

NAPPA#168

NEWS FROM AFRICAN PROTECTED AREAS NOVEMBER 2022



Itombwe Nature Reserve in DRC, by Félix Iguzi

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Editorial



GEOFFROY MAUVAIS
PAPACO COORDINATOR

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

This year marks 30 years since the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in Rio, Brazil, in 1992. Yes, thirty years ago, we already knew about climate change, its causes and consequences, and the risks and the outcomes we faced if we failed to act.

Thirty years on, a simple question comes to mind: since the first Conference of the Parties (COP) was organized in Berlin, Germany, in 1995, did we do what was needed?

In a few days, between November 6 and 18, world leaders, government officials, diplomats, civil society, community members, local and indigenous people, the private sector, businesses, international organizations and media will all congregate – once again - in Egypt for the 27th COP of this Convention. As we all know, the COP is the supreme decision-making forum of the Convention. It brings signatory parties together once a year to discuss and agree how to jointly address an incipient climate disaster. Like every year for the past 27 years in a row.

Another simple question: is there still something to discuss and agree on? We know for a fact that we are not on track to limit climate change to the previously agreed levels. Global emissions continue to grow, while if we want a chance to limit global warming to 1.5°C, they should halve by 2030 and reach 'net-zero' by 2050.

COP27 takes place in Sharm El-Sheikh, on the coast of the Red Sea, and is billed as an 'African COP' because of its location. But it's definitely not an easy place to reach without burning fossil fuel in excess! African countries expect to be central to the discussions because they are exposed to some of the most severe impacts of climate change. Reports state that around half of the world's

population is 'highly vulnerable', with those in highly vulnerable regions (Africa is one of them) significantly more likely to suffer from floods, droughts, and storms, etc.

COP27 is taking place in one of these highly vulnerable countries. There, you should clearly feel the urgency of the climate crisis. This is probably why the Egyptian Presidency of the conference listed the implementation of the Convention as a priority. Several days have been awarded a particular theme, with the ambition to go deeper in the discussions – a day to discuss Finance, Adaptation and Agriculture, Water, Decarbonization, one for Science, another for Solutions, Biodiversity etc. Of course, Gender, Youth, Future Generations, Civil Society... can all expect their special day. But can they expect impactful decisions?

Funding will be instrumental to assist vulnerable countries in both adaptation and mitigation efforts. Historic promises, such as the commitment made by rich countries in 2009 in Copenhagen to deliver \$100 billion annually for climate finance (and which has not yet been fully implemented) will come back to the surface. Developing countries also seek additional support to cover the cost of loss and damage (destructive impacts of climate change that can no longer be avoided). This, they argue, should come from developed countries whose historic industrial emissions largely contributed to the current climate crisis. But beyond talks about money, will there be a real will to act on the ground once COP closes?

Each day spent procrastinating brings us – all of us, wherever we stay – one step closer to irredeemable damage and puts humans (and Nature of course) in jeopardy. When will real changes take place? ●

PAPACO ONLINE

[facebook/IUCNpapaco](https://www.facebook.com/IUCNpapaco)

[MOOC FB Group \(English\)](https://www.facebook.com/groups/moocfbgroup)

[@moocconservation \(Instagram\)](https://www.instagram.com/moocconservation)

[@Papaco_IUCN \(Twitter\)](https://twitter.com/Papaco_IUCN)

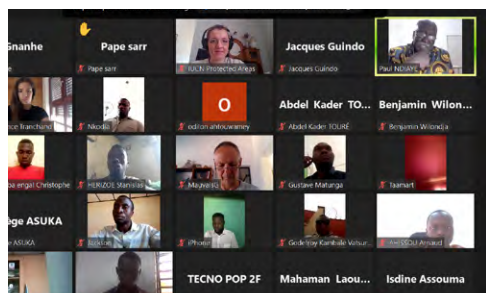
[Papaco.org](https://www.papaco.org)

[IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas newsletter](#)



MOOC-CONSERVATION.ORG

SELF-PACED MOOCS



Webinars. Many of you took part in our English-speaking webinar in October. Mark your calendars, the next one will take place on 8 November, again with the MOOC Conservation team. You will have the opportunity to ask your MOOC and protected area related questions - we would love to talk about what is happening in conservation in English-speaking Africa.

