Bird Numbers 2019

Counting birds counts

Book of Abstracts

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BIRD 2019 NUMBERS
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Bird Numbers 2019: counting birds counts

The logo of the Conference pictures two species with different stories: the Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* and the Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*, both occurring in Alentejo. The first is a LC species currently suffering a moderate decline in Spain and Portugal; the second is a resident bird classified as NT which is declining in Europe at a moderate rate and seemingly increasing in Portugal, a country that holds 25% of its European population.

Bird Numbers 2019

Counting birds counts

Évora | Portugal

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FOREWORD

Dear friends and colleagues,

During the past 50 years the former International Bird Census Committee (IBCC), European Ornithological Atlas Committee (EOAC) and from 1992 onwards the European Bird Census Council (EBCC), promoted and organized jointly with national delegates inspiring Conferences all over Europe with a common goal: increase our knowledge on bird abundances and population trends highlighting the role of birds as environmental indicators.

The message blossomed along the years and our current understanding on what is happening to our birds across Europe is huge. But the extent of threats they are facing is not smaller due to an unceasing pressure on European habitats that challenges biodiversity levels and human well-being.

The 21st Conference of EBCC aims to address these issues and endorse them to citizens. The theme of the Conference, *counting birds counts* stresses the importance of bird monitoring for society and also underlines the running phrase of EBCC: *every bird counts*.

Birds do not recognize national borders. Because of this international collaboration is needed to understand changes in bird population and to protect these species. The Conference includes people from 40 countries, not only from Europe but also from North America, Africa and Asia.

We are pleased to welcome you all in Évora for Bird Numbers 2019! The conference programme is full of stimulating talks, workshops, posters and social and cultural events that have been organised for you. The wonderful city of Évora, the magnificence of the venue – *Colégio do Espírito Santo* – and the awesome landscapes of the Alentejo region dressed in spring colours and fragrances will help us to create the perfect atmosphere for a successful meeting.

We acknowledge the contribution of all our partners and sponsors. Without their support this Conference would be unconceivable. We are also grateful to volunteers, experienced young people who will do their best to make your stay among us pleasant and memorable.

We wish you a fruitful April week,

Ruud P. B. Foppen
on behalf of the Board of European Bird Census Council
Aleksi Lehikoinen
on behalf of BirdNumbers 2019 Scientific Committee
João E. Rabaça
on behalf of BirdNumbers 2019 Organizing Committee

THE AFRIBIRDS EXPERIENCE: UPSCALING COMMON BIRD MONITORING IN AFRICA VIA THE UNESCO NETWORKS OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

Samuel Fournet, Alex Ngari, Jean Yves Paquet, Lars Lachmann, Paul Kariuki Ndang'ang'a, Svane Bender

SF, LL, SB: The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), Germany (Samuel.Fournet@NABU.de); AN, PKN: The BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat, Kenya; JYP: Natagora, Belgium

The lack of bird observations and consistent monitoring schemes in Africa creates a large information gap, for understanding the population trends of Afro-Palearctic migrant birds, for weighing the different factors of decline operating either on birds' wintering grounds, breeding grounds or on migration routes and, consequently, for identifying ways to reverse the decreasing trends. The NABU surveyed the UNESCO network of African Biosphere Reserves to reveal their current knowledge, equipment and practices on bird monitoring and to identify the constraints to be removed so that African organizations managing protected area can play a proactive role in bird conservation. As a nucleus for standardized replication and potential expansion, a long-term bird monitoring and conservation scheme was adapted and implemented in two selected pilot sites at the Omo Forest Reserve in Nigeria and the Comoé National park in Ivory Coast. Under this project called AfriBiRds, five BirdLife organizations are involved to give a particular focus on common bird, where data gap are even more explicit in Africa. Each pilot monitoring team and ecological monitoring officers from 14 guest African biosphere reserves were conveyed on site to follow a training workshop on bird monitoring. The results of the workshop are compiled into a monitoring toolkit delivering field recommendations for bird identification and monitoring equipment, guidelines to set a common bird monitoring scheme in African protected area and tutorials to use mobile apps and internet platform for recording, managing and archiving bird observations and recommendations. The preliminary results from the two first field campaigns will be also presented with the lessons to be learnt from the Nigerian and the Ivoirian experiences and to sound promising replication of this initiative. AfriBiRds aims finally to contribute to the emergence of an African Bird Census Council and an Afro Bird Portal in collaboration with Europe.

THE AFRIBIRDS EXPERIENCE FOR UPSCALING COMMON BIRD MONITORING IN NIGERIA

Stella Egbe, Joseph Onoja, Alex Ngari, Samuel Fournet

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The lack of bird observations and consistent monitoring schemes in Africa creates a large information gap, for understanding the population trends of Afro-Palearctic migrant birds, for weighing the different factors of decline operating either on birds' wintering grounds, breeding grounds or on migration routes and, consequently, for identifying ways to reverse the decreasing trends. The NABU surveyed the UNESCO network of African Biosphere Reserves to reveal their current knowledge, equipment and practices on bird monitoring and to identify the constraints to be removed so that African organizations managing protected area can play a proactive role in bird conservation. As a nucleus for standardized replication and potential expansion, a long-term bird monitoring and conservation scheme was adapted and implemented in two selected pilot sites at the Omo Forest Reserve in Nigeria and the Comoé National park in Ivory Coast. Under this project called AfriBiRds, 5 BirdLife organizations are involved to give a particular focus on common bird, where data gap are even more explicit in Africa. Each pilot monitoring team and ecological monitoring officers from 14 guest African biosphere reserves were conveyed on site to follow a training workshop on bird monitoring. The results of the workshop are compiled into a monitoring toolkit delivering field recommendations for bird identification and monitoring equipment, guidelines to set a common bird monitoring scheme in African protected area and tutorials to use mobile apps and internet platform for recording, managing and archiving bird observations and recommendations. The preliminary results from the two first field campaigns will be also presented with the lessons to be learnt from the Nigerian and the Ivoirian experiences and to sound promising replication of this initiative. AfriBiRds aims finally to contribute to the emergence of an African Bird Census Council and an Afro Bird Portal in collaboration with Europe.

THE AFRIBIRDS EXPERIENCE FOR UPSCALING COMMON BIRD MONITORING IN IVORY COAST

Dibié Bernard Ahon, Wadja Mathieu Egnankou, Alex Ngari, Samuel Fournet

DBA: Université Jean Lorougnon Guédé / SOS Forêts, Ivory Coast (bahon2013@gmail.com); WME: Université Félix-Houphouët-Boigny / SOS Forêts, Ivory Coast; AN: The BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat, Kenya; SF: The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), Germany

The lack of bird observations and consistent monitoring schemes in Africa creates a large information gap, for understanding the population trends of Afro-Palearctic migrant birds, for weighing the different factors of decline operating either on birds' wintering grounds, breeding grounds or on migration routes and, consequently, for identifying ways to reverse the decreasing trends. The NABU surveyed the UNESCO network of African Biosphere Reserves to reveal their current knowledge, equipment and practices on bird monitoring and to identify the constraints to be removed so that African organizations managing protected area can play a proactive role in bird conservation. As a nucleus for standardized replication and potential expansion, a long-term bird monitoring and conservation scheme was adapted and implemented in two selected pilot sites from which the Comoé National park in Ivory Coast. Under this project called AfriBiRds, 5 BirdLife organizations are involved to give a particular focus on common bird, for which data gap are even more explicit in Africa. Each pilot monitoring team and ecological monitoring officers from 14 guest African biosphere reserves were conveyed on site to follow a training workshop on bird monitoring. The results of the workshop are compiled into a monitoring toolkit delivering field recommendations for bird identification and monitoring equipment, guidelines to set a common bird monitoring scheme in African protected area and tutorials to use mobile apps and internet platform for recording, managing and archiving bird observations and recommendations. The preliminary results from the two first field campaigns will be also presented with the lessons to be learnt from the Ivoirian experiences and to sound promising replication of this initiative. AfriBiRds aims finally to contribute to the emergence of an African Bird Census Council and an Afro Bird Portal in collaboration with Europe.

