Conservation Action Planning for *Catharus bicknelli* (Bicknell's Thrush) and *Pterodroma hasitata* (Black-capped Petrel):

Flagships for Montane Forest Conservation on Hispaniola

2-4 November 2010
Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Sponsors

Participating Organizations

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Executive Summary

Conservation Action Planning for Catharus bicknelli (Bicknell's Thrush) and Pterodroma hasitata (Black-capped Petrel): Flagships for Montane Forest Conservation on Hispaniola brought together managers, scientists, conservationists and decision makers from seven countries at the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from 2-4 November 2010. The 60 participants spent three days of intensive work, planning concrete conservation actions for the benefit of these two focal species, their montane forest habitats, and associated bird species.

This meeting of two species-specific working groups — the International Bicknell's Thrush (BITH) Conservation Group (IBTCG) and Black-capped Petrel (BCPE) Working Group — was convened in part as a follow-up to a 1998 conference in Santo Domingo on the state of Hispaniolan bird conservation. Both species inhabit montane forest areas in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and elsewhere in the Greater Antilles, and so face similar conservation issues. The basic premise behind organizing a workshop for these overlapping groups was to explore synergies and foster collaborations for their shared conservation.

The two groups entered the meeting at different stages of organizational development. The IBTCG, formed in 2007, had completed a Conservation Action Plan for BITH and had a primary goal of introducing the plan and discussing strategies for its implementation among Caribbean partners. The BCPE Working Group, still in relatively early stages of its existence, was attempting to bring together BCPE interests from across the species' migratory range to create a framework for an explicit conservation action plan.

The goals of the workshop were met or exceeded, and next conservation priorities were established for both species. Progress at the meeting will enable the BCPE Working Group to complete a draft BCPE Conservation Plan by the end of February of 2011. The IBTCG made important progress by committing to hire a Caribbean coordinator and to hold hold its next meeting at another wintering grounds location within 18 months.

Meeting Agenda Summary

Tuesday, November 2

Intros, Objectives and updates, Overview of Bird Conservation
LUNCH
BCPE I: Status assessment review; Past and current actions; Vision, Goals and Objectives

Wednesday, November 3

BCPE II: Break objectives down into desired results
CONCURRENT BITH SESSION:
Boreal forestry, wind issues, Mountain Birdwatch
CUA LUNCH
BITH I:
Implementation of the BITH Conservation Action Plan

Thursday, November 4

BITH II:
Implementing the Conservation Plan: Engaging wintering ground states and defining rangewide research and monitoring actions
LUNCH
Overlapping conservation issues: Hispaniolan forest conservation, Wrap-up, next steps

Summary of BCPE Action Items

Action Item I: Elena Babij (Jamaica, Haiti, DR and Puerto Rico) and Jessica Hardesty Norris (Guadalupe, Dominica, and Cuba) to find relevant information in the Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF) evaluations and provide volunteers with the draft plan for their feedback on their sections.

Action Item II: Volunteers from each break-out group committed to coordinating with the other members and other interested parties to complete the following table by December 1, 2010.

Objective 1: Nicasio Viña and Steve Latta
Objective 2: Veronica Anadon and Abdel Abellard
Objective 3: David Wege and Eduardo Iñigo-Elias

Output	Action	Current projects (or those with committed funding)	Interested or Responsible people and institutions

Action Item III: Plan a BCPE side meeting at the July 2011 SCSCB meeting to ensure that people are aware of the Conservation Plan and have reviewed it.

Summary of BITH Action Items

Action Item I: Explore the possibilities of developing sister Important Bird Area (IBAs) between breeding and wintering ranges; Ted Cheskey to coordinate with IBTCG Outreach Committee to produce a white paper for presentation at next IBTCG meeting.

Action Item II: Complete detailed position description for a Caribbean IBTCG Coordinator, secure funding, and advertise position during winter of 2011.

Action Item III: Examine existing management plans for protected areas where BITH is found, and provide a list of questions or suggestions for future revisions, while recognizing the importance of areas outside the public domain.

Action Item IV: In order to orient a Caribbean IBTCG Coordinator to regional needs and priorities, and to have a baseline of information, workshop participants agreed to report back on five questions (see Session IV)

Action Item V: The group committed to holding the next IBTCG meeting during 2011 or early 2012 in a different wintering ground country.

Action Item VI: The Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) will post winter survey protocols and audio files on the IBTCG webpage, to serve as a downloadable resource for those who may be interested in conducting field surveys.

Action Item VII: Kent McFarland of VCE will provide georeferenced versions of island-specific habitat models, with roads and towns as available data layers. Each map could depict potential "hotspots" for BITH to be surveyed, rather than actual occurrence probabilities on each map pixel, for ease of use.

Action Item VIII: Using standardized protocols downloadable from the IBTCG web page, vegetation at each point of BITH detection will be characterized during future surveys.

Action Item IX: Participants will provide project ideas to members of the IBTCG Coordination Committee, Jessica Hardesty or Jose Nunez so they can be posted as potential BITH or BCPE thesis topics for university graduate students and expedition societies.

Action Item X: There is sufficient need for targeted outreach that the IBTCG decided to form an Education and Outreach Working Group, led by Miguel Angel Landestoy, Ann Sutton, Becky Stewart, and SOH (Jorge Brocca), who has an existing outreach specialist. Short-term tasks to be completed in 2011 will include:

- Collate and evaluate existing materials
- Identify gaps and determine the greatest needs for outreach
- Develop an effective communications strategy

SESSION I: Caribbean and North American Perspectives on Black-capped Petrel (BCPE) and Bicknell's Thrush (BITH) Conservation

Opening Remarks

9:30-9:45 Welcome and Convocation from the Ministry of the Environment, Vice Minister for Protected Areas, Bernabe Mañon

9:45-10:00 Welcome from Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo (UASD), from former Biology Program Director Sixto Inchaustegui

Frameworks and Updates: Presentations by Participating Countries and International Actors

Canadian Perspective

Becky Whittam, Canadian Wildlife Service (See Annex 2)

1. Canada has a very large proportion of potential breeding habitat for BITH, and supports about 40% of the currently estimated breeding population. Of this habitat, about 80% is managed industrial forest where practices such as pre-commercial thinning impact habitat during the breeding season.
2. Over the last decade a great deal of work has been done on BITH under the broad categories of monitoring, research and stewardship. In particular, declines in abundance and distribution have been noted, leading in part to a recommended status designation of Threatened by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada in November 2009. The process for legal listing under the federal Species At Risk Act is underway and is scheduled to be completed by November 2011.
3. Once BITH is legally listed, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, will develop a Canadian Recovery Strategy and Action Plan. These documents will be greatly informed by the International Conservation Action Plan developed by the IBTCG. This will be followed by implementation of conservation and recovery actions identified through the federal planning process.
4. BCPE has been documented to occur in Canadian waters. Details of these occurrences were provided to Elena Babij.

