



A road map for African protected areas: act now!

Africa is a continent with a rich, unique and irreplaceable biological diversity. It contains many protected areas whose vocation is to preserve this richness, now and for the future.

Are we succeeding?

Yes, certainly, in some places and in some countries, according to the context, actors, history, partnerships... There are some successes and encouraging initiatives, so there is hope.

No, definitely not, if we look more generally at the results of many recent analyses, and even more so if we consider the challenges that await, the first of which is the significant growth in the human population and a reduction in the area available for biodiversity and natural habitats.

What should we do?

Continue and strengthen conservation programmes and projects at all scales and of all kinds, research and other studies? Certainly. This is a very long-term task that has produced and will continue to produce, useful and necessary results. We should continue working on - what we have to do - to improve protected area management, because we need more efficient tools, more effective methods, and a better understanding and evaluation of the results.



NAPA

News from African Protected Areas

Nouvelles des Aires Protégées en Afrique

N°62
March 2013



Invasive plants affecting Protected Areas of West Africa Management for reduction of risk for Biodiversity

(Directions 2 and 4 of the Road Map for African PAs)

This is the second part of the summary of the study which was conducted in 2012, for IUCN-Papaco, by Dr. Geoffrey Howard, coordinator of the IUCN Invasive Species Global Program (geoffrey.howard@iucn.org), who also provided the pictures. It aims at identifying the risks of exposure to invasive plants from a sample of protected areas in West Africa, located in Burkina Faso and Ghana, and which cover from north to south a large sample of representative biotopes in the region (see map on previous NAPA). In the NAPA letter n°61, we summarized the basic knowledge about invasive species and invasive processes while issues relating to the prevention and control of invasions are addressed here. All the results of this study are available on www.papaco.org including case studies in visited PA.

Second part: prevention and control of invasive alien species (IAS)

Ways to address the risks once an invasion has begun or a species identified as a likely threat to native biodiversity

Awareness of biological invasions and threats they can cause to protected biodiversity

Awareness (or appreciation) of the general principles and impacts of biological invasion is a basic

necessity for any attempts to counter present or future invasions. In PAs it is wise to have two levels or types of awareness available to those who manage or use the area: 1., a technical level for PA managers and other staff who might be deployed to have some role in the amelioration of the impacts of invasions, AND, 2., another available to the visitors to PAs – tourists, researchers, students and others who deliver goods and services but do not engage with biodiversity as part of their routines.



J. gossypifolia as hedge in HQ, Mole N.P.

The first would usually arise from a **policy decision** by the national or regional body whose responsibility is to ensure PA management that gives native biodiversity the maximum chance of continued survival, good health, and stable populations and communities of animals, plants, and habitats. This decision would then need to be implemented through a set of in-service training routines for senior managers in, for example, the same style as the

training on Management Effectiveness done by IUCN-PAPACO since 2008 (Master's degree and UD, in partnership with the Senghor University).

The second form of awareness would be much less technical and tailored to tourists and other visitors to the PA who may want to know about invasive species – in general and in particular about notable invasive species to be seen in the PA and how to prevent further invasions. It may be possible for this to be organized and produced by a relevant NGO or a communications agency with links to the particular protected area and a wish to promote good conservation practice – through preventing and avoiding biological invasions. This could then be in the form of a dedicated static display (like the one at the entry to Ankasa Conservation Area – see hereafter) which would be easily accessible by all visitors to the PA – perhaps located at or near the entrance or near park accommodation or any other visitor or information centre. The alternative is to prepare awareness leaflets devoted to certain types or stages of invasion or to particular invasive species that are in or threaten the PA. These leaflets would be readily available and point out the characteristics of the invading species, the way that it was (or is expected to be) introduced to the PA and some hints on what the reader can do to reduce the risk of further damage or more invading species. The reason for this emphasis on awareness is to ensure that the threat of invasion is **real** to the PA managers.



An awareness display on a water-proof standing structure in Ankasa Conservation Area, Ghana

Even more effective (but beyond the resources of most protected areas) is the publication by Murray &

Powell (no date) which is an illustrated booklet describing 45 the most important invasive plant species in Kruger National Park (South Africa) with notes on identification, general species information and the most effective treatment methods for their control.

Recognition and monitoring of alien species and invasions by alien species

The process that leads to a species invasion usually begins with the introduction and establishment of an alien species. Thus one of the ways to reduce or prevent the threat of negative impacts on native plant diversity is to recognize a foreign species that has appeared in the PA and is beginning to establish and reproduce - and then test it for likely invasiveness and remove it if this species is a perceived threat. This requires two things – the first of which is present in most PAs in West Africa: a vegetation study of the reserve with, in some cases, a list of the native plants known from the conservation area. While it may be difficult for a PA manager or biologist to search the conservation area for new arrivals and then to be sure they are new-comers, it is often the case that those who carry out routine patrols will be very familiar with “the look of the area” where they patrol and so notice a new species of plant. Increasingly, those who patrol may carry a digital camera and possibly a GPS. With this easily portable equipment, it is possible to record the salient features of the unexpected plant species and record its exact position for future reference – and to make this information available in the patrol's report upon return to base. The next steps to recognition of the species as either new to the PA (or already part of the native biodiversity) and then its status as a potential invasive species would be the responsibility of a PA Biologist or Ecologist (or PA manager) with access to identification materials or an institution (such as a government or university herbarium) that could confirm its identity and so its likely status as an alien and/or potentially invasive species.

