



Newsletter from African protected areas

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Editorial

by Geoffroy Mauvais (PAPACO coordinator)

Objective 30

The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will take place in Kunming, China in October this year. As usual ahead of this type of meetings, we are told that it will be "crucial" and that the decisions made will change our future. And, undoubtedly, we will be told the same ahead of the following meeting.

Yet, symbolically at least, this COP 15 is indeed important.

First, because of its symbolic date. 2020 marks the end of a decade framed by the Aichi targets, included in the strategic plan for biological diversity which was defined during the 10th COP meeting (Japan, 2010). Certainly, many of these objectives have not been achieved - but they at least gave us a direction and an ambition. They must now be re-assessed for 2030, in light of our recent scientific discoveries (nearly a million animal or plant species threatened with extinction) and of the global movement to protect the environment that has emerged over the course of recent months. Both factors certainly helped to give us a sense of urgency that might contribute to move our decision-makers.

Thus, the objectives must be re-scaled. The first suggestions filtering from the exchanges among the parties to the convention are directed towards the conservation of 30% of land and seas, including 10% under full protection. This target is much higher than what we painstakingly achieved since 1993, when the CBD came into force. However, we are without doubt

living a moment unique enough to finally give us the audacity and the courage to go beyond the usual weak commitments. For now, these are only avenues for reflection, but we know that these meetings are prepared well in advance and upfront discussions will help determine the final results.

Obviously, the question must be raised: 30% of what? This is the existential question already asked by many NGOs and scientists. We must protect territories that actually contribute to conservation, and make sure that they can and will continue to do so. The European Parliament has already passed a resolution calling for COP 15 to commit to legally binding goals, as the Paris agreement for the climate change convention. Yet we can wonder about the strength of such promises! Fortunately, this time at least the United States will not have to leave the CBD, since they were never a party to it...

Beyond mere figures, the effort to be produced will be monumental for all of humanity. In terms of land use planning, use of chemicals, exploitation of animal and plant resources, demography, economic models, education... everything needs re-thinking. This effort is no different than the one necessary to fight climate change; in fact, they are intrinsically linked and their common success will determine the success of an ultimately not so secondary objective: the survival of our own species.

Our courses

ONSITE COURSES

University Diploma: back to school

The sixteenth group of students doing the University Diploma in Protected Area Management (French only) will start classes on 17 February. The 20 students will gather in Ouagaougou (Burkina Faso) for seven weeks of intense training, after which, successful candidates will be given a University Diploma by Senghor University.

If you are a French speaker, note that calls for applications are published on social media and in our NAPAs. So make sure you follow us by filling-in the newsletter subscription form on papaco.org/napa.

MOOC (ONLINE COURSES)

Registrations open

Next session: 17 February to 19 July 2020.

In a couple of days, we'll be up for yet another session, which will last a little longer this time as courses will be available for five months. Why you ask? So that we have a session running during World Conservation Congress (Marseille, France) in June 2020.

So spread the word, we have a huge milestone ahead as we intend to reach 50,000 registrations by the end of June!

REGISTRATIONS: mooc-conservation.org

MOOC
conservation



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Featuring this month

IMPLEMENTATION OF CITES IN WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES: PROGRESS, CONSTRAINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Introduction

One of the most serious problems humanity faces today is the increasing degradation of natural resources and biodiversity, which is partly caused by the illegal trade in wildlife and plant products. This trade continues to grow and has led to the extinction of several species, despite the introduction of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973 and its ratification by many countries around the world. The situation in Africa is particularly worrying due to the porous borders and limited resources available to tackle this issue. Although CITES has been ratified by the majority of States on the continent, especially in West Africa, several countries (including Togo and Nigeria) are recognized as hubs of the illegal international trade in wild flora and fauna. One of the objectives of the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABICC) program, which is funded by USAID and supported by IUCN and other agencies, is to build local capacity to enforce CITES and protect biodiversity more effectively. In 2017 and 2019, WABICC sponsored training for 27 students from 13 West African countries through the CITES Master's program at the International University of Andalusia in Spain. The students, who are professionals in this field, tackled various research subjects relating to CITES, particularly levels of knowledge about the Convention, and progress with and constraints to its implementation. They also conducted case studies on the trade, particularly plant and animal species and captive breeding of certain wildlife species. This paper summarizes their findings on the implementation of CITES

in various countries across the sub-region, focusing on the constraints to implementation and recommendations to improve its enforcement in these countries.

