

The Practitioner's Toolkit for Nature-Positive Enterprises was launched on 14 June 2023 and is available at [endangeredlandscapes.org/resources](https://endangeredlandscapes.org/resources).

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## The Whitley Awards 2023

The UK-based charity Whitley Fund for Nature has announced the six conservation leaders receiving the Whitley Awards 2023. The Whitley Awards ceremony was held at the Royal Geographical Society and was also broadcast online.

The awards are worth GBP 40,000 each in project funding over 1 year in support of work across the Global South. The 2023 Whitley Award Winners are Leonard Akwany, Kenya (Saving native fish species of Lake Victoria, Kenya); Yuliana Bedolla, Mexico (Protecting nocturnal seabird species nesting sites in key Mexican Pacific islands); Serge Kamgang, Cameroon (Towards an integrated lion conservation approach in the Benue Ecosystem, Cameroon); Mamy Razafitsalama, Madagascar (Managing fires and monitoring fragmented forests in Ankarafantsika National Park in Madagascar); Albert Salemgareyev, Kazakhstan (Building trust in data: resolving saiga–pastoralist conflicts over water in West Kazakhstan); and Tulshi Suwal, Nepal (Conservation of the Critically Endangered Chinese pangolin and human livelihoods in central Nepal).

In addition, a Whitley Award alumnus is chosen to receive the Whitley Gold Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to conservation. Worth GBP 100,000, this top prize was presented to 2014 Whitley Award winner Shivani Bhalla of Ewaso Lions for her work on fostering human–carnivore coexistence through locally led programmes, helping to reverse a decline in lion populations in northern Kenya. Applying the PARTNERS Principles—distilled from decades of successful community collaborations developed by last year's Whitley Gold Award winner, Charu Mishra—she and her team will collaborate with the Ewaso community and conservation practitioners from across the globe to develop an open-source framework, laying out pathways for conservation practitioners to build skills within their teams to ensure that conservation decision-making happens locally.

To date, the charity has given GBP 20 million in conservation funding to more than 200 conservation leaders

in over 80 countries. The Whitley Award was one of the first awards given in recognition of grassroots conservation leadership in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Whitley Fund for Nature supports emerging country nationals working on the ground in regions where biodiversity is rich but resources for conservation are lacking. Projects are deeply rooted in community involvement and are pragmatic, science-based and impactful.

Whitley Fund for Nature has a long-term commitment to conservation leaders, and winners can apply for continuation funding grants worth up to GBP 100,000 over 2 years to further fund and scale up their work or respond to new threats. As part of this scheme, Whitley Fund for Nature supports nature-based solutions projects that directly address climate change and biodiversity loss in consultation with communities. Winners also gain a lifelong membership in the global alumni network, giving them access to like-minded leaders and opportunities to foster collaborations. Over half of Whitley Award winners go on to receive continuation funding. Whitley Fund for Nature is celebrating its 30th year of supporting grassroots leaders across the Global South.

For more information on the Whitley Awards or how to apply, visit [whitleyaward.org](https://whitleyaward.org).

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## Another Indonesian songbird on the brink of extinction: is it too late for the Kangean shama?

The cage-bird trade is one of the principal threats to songbird conservation in Asia. In Indonesia, where this threat is most acute, it has already driven several bird taxa to extinction in the wild and others to the brink of it. Among the most traded species, highly prized for its song, is the white-rumped shama *Copsychus malabaricus*, three million of which were estimated to be held in Javan households in 2018 (Marshall et al., 2020, *Biological Conservation*, 241, 108237). One taxon, *C. malabaricus nigricauda*, endemic to the Kangean Archipelago off north-east Java, is highly distinctive in size, plumage, behaviour and genomics, and may be a separate species, the Kangean shama (Wu et al., 2022, *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 39, msac189).

With Cameron Rutt of the American Bird Conservancy, I spent 4 days on Pulau Kangean (the main Kangean island) during 5–8 June 2023 without encountering a single Kangean shama in the archipelago's largest area of forest, mirroring the results of an unsuccessful search in 2010