The outcome for the PA will vary with the policy of the managers – some prefer to remove all species that are not native to the area, others may let it remain and observe its spread or otherwise in the future. If the latter is the course taken, the patrol system should then be required to monitor the locality of the suspect species and record any changes in area or density of the plant over time – also to be reported from observations but also, where possible, through photographic images of the size and shape of the new species' distribution or spread.

The same process can be used to monitor areas for invasions that may have begun before any alien species were recognized. This requires those on patrol to report and record any significant changes in vegetation compared to what they would expect. Then the PA manager can decide to bring in an expert or continue monitoring to assess if the situation is worsening and then take action to reduce its impact.

There are two more avenues to the detection of alien and invasive species in a PA. One is simply to recruit an expert in plant invasion to make an assessment for that purpose; the other is to prepare to search for invasive species that are already present in the larger area around the PA. This would require a guide to the recognition of such a species and, if possible the usual pathways for its introduction to a new area –and/or the preferred habitats that it might occupy. With this information it is then possible to search the likely places where it might settle and record any likely species incursions and, as before, take some camera images and/or plant specimens for definite identification by an expert.

Estimating likely risk of invasion and possible impacts of an alien species

When a suspect species or possible new invasion has been identified, there is no guarantee that it does, in fact, represent a significant threat to biodiversity – even though it may be a likely candidate for the ecosystem type where it has been found. If a risk exists, it will rely on the opinions of experts unless a risk assessment is implemented. There are several types of Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) or Pest Risk Assessment (PRA), but all use the same process of assessing the known or observed characteristics of the suspect species with usual invaders and matching the conditions of the area it is likely to threaten.

One of the standard WRAs that has been widely used for this purpose is the Australian Weed Risk Assessment. This is based on a screening system of 49 questions that relate to biogeography, invasion history (in other places), invasive traits, and ecology of the target species in relation to the site in question. Each of the 49 answers is given a numerical value (to coincide with a range of extremes including “Yes. Very important” to “no, not at all important”). Some responses may be allocated negative values and then, when all the questions are answered, a numerical total is calculated. This is then compared with a set of numbers – usually the highest being “Not at all likely to become invasive”

through to “Very likely to become invasive”. Then the final answer of how to proceed, which is usually taken by another group, different from those who answered the 49 questions (to avoid conflict of interest), leads to: 1. prevention of introduction (or eradication), 2. introduction - but under conditional circumstances that would include monitoring and possibly test plantations, 3, allowing introduction without conditions...

An up-to-date website that publishes details of weeds risk assessments of many common invasive plant species and shows the questions and then answers for each question in the WRA is the Weeds Network of Monash University in Australia (http://weedsnetwork.com/rs/:wra_newspage).

Using the appropriate WRA tool it is possible to make informed decisions about potentially invasive alien species that are near a PA or already within its boundaries – and even those in the country or region that may, in due course, become a threat to biodiversity conservation.



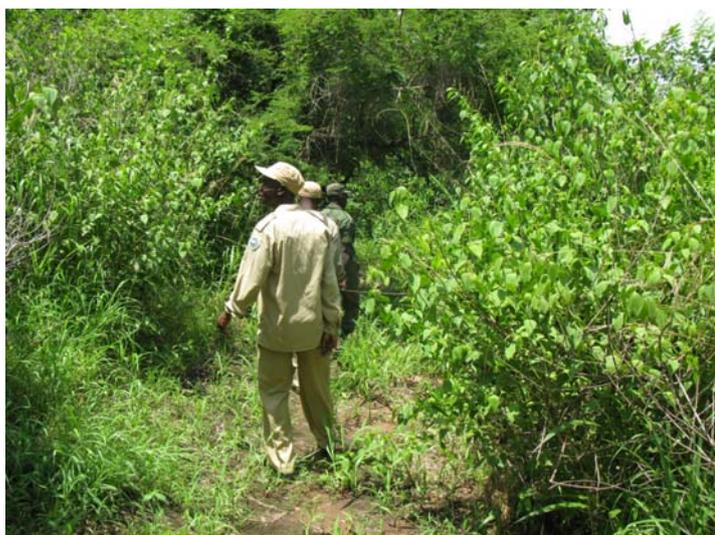
Cecropia peltata, Ankasa NP (Ghana), beside the access road into the forest

Decision on action

Once a WRA or other means has been used to define the seriousness of a threat from an alien species of actual or possible invasion, there is a need to take some action. Actions can range for “doing nothing” through no action apart from “monitoring the situation”, to the extreme of deciding to initiate a programme of eradication or management of an invasive species within or near the PA concerned. The decision will usually be in line with senior management principles and procedures

as well as PA Management Plan priorities and may, in serious cases, require an Environmental Impact Assessment through the Regulating Environmental Agency of the country. It is also recommended that such a decision and its later actions follows the **Ecosystem Approach**¹, especially to define in detail the objectives of any actions and to involve all stakeholders in both planning, decision-making and implementation of the action. Stakeholders in this situation would of course be the PA managers at all levels, but also local communities (which may be affected or have their own values for the species to be managed), local authorities, tourism managers (and their clients) as well as research organizations associated with the PA concerned.