One month left to enrol. There is still plenty of time to enrol this session and finish a MOOC. Remember, courses are self-paced so there is nothing to catch up on.

Ongoing session: 12 September to 11 December 2022

Registrations close: 30 November 2022

Enrolments: mooc-conservation.org



ESSENTIALS

What are they? They are short courses geared to a specific profile of protected area conservation actors.

Four options are possible: Rangers, Managers (involved in Research R or in Law enforcement L) and Leaders.

The Essentials are open throughout the year.



RANGER ESSENTIAL

For protected area (PA) professionals who apply decisions and ensure the implementation of activities inside the PA.

MANAGER ESSENTIAL

For protected area professionals who need to plan, manage and assess the work carried out by field agents.

➔ **MANAGER LAW** focuses on law enforcement and the valorisation of the PA and its natural resources.

➔ **MANAGER RESEARCH** focuses on research activities, monitoring-evaluation and ecological monitoring.

LEADER ESSENTIAL

For actors who are influencing the protected area context at a larger scale, without necessarily working directly inside a protected area.

AMBASSADORS - NEWS FROM OUR HUBS

AMBASSADORS? They are MOOC Conservation students who volunteered to assist other learners in their cities or regions. Full list: [here](#).

NEW AMBASSADORS

[Victoria in Namibia](#)



[Kevin for English-speakers in Cameroon](#)



ACTIVITIES IN BENIN WITH KEVIN KASSOUWIN

Ever since he became the main ambassador in Benin, Kevin has been organising meeting after meeting, sometimes even touring the country. New technologies is his field of expertise, so when he visits schools and universities, he usually takes the opportunity to provide some training on the use of drones. This was the case lately at Medji de Sékou Technical School of agriculture. Read what one of the students had to say:

It is with great pleasure that we once again were able to train our future agricultural technicians (members of the club for Nature Conservation) in nature conservation and in precision farming skills. We did this through an in-person information session using IUCN-Papaco's online courses and through an initiation in drone piloting and using GPS.



By running this free training session, the MOOC Conservation ambassador has once again fulfilled his commitment to conservation and training in new technology tools. Forty students were present from first to fourth year and from all specialties.

Once again, we had the full support of the school's administration who also expressed the need for more training destined to professors, as they need to improve their theoretical and practical knowledge in nature conservation and precision farming.

ACTIVITIES IN THE COMOROS WITH ANRIFIDDINE

Anrifiddine is one of the newer members of our big ambassador family, and straight away, he took the opportunity to combine this new activity with his job. Thus, in October, he organised a MOOC presentation in the Park he works in:

During a two-day workshop of Mitsamihouli-Ndroudé National Park's co-management committee, MOOC Conservation's ambassador in the Comoros took the opportunity to introduce the MOOC Conservation courses (MOOCs and Essentials) to members of the co-management committee and helped them register.



After this, the entire committee was grateful to have been able to learn about the steps to take to participate in this training in protected area management and other modules, which will help them work effectively in nature conservation. ●

If you'd like to create a MOOC Conservation Hub in your city, first make sure that there is not already one ([full list here](#)). If you don't see your city or country, get in touch with us.

YOUTH-CONSERVATION.ORG: TUTORS



We officially launched the youth-conservation.org website in October. Our aim through this project is to raise awareness among the youth (10 to 17 years old) about the importance of preserving the environment, and that we all have a role to play to help save the planet. We would like to see the youth and African youth in particular take ownership of this tool and mostly that concrete actions flow from it.

TWO TUTORS TO HELP US OUT

In order to help us launch the platform and identify the strategies that work (or don't work), we got help from two previous graduates from the Environment Masters' degree programme at Senghor University. Until the end of 2022 they will be with us to make Youth Conservation known in their respective countries, and more importantly to make sure local school and organisations actually use the site.

