DEAR READER,

YOU ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO US, WE THANK YOU AND WELCOME YOU TO THIS ISSUE OF OUR REPORT.

THIS ISSUE OF THE REPORT BRINGS IN NEWS FROM VARIOUS FIELDS OF SABUKO’S WORK, SUCH AS EDUCATION, POLICY AND CONSERVATION RESEARCH.

THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF OUR ORGANIZATION REMAINS THE SAME: SAVING SPECIES, CONSERVING LANDSCAPES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND EMPOWERING LOCALS.

VERY RECENTLY, SABUKO HAS STARTED A MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM. NEW MEMBERS WILL HELP US TO TAKE ACTION ON GEORGIA’S BIGGEST ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS - FROM DEFORESTATION, TO POACHING, TO CLIMATE CHANGE, TO PROTECTING WILDLIFE HABITAT AND MORE.

THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS IS INCREASING, STILL ITS NOT ENOUGH TO MAKE AN IMPACT. EACH OF THEM PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE IN PROTECTING NATURE OF OUR COUNTRY, BY JUST SHARING OUR IDEAS AND SPREAD SABUKO’S WORD.

WE HOPE THAT WHAT YOU SEE BELOW IN OUR HALF-YEAR REPORT WILL LEAVE YOU INSPIRED TO JOIN AND SUPPORT SABUKO.

BEST REGARDS

NATIA JAVAXISHVILI
DIRECTOR OF SABUKO

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**Conservation for Life**

**The Eastern Imperial Eagle (Aquila heliaca)** is classified as **Vulnerable and Decreasing**. The steppe zone of East Georgia forms an important breeding and winter habitat. It was assumed (in 2013), that Georgia holds around **35 pairs**.

**Sabuko’s Goal is to improve the conservation status of Imperial Eagles in Georgia. Based on our field inventories: Breeding success per nest is 0.9 and there are 8-15 Active Nests.**

Since 2016, we tagged around **15 chicks** of Imperial Eagle. As a result: we assessed an average lifetime - 230 days; 8 of them have been killed by electrocution (countries: Georgia, Turkey, Israel, Azerbaijan) and 1 - by poachers; 2 more died under unclear circumstances.

**The Egyptian Vulture (Neophron percnopterus)** is classified as **Endangered species** by IUCN. The global population of the species is estimated to be between 12,000 – 38,000 (numbers from last year 21,000 – 67,000) individuals with a stable decreasing tendency.

The Egyptian vulture lives in open dry hills and low mountainsides. Their nest is positioned in niches, ledges and clefts and can be used for several years.

In 2018 and 2019 Sabuko conducted field surveys to assess the breeding population of Egyptian Vulture in Georgia. We discovered **30 nests** and noticed most of Egyptian Vultures near the city Marneuli where the main municipal dump was located. In total we counted **more than 25 Egyptian Vultures**.

**Biodiversity research in Racha is in progress. Racha is candidate site in the Emerald network and it is utmost important to describe the biodiversity and habitat diversity there for future approval. First, literature data was analyzed which was continued with field studies and surveys.**

*Khatia Basilashvili
Conservation Research Manager*
The project “Restoring Gallery Forest and Grasslands in the Iori River Valley” aims to initiate restoration of the natural dynamics of the Iori River, significantly improving the condition of gallery forest along its length. It will also lay the foundations for a rotational grazing scheme that will reduce overgrazing of the biodiversity-rich steppes. The restoration of native biodiversity will increase the resilience of ecosystems and improve the livelihoods of local communities.

Based on the Chachuna Forest Health Status Assessment, launched within the frames of the project, priority restoration interventions will be implemented.

Relevant recommendations will be provided to the Agency of Protected Areas for further steps that will address forest health issues affecting the sustainability of forest ecosystems.

The research will also include the Phytopathological Study of Gallery Forest and Grasslands in the Iori River Valley that advances the understanding of plant diseases. Effective environment-friendly measures and recommendations will be provided for disease control.

The agency of Protected Areas received recommendations on sustainable Pasture Management from Sabuko to be included in pasture lease agreements. The management plan serves as a sustainable land management tool and includes main requirements for implementing rotation grazing.

During developing the plan, Sabuko was the first organization to use drones in the field study in Georgia.

Sabuko’s internship program supported three young students.

The project “Restoring Gallery Forest and Grasslands in the Iori River Valley” is funded by the Endangered Landscapes Programme (ELP).
Sabuko has joined the international Spring Alive campaign. In this frame we translated the guide book Wild and Wonderful Games Guide. A handbook was created with background information on raptors, especially on Eastern Imperial eagle. It provides a selection of cross-teaching ideas.

More than 20 teachers of school eco clubs from Tbilisi, Telavi, Gardabani municipality and Dedoplistskaro attended our trainings where they have been introduced with the guide book and trained to plan Lessons on Environmental topics in an entertaining way for children.

Sabuko participated in promotion of the Spring Alive topic - Glass Collision at the kick-off event for Days of Nature in Tbilisi.

We also joined the Urban Birding campaign of GIZ with diverse activities, including Urban Bird Walks, Bird Fest, Photo Exhibition, Bird Ringing and engaged 100+ adults and about 500 pupils from Tbilisi and regions.

Trails in public areas have been designated for individual bird walks as well, combined with digital informations, info stations, and activities along those trails, like focus points and story walks.

Sabuko celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the annual educational campaign - Hour of Garden Birds in which about 25 schools from all over Georgia have been involved.

On every 22nd of May educators throughout the whole country turn their classes into conservation scientists, helping us track the ups and downs of birds across the country. During one hour, children observe and count birds in nearby gardens and report the numbers and names of species to Sabuko.

Representatives of Sabuko have visited QSI - International School of Tbilisi several times to conduct Lectures on Nature and Environment.

Also, we supported the QSI Tbilisi Roots and Shoots Outreach program to raise awareness in the local community about environmental issues, animal rights and social activism.

Sabuko continued cooperation with the education department of Tbilisi Zoo and organized several visits with different groups of children.

Once a month Sabuko provided an educational program at the Biodiversity Caucasus Hall in the National Museum of Georgia. With changing topics, components of birdlife have been introduced to more than 500 school children in a combination of lectures, games and crafts.
BECOME SABUKO’S MEMBER

JOIN OUR MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM, HELP US TO SAVE ENDANGERED SPECIES AND LANDSCAPES AND GET ONE OF THESE PRODUCTS FOR FREE:

- Free attendance at Sabuko’s trainings and workshops
- Participation in expeditions and field trips
- Educational materials in Georgian and English languages
- Bird shaped wooden brooches