NAPA

News from African Protected Areas

Nouvelles des Aires Protégées en Afrique

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In 2015, let's be 2015...

The year 2015 is beginning and as every year at the same period, it's time to make all kinds of resolutions for the future. For those regarding our protected areas, this year, it should be easy: let's just refer to "the promise of Sydney" (*the "vision" is briefly presented in this NAPA, we'll come back later on the promise*) to have something to fill our schedule until December. Discussed and written during the World Parks congress in last November, this promise should inspire us for the coming decade. We shall do our best to make it happen.

There are also the resolutions that concern us directly. Those that are within our reach and for which, a little effort will be enough to make them happen. I've got one that I would like to suggest, regarding the NAPA.

The NAPA letter was founded in 2007 and since then has never failed to be released, month after month. Let's be honest, it is not perfect. Well, in fact it is quite far from being perfect. Its model is too basic, the dominant color is still a nondescript green, the content is irregular and translations are approximate, both in French and English, depending. More could be done, probably, and it could be better, certainly. Many readers challenge me to make changes, to go digital, to modernize it, to make it more fashionable... Well, it's a good idea but changing a recipe that has proven to be successful should be considered carefully.

Let's see what are the strengths of the NAPA because there must be some, no?

First, its content: it speaks of simple things (most of the time), accessible and if possible useful for the work of PA managers and their numerous partners. This is not science but in general, the information it contains is fair and of a certain common sense. That's not bad, isn't it?

Then its shape: pdf format is a bit outdated, but easy to download, to store and why not, to print. This is why I happen to accidentally find the NAPA during my field visits, forgotten on a table or in a vehicle, and it's a good thing to see it there.

Finally, regularity: every month, every year for 7 years and in two languages (or almost!)... Not so easy.

Thus in Sydney, at the conference, I was surprised to see how many unsuspected readers have joined the club over time and reported that they were receiving or reading the letter (usually with pleasure I guess as others would not mention it?). Unsuspected because my mailing list now has 1,602 contacts and of course, I just can't remember all of them. But I am sure that there are still friends of African protected areas who do not read the NAPA and might be happy to know that it exists...

So here's my suggestion: let's try to be 2,015 readers by the end of the year. Nothing really complicated: you just have to pass on the information around and maybe some of your contacts will be interested to register? It is not that we are short of readers, but if more people can enjoy it, why wait? And keep in mind that all

previous issues are downloadable on www.papaco.org. So if anybody is enthusiastic about the NAPA and want to subscribe he can contact me directly (geoffroy.mauvais@iucn.org).

This is a very simple resolution, easy to achieve and helpful for 2015. We'll see if we get there but in advance, I thank you very much.

Happy New Year!

Papaco is on Twitter
@Papaco_IUCN

The 11th University Diploma on PA management will be organized in Gabon in April

Direction 4 of the Road Map for African PAs

After the 10th University Diploma which will start in February in Ouagadougou, a new 8-week training course on PA management (UD n°11) will be organized in Gabon, Lopé National Park, in April with WCS. Starting on the 20th of April and lasting until mid-June. Inscriptions will be open soon online on:
http://continue.senghor.refer.org/

The Promise of Sydney – The "Vision" from the participants to the congress

Over 6,000 participants from 170 countries met at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 in Sydney, Australia. Acknowledging the traditional owners of the land where we met, we celebrated an enormous variety of inspiring ways of addressing the challenges facing the planet, through protected area approaches that respect and conserve nature, while benefitting human health and prosperity. We recognized that rebalancing the relationship between human society and nature is essential, and that ecosystems and their variety of life fully support our existence, cultural and spiritual identity, economies and well-being.

We celebrate the expansion and improved governance and management of protected and conserved areas around the world, and the leadership and initiatives of many regions, including the first ever Asia Parks Congress, since we met in Durban in 2003. In particular, we laud the establishment of new marine protected areas, as healthy oceans are critical to life on earth and must be protected at much greater scale. We acknowledge the increasing role of Indigenous Peoples', community, and privately-conserved areas and territories in reaching biodiversity conservation and societal goals, and the opportunities presented by new communication and other technologies to better understand and engage new constituencies, including young people in the world's rapidly expanding cities. We commend numerous improvements of corporate practice, and the many success stories and varied partnerships across sectors for nature conservation and sustainability.