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AfriBiRds

african bird surveys in biosphere reserves

THE AFRIBIRDS EXPERIENCE:

UPSCALING COMMON BIRD MONITORING IN AFRICA VIA THE UNESCO NETWORKS OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

BfN Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

Supported by:

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag

EBCC Conference, Évora, 12.04.2019 Speaker:

Samuel Fournet, Jean Yves Paquet

Content: AfriBiRds team

Contact: Samuel.Fournet NABU.de

Web-site: https://en.nabu.de/projects/afribirds/

Introduction

Objectives

- Develop and implement an up-scalable pilot scheme for long-term monitoring of common bird populations at two sites as a nucleus for replication among African Biosphere Reserves, Important Birds and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and for expansion at the national/regional level

Supports

1. **the integration of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP) from the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),**
2. **the UN implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),**
3. **the “Life on Land” Sustainable Development Goal (SDG15)**
4. **the monitoring of the African Biosphere Reserves from UNESCO‘s Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)**

Partnership (1): AfriBiRds Team

NABU

BirdLife INTERNATIONAL

SOS FORETS

NCF

natagora

OIPR

FORESTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF NIGERIA

Partnership (2)

Project Advisory Committee

ABC

AEWA

A&W

A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute

BN Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

UNEP

CMS

Institut für Vogelforschung „Vogelwarte Helgoland“

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

MaB Man and the Biosphere Programme

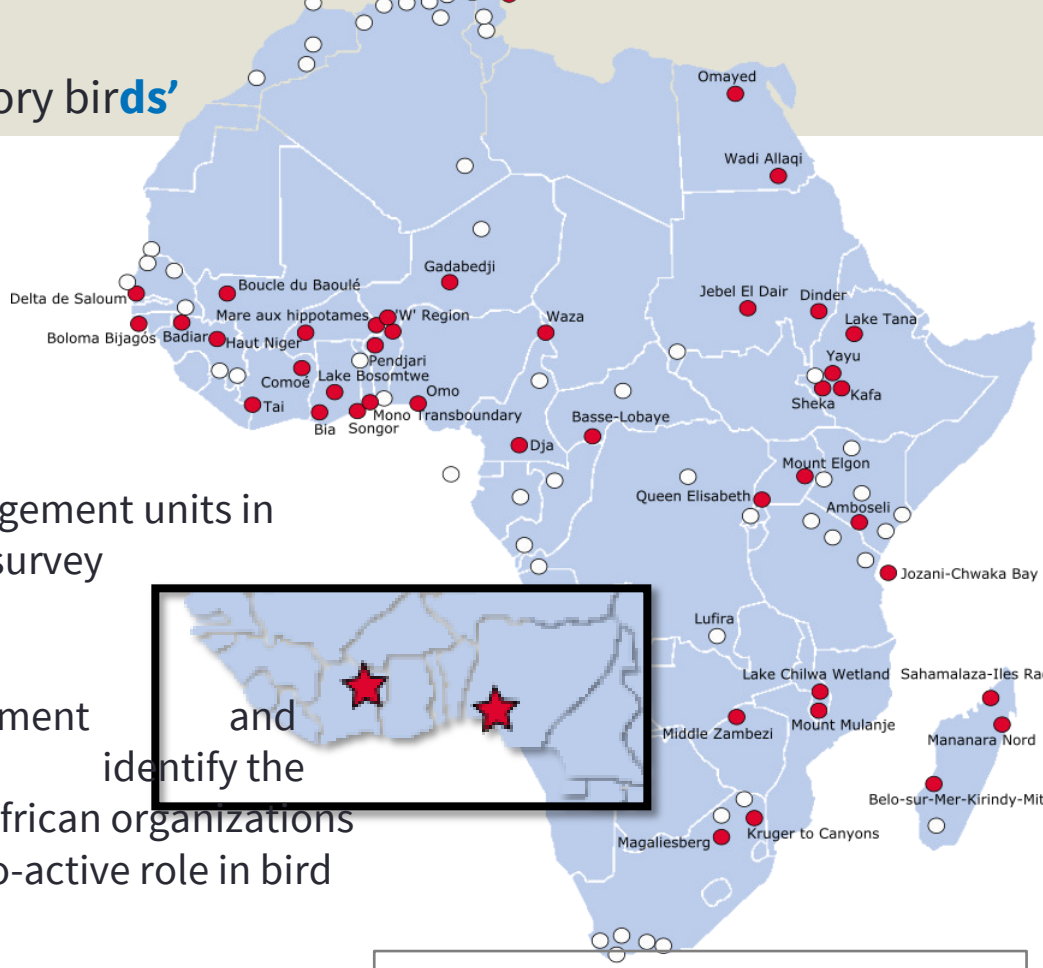
NABU Michael-Otto-Institut Bergenhusen

Percy FitzPatrick Institute

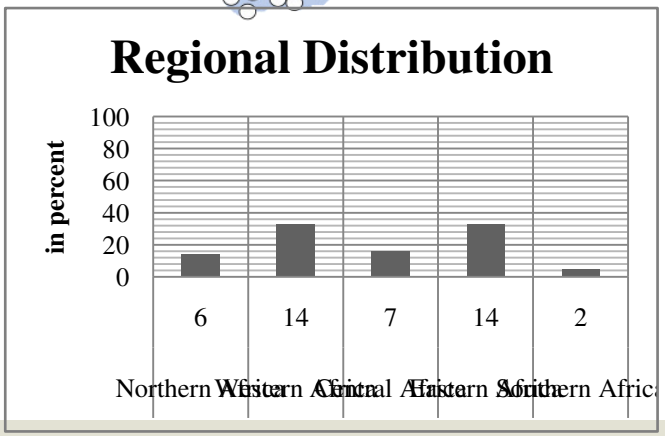
Forschungsmuseum Koenig

State of the art (1)