Defining objectives is important in working with IAS in PAs because the end-point desired may have many more required actions than removal of the threatening species. In some cases, removal of an unwanted invasive species has been followed by another alien species “taking over” and replacing the one removed. The desired end-point (such as restoration of the original habitat or population) needs to be considered in the action because this may require other considerations and activities than removal of the IAS – even before that removal is completed. It is also possible that some stakeholders may want to use the same (alien) species for its desirable properties – which may be possible within an integrated management plan which includes the acceptable needs of all stakeholders.



Chromolaena odorata invading grassland (either side of the path) in Bomfobiri Sanctuary (Ghana) and growing up and over other vegetation (background, left hand side).

¹ An Advanced User Guide to the Ecosystem Approach (CBD, 2009) is available as a pdf file at www.cbd.int/ecosystem/sourcebook/advanced-guide/?task9

Available prevention and management techniques for invasive alien plants affecting PAs

A helpful document that summarizes prevention and management of alien invasive species (Wittenberg & Cock, 2001) which is a product of the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) and can be found in English and French on the former GISP website at www.gisp.org/publications/toolkit/index.asp.

Prevention of the introduction of known IAS to PAS that may be susceptible to their threats requires that the species concerned is stopped before it becomes established. This is best implemented if the most common pathways for introduction of the threatening species (see section 1.3, above) are known. This knowledge makes it possible to predict how, where (and possibly when) the species will come to the PA so that it can be prevented. If its main pathway is through natural means (winds, water flows, storms, floods, animal migrations) then it will be necessary to search in the preferred habitat of the expected invasive to establish if it has come – and then eradicate it on site (and on sight). If it likely to come with traffic and deliveries and tourism, then it may be necessary to make this known and all people and vehicles entering the PA need to be searched and any propagules destroyed. Or if, for example this species is known to be spread on motor vehicle and earthmoving equipment tyres and vehicle parts, these may have to be cleaned at the PA entry point. If it is known to be spread on walking shoes, these can be disinfected at the entry. With this general approach, it is possible to prevent any species entering a PA provided that its pathway details are known.

Eradication is the process of completely removing the offending species and all of its propagules. This may be deemed necessary if a highly invasive species is first encountered inside the PA or outside the PA boundaries but near susceptible, fragile or very important species or animal or plant communities. In some cases this can be achieved by physically removing all plants and destroying them and then closely monitoring the site for germination of the species from its seed bank in the soil. This is possible for some species with a short survival life of seed – but many invasive species have seed that can last for decades in the soil with some individuals germinating every year (or every growing season) for many years. This can be overcome if the infestation is recognized before the first flowering of the IAS plants – provided that all plants and their flowering and fruiting parts are destroyed before **any** seed is set. Removal of plants may also be possible through

burning – provided that all propagules are destroyed (such as corms, bulbs and roots that may sprout after fire) and also provided that other conserved plants are not affected.

Chemical means to destroy newly invading plant populations can be effective – if a suitable (tested) herbicide is both available and has been registered in the country – but this will also need to be allowed under policies and regulations for use of chemicals in PAs. Herbicides that can kill the whole plant above ground (and perhaps the roots) often have no effect on the seed bank if it has already been laid down after the first flowering. In this case the same need for subsequent monitoring exists (as above).

A combination of both mechanical and chemical means for eradication may be necessary in situations where invasive plants have grown in fragile soils where they cannot be up-rooted without loss of soil (such as on steep slopes and rocky outcrops). In this case plants should be removed down to the stump or base of the main stem and then systemic herbicide applied to the cut surface so that it kills any remaining plant parts – above or below ground.

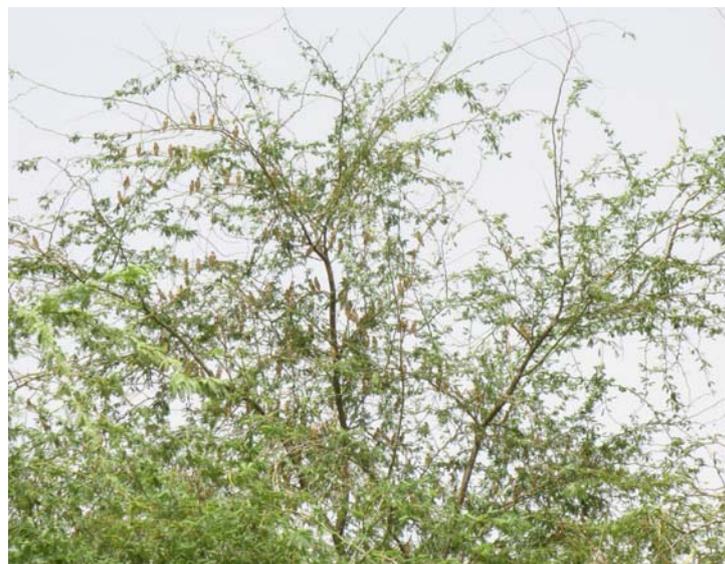
Management (or control) of established invasions is needed if attempts at eradication have failed or if the invasion had begun and spread before it was detected (or before a decision was made to reduce its threats to biodiversity). This will often take a long time and much expense to overcome entrenched invasive plants and, just as with eradication, does not in most cases overcome the problem of a long-lasting seed bank which is characteristic of many of the worst invasive alien species. This is why prevention and eradication should be the first forms of protection against biological invasion – and why early detection of alien species or actual invasions is emphasized, above.