Dominican Republic Perspective

Sixto J. Inchaustegui (See Annex 2)

1. General overview of bird conservation in the DR: mostly through legislative framework (Law 64-00 General Environmental Law; Law 202 -04, Protected Areas Law) and protected areas.
2. DR IBAS published, 21 IBAS identified.
3. Review of protected areas (PAs) and ranges of the endangered birds of Dominican Republic. IBAS and PAs more or less overlap.
4. Trade in species with high cultural and economic demand very hard to control; e.g. severe threats to nesting habitat of Hispaniolan Parrot, destruction also of endemic palm nesting habitat.
5. Minister of Environment is succeeding in monitoring and protecting breeding tern colonies in Cayo 7 Hermanos en Montecristi. Good case showing that when political will and resources are available, implementation of conservation actions can be effective.
6. Montane ecosystems in DR have 13% of country's human population, the poorest of the poor, thus BCPE and BITH conservation efforts have to take local people into consideration, to be successful in the long run.
7. Very few specific and strong enough conservation actions to protected threatened and endangered bird species.
8. The BITH plan is one of the best structured plans in the Dominican Republic, and it is critical for the conservation of the species to have a consensus plan in order to coordinate actions; a similar plan is recommended for BCPE
9. 26% of DR land area is protected

Haitian Perspective

Philippe Bayard, Société Audubon Haiti (SAH)

SAH is a non-profit organization created in 2003 by a group of Haitian professionals concerned about the environmental degradation of Haiti. Its mission is to conserve and rehabilitate the biological diversity of the natural ecosystems

of Haiti and its satellite islands through bird protection.

1. Haiti retains less than 1% intact forest cover.
2. Of 35 protected areas in Haiti, 4 are national parks. Macaya and La Visite are 4,000 ha together, but neither has delimited borders .To properly protect biodiversity and watershed values they should be extended to 50,000 and 20,000, respectively.
3. There are 10 officially declared IBAs but a total of 36 identified in the country and 14 Key Biodiversity Areas.
4. Recent conservation projects have a 30-year history in Haiti, with participation by the University of Florida, VCE, Birdlife, ZSL, Penn State University and others.
5. The projects are all initiated by private interests, there is very little government support, and species-specific attention. There is currently an effort in the government to put in place the Agency for the National Protected Areas (ANAP) and set up the National Protected Areas System. But this is still a project.
6. Root causes of degradation are: complex land tenure, total absence of authority, extreme poverty, lack of education.
7. Overpopulation; For example, there are approximately 650 people/square km in La Visite National Park.
8. This translates into:
   - Short-term individual incentives at all levels outweigh long-term conservation objectives.
   - Forest clearing for agriculture, daily firewood and charcoal production
   - Extraction of forest products: tree ferns and moss for orchid trade
   - Logging of pine forest for boars and firewood
   - Conversion to pasture
9. International Development Agencies like USAID WINNER, GTZ, DED, UNDP, GEF and Cooperacion Espanola have projects in the parks.
10. For example, SAH in partnership with Birdlife has worked to provide access to potable water, education by rehabilitating the community school in Formon and a nursery to local inhabitants of Macaya. Funding was granted by Nature Canada, CIDA, Durrell and NMBCA.
11. All of the problems that face bird conservation are rooted in economics and human development issues.
12. The largest remaining extent of cloud forest occurs along a narrow 10-km band. It is home to 8 globally threatened bird species, two-third of the island's endemic birds and the most important breeding site of the Black-capped Petrel (Goetz 2009). The remnant cloud forest, replete with endemic plant and animal species, is among the last of the native forests of Haiti.
13. Call to action: 1) National Conservation Plan, international planning 2) work with local partners to implement on the ground livelihood projects 3) ensure the political framework for governmental support.

Cuban Perspective

Nicasio Viña, BioEco (See Annex 2)

1. Pajaro de la Bruja, there is a place that they call La Bruja, and there are legends of petrel sightings, where the bird was reported to science for the first time in 1976.
2. There is a range of SE coastline of about 13 km, where the birds are constantly heard late and very early in the year. Also, in 1973 a botanist reported a bird which matched the description of BCPE in Pico Suecia.
3. We have identified a series of locations that provide what seems to be ideal petrel nesting habitat – two of the best sites are within park limits, of strong parks with management plans. There is low human pressure, no mining or logging.
4. A week-long 2006 expedition failed to find the petrel, there are no trails or roads, and you have to hike up and carry your own water. However, there was a recent hurricane .
5. GEF project against invasive species.
6. Declaration de Santo Domingo: Corredor Biologico en el Caribe – there is a signed agreement among the DR, Haiti and Cuba, so that provides a framework for the collaboration among the countries. It includes an action plan that mentions BCPE.

Jamaican Perspective

Marlon Beale, Director of Blue and Jim Crow Mountains National Park (See Annex 2)

1. Overview of habitat types in Jamaica and the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park (BJCMNP).
2. There is a co-management agreement among 2 ministries and an NGO (JCDT) for the BJCMNP.
3. There are also monitoring efforts in cockpit country, 2 RAMSAR sites and other established protected areas
4. 10 years of monitoring activities conducted by JCDT in the BJCMNP – no confirmed incidences of BITH, but there are identified gaps (and a National Ecological Gap Assessment Report).

5. Recent sightings of 3 individuals: one just outside the national park boundary and 2 within. This may be associated with the recent passage of Tropical Storm Nicole.
6. Needs include strengthening of protected areas management and capacity building and research for both BITH and BCPE.

Puerto Rican Perspective

Alcides L. Morales Perez
(Puerto Rican Ornithological Society Inc.)

1. IBA process has been completed and so far 12 IBAs identified.
2. 1940- present 35% increase in forest cover, <10% of forests are protected, and <7% of the country is protected.
3. Several BITH capture sites in Carite/Guavate in 1984.
4. El Yunque National Norest (1990-1992) in Wunderle studies Jan-April.
5. Guanica State Forest, only two BITH captures (1985 and 2005).
6. Additional BITH sightings in 2005-2006 (Vieques at Monte Pirata, Cambalache State Forest and Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge.)
7. Suitable habitat in the mountain range, but not enough targeted censuses for BITH.
8. BCPE has not been found, but searches must be conducted on the mountain range.
9. Four species of conservation concern that can benefit from BITH survey efforts and other kind of management (Elfin Woods Warbler, Puerto Rican Tanager, Broad-winged Hawk, and Sharp-shinned Hawk).