Levels of knowledge about CITES in ECOWAS countries

Generally speaking, actors working on CITES and the general public in the West Africa sub-region know little about the Convention.

The general level of knowledge in countries where surveys were undertaken ranged from 17.75% to 63.6%, rising to 44% to 96% among CITES actors (enforcement officers such as forestry and customs agents). Direct actors were found to be better informed about CITES, with forestry agents having the highest levels of knowledge.

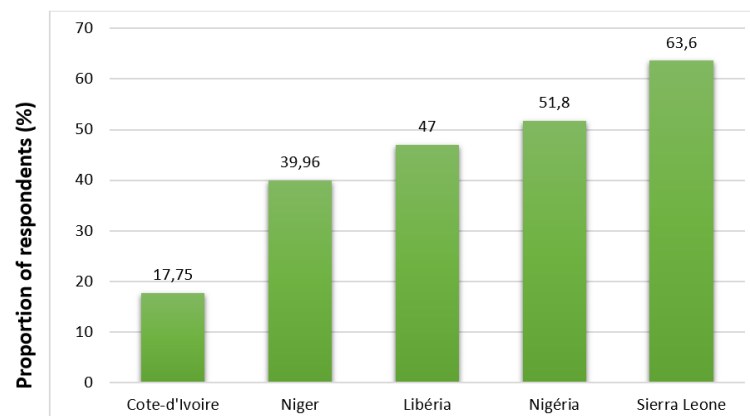


Figure 1: General level of knowledge about CITES in some West African countries

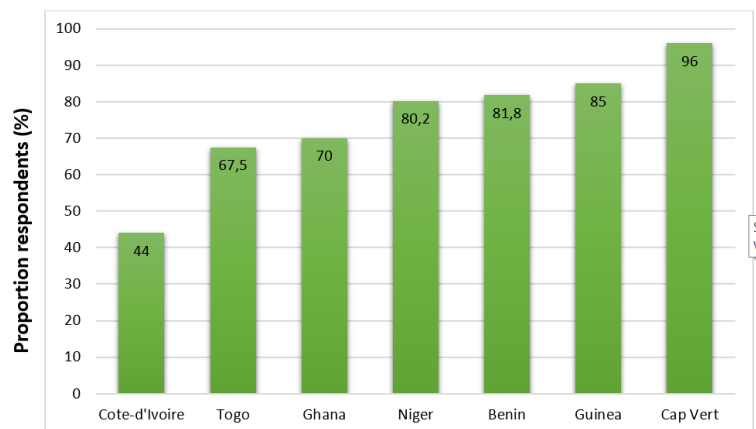


Figure 2 : Level of knowledge about CITES of the officers responsible for its implementation in some West African countries.

Implementation of CITES in West Africa

All thirteen (13) countries ratified CITES between the 1970s and the 1990s. However, Nigeria and Senegal are the only two countries with appropriate legislation that generally meets the conditions required to enforce CITES. As such, they are classified as Category 1 countries. The legislation in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Togo only partly fulfills the conditions for CITES, so these three countries are classified as Category 2 countries. Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and Niger (38.5% of countries in the region) do not meet the conditions required to implement CITES and are therefore classed as Category 3 countries. The situation in the remaining three countries was not assessed.

Things seem better at the institutional level. Most countries in the sub-region have designated management and scientific authorities, but Nigeria is the only country where it is recognized that these authorities are separate and where they operate harmoniously. In other countries where the two authorities exist as separate entities, communication and coordination between them is poor; while in countries such as Benin and Gambia, where the institutional framework is weaker, one institution is both management body and scientific authority, which is not conducive to effective implementation of the Convention.