The three main types of invasion management are mechanical, chemical and biological control, or in some preferred situations combinations of two or more of these techniques – referred to as “integrated control.”

Mechanical control is carried out by hand, often with hand-tools, or with cutting machines or mechanized mowers – or, in dense invasions, with soil-moving machinery such as bulldozers. Fire can be used separately or as an adjunct to the mechanical removal by tools and machinery.

Chemical control is as described above for eradication – but on a larger scale and often using

different herbicides for different growth forms or even plant growth in different seasons. Plant hormones that can disrupt growth, flowering or seed production are also in use – especially where herbicide use is forbidden. Chemical control agents, especially systemic poisons, can be applied by “painting” cut surfaces of stems and woody parts or by drilling suitably slanting holes into tree trunks to ensure that the herbicide reaches the inner parts of the plant. Topical applications by hand sprayer or mechanized spraying machines can cover substantial areas with herbicide – while very large areas can be the subject of aerial spraying from agricultural crop-spraying small aircraft – provided that non-target plant species and water courses can be avoided.



Red Billed Quelea birds, (Quelea quelea) roosting in a prosopis tree near the edge of Mare Oursi (Burkina Faso)

Biological control (biocontrol) is by far the most sustainable and cost-effective form of invasion management because once established, it usually maintains its own population of biocontrol agents. The principle of biocontrol is that invasive alien plants that have been introduced to new areas or ecosystems **arrive without their “natural enemies”** (insect herbivores, plant parasites, plant diseases, plant competitors) which keep their populations in check in their native environment. Native enemies are selected from the original (native) habitat of the invasive plants and released in/on the invasions to control the invasive characteristics of the alien species. In principle, it is possible to introduce native enemies that can: reduce growth rates, affect structural parts of the plant, affect leaves and other green parts which photosynthesize and provide the plant with energy, reduce the uptake of nutrients by the plant roots, reduce or disable flowering, seed production or fruit production and generally remove

the characteristics that enable the alien plant to compete with and dominate native species.

Some countries have used and are using effective biocontrol to manage most of the serious invasive species in their territories – and without negative impacts on native species of plants. Other countries are using biocontrol sparingly while some are reluctant to do so because of fears that the biocontrol agents will cause extinctions with native species. So far in the 100 or so years that biological control has been used, this form of native plant damage has not been recorded. Biological control is frequently used to manage crop weeds and other invasive plants of agriculture – but not all have sanctioned biological control of invasions affecting biodiversity.

Integrated control is employed where one technique or another does not reach some parts of an invasion or when the main methods are not effective everywhere or cannot physically reach all areas of the invasion.

All methods and programmes of invasion management or control need to be monitored for effectiveness and for decisions made when they are effective to continue or lessen the effort. Sometimes, monitoring leads to changes in the methods used or introductions of updates, with new forms of management.

Priorities for eradication and management of invasions in protected areas

Many PAs have priority areas for conservation action where particularly fragile habitats or endangered species are found. Clearly, these should be priorities for monitoring for alien species and any signs of invasions as well as eradication or management action if any are detected.

Another priority should be prevention or eradication or management of IAS considered as the most serious in a PA (such as *Chromolaena odorata* or *Lantana camara*) as these are likely to do the most damage and so their control will serve a wider purpose in the long-run. Another reason for this approach is that protected areas can provide a “protected nucleus” of invasive species which may then spread to surrounding areas well outside the PA boundaries and damage productive ecosystems (such as agriculture, livestock production, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture and development such as hydropower generation in rivers and urban “green spaces”). This gives a new responsibility to the PA managers to consider the impacts of their own

protection processes on neighboring enterprises outside of conservation areas.



Catharanthus roseus in Nazinga, Burkina Faso

The areas surrounding PAs, even as far as 30 or 40 km distant or far upstream of a water system, also need to be checked for IAS and support given to their management. While “buffer zones” around PAs may help to filter the introduction of invasive species to a protected area, some species are capable of infesting a PA from quite some distance outside the boundary or buffer zone. Thus surveillance and monitoring should, if possible extend to likely areas of invasion outside a PA. Ultimately, however, priorities for action against potential biological invasion will rest with the park managers, park policies and priorities and the availability of funds.