Pethuelle in Congo Republic



Pethuelle is based in Pointe-Noire (Congo) and is particularly interested in working with people. She is currently a certified history and geography teacher and therefore is very familiar with the local education system. Her passion for questions

related to the environment and biodiversity are some of the reasons why she is now a Youth Conservation tutor.

Firmin au Burkina Faso



Firmin is from Benin but currently lives in Burkina Faso. He is a Consultant in Governance and protected area management and biodiversity.

Feel free to get in touch with them if you are an organisation or a school. If you wish to make Youth Conservation known but are not from the Congo or Burkina Faso, get in touch with us directly. •



IUCN RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES™

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT : IDENTIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF WESTERN AFRICAN FRESHWATER KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS



Western Africa is rich in freshwater biodiversity and regional endemism, supporting the entire global populations of many threatened freshwater species including fishes, molluscs, dragonflies, crabs, shrimps and aquatic plants. This report builds on a regional baseline assessment completed in 2009 as well as an assessment of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas in 2015. The conservation status of freshwater species is found to be declining, but strikingly there is a lack of sufficient monitoring data to reveal conservation trends of freshwater species, with many species not

having been observed for decades. This report identifies key threats to specific species and locations, making recommendations for the conservation of these sites as Key Biodiversity Areas, as well as highlighting specific sites in urgent need of surveys and identifying critical research actions.

Edited by Thomas Starnes and William R.T. Darwall

[Click here to read the full report](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Western Africa is rich in freshwater biodiversity and regional endemism, supporting the entire global populations of many threatened freshwater species including fishes, molluscs, dragonflies, crabs, shrimps and aquatic plants. This report builds on a regional baseline assessment completed in 2009 as well as an assessment of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas in 2015. The conservation status of freshwater species is found to be declining, but strikingly there is a lack of sufficient monitoring data to reveal conservation trends of freshwater species, with many species not having been observed for decades.

This report identifies key threats to specific species and locations, making recommendations for the conservation of these sites as Key Biodiversity Areas, as well as highlighting specific sites in urgent need of surveys and identifying critical research actions. It is hoped that the information presented here will be used by governments, conservation practitioners and researchers to help protect and conserve the unique freshwater biodiversity of western Africa through sustainable regional development.

Key messages

- **Western Africa supports a rich diversity of freshwater species, many of which are endemic.**

Here we provide a regional re-assessment, building on the previous assessment and bringing in new data to support the analysis. We report on the global conservation status of some 1,502 freshwater species, including 555 species of freshwater fishes, 100 species of freshwater molluscs, 307 species of odonates (dragonflies and damselflies), 54 species of freshwater decapods (crabs and shrimps) and 486 species of aquatic plants, drawing on data from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™.

