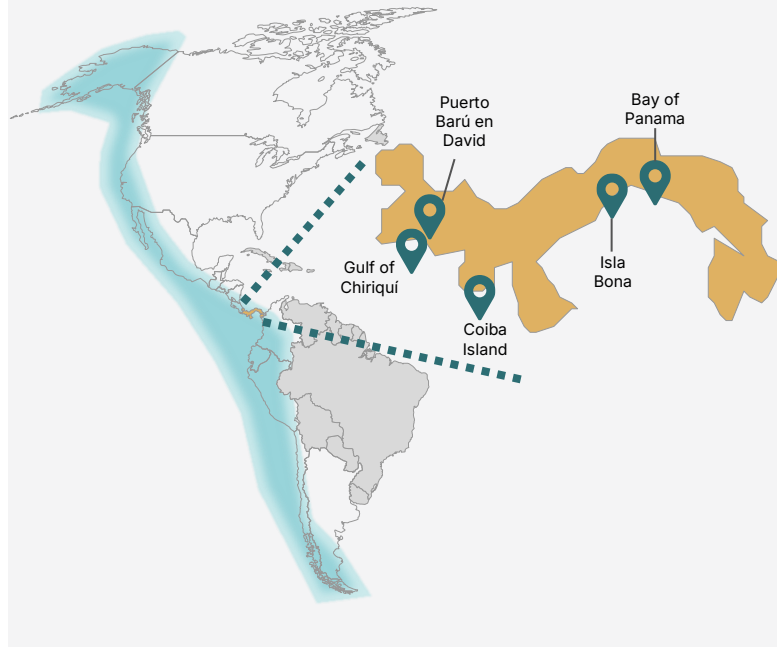
Mission and Vision

Our mission is to defend Panama's environment through legal assistance, strategic litigation, and citizen participation. Our vision is a just, sustainable country where informed citizens hold institutions and businesses accountable for the defense of a healthy and sustainable environment.

Our Focus

Where we work

Panama is a vital ecological corridor and serves as a narrow bridge connecting South America to Central America, offering continuity along the entire Pacific Americas Flyway. Key areas include Cordillera de Coiba, Panama Bay, Gulf of Chiriquí, and Isla Boná. In the wetlands near Panama City, over 3,000 migratory shorebirds represent more than 70 species, an astonishing concentration of life in a threatened ecosystem.



Outcomes



- **Blocked Threats and Defended Habitat:** We use litigation to stop destructive projects before they break ground.
- **Important species** include the threatened Semipalmated Sandpiper, plus Wilson's Plover, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, and Spotted Sandpiper

"Wetland protection is in crisis, and our marine resources are disappearing. We're racing to defend what's still left, before it's too late."

Niche



- **Litigation:** We use legal tools to push back against threats that include mining, development, fuel facilities, ports, over-fishing, and others.
- **Indigenous Defense:** We provide pro-bono legal assistance to rural, Indigenous, and marginalized communities lacking access to environmental defense.
- **Citizen Participation:** We complement legal expertise with community engagement and scientific research.
- **Policy:** We aim to codify protections in law. As examples, we helped draft and advance sustainable fishing regulations and participated in governance bodies for protected areas, including Cordillera de Coiba.



Strategies

Area	Focus	Strategy details
Protect habitat	Higher	CIAM safeguards critical ecosystems, such as wetlands, through legal action, advocacy, and participatory planning. We successfully blocked harmful infrastructure projects, including a stone extraction site and stopped a proposed fuel facility near Isla Boná (see page 4 for more details). We filed strategic lawsuits to nullify environmental authorizations and defend ecosystems. Our work led to the establishment and defense of protected areas informed by both community priorities and scientific data.
Reduce threats	Higher	We use legal tools to block mining, illegal fishing, unregulated tourism projects, and select development by submitting comments, filing lawsuits, and challenging permits that endanger wetlands and coastal zones. We work closely with local groups and regulatory bodies to prevent environmental harm before it occurs. Current efforts include opposing the Puerto Barú port development, which threatens critical mangrove habitats and endangered marine species, and addressing the environmental and community impacts of the Cobre Panamá mine.
Engage public and educate	Medium	Through storytelling, youth education, videos, and outreach campaigns, we make complex legal and ecological issues accessible and actionable for communities. We helped create a hands-on, waterproof field guide to birds and wetlands that is being used by hundreds of educators, community leaders, and environmental defenders across the country. Whether in schools, bird monitoring networks, or community patrols, we empower people to identify and count species, understand ecosystem dynamics, and take part with confidence and pride.
Track and research	Lower	To inform advocacy and enforcement, we monitor compliance with environmental laws and track ecosystem health using field tools, legal analysis, and community-collected data. This evidence strengthens our legal and policy interventions.
Scale	Lower	We strengthen laws and build alliances to extend impact across Panama's most vulnerable ecosystems. Our flyway-scale collaborations ensure that migratory species and ecosystems are protected across national borders.

Stakeholders

We work alongside communities, civil society, government, and international networks to strengthen environmental governance.



Western Sandpiper
Photo: Getty Images



Collaboration Across Stakeholders

We collaborate across stakeholders to build lasting conservation solutions rooted in justice. This helps us protect ecosystems while advancing public participation, equity, and long-term resilience across the Pacific Americas Flyway.