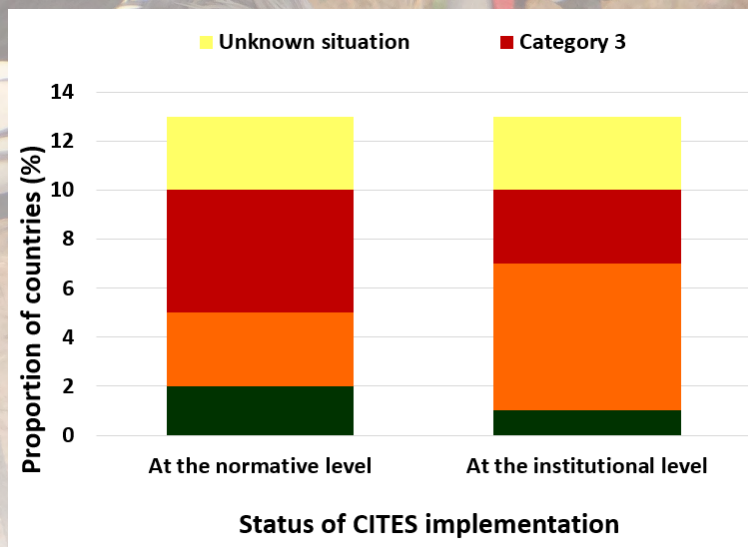


Figure 3: Summary of the status of CITES implementation the various West African countries.

Implementing CITES: the trade in wildlife and plant products

The effectiveness of the institutional systems in each country can be gauged by the way they regulate the exploitation of wildlife and plant products and captive breeding of endangered animals.

Pterocarpus erinaceus (rosewood) is a flagship tree species for international trade. Students on the CITES courses examined various constraints to rosewood production and trade in three countries: Gambia, Senegal and Togo. Demand for rosewood is high, and trade in this product generates a considerable income for countries in the sub-region. Every year countries such as Gambia export large volumes of rosewood to China and other Asian countries (Sanyang 2019). A comparison of natural populations of *Pterocarpus* in Senegal found that the density of Class 1 diameter trees (5-9 cm) fell from 25 trees/ha in 2004 to 4 trees/ha in 2016. This decline in regeneration rates does not bode well for the survival of the species (Sonko 2017). In Togo, a modelling exercise on the species predicts that rosewood populations will shrink and that it will become extinct if international trade continues (Yawo 2019). In this case it is interesting to note that Togo's relatively modest national trade does not negatively affect the survival of its populations of *Pterocarpus*. It was also found that re-exports of timber, which are often poorly managed by individual countries, damage natural populations in the countries of origin and generate little or no legal financial benefits for the

States concerned.

These observations raise the question of the poorly defined and porous borders of African countries (Griffiths 1976), as well as that of corruption, especially in the West African region. Corruption is one of the most important facilitators of the illegal trade in flora and fauna (Zain - Oldfield 2017), and it remains recurrent despite specific resolutions to reduce this problem, as it was the case in 2016 at the CITES 17th Conference of the Parties (Resolution Conf 17.6) where tangible strategies even followed.

Weak border controls or the porous borders of countries facilitated by corruption in the sub-region mean that some countries are considered export countries because they also serve as transit for wildlife products. Togo, for instance, is considered a hub of the illegal ivory trade with 41 tonnes bound for Asia seized at the Lomé port between 2014 and 2017 (Agbodji 2017). However, the small size of the country's elephant population clearly indicates that ivory does not come mainly from Togo's elephant populations. Seizures at ports of entry in Togo therefore suggest undetected entries. Several studies have already demonstrated the porous nature of borders, with seizures being made on other continents that originated on the African continent and were therefore not detected at the ports of this continent. Heinrich *et al.* (2019) for example, identified 39 cases of pangolin product seizures estimated at 737 pangolins in Germany destined for Asia between 2010 and 2018, of which more than 90% came from West Africa, mainly Nigeria and to a lower-degree Guinea, Togo and Ghana.

This trend is also evident in the local and regional trade in wildlife species. In all countries in the sub-region, wildlife markets are observed at the agglomeration level. Sow (2019) has shown that in Senegal this very dynamic trade is fueled by imports. A variety of species is proposed, many of which are threatened. In the markets visited in twelve of Senegal's fourteen regions, 70% of the species identified were protected and 52.3% listed in the CITES annexes. Some products came from Central Africa and even from East Africa. This trend is noted in several countries in the sub-region where wildlife products are often found on the markets that are not present in the country concerned (Djagoun *et al.* 2018). The effort, more than regional, must therefore be continental or even international.

