

# Using Strategic Alliances to Achieve International Designations of Priority Sites: Case of Laguna Cabral in Dominican Republic

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# Retrospective

- Grupo Jaragua (GJ) was established in 1989. Before its creation, technical personnel (that today are part of GJ), had participated in background studies to designate Jaragua National Park as a protected area, back in 1983, in conjunction with the National Direction of Parks and the German Service for Social Technical Cooperation (DED).
- The proposal for Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve was elaborated by the Ministry of Environment and Grupo Jaragua, and approved in November 6, 2002 by UNESCO.
- GJ led the process of IBAs designation, as BirdLife International affiliated NGO. The organization also coordinated the KBAs for the DR, participating in the production of the Caribbean Ecosystems Profile.

# Retrospective

- In 2007 formally submitted the proposal to include La Placa as a protected area, today already established as Biological Reserve Loma Charco Azul.
- Since 2005 has participated in the formulation to designate the wetlands of Jaragua and Laguna de Cabral, this last one recently designated as RAMSAR Site.
- Recently produced the required documents to include formally Jaragua National Park and Los Haitises National Park as UNESCO World Heritage Site Indicative List.

# Retrospective

- 1983 Laguna Cabral (LC) was declared as Wildlife Refuge.
- 1995 Grupo Tinglar begins promoting birds conservation and the site by means of capacity building of the first group of birdwatching guides in the DR.
- 1995-2007 Several projects were conducted, specially promoting the site as an important spot for biodiversity and sustainable development for surrounding communities: Cabral, La Lista, El Peñón and Cristóbal.



**Members of the El Peñón Ecological Society monitoring birds, this helped with the scientific information.**



# Retrospective

- 2000-2008 Ducks count sponsored by Ducks Unlimited say that LC is a very important wetland for migratory birds, specially ducks.
- 2005 As a result of the monitoring data LC is recognized as an IBA.
- 2005 A group of technicians leaded by the BirdLife Program of Grupo Jaragua and Grupo Tinglar draft a proposal to the National Ramsar Authorities to designate Laguna Cabral as a Ramsar Site.



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# Retrospective

- After several letters and meeting with national authorities, 6 years later on February 2011, Laguna Cabral is listed on the Ramsar Convention as an Wetland of International Importance.



# Good

- DR has designated a second Ramsar Site, adding an important habitat for congregatory birds.
- LC is recognized as an international ecosystem for the conservation of biodiversity of the Caribbean.



# Bad

- Even the Enriquillo Lake was designed as Ramsar Site in 2002, there are not clear policies to manage the site accordingly to the Ramsar Wetlands Convention.
- A very slow process to get the designation, because of bureaucratic matters of the Ministry of Environment (the National Authority).



**Canoa, a traditional boat still present, used by fishermen in Laguna Cabral Wildlife Refugee**



# Ugly

- Small recognition of the key actors that accomplished all the work.
- A big challenge for the management of the site, specially regarding the continuous flooding of the area and the Enriquillo Lake.



**Entangled net. Local guides learning how to monitor terrestrial birds**

# Perspective

- With the celebration of the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival 2011, the local Authorities declared their interest in working together for the conservation of the Ramsar Site.



**Grupo Tinglar and Local authorities from municipalities surrounding Laguna Cabral in the CEBF 2011**

# Challenges

- Spread the word among people about the Ramsar designation of Laguna Cabral.
- Lobby to get attention of national authorities for the investment in the site, specially in infrastructure for ecotourism and promotion.
- Put together the interest of local authorities and the conservation efforts carried by the conservationist.
- Continue with the good relationship between national authority of Ramsar, the Majors of the surrounding municipalities and the local communities.







*Thank you!*  
*¡Gracias!*

*... and come to Laguna Cabral.*  
*A natural wonder!*