"Fishers and women live on these resources. They aren't just stakeholders; they're guardians of the ecosystems we're fighting to protect."

Government National



We work on both sides of the coin. Working collaboratively, we participate in national committees, including for Cordillera de Coiba and Panama's protected areas, ensuring civil society has a voice. We engage the Ministries of Public Works, Trade, and Environment. With allies, we share information, propose alternatives that reduce harm to biodiversity, and encourage for stronger protections. But when institutions fail to act, we don't hesitate to apply pressure or sue. We bring some legal arguments in front of the Supreme Court, including using the Law of Transparency to require the government to share relevant information.

Business



Fishing and Aquaculture

We engage fishing communities to encourage co-management of sensitive coastal areas and support responsible fisheries regulation. We monitor fishing impacts with groups like [MarViva](#), participate in national fisheries regulations, and advocate reforms to curb destructive practices in marine zones.



Energy

We stopped projects such as a proposed hydrocarbon facility near Isla Boná, using legal tools to prioritize biodiversity and community health.



Developers

When construction threatens wetlands, such as Puerto Barú, we intervene with litigation and public campaigns to hold developers accountable under environmental law.

Local communities and others



Indigenous communities

Our alliances with Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities center local knowledge and sustainable development. In communities like Juan Díaz and Chimán, we co-develop management, support education, and accompany leaders in court.



Local communities

We use dialogue to help turn teachers and residents into true guardians of their ecosystems, shaping management plans and conservation efforts from the ground up. We support rural groups in places such as Veraguas and Otoque Island with legal advice, environmental training, and sustainable development.



NGOs in Panama

We partner with organizations including Panama Audubon Society and Fundación Natura to share data, coordinate advocacy, and expand impact.



International partners

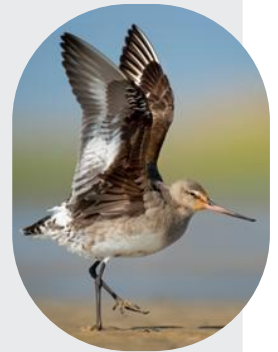
We work with international partners such as the Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA), Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW), and Escazu Network. We strengthen legal strategies and tools and share information, including ecological data. This promotes protections and environmental justice across Latin America.

Key Successes and the Future

Isla Bona Protection from Energy (Fuels)

Outcomes: We helped stop a fuel storage facility planned near Isla Boná, safeguarding a vital marine bird habitat and surrounding islands. The area was officially designated as a protected nature sanctuary, preserving biodiversity and local fishing livelihoods. This strengthened overall governance of marine ecosystems on Panama's Pacific coast.

How we got there: We achieved this by combining legal, technical, and community-based strategies. Our team provided scientific data on marine biodiversity and coordinated with allies to raise public pressure through media and civil society engagement. We supported local communities to articulate their opposition and submitted formal objections to government agencies. The project was halted and we advanced a legal proposal that led to formal protections.



Hudsonian Godwit
Photo: Getty Images

Advancing Responsible Fishing

We helped strengthen enforcement of Panama's fishing laws through our role in the Responsible Fishing Committee, supporting sustainable management for over 30,000 artisanal fishers. We provided legal and technical input to monitor compliance, propose policy changes, and support enforcement. We collaborated with fishing cooperatives in northern Panama covering 150 boats to build capacity and implement best practices in zones, such as the Gulf of Montijo. Our participation in the Committee, legal engagement, and community outreach secured better fishing practices, improved protection in marine reserves, and empowered coastal communities as co-managers of marine resources.

Citizen Science Initiative

Our citizen science initiative empowers local communities to take an active role in monitoring and protecting Panama's wetlands. We've trained educators, fishers, and youth leaders to identify and count migratory and marine bird species, using tools such as waterproof field guides co-created with community input. These efforts not only generate vital ecological data but also deepen public understanding of wetland laws, ecosystem health, and species conservation. By integrating traditional knowledge and scientific methods, the initiative strengthens grassroots leadership and drives more inclusive, informed conservation.

MOVING FORWARD

Mining, tourism, climate, development, and other threats are intensifying, such that the fight for Panama's coastal and territorial ecosystems has never been more urgent. Our roots of legal, scientific, and community-based strategies remain essential tools for defending ecosystems and collective rights. We are continuing our legal battles to hold powerful actors accountable, strengthening youth leadership programs, and building new citizen science tools. Communities across Panama are calling on us to stand beside them in legal battles and advocacy campaigns. But we are stretched thin.

"Advocacy for us is very wide – it is not just about ecosystems, it's about human rights, justice, and the power of communities to defend both."

We envision vibrant wetlands teeming with migratory birds, coastal communities leading sustainable futures, and public institutions that truly serve the people and the planet. We are also looking to scale our impact across Panama and the broader Pacific Flyway. We want to build a larger legal and technical team, expand partnerships with organizations across Latin America, and develop a communications strategy that reaches broader audiences with urgency and hope. At this critical time, we are ready to meet the moment. Panama is a small country, but it is a mighty bridge for biodiversity and we aim to be just as strong in protecting it. With the right support, we can respond to growing community requests, defend ecosystems at risk, and inspire a new generation to stand up for environmental justice.