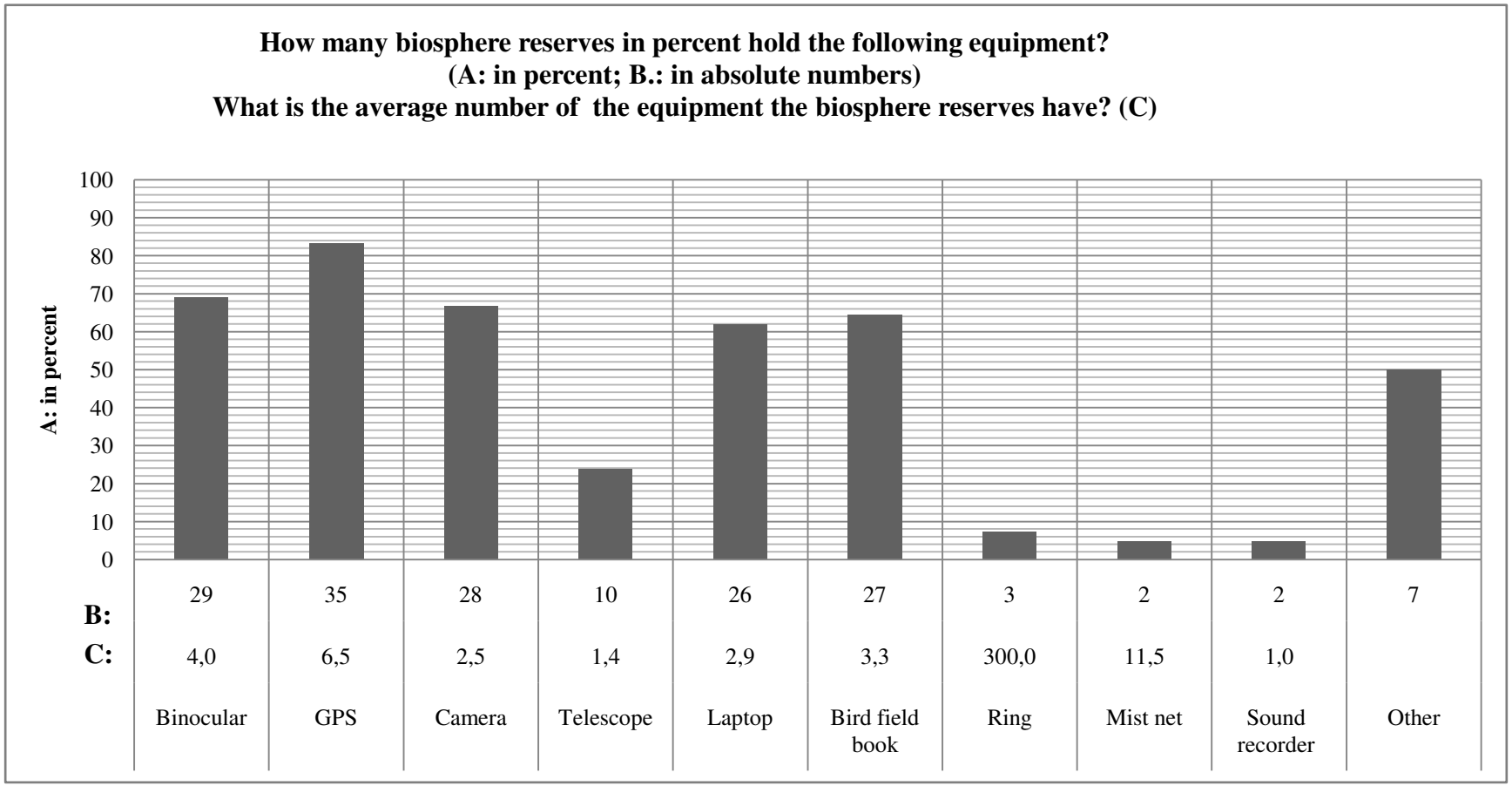
Review bird monitoring capacities in African biosphere reserves



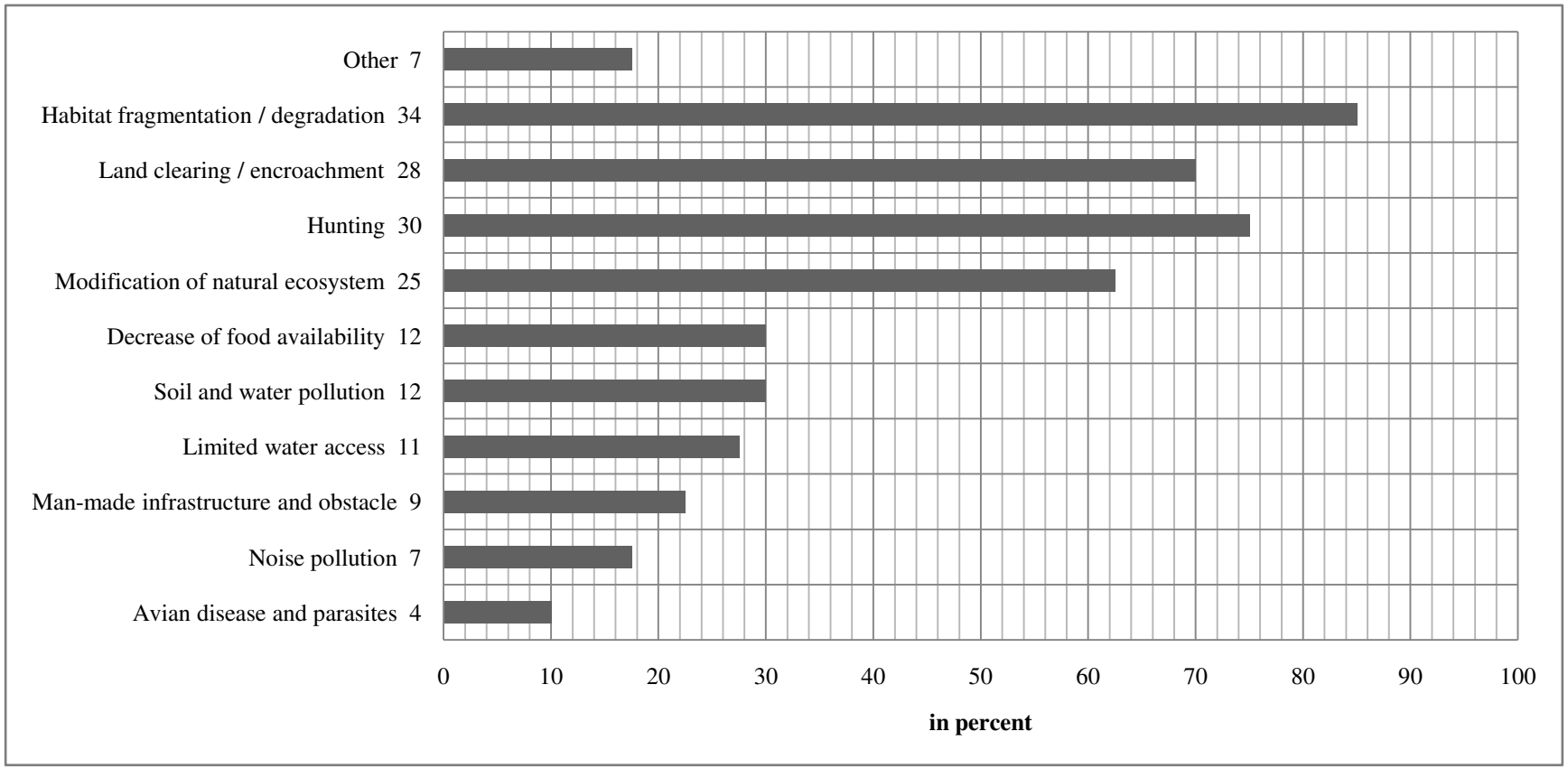
- 43 (red dots on map) out of 97 BR management units in Africa replied to an extensive AfriBiRds survey
- The survey enabled:
  - To reveal the current knowledge, equipment and practices on bird monitoring and to identify the constraints to be removed so that African organizations managing protected area can play a pro-active role in bird conservation
  - To select our two pilot sites (red stars on map) based on a multi weighted criteria from the survey reply
  - To select guest neighbouring biosphere reserves to take part to our AfriBiRds monitoring workshop training
  - To ground an AfriBiRds Biosphere Reserve network for potential future expansion of the monitoring scheme



