

Whitley Award Shortlist 2008



1
Çağan Şekercioğlu
Community-based conservation, ecological restoration and ecotourism at Kuyucuk Lake, Kars, **TURKEY**



2
Deepak Apte
Establishing India's first network of marine protected areas to protect local livelihoods and the Giant Clam, **INDIA**



3
Zahirul Islam
Sea turtle conservation through working with the communities of Cox's Bazar, Bay of Bengal, **BANGLADESH**



4
Denny Kurniawan
Conservation of tropical peat forest in Sebangau National Park: development of a sustainable society, Borneo, **INDONESIA**



5
Liu Yi China
Mangrove Protection Project (CMPP), **CHINA**

Congratulations!

The Whitley Awards received over 100 applications this year so it's been no easy task to reduce the list down to just eleven Award finalists. Of these, only one will win the Gold Award of £60,000, with up to eight winning a Whitley Award from Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal on May 21st. The winners will receive their prizes at our annual ceremony at the Royal Geographical Society which will also mark the Fifteenth Anniversary of The Whitley Awards. Congratulations to all the finalists for reaching this stage!

All the team at WFN



6
Marleny Rosales-Meda
Towards sustainable subsistence hunting by indigenous Maya-Q'eqchi' communities through participative education, **GUATEMALA**



7
Jean Wiener
Education, capacity building and action for people and environment, **HAITI**



8
Rodrigo Hucke-Gaete
Blue Whales in Chile: The Giants of Marine Conservation, **CHILE**



9
Ernesto Ráez-Luna
Ecosystem approach to conservation of Amazonian headwaters, Tambopata River, **PERU**



10
Patrícia Medici
The Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative: Expanding from the Atlantic Forest to the Pantanal, **BRAZIL**



11
Carlos Peres
Informed landscape management in the 'Arc of Deforestation': Trade-offs between biodiversity & land value in the Amazonian frontier, **BRAZIL**

THANKS We would like to thank the Whitley Judging Panel and our Paper Screeners, all of whom give their expertise and time voluntarily to select our finalists. Marking and commenting on each application takes a lot of time, from October to February, and is followed by a day of debate and discussion at a panel meeting in mid-March. Of course, the application process is not over yet. The final interview stage takes place in May. We look forward to it and would like to pass on thanks to you all!

News from previous winners

Good news for Caribbean Sea Turtles

In November, Didiher Chacon, who won a Whitley Award in 2005, made an important announcement launching a Latin American Program Office for WIDECAST in Costa Rica. WIDECAST – the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network – is an NGO with representatives in over 40 countries dedicated to turtle conservation. Turtles are by nature migratory and WIDECAST was established in recognition that any national initiative would fail in conserving turtles if operating in isolation. As coordinator, Didiher will push forward with several tri-national projects and an ambitious mission to improve the conservation status of turtles in the Caribbean region through research, political lobbying, training, the creation of socio-economic alternatives and education.



BBC Wildlife Fund supports two previous Gold Award Winners



2008 got off to a great start with the announcement Randall Arauz and Laury Cullen

had won funding from the BBC Wildlife Fund, an off-shoot of the Planet Earth series. The grants total £20,000 each and will be boosted by matched funding from WFN. With this new funding Randall's NGO PRETOMA will build on its role as a leader in sustainable fisheries to take the first steps towards effective implementation of the National Costa Rican Plan of Action for Sharks. Laury's project builds on his earlier Whitley funded work with Brazilian farmers to encourage coexistence with jaguars. The project will develop a network of core-reserves for the upper Paraná Region of the Atlantic Forest, one of Brazil's most endangered habitats.



Lethal attraction? Helping manatees survive tourism in Belize

Three years on from winning her Whitley Award in 2005, Nicole Auil continues efforts to protect Belize's 1,000 remaining Antillean manatees. The team has been researching the species, whilst working with the local community to give them the tools they need to manage their marine resources effectively. Boat propellers, mangrove destruction and net entanglement are just some of the threats faced by manatees, but if protected there are potential economic benefits for local people. Now Nicole is extending her work and introducing scholarships to help community members attain tour guide licences as part of the Gales Point Management Plan. The licences, together with speed limit zoning and training in ecotouring, are already making a difference, creating safer waters for manatees, and means of a sustainable source of income for local people.

Community-led Marine reserve rated best in the Philippines

The village of Handumon – one of the first communities to work with Project Seahorse, led by Whitley Award Winner Amanda Vincent – has won first prize in a national search for the best Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Philippines. Over 1,000 MPAs were eligible for the recognition. Where once seahorses were being fished out, today the 50-hectare Handumon Marine Sanctuary in Bohol is a place where fishes and corals thrive. It is now a showcase for effective law enforcement and its success has generated enthusiasm for a further 29 MPAs in the region. Amanda said: 'The Project Seahorse team is very proud. We hope everyone at Whitley shares this feeling as your support enabled us to start the project in this community!'

Chinese Government funds Hooded Crane Conservation



In January, Guo Yu Min received a grant of £5,500 from the National Science Foundation of China to further his work to protect the Red-listed Hooded Crane. Hooded Cranes breed in China's Xing'an Mountains, but

little is known about them. Guo's team is working to increase the profile of cranes and their marshland habitat, which is under threat from drainage for agriculture. It is the first time Guo's work has achieved support from the Chinese government. This spring a website has been launched www.grusmonacha.org and Guo has distributed 10,000 crane calendars to local people. Guo said 'Pictures of the secretive Hooded Cranes are now hung on the wall, seen by the local people with their own eyes and are in their hearts year-round'.

Image: James Powell