Closed tropical rainforests will remain largely immune to invasion except at access roads and other openings which can provide pathways for invasion in that area and the natural edges of the forest. Such forest-associated open areas may have species of plants that valuable in themselves and may also be important to the PA fauna (e.g. the native Zingiberaceae species that are required food for Gorillas in Guinea Forests – section 1.4, example e.). Open forests, woodlands, grasslands and shrublands are the most susceptible so that pathways of invasions should be priorities for their attention and degraded areas within them are most suspect sites for initial entry and establishment by invading species.

Building IAS prevention into existing structures of PAs

The processes described above need to be part of the existing procedures of PA management for each

separate protected area. If not already present, the general subject and the threats to conserved biodiversity should be introduced during the usual stakeholder discussions for the preparation of a Management Plan for the PA. This may need outside expertise and intervention – unless there is awareness and willingness that biological invasion is indeed an issue for management to prevent biodiversity loss. It was noted that most PA managers were indeed aware of the presence of IAS in or near their PAs; however, few, if any, had incorporated monitoring or management into the routines of PA management. IAS monitoring and management was rarely mentioned in those management plans that were available.



Ricinus communis near Boabeng Fiema, in Ghana

IAS monitoring might fit best as a regular task for PA routine patrols (as suggested above), especially if the staff on patrol have access to GPS and a digital camera. In addition, most PAs have a research group or encourage research within the PA and it is suggested that biological invasions become a requested research topic to better assist the management process and investigate impacts of invasions on specific elements of protected biodiversity.

Funding for monitoring could be part of the budget for management effectiveness until such time as a potentially serious invasion requires a risk assessment and then eradication or management procedures. At that time it is likely that most PAs will need outside assistance (technical and financial) – unless the national PA management authority has an invasive species unit.

Some guidance on how invasive alien species in protected areas can be addressed is given by De Poorter *et al.*, 2007a and ways to include such issues in the process of Management Effectiveness are suggested by De Poorter *et al.*, 2007b. This may be a suitable entry point for invasion biology in PA

management – although other areas could be primarily through research or in league with other national government agencies involved in IAS management – in Agriculture, Environment and Water Management. Interactions with regional bodies (especially ECOWAS) may be an advantage to acquire information about potentially invasive species spreading across West Africa.

Internationally available information about most species which have been alien and invasive in PAs is available from a number of websites – some with databases of species with their means of recognition, native and invasive range (by country), impacts on biodiversity (and often on productive ecosystems), pathways of introduction and invasion and methods of effective management. These are available on the internet with the most comprehensive being: the Global Invasive Species Database (www.issg.org/database), the CABI Invasive Species Compendium (www.cabi.org/isc), and the Global Invasive Species Information Network (www.gisin.org). There are more than 400 databases of invasive species and specialized IAS websites on the Internet – all of which are readily retrievable through the usual web search engines such as Google. These can provide general and specific information about all aspects of Invasion Biology and so can be valuable sources of information for invasive species issues in Protected Areas.

*The results of this study are presented on
www.papaco.org*

Erratum

The plant presented as « Senna occidentalis » in the previous NAPA newsletter was in fact « Senna obtusifolia ».



Beatrice is now leaving Papaco ...

After four years with us at the Papaco, Beatrice is flying towards new horizons (yet to be identified!). Particularly in charge of evaluations of PAs effectiveness, but also thematic studies, training courses, communication etc., she has tremendously supported the construction of our program and of the team.

We know we lose an exceptional colleague. But she will remain committed to the conservation, and if you

want to benefit from her great qualities, do not hesitate to contact her: beatricechataigner@gmail.com

See you soon Bea,
for new and enthusiastic adventures...

The Zoological Society of London's EDGE Fellowships (reminder)

The Zoological Society of London's EDGE of Existence programme (www.edgeofexistence.org) is the only global conservation initiative focusing specifically on threatened species that represent a significant amount of unique evolutionary history. One of the most effective ways in which the programme is working to secure the future of EDGE species is by awarding two-year Fellowships to future conservation leaders ("EDGE Fellows") working on poorly-known EDGE species. EDGE Fellows follow a two-year training programme comprising of:

- A 4-week Conservation Tools training course at the beginning of the programme to provide Fellows with essential training in techniques to implement their project;
- A grant to undertake a 2-year project on a top-priority EDGE species;
- Ongoing technical support/mentoring (achieved via online modules, web-based tutorials/seminars, and field visits) throughout the Fellowship;
- A 2-week Conservation Leadership training course in London on successful completion of Fellowship to help Fellows prepare for the next stage of their career.

The application form, guidelines, and eligibility criteria are available to download on the EDGE of Existence website (www.edgeofexistence.org/conservation/fellows) or can be requested from the EDGE Fellows Co-ordinator (cath.lawson@zsl.org).

Next application deadline is 31 March 2013.

A case of sustainable funding for the environment: the new West African Savannah Foundation in Benin (FSOA)

(Direction 8 of the Road Map for African PAs)

Context

The National Wildlife Reserve Management Centre (French Acronym CENAGREF) was created in Benin in 1998 to manage protected areas and their peripheral zones. Some important progresses have been made in recent years in sustainable ecosystem management in North Benin. Each of the national parks has developed and implemented a Government approved action plan. Real improvement has been noted as regards local community involvement and ecological surveillance and monitoring. Business plans have been drawn up on a national level and for each of the Parks, and

more analytical and transparent financial management practices are being implemented.

