



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 (Drawing: Martin Rinik)

Birds Know No Boundaries

Cross-Border Environmental Activities in the Middle East

The event is being held under the auspices of the Honorable Mr. Shimon Peres, the 9th President of Israel, within the framework of the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland

Friday, January 22nd, 2016, from 16:00-17:30
Salon Kirchner, Seehof Hotel
(<http://www.seehofdavos.ch/>), Davos, Switzerland





The Honorable Shimon Peres was Israel's 9th President and is President of the Peres Center for Peace whose mission is to promote lasting peace and advancement in the Middle East by fostering tolerance, economic and technological development, innovation, cooperation and well-being. Mr. Peres was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 jointly with Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin "for their efforts to create peace in the Middle East".



Paul Winter, USA, is one of the leading artists worldwide composing and playing earth music. He has produced 45 albums, seven of which have won Grammy Awards. His new composition "Flyways" integrated with ethnic music and the calls of birds celebrates bird migration and the countries through which they fly along the Great Rift Valley.



General (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid is the Chairman of the Amman Center for Peace & Development (ACPD), Jordan. In the past he served as the Jordanian Chief of Intelligence and was the top security official responsible for preparing the Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan in 1994. Today the General is a leading figure in the project with the Barn Owls and the farmers, in educational projects and the conservation of bats in the Jordan Valley, and more.



Satellite photo of the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth and part of the Great Rift Valley (Courtesy of NASA)



Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Baruch Spiegel, Israel, was responsible for peace and security negotiations with Jordan leading up to the Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan signed in 1994. Maj. Gen. Spiegel plays a key role in the Army for the Protection of Nature in Israel. In partnership with Jordanian General Mansour, the two have sought to promote the "fruits of peace" between Jordan and Israel in a highly complex regional context.



Alexandre Roulin is a professor of biology at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. For already two decades he has been studying Barn Owls and since 2009 has been actively participating in the project of promoting cooperation between the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian communities using nature conservation as a tool. His ambition is to motivate scientists to participate in societal issues by using the "Environmental diplomacy" approach.



Yossi Leshem is a professor in the Department of Zoology at Tel Aviv University, Israel. He has worked since 1971 at the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI), and acted as the CEO between 1991-1995. The founder and Director of the International Center for the Study of Bird Migration, he acts as the Secretary of the SPNI's Hoopoe Foundation.



A Jordanian farmer holding a Barn Owl next to a nest 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 (Photo: Hagai Aharon)

Event Objectives



- The subject of nature protection and environmental conservation in general, and birds in particular, has the potential to bridge between nations, especially in regions of conflict.
- A number of very successful joint projects are operating in the Middle East, for example, the project in which Barn Owls are used as pest control agents in agriculture, communication via the Internet on topics of bird migration and habitat conservation, and more.
- During the event we will present our successes and vision to promote a number of additional projects with the emphasis on birds, nature and the environment in the Middle East, in collaboration and with the assistance of additional international organizations and foundations in Europe and North America.

Event location

Salon Kirchner, Seehof Hotel, Promenade 159, CH-7260 Davos, Switzerland

Program



15:30-16:00	Light refreshments
16:00-16:05	Opening movie "Without Borders"
16:05-16:20	The Honorable Mr. Shimon Peres , Israel's 9 th President – Bird and Nature Conservation in Regions of Conflict: the Vision and its Fulfillment
16:20-16:30	Paul Winter , seven times Grammy Prize winner, playing pieces from his new composition "Flyways" and its history in the Middle East
16:30-16:45	General Mansour Abu Rashid , Chairman of the Amman Center for Peace and Development (ACPD), Jordan and Brig. Gen. Baruch Spiegel , Israel – From the War over Borders to the Struggle for Peace
16:45-17:10	Prof. Alexandre Roulin , University of Lausanne, Switzerland and Prof. Yossi Leshem , Tel Aviv University, Israel, SPNI, the Hoopoe Foundation – Birds, Nature and the Environment as a Bridge across Borders
17:10-17:20	Questions from the audience
17:20-17:25	Paul Winter – an additional piece to close the event
17:25-17:30	Closing remarks by Dr. Philippe Roch , Former State Secretary for the Environment, Switzerland



A Griffon Vulture, in danger of extinction in the Middle East – its conservation is one of the proposed cross-border projects. In Israel only 32 breeding pairs remain compared to about 1,000 before the establishment of the State of Israel (Photo: Pini Hamou)



General Mansour Abu Rashid, Jordan, in one of the bunkers abandoned after the signing of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan, many of which are populated by insectivorous bats along the Jordan Valley, Israel. The General is learning about the bat conservation project jointly run with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), with the aim of implementing on the Jordanian side of the border. (There are 9 insectivorous bat species in danger of extinction in the region!)



Migrating Cranes on the background of the snow-covered Mt. Hermon, along the Great Rift Valley on the border between Syria, Israel and Lebanon. 500 million birds migrate over this mountain range twice a year (Photo: Dror Gallil)



October 26th, 1994: Signing of the Peace Treaty between Jordan and Israel over two decades ago. Front row (from left to right): Jordanian General Mansour Abu Rashid, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, US President Bill Clinton, Jordanian Prime Minister Abdelsalam al-Majali; back row (from left to right): Israeli Brig. Gen. (Res.) Baruch Spiegel, US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, President of Israel Ezer Weizman, His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



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 and Shaul Aviel from Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu (Photo: Hagai Aharon)

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Please confirm your attendance to Prof. Roulin or Prof. Leshem