Regional Framework of Important Bird Areas

David Wege, BirdLife International (See Annex 2)

1. BirdLife is a global partnership of 113 national conservation organisations focused on saving species, protecting sites, conserving habitats and empowering people.
2. Saving species starts with the most threatened birds – namely those on the IUCN Red List for which BirdLife is the listing authority for birds.
3. Species are categorised as Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable using objective, quantifiable criteria. BCPE is considered Endangered, BITH Vulnerable.
4. Protecting sites focuses on sites recognised as internationally significant for the birds they support – namely Important Bird Areas (IBAs).
5. IBAs have been identified across the globe by national partners and collaborating experts. They are identified against objective, scientifically-robust criteria that define sites important for globally threatened species, restricted-range species and congregatory birds.
6. The insular Caribbean has 285 currently defined IBAs – a number of which are important as breeding colonies of BCPE and wintering sites for BITH.
7. IBAs are protected through a variety of approaches, one of which is the empowering of local community groups (local conservation groups, site support groups or caretakers) who have a vested interest in maintaining the site.
8. IBAs and threatened species are tangible units for conservation. BCPE and BITH help focus attention on some critical sites for biodiversity conservation and the needs of montane forests throughout the region. As migrants, they also highlight the need for international partnerships to achieve long-lasting conservation.

Avian Conservation in the Dominican Republic: Progress from 1998 workshop

Dr. Steve Latta, National Aviary of the USA

1. BITH process is coming to fruition and exploring new conservation models.
2. Lessons learned since 1998 Avian Conservation Workshop
   a. *Lesson 1:* We need to better understand the power of politics
      i. Growth of a conservation ethic as reflected in policies and the united fronts
      ii. Progress of movements like the protest of the cement factory
   b. *Lesson 2:* Power of collaborations – we need to confront our history of fragmentation and competition among conservation organizations, and advance our common goals
   c. *Lesson 3:* The power (and responsibilities) of international conservation organizations and funders.
      i. Funding sources can have a distorted amount of power; they provide economic support and technical expertise, but there is also a history of creating jealousies, and funders can drive the conservation

agenda.

ii. E.g. Neotropical migrants have a lion's share of the resources – 15/32 endemic species are threatened

d. *Lesson 4:* The power of education. We urgently need the next generation of field biologists and resource managers, but also professional ornithologists who can direct research and conservation programs.

i. Up to now, most capacity building occurs through field research programs.

Introduction to the Species Working Groups

Rangewide Conservation of Bicknell's Thrush – Uniting Partners across the Hemisphere

Chris Rimmer, Vermont Center for Ecostudies (See Annex 2)

1. Why BITH? One of North America's most rare, range-restricted breeding songbirds, facing multiple threats. Classified as globally Vulnerable.
2. International Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Group (IBTCG) – formed in 2007, meets annually, flexible and inclusive structure. Purpose = development and implementation of conservation action plan for BITH. Web site: http://www.bicknellsthrush.org/
3. Profoundly at risk from predicted climatic warming. In North America, montane forests forecast to essentially disappear with 2C warming. In Greater Antilles, predicted decrease in precipitation leading to significant drying.
4. Documented population declines, both in core U.S. range and in Maritime Canada.
5. Winter range: Hispaniola appears to support most of global BITH population, but recent models suggest more habitat on other Greater Antillean islands.
6. Deforestation ongoing and unsustainable, despite official 'protection' of many areas.
7. Apparent habitat segregation of males and females on Hispaniola, importance of conserving 'female' habitats (example of Cordillera Septentrional project).
8. Conservation Action Plan for Bicknell's Thrush released in July 2010: overall goal = increase global BITH population by 50% over next 50 years (2011-2060), with no net loss of distribution.
9. Breeding grounds conservation actions:
   a. Predict and monitor effects of climate change
   b. Document BITH global and regional population trends
   c. Develop and implement Best Management Practices in industrial forests
   d. Maintain a target amount of BITH habitat in industrial forests
   e. Determine impacts of forestry on BITH population dynamics
   f. Identify important migratory stopover sites, routes and patterns
10. Wintering grounds conservation actions
   a. Improve protection of habitat in currently protected areas
   b. Develop habitat management plans and secure implementation funding
   c. Develop and implement pilot reforestation projects
   d. Expand resources and reach of BITH Habitat Protection Funds
   e. Clarify BITH distribution and habitat use throughout Greater Antilles
11. Develop strong links and build capacity of Caribbean partners
   a. This workshop represents a major step towards achieving this goal.

Establishment and Progress of BCPE Working Group

Dr. Elena Babij, USFWS and BCPE Working Group Coordinator

1. Underscored the importance of previous contributions to knowledge about the bird, which have provided a platform for current efforts, and generated the support that makes this planning process possible.
2. The USFWS Migratory Bird Program identified BCPE as a Focal Species, which has allowed the USFWS to devote some resources to a consensus-based international planning process, with the objective of producing a plan that will be recognized and ratified by all range countries according to their processes.
3. BCPE website new and seeking contributions http://www.fws.gov/birds/waterbirds/petrel/
4. Gadfly Petrel Group just formed and has a website. See http://gadflypetrel.ning.com
5. Presented an overview of the Draft Status Assessment, with special attention to the need for review and comment.

Lessons from Cerulean Working Group

Paul Hamel, United Stated Forest Service and Interim Chairperson of "El Grupo Ceruleo"

Hamel's primary message was to spend your time together in this meeting paying attention to each other, accommodating your differences, and seeking solutions to your identified problems that will ultimately integrate conservation action into ongoing land use practices.

1. The steering committee of the Cerulean Warbler Technical Group comprises four subcommittees: Breeding Season Research, Breeding Season Monitoring, Breeding Season Conservation, and Nonbreeding Season Issues. The latter is called "El Grupo Cerúleo."
2. In the period 2001-2010, members of the Cerulean Warbler Technical Group and of El Grupo Cerúleo have developed and solidified a substantial new understanding of the breeding and nonbreeding biology of Cerulean Warbler, assisted the US Fish and Wildlife Service to assess the status and evaluate a proposal to list the species under the US Endangered Species Act, and to develop two conservation action plans, at the range-wide and at the nonbreeding range scale, for the species. This was achieved by meeting in person several times and involving many different partners with diverse skills.
3. Two reserves to protect habitat for this species and resident endemic birds have been established. Primary hope for future conservation of the species lies with managers of forest habitat in the breeding grounds and agroforestry systems, especially shade coffee, in the nonbreeding period.
4. Migration biology has been addressed far less than either of the residency periods.

SESSION II: Introduction to the Black-capped Petrel, and Development of Overarching Objectives

Status Assessment of the Black-capped Petrel

Dr. Elena Babij, United Stated Fish and Wildlife Service and BCPE Working Group Coordinator

Drawing on information and energy from a committed group of conservationists, the Black-capped Petrel Working Group drafted a status assessment and circulated it in August of 2010. Elena provided an overview of that draft document, which drew heavily on the expertise of the scientists and conservationists assembled near the best known foraging area off of North Carolina. To develop the assessment into a consensus-based international plan, it is necessary to address the existing gaps, especially information about the breeding colonies, and to craft vision, goals, objectives, and action items, in accordance with the framework offered by the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Strategy Planning for Species Conservation: A Handbook. It was pointed out that recent (2009) sightings suggesting a breeding colony in Jamaica, which is currently missing from the assessment.