Despite these advances, we recognize that threats to nature, its biological diversity and protected areas are now at the highest level in human history, due to a convergence at immense scale of the impacts of human consumption patterns, population growth, and industrial activity. Many protected and conserved areas are at risk or are poorly managed, and many rangers on the frontline have sacrificed everything for this cause. This reality must be faced directly, truthfully, and collaboratively. Bold vision and concerted action are required if we are to meet both conservation goals and human aspirations for current and future generations. There is no time to lose.

We, therefore:

Promise to INVIGORATE… our efforts to ensure that protected areas do not regress but rather progress. We will scale up protection in landscapes, wetlands and seascapes to represent all sites essential for the conservation of nature, especially in the oceans. We will enhance diversity, quality and vitality in governance and management, including the appropriate recognition and support of areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and private entities. We will strive to promote sustainable land-uses and eliminate activities and policies that degrade, threaten or result in extinction or the loss of ecosystems and their biodiversity, including the rampant illegal wildlife trade and the impact of invasive alien species. We will recognize, respect, resource and support our frontline staff to do their often dangerous but always critical work.

Promise to INSPIRE... all people, across generations, geography and cultures to experience the wonder of nature through protected areas, to engage their hearts and minds and engender a life-long association for physical, psychological, ecological, and spiritual well-being. We will motivate and engage a new generation of urban and rural communities, as an essential investment in the future of sustainability on the planet, and in the quality of life of people everywhere. Further, by working in partnership with and recognizing the long traditions and knowledge, collective rights and responsibilities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to land, water, natural resource and culture, we will seek to redress and remedy past and continuing injustices in accord with international agreements.

Promise to INVEST… in nature's solutions, supported by public policy, incentives, tools and safeguards that help to halt biodiversity loss, mitigate and respond to climate change, reduce the risk and impact of disasters, improve food and water security, and promote human health and dignity. We will work to enable protected and conserved areas and their stewards to design and monitor effective, evidence-based and culturally appropriate responses to these challenges and to provide a compelling case for increased recognition, incentives, capacity and direct funding. We will encourage regional learning networks and initiatives that support these aims. We will collaborate with new partners to promote sustainable and equitable economies that respect planetary boundaries and social justice.

More on
http://worldparkscongress.org/about/promise_of_sydney_vision.html

POSITION STATEMENT: THE THREAT POSED BY UNREGULATED USE OF POISON TO AFRICA'S BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEMS AND HUMAN HEALTH
(October 2014 – www.iucn.org)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) hereby outlines its position in relation to the increasing incidence and scale of the use of poison causing catastrophic declines in wildlife populations across Africa in recent years.

The use of poisons to kill wildlife has a long-established place in African history. However, the rapid acceleration in this use, coupled with the move to synthetic pesticides, has been shown to have a devastating effect on populations of many scavenging species ranging from hyenas to vultures. Numerous other species, especially those of high economic value, are similarly showing a steep and disturbing decline due to the use of poisons. Many of these species are Threatened, according to IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species.

There is increasing evidence that agricultural pesticides are being misused for the illegal killing of wildlife, partly because these poisons are cheap, easy to obtain and use, silent in their destruction and extremely effective. Targeted poisoning is used for: controlling those species that cause damage; harvesting for food and traditional medicine; and poaching for wildlife products – increasingly for elephant ivory, rhino horn and furs.

Poisoning is often targeted at particular species, but the consequences are frequently unintentional and affect any species scavenging on poisoned carcasses. The use of poison to kill elephants has been reported with increasing frequency, both to facilitate poaching and in retaliation for crop damage. In one incident in 2013, large numbers of African Elephants *Loxodonta africana* were killed when waterholes were poisoned with cyanide in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe1. An estimated 400-600 vultures, mainly White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* and Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* (both Threatened species) died after feeding on a poisoned elephant carcass in the vicinity of the Bwabwata National Park in Namibia's Caprivi-region in July 2013. In southern Africa, particularly in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, the poisoning of rhinos is increasingly favoured by poachers due its silent action making it easier to avoid of detection.