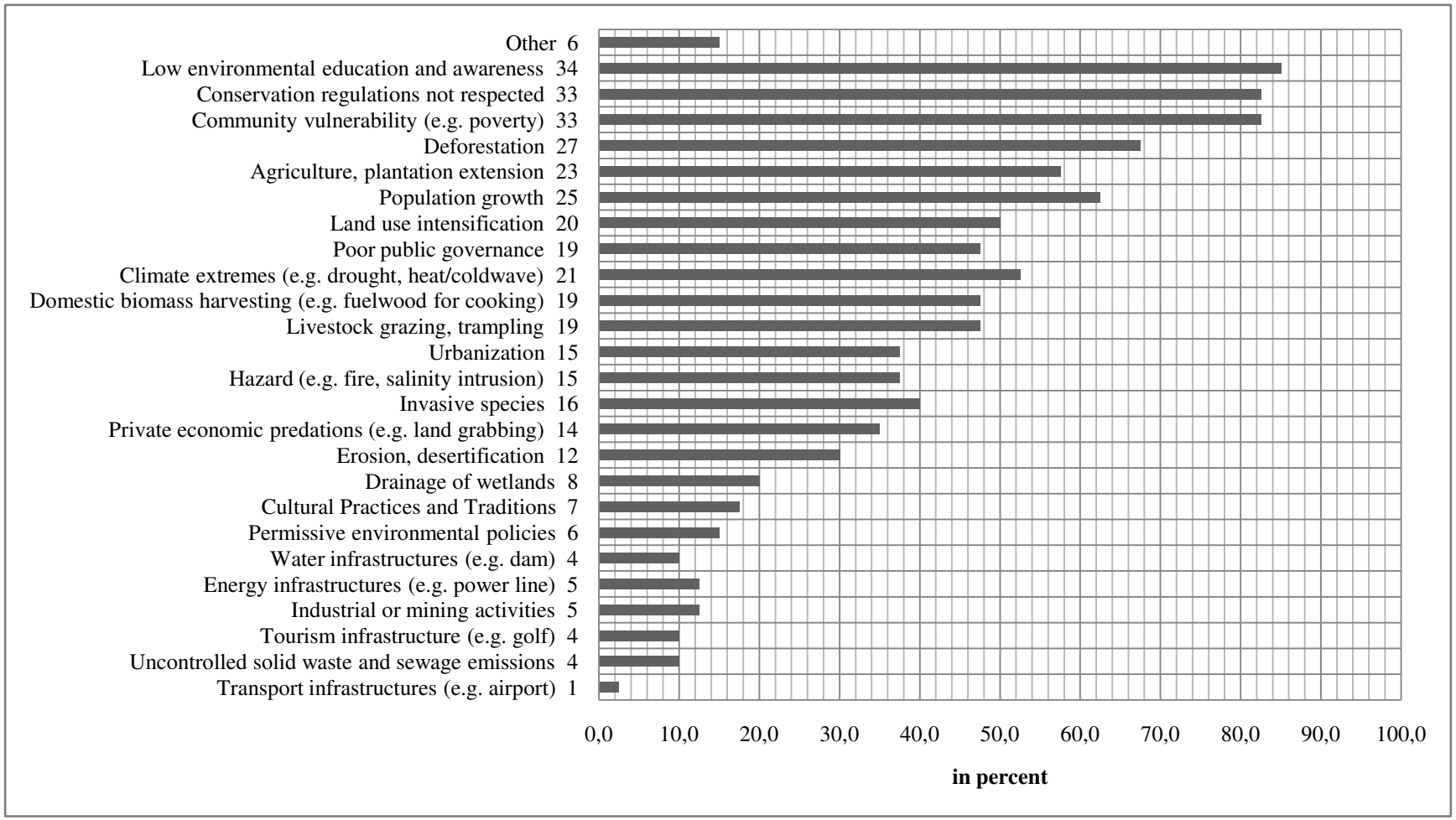
Survey results: biodiversity monitoring equipment



Survey results: top threats for bird conservation



Survey results: top challenges for bird conservation



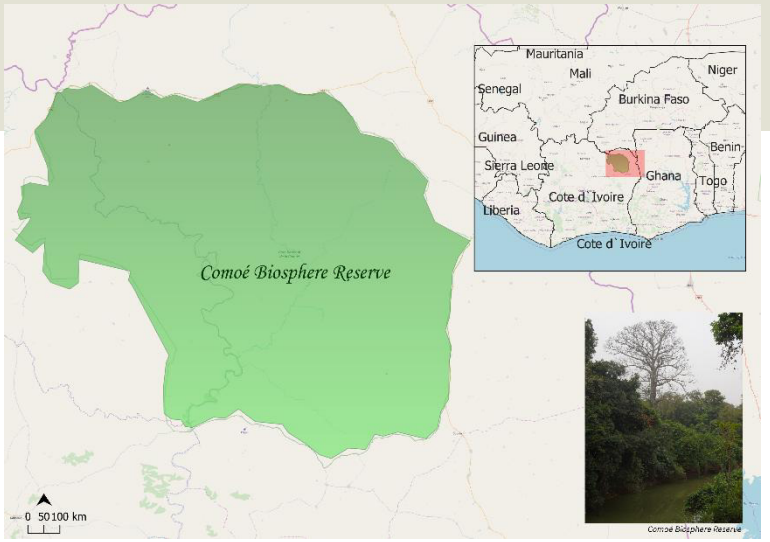
State of the art (2)

Review current African schemes and data portals

- The idea was to avoid 're-inventing the wheel' by offering a methodological monitoring framework flexible enough for being able to feed other potential active on-site schemes such as:
  - **International Waterbird Count - Wetlands international**
  - **IBA monitoring – BL International**
  - **Southern Bird Atlas Project – University of Cape Town**
  - **Land Common Bird Populations Monitoring in Africa – BL International/RSPB**
- Obsmapp and Observation.org were reviewed and selected among other available online tools as the most suitable field collection app and related online archiving/validating/sharing platform mainly due to:
  - **Multilingual and country platforms**
  - **Off-line records and maps, Non-bird species record**
  - **Flexible counting method (Point count, line transect)**
  - **Validation supporting facilities and data sharing policies**

Monitoring implementation (1)