Captive breeding and activities such as ecotourism aim to reverse this downward trend in flora and fauna populations caused by illegal trade. Investigations in Benin (Yevide 2019) and Burkina Faso (Tiendrebeogo 2017) have shown that CITES standards are often not respected in the captive breeding and harvesting of these animals. These operations are often a *façade* for unsustainable harvesting from natural populations, and the lack of institutional and scientific monitoring of breeding outfits and exports makes it impossible to address the situation.

Main constraints to implementing CITES

By and large, the major constraints to enforcing CITES are institutional issues or lack of resources. The main problems identified in the studies include:

- lack of knowledge about CITES and CITES procedures;
- lack of financial support;
- corruption / weak judicial system;
- lack of synergy between implementing institutions and conflicts of attribution;
- porous borders;
- lack of / insufficient equipment.

The two main constraints to tackling the trade in wildlife species are the lack of functional scientific authorities and human-wildlife conflicts, which encourage illegal killings and animal trade. Strong demand from Asia and lack of traceability were also cited as problems.

The main constraints to captive breeding are non-compliance with CITES provisions by breeders of endangered species, the lack of references, harmonization and management of breeding practices, lack of training for breeders, lack of scientific databases to set export quotas, and lack of functional scientific authorities.

Best practices and synthesis of study recommendations

Certain countries are making considerable efforts despite all these constraints. For example, Nigeria is setting up a medical-legal laboratory to combat wildlife crime, and creating wildlife rescue centers. Border control agents in Guinea Conakry recently received training on CITES; Gambia

reached an agreement with Senegal to better control the trade in *Pterocarpus*; and the international airport in Lomé, Togo, was recently equipped with a mobile scanner to improve controls.

Several actions could be undertaken to ease constraints to the application and implementation of CITES in different countries. Overall, the studies' main recommendation was to train actors on the Convention and related procedures.

Other key recommendations included:

- adapting national legislations,
- promoting collaboration between implementing actors, and
- raising stakeholder and public awareness.

The main recommendations relating to trade are:

- train actors to identify species,
- develop guides to the identification of species,
- develop plans to monitor and manage endangered animal and plant populations,
- encourage research into species endangered by trade,
- encourage collaboration between local and national actors,
- raise local people's awareness of the opportunities provided by endangered species and promote alternative activities to reduce pressure on endangered species.

The main recommendations relating to captive breeding are:

- inform the actors concerned about CITES,
- strengthen the capacities of promoters of captive breeding.

It is important that the results of these studies are widely circulated and shared so that different States take the recommendations on board. This would lead to significant improvements in the application of CITES and biodiversity conservation.

How can capacity building in the sub-region help improve implementation of CITES?

The WABICC program enabled 27 officials from CITES implementing institutions in thirteen West African countries to attend CITES training courses. The dissertations they produced during the two one-year courses helped improve understanding of how the Convention is applied in the sub-region, identifying levels of knowledge and weaknesses in the implementation of CITES in several countries. However, they were unable to provide an overview of the situation in West Africa as a whole because not all countries take account of these aspects.

A number of actions need to be taken in each country for this capacity building to have a positive impact on implementation of the Convention across the region, namely:

- organise feedback to share at least some of the concepts learned with different CITES stakeholders at the national level,
- trainees should remain in CITES management bodies for a minimum of number of years, so that they can put into practice what they learned on the course,
- their research findings should be used to improve implementation of the Convention in each country.

In general terms, future actions should be structured around the five following main points:

1. creating a regional network of CITES experts that includes not only those who benefited from the training, but also their academic supervisors, and other stakeholders including researchers,
2. developing a curriculum on CITES in one or more regional training institutions, for continuous capacity building in the sub-region at every level (officials, members of the judiciary, researchers, etc.),
3. strengthening regional collaboration on controlling entry points and exchanging information on seized items and offenders,
4. initiating studies in every country in the region to establish a baseline situation for the most endangered species and generally improve knowledge about species (state of natural populations, population dynamics) and other

aspects (captive breeding, legal and illegal trade, etc.) in order to help formulate effective policies and improve implementation of the Convention,

5. organizing massive campaigns to raise awareness of the Convention and the status of species,
6. seeking funding for actions at the national and regional level.

