



BIRD FRIENDLY ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE, A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR BIRD CONSERVATION

8th May 2015

Start

The increasing demand for energy globally and here at home has resulted in an increasing need to ensure that electrical infrastructure, such as power lines, is constructed in a bird friendly manner.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) Wildlife and Energy Programme is involved in addressing the impacts of electrical infrastructure on wildlife and birds, and will be celebrating World Migratory Bird Day on the 9th and 10th of May 2015 to highlight the need for the protection of migratory birds and their habitat. The theme for this year's celebrations is entitled "Energy - Make it Bird Friendly".

Energy infrastructure across the globe poses significant threats to wildlife and especially birds. Some of the interactions include bird collisions with power lines and wind turbine blades, electrocutions with power lines, collision with heliostats (mirrors) at concentrated solar plants (CSP), birds being burnt in the solar flux at CSP facilities and birds being attracted to solar farms by the "lake effect" that solar panels create.

In view of the complexity, scope and persistence of the problem of interactions between birds and power lines, Eskom and the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) entered into a partnership in 1996 to address the problem in a systematic manner on a national basis and to establish an integrated management system to minimize these negative interactions.

Over the last 19 years the Eskom/EWT partnership has worked tirelessly to find solutions to the negative interactions associated with electrical infrastructure, and some of the key achievements of the partnership include developing new 'bird friendly' power line designs, careful routing of new power lines, placement of mitigation measures on existing power lines and new and innovate ideas around the mitigation devices for preventing bird collisions and electrocutions.

South Africa's energy mix is evolving and the Eskom/EWT Partnership is constantly adapting to the new challenges this process brings. Renewable energy is, in many cases, generated from new technology, and the associated threats are often poorly understood. Our understanding of how birds are impacted by different technologies is only now becoming clearer but more data are needed to understand and mitigate for these negative interactions.

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



“These interactions are not limited to our endemic species in South Africa but include a number of migratory birds like White Storks, Lesser Kestrels, Yellow billed Kites, Steppe Eagles and Amur Falcons to name but a few. It is our responsibility to ensure that the electrical infrastructure developed is bird-friendly” says Constant Hoogstad, EWT's Wildlife and Energy Programme Manager.

Please visit www.ewt.org.za or contact WEP Manager Constant Hoogstad (constanth@ewt.org.za) for more information about the EWT-Eskom Partnership and the Wildlife and Energy Programme.

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