

Statement on Spix's Macaw project October 2016 by ACTP, Germany

The week of October 3, 2016, represented another important milestone in the story of the Spix's Macaw. The Founding Members of the Spix's Macaw De-Extinction Project gathered at the 2016 International Spix's Macaw Meeting at ACTP - Germany to formalize the plans for the reintroduction of the Spix's Macaw, a bird infamously known as the only bird in the world with the designation extinct in the wild, as well as being the rarest parrot in the world. (Previous meetings have been held in Brasilia & Sao Paulo - Brazil, AWWP – Qatar, with interim meetings in Miami – USA and Campo Grande – Brazil)

The goal of the Spix's Macaw De-Extinction Project is reintroductions of Spix's Macaws every year for five year intervals, with reassessment every five years. To that end the agenda and result of the meeting also included:

1. A review of the final architectural construction plans for the breeding center and reintroduction facility to be built on 6,000 hectare Concordia Farm in the historical range of the Spix's Macaw near Curaca, Brazil.
2. Review of and provisional acceptance of a bid for construction of the facility as per the approved architectural plans.
3. Confirmation of the creation of a 40,000 hectare "Protected Area" by the Brazilian Government to afford protection of the reintroduced Spix's Macaw. This Protected Area will surround the present Spix's Macaw Reserve created by purchase of the Concordia Farm historical habitat by AWWP in 2008.
4. Plans for continued habitat restoration within the Spix's Macaw Reserve and the riparian habitat of the Protected Area.
5. A timeline for construction, with construction to begin in late 2016 with completion in 2017.
6. A timeline for trial releases of a substitute macaw species.
7. The date for commencement for the Spix's Macaws into the wild.

In case you missed earlier updates, in July of this year this formal partnership was established to create a reintroduction center within the historical habitat of the Spix's Macaws and begin the process of reintroducing the Spix's Macaw to the wild. This is truly a first, returning a species to nature that has been considered extinct in the wild for 16 years.

The parties to the partnership agreement, officiated by the Minister of the Environment of Brazil, are:

1. The Ministry of Environment of Brazil
2. The Chico Mendes Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (The Brazilian Wildlife Authority)
3. The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) – Germany
4. Lubara Animal Breeding (Al Wabra Wildlife Preservation- AWWP) – Qatar
5. Parrots International – United States
6. Fazenda Cachoeira (the Spix's holder for the Brazilian Government) – Brazil
7. Jurong Bird Park - Singapore

With the participation and blessing of the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment the parties formally engaged in the Memorandum of Agreement on July 12 to “establish a partnership to integrate the expertise and technical efforts of the Parties to promote cooperation actions for the reintroduction of the Spix’s in its natural habitat, in accordance with the Spix Macaw Action Plan and its captive program.”

What does that mean? It means that construction of the reintroduction and breeding facility on Concordia farm will begin within the next few months with completion in 2017. Then Spix’s Macaws donated by ACTP, AWWP, and Brazil will be moved to this new facility. These Spix’s Macaw will be captive bred and then soft released into the skies of their historical Caatinga habitat. The Brazilian Government will create, by formal decree, a Protected Area of thousands of hectares surrounding the release facility to support their safety.