Vultures such as the Lappet-faced Vulture (Torgos tracheliotus) are often victims of poisoning in Africa

These are not isolated poisoning cases. There is evidence that a number of different species and ecosystems are being systematically targeted: Lions *Panthera leo* and other predator species are poisoned in retaliation for depredation on livestock and deliberate poisoning is now considered to be one of the most serious threats to large mammalian carnivores (including hyenas, wild dogs, leopards, jackals and caracals; wild waterfowl are poisoned and then sold for human consumption to unsuspecting consumers; vultures, in their role as wildlife sentinels, are increasingly targeted with deliberate mass poisoning by elephant poachers to prevent the birds swarming in areas (and hence drawing attention to) where illicit activities have taken place1. Poisons (including synthetic and natural poisons extracted from plants) are also commonly used by fishermen in both freshwater and marine ecosystems contributing to overexploitation, incidental and harmful by-catch and habitat damage.

Many of the species negatively affected by poisoning are keystone species that play vital roles in maintaining ecosystem health. Their removal, or depletion of their populations, will have alarming cascading negative ecological effects as well as adverse impacts on human health. For example, the precipitous decline (97-99.9% in 10-15 years) of three highly threatened vulture species, Indian Vulture *Gyps indicus*, White-rumped Vulture *G. bengalensis* and Slender-billed Vulture *G. tenuirostris* on the Indian sub-continent over the last 20 years, caused by poisoning from widespread use of certain anti-inflammatory drugs for veterinary purposes, has resulted in a proliferation of feral dogs (drawn to an increased food supply) followed by a substantial increase in the incidence of human rabies from dog bites. Given that vultures provide a similar scavenging role in Africa, comparable negative impacts are anticipated throughout the continent.

Several of the species targeted by poisoning (e.g., elephants, lions and leopards) are of immense value to the tourism industries, and hence to the economies of several African countries. Secondary impacts of poisoning cascade through many other species, many of which also have high tourism value and play important roles in the natural food webs.

Lions are targetted through poisoning of cattle carcasses

Chemicals of major concern include the systemic carbamate pesticides Carbofuran and Aldicarb, which are commonly used to poison wildlife. Carbofuran has been banned in Canada, the United States and the European Union because of its acute toxicity to both humans and vertebrates. In addition, various toxic organophosphates and organochlorines, as well as cyanide, strychnine and arsenic, are widely available in several African countries and are often subject to insufficient controls. Exposure to these toxic substances, either through direct handling or indirectly through the

food chain and contamination of water supplies, also poses major risks to human health.

In 2006, the governments of India, Pakistan and Nepal (with Bangladesh following suit in 2010) imposed a legal ban on the use of Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS) containing diclofenac sodium to prevent the further decline of vulture populations. This ban, complimented by awareness-raising targeting the public, pharmaceutical organisations and veterinarians, together with the promotion of an alternative product, has had a positive role in improving the status of the subcontinent's vultures, although the continued presence of residues of diclofenac in ungulate carcasses highlights the urgent need to ensure that human formulations of the drug are not sold widely as a veterinary substitute. Similar actions would also help to reduce the indiscriminate use of poisons that result in the loss of large numbers of wild species in Africa, although a holistic approach in interventions, which extend across the full range of health fields, is clearly needed.

The African Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, signed by most countries on the content, prohibits use of poison and poisoned or anaesthetic bait as a method for hunting wildlife. The convention was signed by 40 African countries in 1968, and a revised edition was adopted in 2003. As of 2010, only eight countries had ratified the revised convention, which falls below the 15 countries necessary for its ratification. In accordance with this commitment, IUCN SSC requests governments and environmental authorities across Africa to consider urgent implementation of the following:

• Develop and enforce appropriate legislation to control, ban or restrict the sale, storage, distribution, use and disposal of toxic chemicals known to be used in the indiscriminate killing of wildlife. Bans on the use of some chemicals, like Carbofuran should be considered where practical, especially where these have already been banned in other countries because of their threats to humans and ecosystems;

• Introduce and enforce penalties on those found guilty of being responsible for wildlife poisoning incidents that reflect the serious nature of the crime and act as sufficient deterrent to those who may contemplate perpetrating such acts in future;

• Train and logistically support conservation staff to act swiftly and minimize the damage that can be caused by any future poisoning incidents;

• Enhance analytical capacity and increase sampling, testing and monitoring efforts of relevant institutions across the region, including regular reporting of poisoning incidents;

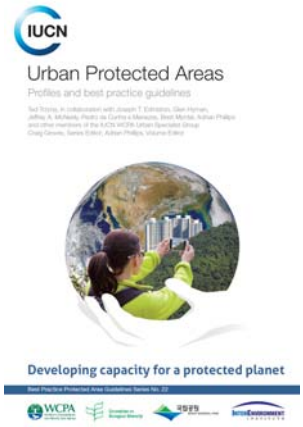
• Increase grassroots educational initiatives to develop and disseminate good practice for predator control and enforcement; and

• Work together through multi-stakeholder regional structures to ensure that the above actions are implemented as widely as possible.

