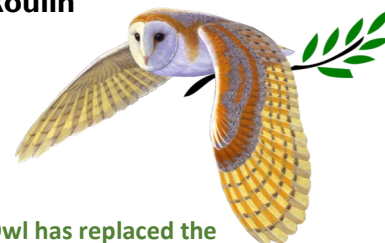


Birds Know No Boundaries - Cross-border Environmental Projects in the Middle East for People and Nature

By Prof. Yossi Leshem and Prof. Alexandre Roulin



The Barn Owl has replaced the "dove of peace" as the symbol of cooperation in the Middle East



From left to right: Prof. Yossi Leshem, Paul Winter, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Baruch Spiegel, Mrs. Margarita Louis-Dreyfus, General (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid

For further information about the event, press on the following links to view:

- a presentation summarizing the Davos event: <http://bit.ly/23Dcq1H>
- a presentation summarizing the meeting with Mr. Shimon Peres: <http://bit.ly/1Pnuntj>
- a movie summarizing the event: <https://youtu.be/HjPhCuNidpw>

The World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos Switzerland, as the name indicates, is about economics, and brings together the preeminent business, political and world leaders to determine global, regional and industry agendas. This year a unique event about birds and nature conservation made a refreshing change to the world of numbers.

On January 22nd 2016, a 90-minute event "**Birds Know No Boundaries - Cross-border Environmental Projects in the Middle East for People and Nature**" was presented within the framework of this year's WEF as a side event, with the aim of presenting the subject of regional cooperation in the Middle East, and to present six projects planned for the coming years in order to promote regional cooperation and nature and environmental conservation.

The six projects presented were:

- 1 Reintroduction of four vulture species to the Middle East
- 2 Using Barn Owls and Kestrels as biological pest control agents in agricultural fields, a highly successful regional project running in partnership with government, academic and public agencies, and enthusiastically received by the audience
- 3 Artists and music for nature
- 4 Ecotourism and education
- 5 Database for monitoring the Eastern Flyway using a network of radar, ringing stations, birders and GPS in the Middle East
- 6 Bat conservation in the Jordan Valley

Details of all six projects can be viewed in the event booklet at: <http://bit.ly/1RYB9rM>.

From War to the Fruits of Peace

The event was planned to be under the auspices of Israel's 9th President, the Honorable Mr. Shimon Peres, who was meant to open the event and present his vision on the subject, but unfortunately due to a mild heart

attack Mr. Peres was unable to be at Davos this year. His place was taken by his son, Chemi Peres, Managing General Partner & Co-Founder of Pitango Venture Capital, and Chairman of the Peres Center for Peace.

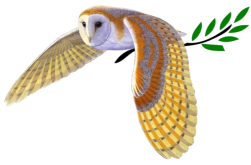


A Jordanian farmer holding a Barn Owl next to a nesting box in the Beit Shean Valley, Israel, part of the regional project for using Barn Owls and Common Kestrels as biological pest control agents in agriculture

The subject was presented by General (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid, Chairman of the Amman Center for Peace and Development (ACPD) in Jordan and Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Baruch Spiegel from Israel whose subject was "From War to the Fruits of Peace", Prof. Alexandre Roulin from the University of Lausanne in Switzerland and Prof. Yossi Leshem from the Tel Aviv University and the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, Hoopoe Foundation. The event was closed by

Dr. Philippe Roch, Former State Secretary for the Environment, Switzerland. Paul Winter, the American world-renowned composer and musician of earth music who has produced 46 albums, seven of which have won Grammy Awards, played excerpts from his new composition "Flyways". This composition celebrates bird migration and the countries through which they fly along the Great Rift Valley, from Eurasia through the Middle East to Africa.

Birds Know No Boundaries



The exposure of our projects in this prestigious forum will no doubt significantly assist us in achieving our vision objectives, and we hope to have birds on the agenda once again at WEF 2017!

The event was attended by 43 guests, who were most impressed by the vision and birding and nature conservation subjects presented as a goal for building partnerships between nations. A number of organizations and people showed very high interest in supporting the projects.

On Wednesday, February 10th 2016, the delegation that initiated the event at the WEF met with the Honorable Mr. Shimon Peres, Israel's 9th President at the Peres Center for Peace in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Israel, to report about the event that Mr. Peres missed.

The delegation reported to Mr. Peres about the great success of the event, and presented him with a painting of a Bearded Vulture ("Peres" in Hebrew) flying above the Alps, painted especially for the event for Mr. Peres by the Swiss artist Laurent

Willenegger, with the hope to reintroduce to the Middle East the Bearded and Lappet-faced Vultures already extinct in the region, and the Griffon and Egyptian Vultures whose populations are on the verge of extinction in the region. In addition Mr. Peres was presented with two flight feathers from a Bearded Vulture from the Swiss Zoo La Garenne

where Bearded Vulture chicks are raised and released in the Alps and a book about Bearded Vultures with a dedication from the Swiss Vulture Conservation Foundation (VCF). Mr. Peres expressed his agreement to grant his personal support for the project of reintroducing the vultures in Israel and the Middle East.



2010: President Shimon Peres learning about the regional project – using Barn Owls as pest control agents, Beit Shean Valley, Israel in the Great Rift Valley, with Prof. Yossi Leshem (center) and Shaul Aviel from Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu



Israel's 9th President, the Honorable Shimon Peres was meant to open our event, but due to a mild heart attack he was replaced by his son Chemi Peres



The event was closed by Dr. Philippe Roch, Former State Secretary for the Environment, Switzerland



Meeting with Israel's 9th President, Mr. Shimon Peres, after the Davos event at the Peres Center for Peace in Tel Aviv-Jaffa on Wednesday, February 10th 2016



Composer and musician Paul Winter opened and closed our event, playing excerpts from his new composition "Flyways"



The Bearded Vulture ("Peres" in Hebrew), whose name was adopted by Israel's 9th President Mr. Shimon Peres, went extinct as a breeding species in the Middle East as of 1982. In that year the last pair nested next to the Dead Sea in the Great Rift Valley



Prof. Roulin has presented Mr. Shimon Peres with two flight feathers from a Bearded Vulture from a Swiss captive breeding program at Zoo La Garenne, a gift from the University of Lausanne



October 26th, 1994: Signing of the Peace Treaty between Jordan and Israel over two decades ago, with key roles played by General Mansour Abu Rashid and Brig. Gen. Baruch Spiegel



Prof. Roulin presents Mr. Shimon Peres with the painting of the Bearded Vulture ("Peres" in Hebrew) flying above the Alps, painted especially for him by the Swiss artist Laurent Willenegger



Muslim and Jewish students observing cranes together in the Hula Valley in northern Israel



April 2014: General (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid learning about the bats in bunkers project with IDF officers in a bunker near Abdallah Bridge