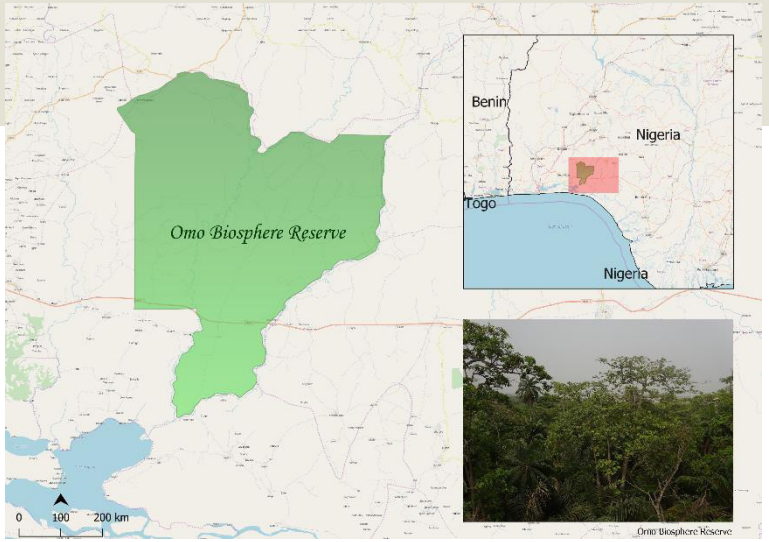
French speaking pilot site: Comoé National Park



- Located in the north-east of Côte d'Ivoire, CNP is the largest park in sub-Saharan West Africa (11,500 km^2).
- Its diverse terrain spans savannahs, grasslands and stretches of gallery rainforest. It is drained by the Comoé River over a distance of 230 km.
- The climate is tropical sub-humid Sudanian transition type.
- As well IBA, UNESCO biosphere reserve and World Heritage Site, CNP is home to many mammal and diverse birds species.

Monitoring implementation (2)

Englich speaking pilot site: Omo Forest Reserve



- Located in the south-west of Nigeria, OFR is recognized as strict forest reserve, IBA and Biosphere reserve.
- The area covering 1,306 km^2 is home to tropical humid forests, including dry evergreen mixed deciduous in the north and wet evergreen in the south.
- It hosts a rich diversity of bird species like Grey Parrot (Psittacus erithacus), Yellow-casqued Hornbill (Ceratogymna elata) or among migratory species Osprey (Pandion haliaetus), Barn Sallow (Hirundo rustic) and Willow Warbler (Phylloscopus trochilus).

Monitoring implementation (3)

AfriBiRds monitoring workshop / Bird Identification training

1 week On-siteTraining

- → 57 participants with 9 African nationalities
- → 16 Biosphere Reserves
- → 7 Ivoirian/Nigerian research organizations active in monitoring
- → 3 Ivoirian/Nigerian agencies having monitoring in their portfolio
- → 4 BirdLife partners and 2 local environmental NGO

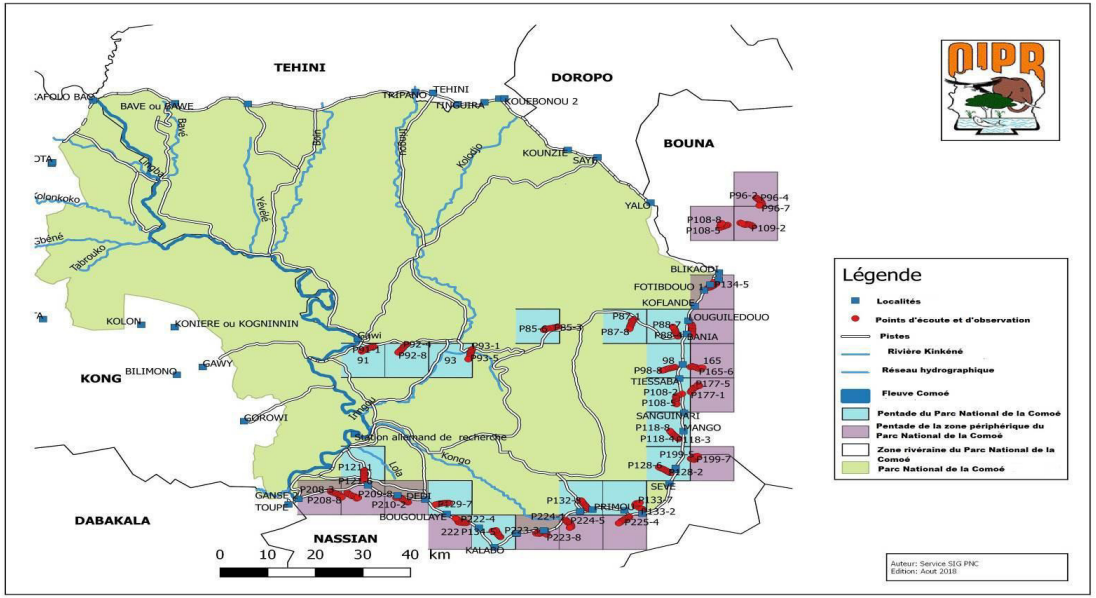
Workshop contents

- Introduction on bird monitoring initiatives: AfriBiRds / Common Bird Monitoring Scheme / Waterbird counts / IBA / Bird Atlas
- How to set an “AfriBiRds” Common Bird Monitoring Scheme ?
- How to use observation.org as supportive monitoring tool ?
- How to use monitoring equipments in the field to identify birds and insert correctly observations into a bird monitoring protocol/app?
- How to develop bird monitoring and conservation program in African Biosphere Reserves ?

Monitoring implementation (4)