However, despite regular contributions from the State budget and a continued increase in tourism revenues, an analysis of current and future costs and revenues shows that if the basic recurring costs inherent to the management plans are to be covered in the long term, a sustainable financing mechanism that generates predictable income flows must be established. Without such a mechanism, recent achievements could be compromised, causing an immediate negative impact on biodiversity conservation and the living conditions of local communities.

On the basis of recommendations emanating from various recent studies, the Government of Benin and its financial partners have undertaken a process to create and fund a private entity that will be responsible for managing a trust fund intended to generate sustainable income flows for the protection and management of the country's savannah ecosystems, as a supplement to other, more variable, sources of funding such as the state budget and tourism.

The main characteristics of the proposed trust fund were specified through a wide participatory consultation process. It is proposed that the fund focus initially on financing activities in the savannah ecosystems of North Benin. Eventually it could be used to provide financial support for the conservation and sustainable management of the whole region as the integrated cross-border management of neighbouring parks (in Burkina Faso and Niger) is essential to ensure the long-term preservation of biodiversity. The name of this fund is "**Fondation des Savanes Ouest-Africaines**" (FSOA - West African Savannah Foundation) and it was officially created in November 2012.

FSOA Profile

The objective of the foundation is defined as follows:

To promote the **conservation and preservation** of:

- Pendjari National Park and the Biosphere Reserve,
- The part of the Regional W Park that is in Benin and the cross-border Biosphere reserve,
- The cross-border savannah site known as WAP (W – Arly – Pendjari) which covers ecosystems in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

And to advance **education, science and local development** through the promotion of ecologically sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity in the same areas.



An Elephant in the Pendjari national park, in the river

Legal Structure

Benin does not have a specific legal arsenal regarding the creation of a trust fund or foundation. Therefore the following option has been preferred:

- Creation of a **foreign foundation that will have an operational headquarters in Benin where it will request a Headquarters Agreement granting it the necessary tax exemptions, charity status and the right to freely transfer and invest its capital and investment income.**
- Creation of the foundation **in England** due to the fact that it will benefit from advantageous tax exemptions,, the board members have limited liability, England is considered neutral from a political point of view and there are varied and favourable investment possibilities.
- Choice of legal status as **“Limited liability company guaranteed by its charity status”** as laid out in the following documents:

Memorandum of Association

Articles of Association

This model is commonly used in other Environmental Trust funds created in the Francophone area such as Mauritania, Cameroun or Côte d'Ivoire, with local specific variations.

Funding Strategy

In Benin parks, business plans have been designed based on clearly defined management objectives. These make it possible to predict the costs associated with managing protected areas, their own revenues and their funding requirements in a transparent manner. Two scenarios (low and high hypothesis) have been proposed to estimate the average funding needs per year.

According to these estimates, the Benin funding line should mobilise minimum revenues of between €764,000 and €887,000 per year, excluding any other contributions than those by the Government and its own resources. **Therefore, and for an annual average income of 4%, the Benin funding line will need to be equal to between €19 and 22 million.**

The FSOA investments will be managed by an internationally reputable Investment Manager on the basis of guidelines established by the Board. The strategy will be based on a prudent policy of diversified investments and markets. Funds received in other currencies will be invested in international financial markets at an acceptable rate. The Investment Policy will be based on those of other similar sized trust funds with similar objectives, with the support of a professional Investment Advisor.



The Bali water pound in Pendjari national park

Fund Raising

At this stage, the funding promises come from the Government of Benin which has demonstrated its commitment to creating the Foundation by already doing several instalments. The Government of Germany is committed for a contribution of €12 million to the trust fund. The terms and conditions of this support will be specified in the coming months. The World Bank has mobilised a total of \$US6.9 million, of which \$US1.9 million from the GEF and \$US5 million from IDA. Of this amount, \$US5.3 million will be used to improve protected area management in North Benin, \$US1.5 for revenue generating activities in the peripheral areas and \$US100,000 for building the capacities of the FSOA.

The new regional parks support Programme financed by the European Union, “Programme d’Appui aux Parcs de l’Entente – PAPE” recognises the advantages of using the FSOA as a financial management mechanism (on the basis of the criteria in its Grant Allocation Manual), certainly as regards the Benin component.

Finally, certain stakeholders highlighted the difficulty for Benin to mobilise traditional sources of financing other than those already identified above and the need to adopt a systematic and pro-active approach to innovative financing sources in particular the private sector. It was therefore recommended that the definition and implementation of a fundraising strategy targeting the public sector be added to the FSOA work plan.

Next steps

With the establishment of the Board of the FSOA in the coming weeks, the concrete operations can commence, including support to the parks. The experience of this fund will be useful to all conservation partners in Africa because whilst it is not sufficient alone, funding by such a foundation proved to be a valuable tool for planning and sustaining certain operations on conservation field...