Several species can be threatened at one time

In the longer term, IUCN respectfully appeals to the governments and other conservation actors in Africa to make a strong commitment to seeking effective strategies to address the root causes of the poisoning problem, to prevent it becoming more pervasive. There is a high likelihood that increasing development and demographic pressures could continue to worsen the problem, which makes it an urgent priority to find sustainable solutions to managing human-wildlife conflicts, and to take all measures necessary in curbing illegal trade in wildlife products. These strategies should be accompanied by global efforts to curb the circulation and use of highly ecotoxic compounds in general circulation, while increasing investment in non-ecotoxic alternatives and organic methods of crop production (e.g. by implementing international treaties and regulations, such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants).

More on www.iucn.org



Urban Protected Areas - Profiles and Best Practice Guidelines

By Ted Trzyna and al.

Read and download at **www.iucn-urban.org**

"Their importance cannot be overstated."

Urban protected areas — nature reserves situated in or at the edge of larger population centers — "are at the heart of the struggle to create more sustainable prospects for both nature and people," according to this new book from IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature. "Their importance cannot be overstated."

Urban protected areas "have a crucial role that sets them apart from other protected areas. They provide opportunities for large numbers of urban people to experience nature, including many people who may not be able to visit more remote protected areas."

This is important for two reasons. One is now well known: Regular contact with nature is good for people. Aside from the benefits of outdoor exercise, spending time in nature improves physical and mental health.

The other reason may be less obvious: Urban people are crucial for nature conservation globally. Conservation depends on support from urban voters, urban donors, and urban communicators. Yet people living in cities tend to have less and less contact with nature. As the author puts it: "The wildest and remotest places on Earth, the most imperiled species on Earth, the chain of life sustaining human life on Earth will be protected only if urban people care about nature."

The book profiles urban protected areas in fifteen metropolitan areas around the world and gives guidance on such topics as engendering a local sense of ownership, engaging with diverse ethnic groups, and breaking down cultural barriers between the "natural" and the "urban"; coping with such challenges as encroachment, crime, invasive species, human-wildlife conflict, zoonotic diseases, wildfires, noise, and artificial nighttime light; and making urban protected areas national and global priorities…

PARCC WEST AFRICA

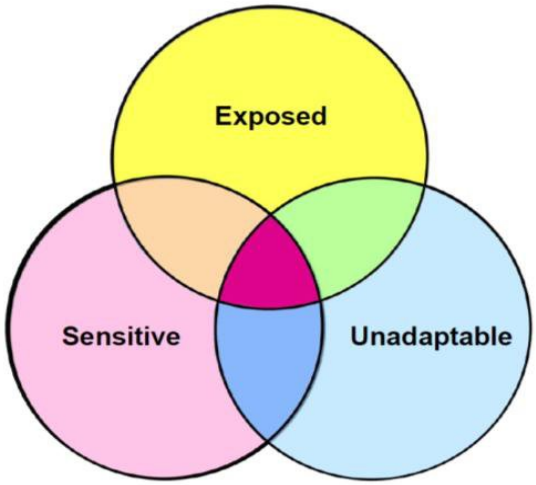
A climate change vulnerability assessment of West African species

By Bora Masumbuko, IUCN-PACO

Introduction & methods

As part of the PARCC project, **a climate change vulnerability assessment of West African species** was conducted by the IUCN Global Species Programme (IUCN GSP), one of the project's technical partners. The objective was to assess the vulnerability to climate change of almost all terrestrial and freshwater vertebrates of West Africa. This information will help conservation actors better understand how climate change may impact individual species from each taxonomic group in the region, and to develop suitable responses to improve their climate change resilience.

The report was compiled on the basis of an expert workshop, and the re-analysis of an existing global dataset, wherein the available biological and ecological trait data were compiled for 183 amphibians, 1,172 birds, 517 freshwater fish, 405 mammals and 307 reptiles.
For each individual species, their 'sensitivity' and 'adaptive capacity' to climate change and its impacts was assessed using the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Framework, developed by IUCN (see below).