The guide developed by WABICC for the CITES COP in 2018 (USAID/ECOWAS 2018) covered some of these points. Now it is important for all current and potential stakeholders in different countries to work together to develop a strategy for tackling the illegal trade in wildlife and plants, drawing on existing documents and different types of work undertaken in the context of the WABICC project. Because of its regional status and federating role in policies, ECOWAS is well placed to bring these actors together, organise them and launch activities to improve the implementation of CITES in West Africa. This effort will only succeed if every actor, even those who are currently overlooked in certain countries, such as universities, is involved in the battle.

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CAP DEV 2020

CAP DEV 2020 - Capacity building stand

In June 2020, the city of Marseille in France will be hosting thousands of visitors from across the world at the [World Conservation Congress](#). This event is key in IUCN, as this is where the Union's strategy for the next four years is defined, and its stance on different matters is reassessed.

The Congress takes place every four years, and for the first time, the « Exhibit » area will be open not only to members, but also to the public (from 12 to 15 June). Papaco has secured a stand: Cap Dev 2020.

Why Cap Dev?

Cap Dev for *Capacity Building*. We are not going to represent Papaco's work, but to present capacity-building opportunities in the field of conservation. Our MOOC will of course be part of the offer, but our wish is to showcase other work as well, and do our possible to give visitors the information that fit their needs.

Capacity development: definition

Capacity building is the act of providing the means, tools and infrastructures (physical or virtual ones), that enable the acquisition or the increase of **knowledge**, **hard skills** and **soft skills**.

The stand goals

Main goal: to be the information hub on capacity building programmes in the field of conservation.

Practical goals:

- Inform the public about courses that exist, matching the profile of the enquirer,
- Provide organisations working in the field of capacity building a platform, a place where they can share information and promote their activities,
- Enable meetings between possible learners and organisations offering training,
- Enable registrations for future learners to courses suited to their needs,
- Create a database with all the partners in this sector that wish to establish a network for information exchange after the Congress (the framework and organisation of said network will be discussed with actors involved),
- Brainstorm best practices of capacity building for conservation in the form of meetings and panel discussions,
- Introduce and compare capacity development projects around the work, so that these can grow, cooperate and adapt to different contexts.

NB: the CAP DEV 2020 stand is not a PAPACO stand, nor is it a stand about PAPACO's MOOCs. It is meant to promote all endeavours aiming at building capacities in the field of nature conservation.

For more information or to submit a request, please email: capdev2020@papaco.org.

To learn more: capdev2020.papaco.org.



Announcements

PANORAMA

SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

The Upper Tana-Nairobi Water Fund: Engaging business investment in Nature- based Solutions for water security

The Upper Tana River in Nairobi Kenya supplies 95 percent of the water for Nairobi's 4 million residents, and for another 5 million people living in the watershed. It also provides half of the country's hydropower output. Upstream, intensive farming practices of more than 300,000 small-scale farmers cause the soil to wash into the river downstream. Not only does this affect farm productivity and ecosystem health, but also causes costly damage to hydropower infrastructure and Nairobi's water supply.

To tackle the problem, the Nature Conservancy and its partners developed the Upper-Tana Nairobi Water Fund, four years ago. This financial and collaboration mechanism gathers public, private, and civil actors to fund, implement and monitor improvements for a sustainable watershed management. Upstream, TNC works with farmers to apply soil and water conservation techniques to prevent runoff and save water; the benefits are felt at the upstream and the downstream level.

Full article: [here](#).

More info on Panorama: [here](#).



A young woman picking tea leaves on a tea plantation in the Upper Tana Watershed, Kenya.
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CALL FOR PROPOSALS



Mid-term project evaluation: World Heritage Leadership

Requested by: IUCN Nature-Culture Initiative, on behalf of IUCN and ICCROM (the project partners)

IUCN invites you to submit a Proposal for the Mid-term evaluation of the World Heritage Leadership Programme. The World Heritage Leadership Programme is a partnership of IUCN and ICCROM (the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property—iccrom.org) and this RfP is issued on behalf of IUCN and ICCROM.

Issue Date: 23 January 2020

Closing Date and Time: 13 February 2020, 17:00 CET

Submitting Proposals to: procurement@iucn.org

All the details about this request for proposals: [click here](#).

All currently running tenders: [click here](#).

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