Business Skills for Protected Areas (reminder)

Are you responsible for managing a natural World Heritage Site or a Protected Area on a Tentative List for inscription? Would your organisation benefit from having better business planning skills? If the answer to the questions above is yes, then this is your opportunity to take part in a fully funded, training programme with business planning experts from Shell.

Please follow the link below for more information. **The application round opens 11th March and closes 6th May.**

http://www.earthwatch.org/europe/our_work/corporate/shell/whs_intro/

According to a study released (in early February) by the Gabonese National Parks Agency, WWF and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), poachers have killed an estimated 11,100 elephants – between 44 to 77 per cent of the population – in parts of Minkébé’s National Park and its surroundings in northern Gabon since 2004, when it held Africa’s largest forest elephant population.

“The situation is out of control. We are witnessing the systematic slaughter of the world’s largest land mammal,” said Bas Huijbregts, head of the Central African strand of WWF’s global campaign against illegal wildlife trade. “Some reports lead the world to believe that the ivory war has moved from the Central Africa region to other parts of the continent. This is wrong. What has changed is that these criminals are now also attacking the better protected elephant herds in Eastern and Southern Africa.”

“But here in Central Africa, unnoticed to the world, elephants are losing this war at lightning speed.”



Elephant in Lope national park, 2012

A regional Crisis

Fiona Maisels, a conservation scientist at WCS who has been analyzing the survey data, said that the data pointed to a regional crisis. “The Minkébé data are representative of trends across all remaining forest elephant strongholds in the region, not to speak of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is believed to hold 7,000 to 10,000 elephants, or less than ten per cent of its population twenty years ago,” Gabon, Maisels explained, represents only about 13% of the forests of Central Africa but is home to over half of Africa’s forest elephants. The Minkébé National Park, in turn, is home to Gabon’s biggest elephant population and to probably the largest forest elephant population in Africa. “At least until these data came out,” she said.

Over in the Central African Republic (CAR) - which in the mid 1980’s held up to 80,000 elephants – poachers are taking advantage of the political instability to wipe out the country’s remaining elephant, which can now number in the thousands.

Poachers kill over 11,000 elephants in Gabon

A press release from TRAFFIC – the wildlife trade monitoring network

A new study confirms what has been long suspected: elephant populations are being decimated to the point that the survival of the species in Central Africa is now in question.



Speaking from Bayanga in southwest CAR, Guian Zokoe, who is in charge of the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas for the CAR Ministry of Water and Forests, says poachers have killed at least 17 elephants around the Ngotto forest in the south of the country in the past few days. Unconfirmed reports by villagers hint that some sixty elephants were also killed further north, near the town of Yaloke, he said, adding there were reports of killings throughout the country.

“The Central African Republic’s new government has to send its armed forces to stop these poachers before they hit its last elephant stronghold, Dzanga-Sangha, a recently declared World Heritage Site.”

“It is not just a question of protecting CAR’s natural resources, but of stopping these armed groups from waltzing around the country and terrorizing local populations wherever they go,” Zokoe added.

How to end poaching

Although solutions to effectively address the poaching crisis in the region are varied, what can be concluded is clear: left unaddressed, Central Africa’s elephants will follow the footsteps of their western black and northern white rhinoceroses, both hunted to extinction.

“Governments in the region such as Cameroon, Chad and Gabon are recruiting more rangers and send their armies to fight these poachers. But that is not enough,” Huijbregts says. “The international intelligence community needs to get involved in this fight as soon as possible, in order to identify, track and put out of business these global criminal networks, which corrupt governments, erode national security and hamper economic development prospects.”

But Huijbregts explained that to effectively put an end to the poaching crisis, countries in East Asia would need to address their exploding demand for ivory, which is resulting in record prices.

“Unless the governments of the region and demand countries treat this issue as an international emergency we cannot rule out that, in our lifetime, there will no longer be any viable elephant populations in Central Africa,” Huijbregts said.

More info:

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About WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the Earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

About TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. TRAFFIC is a joint programme of IUCN and WWF.

www.facebook.com/WWFCentralAfrica



ToRs for a consultancy High-level meeting on the African elephant

Summary

IUCN seeks a consultant to assist with planning and, subject to availability of funding, implementation of a high-level meeting on the conservation of the African elephant. The ideal candidate has experience with diplomatic protocols, fundraising, communications, and event planning and management, as well as some experience with complex and/or controversial aspects of contemporary conservation and development.

Background

The African elephant is facing an increasing threat due to illegal killing for the illicit ivory trade... A resolution of IUCN's World Conservation Congress calls on IUCN to convene a high-level meeting to identify urgent measures needed by range, and ivory transit and consumer States, and to build political will towards implementing these solutions. The resolution recognizes the long supply chain of ivory trade, from protection on the ground in African range States to consumer education in consuming States, and law enforcement needs all the way along the trade routes. The resolution also recognizes that this is not a problem that can be tackled by the conservation community and environmental Ministries alone – real change will require commitment from the highest level within key governments to ensure a cross-sectoral approach to the problem. Seed funding for the implementation of the IUCN resolution has been secured and a consultant is required to work closely with the IUCN network to organize and, subject to sufficient funding being sourced, conduct the meeting.