The Story of the BCPE

Jim Goetz, Cornell University

1. Hispaniola has great biodiversity despite extensive deforestation, leaving <1% of original forest cover. Wingate discovered BCPE nesting in Haiti in 1963. Populations at Macaya and Loma del Toro (LOTO) in the DR were discovered in 1980s, with some follow-up survey work conducted in the early 1990s.
2. From 2008-2010 we conducted surveys to determine logistics, status of habitat, presence of BCPE at historical sites at LOTO, La Visite, Macaya. In 60 days of field research we completed 7 BCPE surveys: two each to Macaya & LOTO, 3 to La Visite, and also a 15-day socio-economic survey trip to La Visite. The primary lessons from this work were:
   a. A good understanding of the logistics involved in access to the 3 nesting sites, and some study methodologies, such as nest searches (1 nest was located) and netting (2 individuals captured).

b. Confirmation of extant populations at 3 main sites, and based on Wingate (1964) potentially more populations between La Visite and LOTO.

c. A clear understanding of the need for better tools to measure abundance – infra-red, genetics, recordings with a microphone array might help.

3. Conservation status of the three sites
   a. *LOTO* – more or less good shape. Estimated 5% of total pop. Largest threats may be invasive mammals (cats, rats, mongoose, pigs) and communications towers with cables, bright lights at base.
   b. *Macaya* – ~2400 ha. threatened, but hopefully not <5 years. Est. 5% of pop. Threats include deforestation, commercial logging of pines, forest fires. Likely also invasive mammals,
   c. *La Visite* – about 240 ha broadleaf forest, stretched over a 7 km x 400 m cliff. Critically endangered due to rapid degradation and deforestation. Likely < 5 years from total loss under status quo. Estimated >90% of known global population. Clearing for agriculture and extraction of non-timber forest products (tree ferns, moss for orchid growing in Port-au-Prince)

Especially in light of our experiences with local communities near La Visite, we identified the fundamental problem: short-term individual incentives at all levels (political, economic) for resource extraction outweigh long-term communal-benefit incentives.

1. In the general population, there is little interest in bird conservation per se, but there is an acute awareness of the causes and consequences of environmental degradation. Conservation interest might be high, but can't be observed until people's basic needs are met AND incentives are shifted to favor conservation over short-term exploitation.
2. The human populations face a suite of problems:
   a. Lack of alternatives, basic and environmental education
   b. Cycle of poverty – exacerbated by hurricanes and earthquakes
   c. Lack of resources/capital – natural, human, financial, social, infrastructure
3. The root causes of degradation are systemic – lack of basic education, poverty, high population for available resources, complex land tenure, and absence of State authority.
4. This translates into:
   a. short-term individual incentives at all levels outweigh long-term communal incentives
   b. broadleaf forest clearing for agriculture, daily firewood, charcoal
   c. extraction of forest products: tree ferns, moss for orchid trade
   d. logging of pine forest for boards, firewood

Management of Endangered Gadfly Petrels

Dr. Jessica Hardesty Norris, American Bird Conservancy

1. Objective: to share experiences from other conservation programs, and give a sense of the wealth of available experience on which we can draw
2. Contributions from BirdLife organized Gadfly Petrel Conservation Group http://gadflypetrel.ning.com/main/invitation/new?xg_source=msg_wel_network
3. With huge contributions from practitioners, who generously provided slides, Jessica reviewed several success stories in petrel conservation
   a. Hawaii – Hawaiian Petrel
   b. New Zealand – Magenta Petrel
   c. Bermuda – Bermuda Petrel

Discussion: The working group is actively soliciting feedback to develop the status assessment into a draft conservation plan. To complete the gaps in the status assessment, participants volunteered to provide specific input on the "Recent Survey Locations and Observations" and "Current Management Actions".

Cuba: Nicasio Viña

Jamaica: Ricardo Miller/Ann Sutton/Marlon Beale

Haiti: Jim Goetz and Abdel Abellard

DR: Ernst Rupp, Jorge Brocca, Jim Goetz

Puerto Rico: Alcides Pérez Morales and Veronica Anadon

Anthony Levesque and Arlington James were also identified as good people to ask to provide review on the sections for Guadalupe and Dominica, respectively.

Action Item

Elena Babij (Jamaica, Haiti, DR and PR) and Jessica Hardesty Norris (Guadalupe, Dominica, and Cuba) to find relevant information in the CEPF evaluation and provide volunteers with the draft plan for their feedback on their sections.

Discussion: The group reviewed some straw man proposals (based on IUCN guidance for species specific management plans) for vision, goals and objectives, and decided to form two small working groups; one for a vision statement and one for goals and objectives. There was general agreement that the vision should have a time frame of about 40 years. Vision statement: Ricardo Miller, Andrew Rothman, David Wege, Laura Perdomo, Ann Sutton. Goals and Objectives: Elena Babij, David Wege, Laura Perdomo, Veronica Anadon, Ann Sutton, Jennifer Wheeler, Alcides Morales Perez, Jim Goetz, Jessica Hardesty Norris and Ernst Rupp.

A concern was raised that there were many assumptions in the discussion, for instance, whether the primary threats were at the nesting colonies.

The small groups developed the following Vision (long term/50 years), Goals (10 years) and Objectives, which were accepted.

Vision: ***The Black-capped Petrel is flourishing throughout its historic range***

Goal: ***Ensure the long-term survival of a stable population of Black-capped Petrel whose conservation status has improved from "endangered" to "near threatened"***

Objectives:

1. ***Improved knowledge of the breeding distribution, at-sea range, seasonal movements and factors affecting BCPE populations***
2. ***Effective management of the three known breeding colonies and at-sea congregations to grow the population***
3. ***Increase the breeding range and number of viable breeding populations***

SESSION IIIa: Results and Actions for the Black-capped Petrel

The participants divided themselves into small groups based on their own interests, and developed a set of Desired Results/Outputs for each Objective (See Annex 3, BCPE Output Matrix). Some groups were able to develop actions during the break-out session, and all groups committed to following through the group work so that the following table could be added to the draft plan.

Action Item

Volunteers from each break out group committed to coordinating with the other members and other interested parties to complete the following table by December 1, 2010.

Objective 1: Nicasio Viña and Steve Latta
Objective 2: Veronica Anadon and Abdel Abellard
Objective 3: David Wege and Eduardo Iñigo-Elias

Output	Action	Current projects (or those with committed funding)	Interested or Responsible people and institutions

In the discussion of the working group presentations, it was noted that the capacity-building facet of this work needs to be addressed, especially in light of severe economic constraints that limit the ability of people to continue work without further support.