The IUCN Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Framework

- **Sensitivity:** the lack of potential for a species to persist
- **Poor adaptability:** inability to avoid the negative impacts of climate change through dispersal and/or micro-evolutionary change, and
- **Exposure:** the extent to which each species' physical environment will change

Species that are both sensitive and poorly able to adapt to climate change, **and** are among the most severely exposed to climatic changes are described as **'climate change vulnerable'**.

Climate projections were provided by the UK Met Office Hadley Centre. Extinction risk for each taxonomic group was assessed according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Species that are both globally threatened and vulnerable to climate change should be seen as top priorities for conservation action.

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments

➢ *Amphibians*

7%, 10% and 25% of West African amphibians are considered vulnerable to climate change by the years 2025, 2055 and 2085, respectively. Some amphibians indeed have a high sensitivity to climate change particularly due to their dependence on specific habitats (fresh waters for larval development). Many amphibian species of the region are believed to be poorly able to disperse as a response to climate change, typically due to their intrinsic biological characteristics, which render them poorly equipped to move large distances over short timeframes.

➢ *Birds*

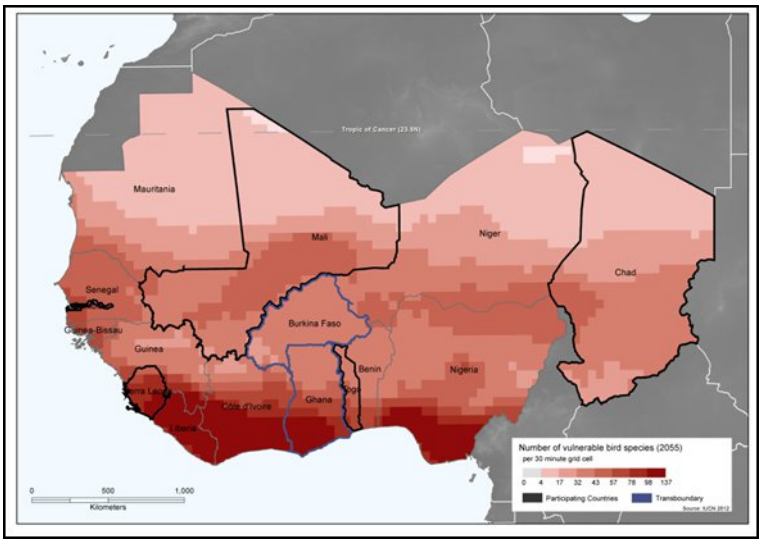
1.5%, 21% and 26% of West African bird species are considered vulnerable to climate change by the years 2025, 2055 and 2085, respectively. Bird species show a lower level of vulnerability to climate change compared with other groups, however, there are some uncertainties about bird sensitivity traits notably due to a lack of knowledge of species' population sizes. Some bird species will not have the ability to adapt to climatic changes, mainly due to a low reproductive output over time and/or intrinsically low dispersal abilities.

➢ *Freshwater fish*

19%, 39% and 60% of West African freshwater fish are considered vulnerable to climate change by the years 2025, 2055 and 2085, respectively. Some freshwater fish species show a high sensitivity to climate change and its impacts, particularly due to their specific habitat and microhabitat associations, which may be affected under a changing climate. Although uncertainty is high for certain traits and/or species, the high prevalence of sensitivity in species with sufficient data suggests that other species may be similarly sensitive.

➢ *Mammals*

5%, 16% and 28% of West African mammals are considered vulnerable to climate change by the years 2025, 2055 and 2085, respectively. The specific biological traits that render mammal species sensitive to climate change vary widely within the group, due to the large variety among the species concerned in terms of their biology, ecology and life-history. Some West African mammals appear poorly able to adapt to climate change because of their limited dispersal abilities.



Distribution (total number of species per grid) of climate change vulnerable West African mammals by 2055

➢ *Reptiles*

7%, 21% and 34% of West African reptile species are considered vulnerable to climate change by the years 2025, 2055 and 2085, respectively. Reptile species show a high sensitivity to climate change particularly due to their specific habitat and microhabitat dependencies, and specific feeding habits. Some West African reptiles also appear poorly able to adapt to climate change because of their low intrinsic capacity to disperse.

Examples of ways in which vulnerability assessments species traits may be used to inform conservation actions

- For species assessed as **poorly able to disperse** as a response to climate change: facilitate their dispersal, through ensuring connectivity (i.e. removing barriers) or manually relocate populations to areas with a more suitable climate (although this option should be considered very carefully).