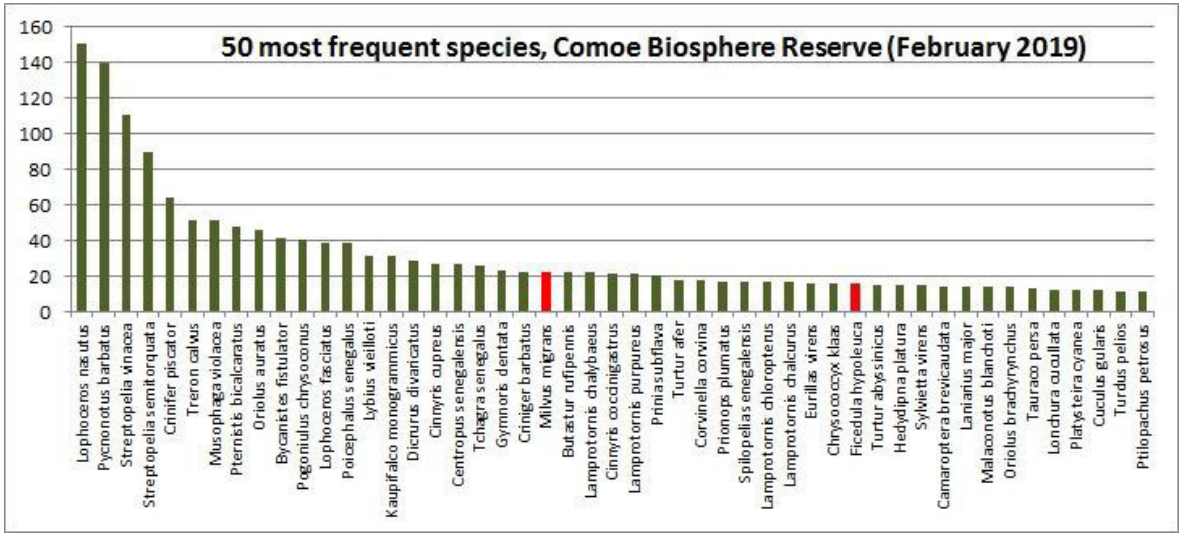
Final Monitoring scheme protocol

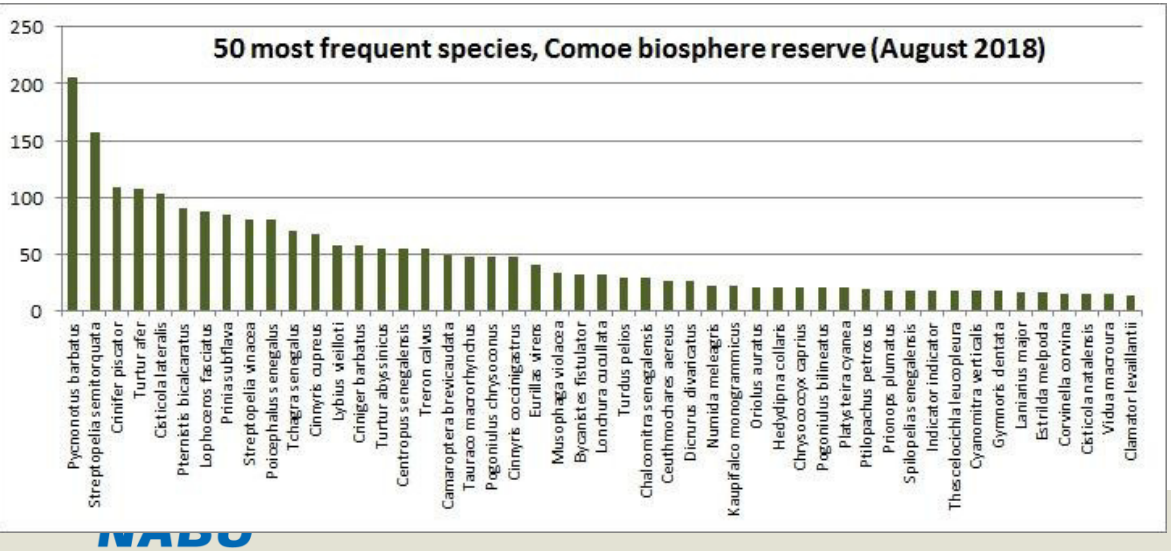
- Fields data on birds were collected by using 8 point counts with 15 minutes observation time laid along semi-randomly located 2.8 km-long transects and spaced at 400m intervals
- The transects are laid within 4.5km by 4.5km squares derived from a 9km by 9km pentads grid.
- Data collection is scheduled in two seasons. The 1st round of bird counting was done in June/August 2018 during the wet season when migratory birds are away and the 2nd in January/February 2019 during the dry season.



Monitoring preliminary results (1)

Comoé National Park



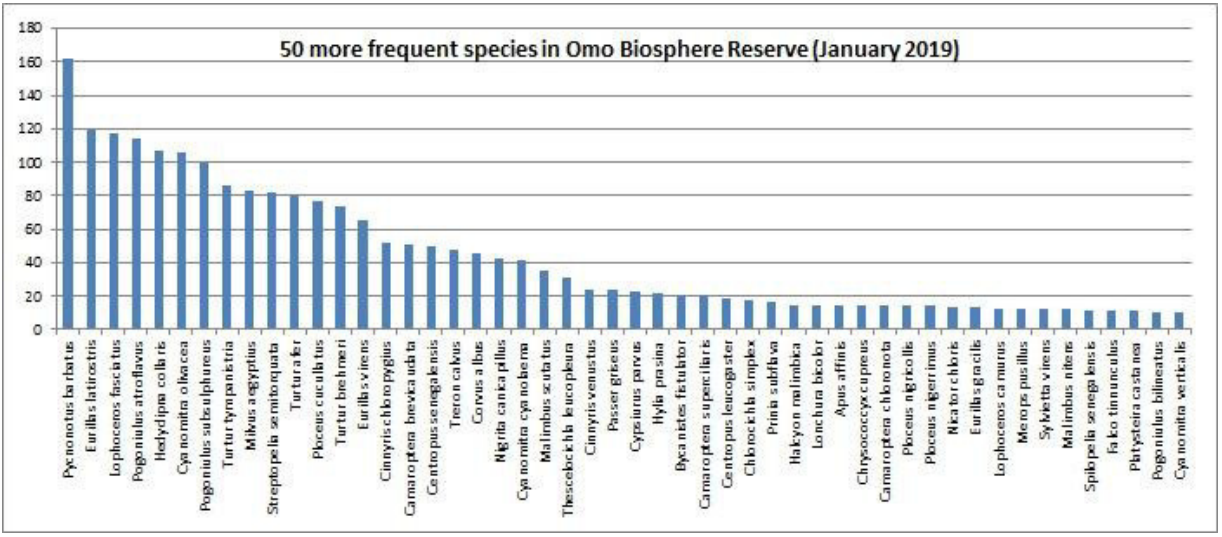


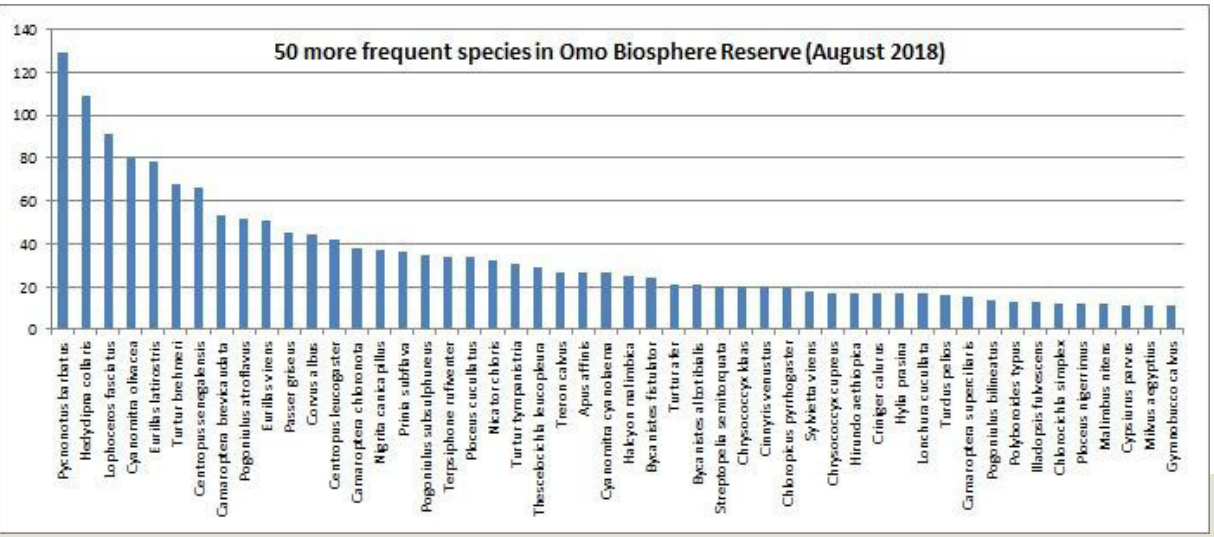
The first year enables to compile 120 effective observation hours with 240 point counts through 168 km wandering path covering 30 squares representing ~5 % of the park area.

Data were compiled with ObsMap and are available in observation.org
https://ivorycoast.observation.org/

Monitoring preliminary results (2)

Omo Forest Reserve





The first year enables to compile 88 effective observation hours with 176 point counts through 123 km wandering path covering 22 squares representing ~a third of the park area.