Discussion on Introduced Predators: Neither country (Haiti or DR) will be able to remove all introduced predators such as cats and rats, but there are opportunities for intensive management of small areas during certain times of year when the birds are present and most vulnerable.

Discussion on Reforestation: this brought out the lack of specific information, e.g. to determine whether habitat loss is a primary threat.

Conversation: there are many assumptions in recommending management actions given our current level of understanding about the bird, especially that the causes for the decline primarily involve the nesting colonies. On the other hand, it was noted that all available information suggests a strong dependence on existing forest, especially if the alternative is agricultural use or burning (e.g. in PN La Visite, petrels are confined to the forested area).

Action Item III

Plan a brief BCPE side meeting at the July 2011 SCSCB meeting to ensure that people are aware of the Conservation Plan and have reviewed it.

SESSION IIIb: Breeding Grounds Issues and Actions for Bicknell's Thrush

Managing Boreal Forests

Methods to address main threats of forestry:

1. Partner with forestry companies
2. Maintain target amount of breeding habitat in industrial forests
3. Conduct regional and rangewide surveys, and assist forestry companies to implement best management practices
4. Work in collaboration with regional agencies to identify where logging will happen – and specifically where pre-commercial thinning will take place
   a. Surveys will be conducted, and if BITH present, there should be no logging.
   b. Surveys will tie in to Mountain Birdwatch
5. Provide simple descriptions of habitat to forest managers/ landowners to allow straightforward, easy planning

How can we remove the barriers to implementing BMPs?

1. Work cooperatively with companies
2. Establish targets for amount of habitat; we can take provincial data on forests and data from sampling to estimate the amount of habitat required
3. Can determine density through monitoring programs

Goal: ***provide fixed targets for management plans for maintaining a certain amount of habitat.***

Challenge: ***coming up with a population target for BITH to share with the logging companies, and gain their buy-in.***

The group also discussed the importance of focusing beyond industrial forestry sites; we need multiple approaches to BITH conservation. Each province or state in which BITH breeds has a different culture in terms of habitat dynamics and protection regimes. Beyond forestry, we need to determine whether "protected" areas are actually being protected.

Action Item

Define "critical" habitats that are highest-priority for protection; start with areas where we have already found BITH. It is essential to determine "core" and "subcore" habitat to guide our conservation efforts. An occupancy model based on Mountain Birdwatch data can be used.

Action Item

(for implementation by research team): By 2012, initiate a project investigating the impacts of thinning on productivity. Project would require a minimum of 5 breeding seasons; could be implemented by Ph.D. and MSc students.

Wind Power

This discussion focused on the need to develop a unified approach to address the issue of wind power across the breeding range of BITH. Fundamental question: what are the effects of wind power development on high-elevation habitat and birds themselves?

Landscape-scale site evaluation tool: Create data/map indicating where wind resources are, where high-probability habitats are, and where they overlap. Map will include already protected areas. Also, we need to determine whether all protection is equal – how "protected" are protected areas? Our approach needs to be proactive, focused and prioritized – e.g., protecting which 10% of habitat would protect 80% of the population?

Len Reitsma has developed a protocol for documenting pre- and post-effects of construction. We can potentially use this protocol as a basis for developing a standardized protocol. Yves Aubry also mentioned protocols used in Quebec. It is important to have a standardized protocol, and a standardized database to access results.

Research/monitoring Subgroup: Judith, Becky, Pam, Len, Fred, Yves, Ted. Group will develop site assessment protocols for wind impact.

Potential Suggestion: Leverage habitat destruction on breeding range towards contribution to BITH Habitat Protection Fund or something similar.

Mountain Birdwatch (MBW) 2.0

We discussed the BITH habitat model on which site selection was based and compared this model to a preliminary new maximum entropy model. The new model will give probabilities that an area is used by BITH, rather than just yes/no, as with the existing model. New model yields habitat estimates that are largely similar to the old model, except that the new model is more accurate in northern range. Since the new model shows no major changes, Judith's recommendation was to retain existing survey site selection. There was some concern about whether Quebec would have too many "0"s, and there was interest in exploring the new model further.

Action Item

Judith and Kent will consult with Brian Mitchell about whether overlaying new model into existing selection grid is possible without re-selecting all MBW points.

We discussed a second major issue: funding the MBW 2.0 initiative, both this year and sustainably into the future. *Need:* International fund for monitoring.

Funding Subcommittee: Ted, Judith, Christian, Chris, Becky S., Frederic. Judith as point of contact.

Action Item

Develop plan for long-term sustainability of Mountain Birdwatch.

Making a push towards funding the entire initiative in 2011 will give us a better idea of whether we should sustain the international monitoring effort in all regions in the future.

The group brainstormed ideas for who to contact to solicit funding. Potential sources included: Forestry companies, Public fund raising, US Forest Service, Wind and Cell Tower mitigation funds, Ben and Jerry's, Government of Quebec, Forestry schools, SEPAQ in Quebec, Park's Canada, PEW-CBI, Peter Stein (Wagner Woodlands), CANWEA. It was also suggested that a data blitz may help in Quebec in 2011.

Working Lunch: The Bay-Breasted Cuckoo

This meeting was the first time that the many organizations, ornithologists, biologists, and conservationists interested in the conservation of Bay-breasted Cuckoo met at one table to discuss the species' status. The group shared information about the Bay-breasted Cuckoo Plan by Woolaver, et. al., recent and historic sightings, and the species' updated Alliance for Zero Extinction status. The meeting concluded with the formation of a Bay-Breasted Cuckoo Conservation Group.

Created list of research/conservation needs

1. Understand real distribution of species in DR
2. Understand characteristics of habitat used by Bay-breasted Cuckoo
3. Determine range of annual movements of species
4. Develop an explicit list of conservation needs

SESSION IV: Implementation of the BITH Conservation Plan

Connecting People and Birds: the Important Bird Area Program in Canada

Ted Cheskey, Nature Canada

BirdLife International's Important Bird Area (IBA) program is delivered in Canada in partnership between Nature Canada and Bird Studies Canada. The program came to Canada in mid-1990's focusing initially on site identification (about 600 IBAs recognized), followed by development of community conservation plans for about 100 IBAs. After this phase, there was a period of minimal funding and activity other than supporting some priority local projects. At this time, it was realized that:

- a high proportion of IBAs are not officially protected, and even officially protected sites may have conflicting management objectives
- data for some IBAs are old and outdated, and may no longer be valid
- the lack of human presence at IBAs means that there is a lack of knowledge of the state of many IBAs
- if IBA conservation and monitoring depend on large amounts of funds, it is doomed.

In response, the IBA Caretakers Network was launched in 2009, modeled largely on the site support group model employed elsewhere in the BirdLife network. The idea is simply to recruit a local individual or group to be the "eyes, ears, and feet on the ground" so that some of the above concerns can be addressed. Caretaker Networks are being developed in several provinces, managed nationally by the Canadian IBA partners and led by provincial-level nature-conservation groups such as BC Nature and Nature Quebec. As of July, 2010, 150 IBAs were matched with Caretakers. The goal is to have 300 Caretakers by 2014.