Tasks

Amongst other tasks, the consultant will be required to work with the relevant components of the IUCN network (e.g. Headquarters, Regional Offices in Africa and Asia, SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG), the SSC Chair's Office and potentially Member institutions) to:

1. Help identify and approach all participating States
2. Help identify likely Heads of State/high-level civil servants or diplomats to play leading roles
3. Coordinate approaches to the African Union and the sub-regional economic groupings
4. Identify and prioritize appropriate venues
5. Propose realistic date of meeting
6. Develop detailed event specification and budget
7. Liaise with existing donors
8. Identify potential new donors, and prepare concept notes and/or funding proposals, as required
9. Work with the AfESG to develop the technical agenda and coordinate contracts for technical inputs
10. Prepare and, subject to availability of funding, implement logistical plan for the meeting
11. Prepare and, subject to availability of funding, implement communications plan for the meeting

Required skills & qualifications

- Fluent English and ability to work in French
- Ability to quickly grasp the substance and content of the undertaking
- Background in international diplomacy, politics or policy and experience with event preparation and management
- Experience with communications and PR
- Experience in fundraising

Timeline and location

It is preferred that the consultant be based in East Africa, with Nairobi a strong preference. It is expected that the consultant will be required for 3 - 4 months between now and June 2013, at times in that period working full-time, although this can be negotiated.

Application process

Applications should consist of:
 Cover letter
 Proposed approach and costing
 Curriculum vitae
 3 references with contact details

and should be submitted to Cecily Nyaga at cecily.nyaga@iucn.org by **March 11, 2013**

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
 PARTNERSHIP FUND

New Call for proposals

REGION: Eastern Afrotropical Biodiversity Hotspot

This call for proposal is open for **large grants** and **small grants** for all eligible Eastern Afrotropical countries: **Yemen, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.**

Deadline: Large Grants: 1 April 2013; Small Grants: 19 April 2013

Info : www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/default.aspx

African rhinos won't hold out for much longer, IUCN experts warn

Press release

Gland, Switzerland, 26 February 2013 – Nearly 2,400 rhinos have been poached across Africa since 2006, slowing the population growth of both African rhino species to some of the lowest levels since 1995, according to the latest facts revealed by IUCN experts.

Rhino poaching increased by 43% between 2011 and 2012, representing a loss of almost 3% of the population in 2012, according to IUCN's Species Survival Commission's (SSC) African Rhino Specialist Group. Experts predict that if poaching continues to increase at this rate, rhino populations could start to decline in less than two years' time.

"Well-organized and well-funded crime syndicates are continuing to feed the growing black market with rhino horn," says Mike Knight, Chairman of the IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group, a group of rhino experts within IUCN's Species Survival Commission. "Over the past few years, consumer use of rhino horn has shifted from traditional Asian medicine practices to new uses, such as to convey status. High levels of consumption – especially the escalating demand in Viet Nam – threaten to soon reverse the considerable conservation gains achieved over the last two decades."

There are currently 5,055 Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) and 20,405 White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*) in Africa. Although these numbers have increased slightly over the last two

years, there is no room for complacency. In 2012, at least 745 rhinos were poached throughout Africa – the highest number in two decades – with a record 668 rhinos killed in South Africa alone. In 2013, one rhino has been lost to poaching every 11 hours since the beginning of the year – a rate that is higher than the average for 2012.



Illegal trade in rhino horn is coordinated by well-organised criminal syndicates which transport the horns primarily to Viet Nam and China. Mozambique has also been identified as a key driver of poaching activities, with poachers making cross-border raids into the South African Kruger National Park, home to the world's largest rhino population. Mozambique is also a major transit point for illegal horn to Asia.

IUCN experts call upon the international community – especially the key consumer and transit states such as Viet Nam, China and Mozambique – to urgently address the crisis by strengthening and enforcing regional and international trade laws, particularly in relation to rhino horn.

“The rhino community is encouraged by the signing of a recent Memorandum of Understanding between South Africa and Vietnam to address the rhino poaching epidemic as well as other conservation issues,” says **Simon Stuart, Chair of IUCN’s Species Survival Commission**. *“However, it needs to be reinforced with tangible government action on both sides. International and regional collaboration needs to be strengthened, as does sharing of information, intelligence and expertise to address wildlife crime issues.”*

Updated facts on the rhino crisis come on the eve of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that will take place from 3 to 14 March in Bangkok, Thailand. Illegal rhino horn trade will be one of the many issues discussed at the meeting.

For more information, please contact:
Ewa Magiera, IUCN Media Relations,
ewa.magiera@iucn.org



JOB opportunity

The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) is an umbrella organization for community conservancies in Northern Kenya. NRT has expanded to include 21 conservancies covering over 20,000km² of land and representing over 200,000 local

people. NRT is now seeking to fill the position of Senior Scientist, based at the headquarters, in Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in northern Kenya. Applicants should send their CVs and a covering letter to the **CEO, Northern Rangelands Trust, Private Bag, Isiolo, Kenya** at info@nrt-kenya.org before **31st March 2013**.

NAPA – CONTACTS

www.papaco.org and www.iucn.org

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of IUCN