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Monitoring preliminary results (3)

Summary

Scientific name	name	2018 IUCN Red List category	August	February	Frequency in winter (n=243)
Milvus migrans	Black Kite	LC	3	22	9.05%
Ficedula hypoleuca	European Pied Flycatcher	LC		16	6.58%
Merops apiaster	European Bee-eater	LC		8	3.29%
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Sylvia communis	Common Whitethroat	LC		1	0.41%
Hirundo rustica	Barn Swallow	LC	2		0.00%
Apus apus	Common Swift	LC	1		0.00%

Scientific name	name	August	January
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Milvus migrans	Black Kite	1	7
Hirundo rustica	Barn Swallow	1	4
Motacilla flava	Western Yellow Wagtail	1	4
Sylvia borin	Garden Warbler		1

Conclusion (1)

Final project products

Monitoring activities and reporting

1. a bird monitoring survey among the African Biosphere reserves
2. an established and running monitoring scheme on 2 pilot sites that can be expanded countrywise
3. an online Bilingual Bird Monitoring Toolbox
4. an online bird observation data base

Dissemination on the value of bird monitoring in Africa

- Media: 4 Leaflets, 2 Newsletters, 6 online articles, 2 news paper articles in Nigeria and Ivory Coast
- Conferences: 7 UN-related, 2 scientific, 1 Birdlife, 3 monitoring/biosphere mgt workshop leading to 8 talks, 5 posters, 2 side events, 1 open meeting
- Event Organisation: 3 Project Advisory Committee meeting, 2 weekly AfriBiRds Monitoring and Conservation workshop, 3 bird identification training, 4 bird conservation awareness events, 2 final project events on site

Conclusion (2)

What comes next ?

Keep the pilot case studies scheme active on a long term after the project ends

Expand the schemes in Nigeria and Ivory Coast

A second AfriBiRds project with our pool of pro-active biosphere reserves ?

Launch an ambitious project combining the NABU AfriBiRds and the RSPB Land Common Bird Populations Monitoring in Africa approaches ?

Participate to the emergence of a Pan-African Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS) and an African Bird Census Council ?

Thank you for your attention !

Contact: Samuel.Fournet NABU.de

Web-site: https://en.nabu.de/projects/afribirds/

AfriBiRds: Upscaling landbird monitoring in Nigeria

‘African Biosphere Reserves as pilot sites for monitoring and conservation of migratory birds’

Authors: Egbe, S. (egbestella@gmail.com), Osagiede, O., Olabode O., Omonu C., Ine I., Onoja, J., Ngari, A., Fournet, S.

ES: The A. P: Leventis Ornothological Research Institutem Nigeria; OC/II: Forestry Research Insitute of Nigeria, Nigeria; OO/OO/OJ: The Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Nigeria; AN: The BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat, Kenya; SF: The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, Germany

Introduction

Lack of birds’ observations and consistent monitoring schemes in Africa creates a large information gap for understanding the general declining population trends of Afro-Palearctic migrants mainly reported from European observations. This information is needed for weighing the different factors of populations decline affecting birds’ wintering and breeding grounds, migration routes and, consequently, for identifying ways to reverse the decreasing trends.

/

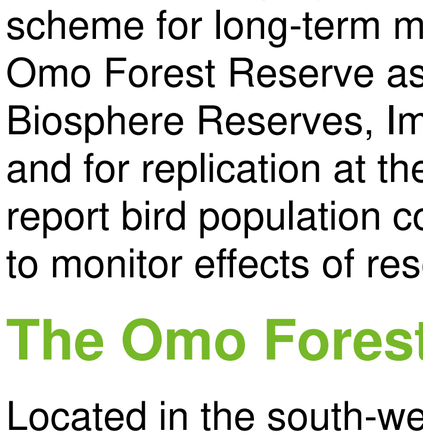
Project goal

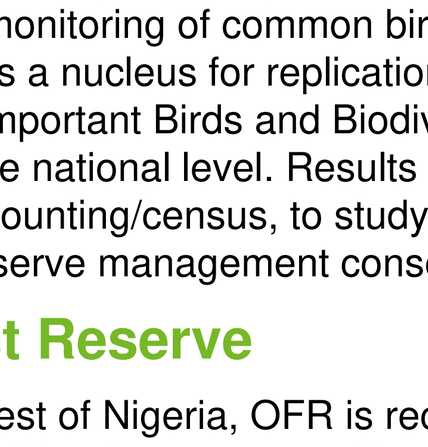
The AfriBiRds project develops and implements an up-scalable pilot scheme for long-term monitoring of common bird populations at the Omo Forest Reserve as a nucleus for replication among African Biosphere Reserves, Important Birds and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and for replication at the national level. Results are used to regularly report bird population counting/census, to study landbirds trends and to monitor effects of reserve management conservation strategies.

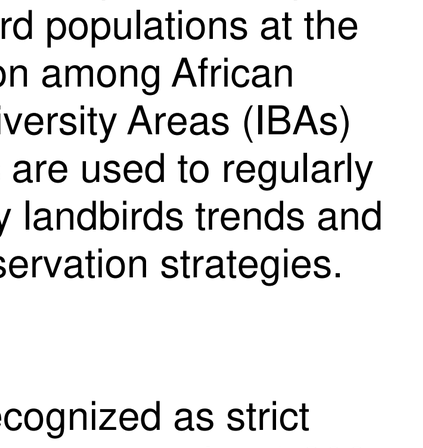
The Omo Forest Reserve

Located in the south-west of Nigeria, OFR is recognized as strict forest reserve, IBA and Biosphere reserve. The area covering 1,306 km² is home to tropical humid forests, including dry evergreen mixed deciduous in the north and wet evergreen in the south. It hosts a rich diversity of bird species like Grey Parrot (Psittacus erithacus), Yellow-casqued Hornbill (Ceratogymna elata) or among migratory species Osprey (Pandion haliaetus), Barn Sallow (Hirundo rustic) and Willow Warbler (Phylloscopus trochilus).

/ Treron calvus/ Polyboroides typus







Top achievments

1. Bird monitoring training workshop

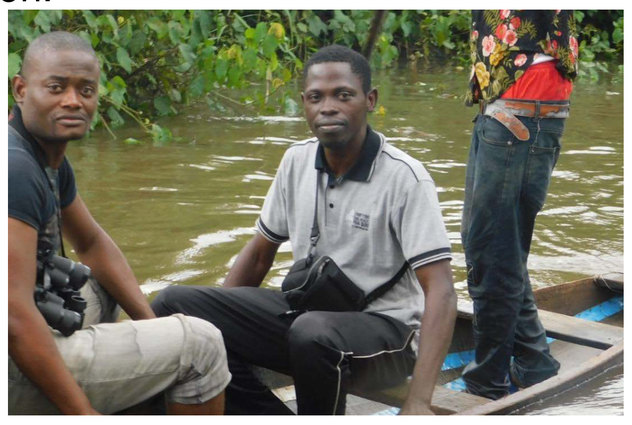
A 1-week workshop was organized on-site to train 29 people on establishing a bird monitoring and conservation scheme representing 8 African Biosphere reserves, 2 Nigerian research organizations and 1 environmental regional agencies. The Omo monitoring team received an additional birds identification training on the field.