Often Caretakers are people or groups with a long-term interest or passion for the site. They must commit to some simple tasks including:

- reviewing and revising summary information on the IBA Canada website (www.ibacanada.ca) with regard to habitats, threats and trigger species populations, and recommend revisions
- visiting the site annually
- conducting outreach or educational activities
- advising local/provincial group of any threats to the IBA

An important point is that IBA Caretakers are volunteers. Volunteers must realize a benefit to their involvement in a project, and their long-term commitment depends on their efforts being recognized, supported and encouraged, as well as the demands of their efforts being reasonable.

Currently there are 12 IBAs in Canada with Bicknell's Thrush, all in Quebec, Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. The sites are generally remote and difficult to access. Some are actively logged. Who should be the Caretakers of these IBAs: logging company employees, nature club members, Mountain Birdwatch survey volunteers, retired biologists, young professionals, CWS biologists? The answer: all of the above are viable candidates.

Discussion: The group proposed developing "sister" IBAs that link North America and the Greater Antilles, as is being explored between Nature Canada and Haiti. Need to identify NGOs that work with local communities, talk to them about IBA program. BirdLife might be a logical coordinator for bird groups in Caribbean, and is willing to facilitate that. In discussion, we completed the following information.

Country	# of IBAs	IBA sites with known BITH
Haiti	10	2
DR	21	14*
Cuba	28	1
Jamaica	15	1
Puerto Rico	20	2-4 (needs verification)
Canada	~600	12 (PQ, NB, NS)
USA	2,521	7 (NY, VT NH, ME)

** 13 IBAs have reliable data, but BITH status in one IBA requires verification.*

Action Item

Explore the possibilities of sister IBAs between breeding and wintering ranges; Ted Cheskey to coordinate with Outreach Committee to produce a white paper and presentation at next BITH meeting.

Modelling BITH Habitat in the Caribbean

Kent McFarland, Vermont Center for Ecostudies

Presented VCE's predictive model of BITH habitat in the Caribbean, based on documented presence records. For each country/island, we have a probability-based model, with overlay of all protected areas, allowing determination of known and predicted BITH hotspots. The maps are in peer review, but Kent is willing and eager to provide adaptations for interested parties in each country.

Group break-out task to document management gaps in protected areas (see Annex 3, BITH Protected area Matrix).

SESSION V: Implementing the BITH Conservation Action Plan: Engaging wintering ground partners and defining rangewide research and monitoring actions

Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds

Ann Sutton, SCSCB

Presentation follow-up: The IBTCG is encouraged to integrate into the existing structure of the SCSCB. Noteworthy that SCSCB provides scholarships for meeting travel, so please contact Ann Sutton if you would require support to attend. Next meeting is in July 2011.

Next steps on the BITH wintering grounds: *What areas are poorly protected, but important for BITH and/or BCPE? How can we help develop on-the-ground conservation measures?*

The IBTCG announced that it has secured partial funding for a regional Caribbean IBTCG coordinator position to liaise with managers and interested parties, and help wintering countries advance BITH conservation. They hope to be able to commit full funding and move forward by hiring an experienced person in mid-2011.

Action Item

Complete review of position description for a Caribbean IBTCG coordinator and secure funding.

Discussion:

- Group should investigate whether there's an existing mechanism for approving governmental support of the plan. Communicate, for example, with vice-minister in DR. Process could move forward concurrently with BCPE. Sociedad Ornitologica Hispaniola (SOH) and others can help to implement, but a clear relationship with the relevant managers must be established
- One of the difficulties in Cuba – lacking knowledge in regard to BITH status. For BCPE, need to ID and survey/monitor potential breeding areas. First step: forest guards don't know birds, management plans do not fully reflect proposed actions.
- Management Plans for protected areas need to be reviewed through a BITH and BCPE filter, and perhaps other birds. There is an important opportunity for both IBTCG and BCPE group to comment on and help bolster these plans. However, due to sensitivities about "reviewing" plans that have already gone though public comment, it may be useful to provide a list of questions or suggestions for future revisions (i.e. rather than criticize current plans).
- New Ministry in Haiti is an opportunity to bring awareness of BITH (and BCPE) in to on-the-ground planning efforts (Abdel Abellard is contact)
- Responsibility for participation goes to each country. Need to have the information and be well-informed before we advise these groups. Domingo Siri indicated interest in

helping this action for the DR.

Because the need for a systematic approach to develop and implement management plans is great, the group confirmed the need (as written in the current BITH Plan) to:

Action Item

Examine existing management plans for protected areas where BITH is found, and provide a list of questions or suggestions for future revisions, while recognizing the importance of areas outside of the public domain.

This was identified both as a work item for the new position as regional IBTCG Coordinator which the IBCTG has committed to creating, perhaps using the structure of the IBA process.

Action Item

In order to properly orient a BITH Caribbean coordinator to regional needs and priorities and have a baseline of information, workshop participants agreed to report back on:

- ***What are the current or ongoing activities in each country that affect BITH?***
- ***Who are the key individuals working on BITH?***
- ***What are some of the priority activities we should be considering and planning?***
- ***What will we commit to in the next six months?***
- ***What are priority action items and associated activities for our specific country? (18-month goals)***

Discussion:

- Proposals for action items in Cuba: Identify presence in Parque Nacional Turquino. Need to work with guards in Parque Nacional Turquino and elsewhere to recognize bird (BITH) and not only confirm presence absence, but also monitor.
- The group reviewed the current structure of the coordinating committee:
  - *Coordinating Committee:* Chris Rimmer, Becky Whittam, Randy, Dettmers, Kent McFarland, Yves Aubry.
  - *Working groups (leaders)*
    1. Research (Kent McFarland and Kevin Fraser)
    2. Monitoring (Judith Scarl and Greg Campbell)
    3. Forestry (Becky Whittam and Yves Aubry)
    4. Wintering (Chris Rimmer and Robert Ortiz)
- There was considerable discussion of the idea of conducting a workshop in each country, a "rescue plan" or "species management plan" that could bring everyone together to tackle issues and actions. This may be complicated by the fact that BITH is not currently a focal species of conservation concern for some wintering ground countries. It was further noted that securing funding for such workshops and then holding them would further delay our ability to focus on implementation.
- It is critical to engage existing international collaborations such as (and especially) the Caribbean Biological Corridor.

Action Item

The group committed to having the next IBTCG meeting during the fall of 2011 or early in 2012 in a different wintering grounds country.