- **Freshwater species are threatened with extinction.** We find that 213 species, or 14% of all native freshwater species, are globally threatened with extinction. The level of threat varies substantially between taxonomic groups. Of the aquatic plants and odonates, 4% and 5% are threatened, respectively. However, other taxonomic groups face higher levels of threat; 25% of freshwater fishes and freshwater molluscs are globally threatened, and for the smallest taxonomic group assessed, the decapods, 37% are threatened.
- **Freshwater biodiversity is in decline.** The Red List Index shows an increased extinction risk for 1% of freshwater fishes and 6% of freshwater molluscs, but no change was detected for other groups. This is despite clear evidence pointing to increased environmental degradation and human pressure in the region during the previous 10 years. The Red List Index is a relatively coarse measure of changes in conservation status over time, and there is a lag between genuine change and change detected by the RLI. The Living Planet Index shows a 65% decline in species population abundance in Africa, and an 84% decline in freshwater populations globally.
- **Monitoring is urgently needed.** Standardised regional surveys have not been conducted for many years, if at all, and there are no significant long-term programmes for monitoring the state of freshwater biodiversity throughout the region. Many of the Red List assessments are therefore necessarily based on inferred declines in species populations or distributions based on habitat degradation, rather than robust scientific monitoring data. Novel survey techniques such as eDNA monitoring has huge potential to address the monitoring shortfall for freshwater biodiversity in western Africa.
- **Major threats to freshwater biodiversity stem from pollution, habitat loss, harvesting, mining and water management.** Certain threats have disproportionate impact on specific taxonomic groups, such as mining on fishes or drought on plants. The most frequently identified threat to freshwater species is pollution from agricultural and industrial effluents and wastewater.
- **Actions must be taken to halt and reverse declines to freshwater diversity in western Africa.** It is vital that conservation actions are implemented to halt and reverse the declines to freshwater biodiversity where possible. Conservation actions are recommended here in this report, for each taxonomic group and for freshwater biodiversity overall.
- **Key Biodiversity Areas are sites of global importance for the conservation of biodiversity.** Here we revise the CEPF freshwater KBAs of the Guinean Forests of West Africa, re-assessing them against the Global KBA Standard and identifying next steps for their recognition and conservation. We also describe a large KBA capacity-building process that has been undertaken regionally.
- **A few critical sites contain irreplaceable populations of threatened species.** Some twenty-two sub-catchments are identified as irreplaceable sites, representing the only localities of thirty-nine threatened freshwater species. These sites can be used as a basis to a) ensure greater management focus on the unique freshwater biodiversity

elements at these sites; b) target identification of Key Biodiversity Areas and designation of protected and conserved areas, and c) safeguard these critical sites for freshwater biodiversity in the face of wide-scale and rapid development across the region.

- **Freshwater biodiversity supports livelihoods and food security.** Income from fisheries combined with that from agriculture contributes to poverty alleviation for a rapidly growing population. The role of small-scale inland fisheries is often marginalised in political, economic and conservation policies, and their contribution to food security, livelihoods local and national economies must be recognised and taken into account by decision makers, to ensure that these benefits continue to be realised.
- **The data collated and presented in this report**

should be used by decision makers to inform sustainable development in western Africa whilst safeguarding its globally significant freshwater biodiversity. Recommendations are made for the conservation of species and their habitats, for further research opportunities and for the integration of freshwater biodiversity into the mainstream conservation agenda, such as through spatial conservation prioritisation exercises and the designation of Key Biodiversity Areas. This report was disseminated with a policy brief to relevant stakeholders throughout the region by the IUCN Central and West Africa Regional Office (PACO).

[Read the full report here.](#) ●



Figure 6.1 *Liberonautes rubigimanus* is found in fast-flowing mountain streams on Mount Gibi, Liberia and Mount Nimba, Guinea. © Savel Daniels

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOBS

PROGRAMME MANAGER @ WCS

Where? Yaoundé, Cameroon

Application deadline: 30 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

STATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER @ WCS

Where? DRC

Application deadline: 30 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

DEPUTY COUNTRY DIRECTOR @ WCS

Where? DRC

Application deadline: 30 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR @ WCS

Where? DRC

Application deadline: 30 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

HEAD OF COMMUNITY CONSERVATION, KBNP @ WCS

Where? Bukavu and Tshivanga, Kahuzi-Biega National Park (PNKB), DRC

Application deadline: 30 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING OFFICER @ WCS

Where? Epulu, Okapi Wildlife reserve, DRC

Application deadline: 15 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

REGIONAL FOREST AND CLIMATE INVESTMENT LEAD @ WCS

Where? Kigali, Rwanda

Application deadline: 15 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR @ WCS

Where? Kigali, Rwanda

Application deadline: 15 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

CONSULTANCY: ÉVALUATION DES SERVICES ÉCOSYSTÉMIQUES @ BIRDLIFE

Where? South Africa

Application deadline: 21 November 2022

[>> Click here to read full discription <<](#)

IF YOU'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO A NAPA (ARTICLE OR PUBLICATION ON AFRICAN PROTECTED AREAS, COVER PHOTO, JOB OFFER ETC.), CONTACT US.

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