- For species assessed as **possessing a narrow tolerance range to some environmental variables** (e.g. fire, flooding, temperatures etc.): manually manipulate the environment if possible (e.g. fire regime management) to ensure that suitable conditions persist within the species range.

- For species with **known interspecific dependencies** (e.g. specific prey species): monitor the species upon which the focal species depends, and where necessary manage this species to ensure that climate change does not negatively impact their populations.

These are only some of the options available. We hope that practitioners will consider the findings of this study on a species-by-species basis, and use them to modify existing, or develop new, conservation approaches, which explicitly address climate change impacts upon species.

The study also describes knowledge gaps, and recommends actions to fill these gaps. Assessments of the distribution and extinction risk of species for which this has not yet been completed are also suggested.

The full report is available at: www.parcc-web.org

The PARCC project (Protected Areas Resilient to Climate Change) in West Africa is a full-size GEF project aimed at assessing the vulnerability of protected area networks in West Africa to the impacts of climate change, and enhancing the resilience of protected areas by developing strategies and tools to improve the effectiveness of their management in the face of climate change. Importantly, it is also building capacity in the region to ensure that the new tools developed can be used effectively after the project's completion. The project covers 5 core countries in West Africa, namely: Chad, The Gambia, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Togo. It started in 2010 and will run until 2015.

The project is implemented by several partners including UNEP-WCMC (executing agency), and IUCN PACO (main regional partner), who provides guidance and support for the implementation of activities at the regional and national levels. At the national level, countries are involved through the Ministry in charge of managing protected areas who coordinate all activities at the national level. Technical partners include the UK Met Office Hadley Centre, BirdLife International, IUCN Global Species Programme, Durham University and DICE (University of Kent).

The most important outputs of the project to date include:

- *High resolution climate data and future climate scenarios*
- *A report on climate, PA, species, and socio economic data available in all five countries*
- *A draft additional METT module for monitoring the effects of climate change*
- *An assessment of PA connectivity in West Africa*
- *A climate change vulnerability assessment of West African species*
- *A multi taxa (birds, mammals and amphibians) assessments of climate change impacts on biodiversity within West Africa's existing protected area network*

- *An analysis of the connections between protected areas, their riparian populations and climate change at the national and regional levels*
- *Project web site and data portal*
- *Publication and dissemination of a project newsletter*
- *Several training modules and sessions aiming at better understanding the effects of climate change on PAs, and planning for adaptive measures.*

During the last phase, the project will mainly focus on the implementation of transboundary pilot sites activities in the field (i.e. signing of transboundary agreements and joint management plans integrating climate change, monitoring system of the effects of climate change on transboundary PA). It will also work on developing systematic conservation planning systems at the regional and national level, formulating policy recommendations at the national and regional level, and recommendations for PA managers on the best approaches to manage PAs for CC.

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Project web site: www.parcc-web.org

Jobs offers

The **Wildlife Conservation Society** (WCS) is a US nonprofit, private organization established in 1895 that saves wildlife and wild places by understanding critical issues, crafting science-based solutions, and taking conservation actions that benefit nature and humanity. With more than a century of experience, long-term commitments in dozens of landscapes, presence in more than 60 nations, and experience helping to establish over 150 protected areas across the globe, WCS has amassed the biological knowledge, cultural understanding and partnerships to ensure that vibrant, wild places and wildlife thrive alongside local communities. Working with local communities and organizations, that knowledge is applied to address species, habitat and ecosystem management issues critical to improving the quality of life of poor rural people whose livelihoods depend on the direct utilization of natural resources.

WCS is currently offering **3 positions for pilots**. These are full-time field based positions responsible for undertaking aerial surveys and aerial support to wildlife law enforcement and protected area management in **Mozambique**, **Cameroon** and **Gabon** in partnership with Government wildlife authorities. Duties include assuring sound operations, piloting and maintenance of WCS aircraft, organizing and undertaking aerial surveys for wildlife and monitoring of human threats, providing aerial support to law enforcement and protected area management efforts and monitoring, following the WCS conservation aviation program standard procedures and systems. The positions also include technical reporting writing and mapping.

A position for a **logistics unit Director** is also available at **Nouabale-Ndoki** (Congo).

Please apply online at: http://www.wcs.org/about-us/careers.aspx

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