SESSION VI: Innovations in BITH Conservation: Working towards sustainable forest conservation and complete knowledge of distribution

Financing Bicknell's Thrush Habitat

Robert Crowley and Chris Rimmer

Following a one-day workshop on BITH in San Francisco de Macoris, Dominican Republic in February of 2009, actions were taken to develop a financing scheme in support of BITH habitat in the Loma Quita Espuela and Loma Guaconejo Scientific Reserves, the buffer zones around them, and the intervening corridor. The financing scheme includes Payment for Ecosystem Services, (PES) sale of carbon offsets, land purchases by conservation buyers, and the creation of a Bicknells Thrush Trust Fund. The process built upon existing assets and identified opportunities.

- PES: The Dominican Government has 4 PES projects in their portfolio. One of these is for Loma Quita Espuela, which provides water for the municipality of San Francisco de Macoris. The process has involved workshops with water users implemented by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and including representatives from several municipalities that benefit from the water, the local water company, and farm irrigation district representatives. The PES process is still in its early stages and will include environmental compensation payments from the water company to compensate for their intervening in the Quita Espuela rainforest, ongoing water payments for the service, quotas paid by the irrigation district, and potentially direct payments from heavy water using businesses.

- The carbon offset scheme is designed to increase habitat in the areas between the two national parks by compensating farmers for converting areas through fallow and succession to woody vegetation. Work by the University of Vermont and a private sector environmental accounting firm, AgRefresh www.agrefresh.org, studied the carbon situation and deemed the venture to be profitable. Several workshops with farmers and government partners were implemented to help them understand the process and measurements were taken. Hopefully, we will announce the DR's first carbon trade within the next year. Using the same data, a conservation buyer was identified to make the first land purchase, which is well underway and expected to be closed early in 2011.

- Establishment of a sister BITH Trust fund to complement an existing Bicknell's Thrush Habitat Protection Fund in the U.S. The Fund ("El Fondo Zorzal") will be able to handle transfers and will also accommodate revenues from PES and other sources. The Fund now has legal statutes, and it was recently "seeded" by a contribution from VCE. Short-term goals are to establish a process for disbursing funds to on-the-ground conservation projects and to accumulate US $100,000 by the end of 2011.

- Another scheme to generate revenues is a private sector initiative from the DR's leading ice cream manufacturer, Helados Bon, whose owners, Jesus and Jaime Moreno, are also on the board of directors of Fundación Loma Quita Espuela. The new ice cream favor, "Choco-Maple", draws attention to both ends of the BITH migratory range by using locally-grown organic chocolate and macadamia with Vermont maple syrup. Details of how sales of this ice cream will increase the Fund are being developed.

- Branding schemes using a logo for the initiative between the two parks are being considered. The idea is to support businesses that have donate to the BITH habitat initiative through public recognition. Protocols to properly vet the businesses will need to be developed.

- The financing of Bicknell's habitat restoration will require multiple schemes.

Monitoring and Censusing BITH on its Wintering Grounds

Discussion led by Kent McFarland, Vermont Center for Ecostudies

As presented yesterday, using all known georeferenced presence locations of Bicknell's Thrush, VCE developed a species distribution model that predicts the probability of Bicknell's Thrush occurring across its wintering range (Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, Cuba and Jamaica).

Kent opened the discussion by posing three questions:

1. Can we further ground-truth this model through surveys in areas of predicted occurrence that have never been visited?
2. Can we all contribute to a cooperative database of surveys?
3. How can we use this information to drive changes in management and conservation?

Discussion: The group discussed how to engage biologists and volunteers, and developed the following suggestions:

Action Item

Post survey protocols and audio files on the IBTCG web page to serve as a downloadable resource for those who may be interested in conducting surveys.

Action Item

Provide georeferenced maps of island-specific habitat models, with roads and towns as available data layers. Each map could depict potential "hotspots" for Bicknell's Thrush to be surveyed, rather than actual occurrence probabilities on each map pixel, for ease of use.

Action Item

Using standardized protocols to be available on the IBTCG web page, characterize the vegetation at each point of known BITH detection during future surveys.

It was generally agreed that eBird Caribbean www.ebird.org/content/caribbean would be the best repository for data generated by future BITH surveys, but that a more detailed database would also be necessary for data generated from intensive surveys with complementary habitat information. This database would reside with VCE and be shared with the Avian Knowledge Network (http://www.avianknowledge.net/content) so that all cooperators could access information.

Other suggestions:

- Try to contact those who attended the Harvard-sponsored survey workshop in the DR
- Reach technicians who are going out to do field work, even on other organisms or issues.

Action Item

Participants will provide project ideas to members of the IBTCG Coordination Committee, Jessica Hardesty or Jose Nunez so they can be posted as potential BITH or BCPE thesis topics for university graduate students and expedition societies.

Discussion: Nicasio Viña would like to see input on BITH surveys targeted to areas below 1300 m elevation on Cuba. Dr. Masani Accime masani.accime@gmail.com would be happy to lead an expedition to Foret de Pins on the Haiti-DR border, with iguanafoundation.org. Anderson Jean is working in one area of that region, and he would like to conduct surveys if he had the appropriate survey protocols, data forms and playback equipment.

Education and Outreach for BITH

Discussion:

- Translations: The full BITH Plan will be available in Spanish by January 15, 2011, and a French edition by February 1. Workshop participants considered but dismissed the idea of a Creole translation.

Action Item

There is sufficient need for targeted outreach that the IBTCG decided to form an Education and Outreach Working Group, led by Miguel Angel Landestoy, Ann Sutton, Becky Stewart, and SOH (Jorge Brocca), who has an existing outreach specialist. Tasks to be completed in 2011 include:

- ***Collate and evaluate existing materials***
- ***Identify gaps and determine the greatest needs for outreach***
- ***Develop an effective communications strategy***
- ***It is important to liaise with intergovernmental bodies, and that this plan is an important step in the process to do that***
- ***The IBTCG should think about registering the logo and developing a branding protocol, especially as it moves forward with approaching industry for collaborations***

Summary and Closing

Both groups were pleased with progress made during the workshop, and greatly appreciate the investment of time and effort by the participants, hosts and donors. A post-meeting on-line survey revealed an overall high level of satisfaction by participants (see Annex 4 for summary). The exchange of dialogue and the connections made at this workshop provided an invaluable framework for collaborative conservation of these two focal species throughout their wintering and breeding ranges. During 2011, it will be crucial to capitalize on the momentum generated by this workshop. The results and recommended actions must be communicated widely and effectively, and both species working groups must follow through on the action items that were explicitly outlined. The ultimate success of this workshop will be measured by the degree to which such follow-up is achieved.

Acknowledgments

This workshop would not have been possible without the efforts of its primary organizers, who included Yves Aubry, Ted Cheskey, Elena Babij, Robert Crowley, Randy Dettmers, Jessica Hardesty, Kent McFarland, Chris Rimmer, and Becky Whittam. We are indebted to the expert local coordination provided by Sesar Rodriguez and Evelyn Martinez of Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano. We are grateful for use of workshop space and logistical support provided by Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo. We also appreciate support from the Ministry of Environment and Museo Nacional de Historia Natural de Santo Domingo, and we especially thank our Day 1 welcoming speakers, Bernabe Mañon and Sixto Inchaustegui. All participants were very grateful for the delicious and innovative ice cream, 'Choco-Maple', provided by Jesus and Jaime Moreno of Helados Bon, at our evening reception at the Museo. Financial support for the workshop was provided by the Canadian Wildlife Service, MacArthur Foundation, Nature Canada, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service Office of International Programs. Finally, we thank the 60 workshop participants, whose commitment of time, energy and intellect contributed to an invaluable experience for all involved.

Annex 1:
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Annex 2:

Presentations

For the moment, you can see the presentations listed below in the "SANTO DOMINGO" folder at http://www.fws.gov/birds/waterbirds/petrel/ and http://www.bicknellsthrush.org/events.html:

1.	Whittam BITH Canadian Perspective.pdf	Becky Whittam
2.	Consideraciones sobre la conservación de aves RD.pdf	Sixto Inchaustegui
4.	Tordo BCP Cuba.pdf	Nicasio Vina
5.	Jamaica Presentation_Beale.pdf	Marlon Beale
6.	BITH Puerto Rico 1.pdf	Alcides Morales Pérez
7.	Birdlife_presentation_2Nov_Wege.pdf	David Wege
9.	IBTCG BITH overview Nov10.pdf	Chris Rimmer
10.	Black-capped_Petrel_overview.pdf	Elena Babij
11.	Hamel BITH meets CERW.pdf	Paul Hamel
12.	Elena Status Black-capped_Petrel.pdf	Elena Babij
13.	JIM GOETZ BCPE Current knowledge.pdf	Jim Goetz
14.	Hardesty Review of intensive petrel management.pdf	Jessica Hardesty Norris
16.	BITHwind CONCURRENT SESSION.pdf	
17.	IBA_Canada_BITH_2010.pdf	Ted Cheskey
18.	Overview of SCSCB activities	Ann Sutton

Annex 3:

Supporting Documents

BITH: http://www.bicknellsthrush.org/pdf/conservationactionplan.pdf

BCPE: http://www.fws.gov/birds/waterbirds/petrel/#PLANDRAFTS

Annex 4:

Summary of Post-workshop On-line Survey

Eighteen workshop participants responded to an on-line, bilingual survey about the conference. Overall, participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the workshop, although some aspects of its organization could have been improved. Priorities for future conservation efforts revolve around strengthening habitat protection efforts, increasing capacity building and outreach, and better understanding the status of both species throughout the Caribbean. The summary below presents a synopsis of responses, which can be found in full on the websites listed in Annex 3 — many insightful comments were by necessity condensed or eliminated in this brief summary of representative responses.

Please rate the following aspects of the conference:

Answer Options	Too Short	About Right	Too Long	Response Count
Amount of time spent as a full group	0	14	4	18
Amount of time spent in breakout groups	8	10	0	18
Length of conference overall	1	17	0	18
Amount of time listening to presentations	2	15	1	18
Amount of time available for informal networking	6	12	0	18

Please rate our performance in the following areas:

Answer Options	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Response Count
Advance planning for meeting	0	1	4	9	4	18
Advance communication about meeting	0	2	4	6	6	18
Meeting organization and logistics	0	0	3	12	3	18
Quality of presentations	0	0	4	11	3	18
Quality of facilitation	0	0	1	8	9	18
Quality of group discussion	0	0	8	7	3	18
Functionality of meeting space	0	2	10	4	2	18
Relevance of agenda items	0	0	5	10	3	18
Overall value of meeting	0	0	1	12	5	18

Do you feel that we accomplished our goals at this meeting?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	44.4%	8
No	0.0%	0
Somewhat	55.5%	10
Please explain (below)	12	

Do you feel that we accomplished our goals at this meeting?

1. Group discussions were not highly efficient, and it's not clear that the written products are very useful. A standard conservation planning framework might have improved things, but would be a lot to ask with such a large and diverse group.

2. The goals of the BITH half of the meeting were achieved. There were clear future activities and responsibilities given to participants. The next steps for the BCPE group were not clear.

3. There are differences between groups, organizations and individuals working with these species. This meeting provided a good opportunity for dialogue to foster better relations with these key players. Good job!

4. I found that the topic of BCPE was not adequately treated; we probably would have benefited to have a little more time to treat the situation of this species.

Would you recommend combining the two working groups again for future meetings?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	7
No	35.7%	5
No opinion	14.2%	2
Please offer specific feedback below.		10

Would you recommend combining the two working groups (BITH and BCPE) again for future meetings?

1. Not unless, as in this meeting, there was some significant reduction in cost and demands on people

2. It makes sense to combine both meetings, as in many cases, the government and NGO representatives for each country would be the same persons responsible for the management of these species in their home countries. It also creates diversity and an opportunity for each group to learn from the other. This is important since one group appears to be more advanced in its efforts and hence is useful in providing guidance as the management strategies develop.

3. Yes: in countries such as Haiti and the DR (where the birds migrate), the threats are almost the same

4. It only works when we're talking about specific habitat issues on the winter grounds, which aren't very compatible with many of the breeding season objectives. In this sense, it might make some sense for a split meeting, with Caribbean BITH/BCPE co-meeting, and a smaller group meeting in the Northeast for breeding issues.

5. I think people involved in designing conservation strategies should treat each species separately because the problems and requirements of each are different or less similar. You need to invest more time in those meetings and resources.

For the Bicknell's Thrush, please rank the following in terms of their importance:

Answer Options	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Response Count
Additional meetings in the Caribbean	1	4	9	14
Additional meetings in the US/Canada	2	6	5	13
Hiring a BITH coordinator that is based FULL-TIME in the Caribbean	1	4	7	12
Hiring a BITH coordinator that is based PART-TIME in the Caribbean	3	7	2	12
Finding funding to promote collaborative projects between countries	0	4	10	14
Other (please specify)	5			

To make the conference even more productive and successful, what could we have done differently? Please be as specific as possible

1. I would recommend switching future meetings to other countries, so that it could be also held in Haiti or Jamaica.

2. Better opportunities for groups to split off when a less relevant subject was being discussed by the larger group.

3. More time could have been devoted to specific activities and 1-year action planning so that there would be a "guide" of critical activities everyone could follow.

4. Discussion often stagnated or was dominated by a few people in large group. More breakout groups would be great. Often the North Americans did not benefit all that much from the whole group discussions.

Additional questions; reponses are available on the web

- In your opinion, what are your country's top TWO priorities for conservation of BITH and/or BCPE?

- Without additional funding, please identify TWO specific actions that could be taken to address one or both of these priorities.

- If additional funding became available, what specific actions would most effectively address one or both of these priorities?