AfriBiRds training workshop participants

Conservation awareness WMBD celebration with local schools

2. Setting monitoring scheme protocol

Fields data on birds were collected by using point counts laid along semi-randomly located 2.8 km-long transects and spaced at 400m intervals. The transects are laid within 4.5km by 4.5km squares derived from a 9km by 9km pentads grid. Data collection is scheduled in two seasons. The 1st round of bird counting was done in July 2018 during the wet season when migratory birds are away and the 2nd in February 2019 during the dry season.



Bird Identificatin training / Point count proceeding on water

3. 1st bi-annual pilot bird summary

The first year enables to compile 88 effective observation hours with 176 point counts through 123 km wandering path covering 22 squares representing ~a third of the park area.

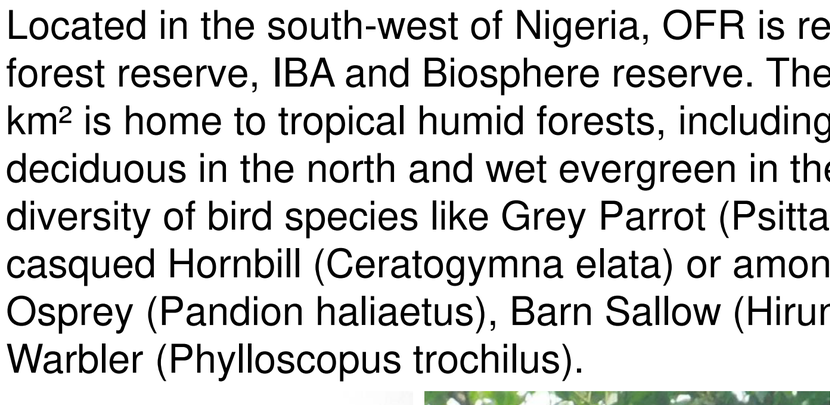
4. Web open-source data

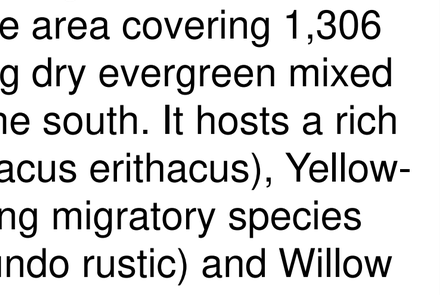
Data were compiled with ObsMap and are available in observation.org https://nigeria.observation.org/

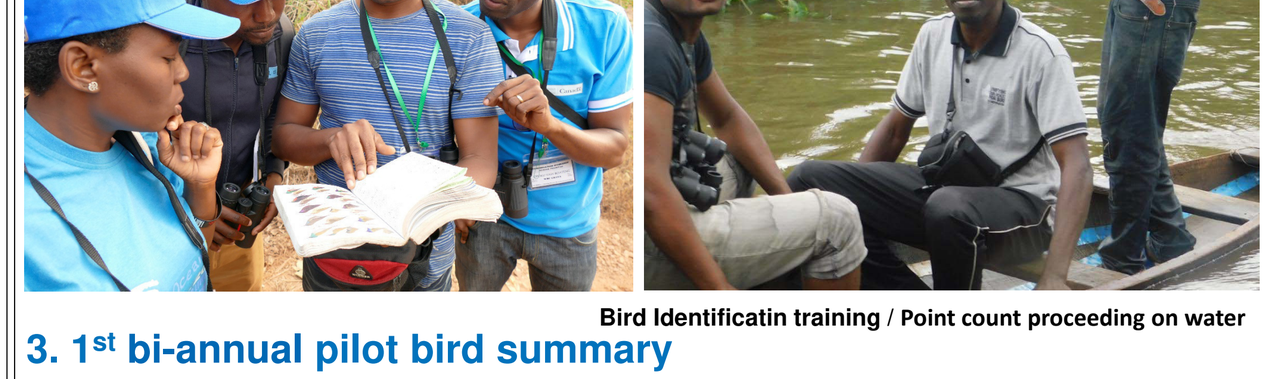
5. Local bird conservation awareness

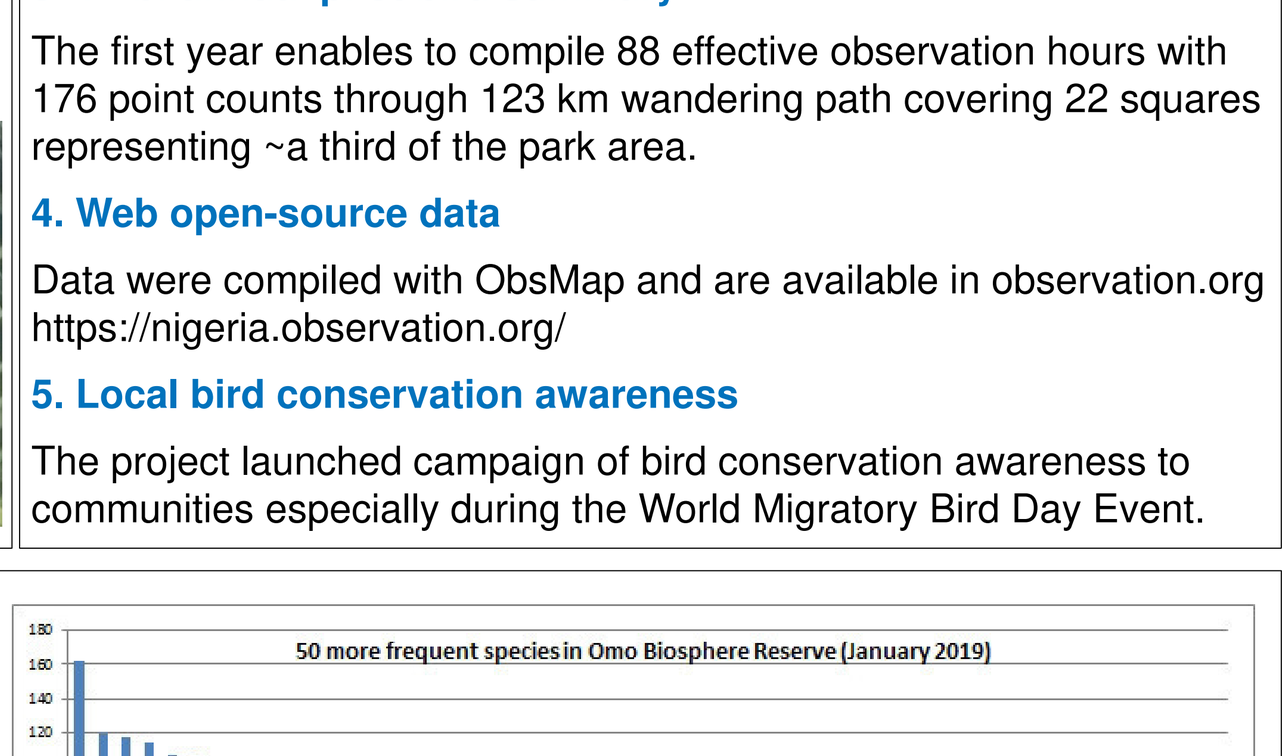
The project launched campaign of bird conservation awareness to communities especially during the World Migratory Bird Day Event.

Preliminary Monitoring Results









Scientific name	name	August	January
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Contact, Web-link, Imprint

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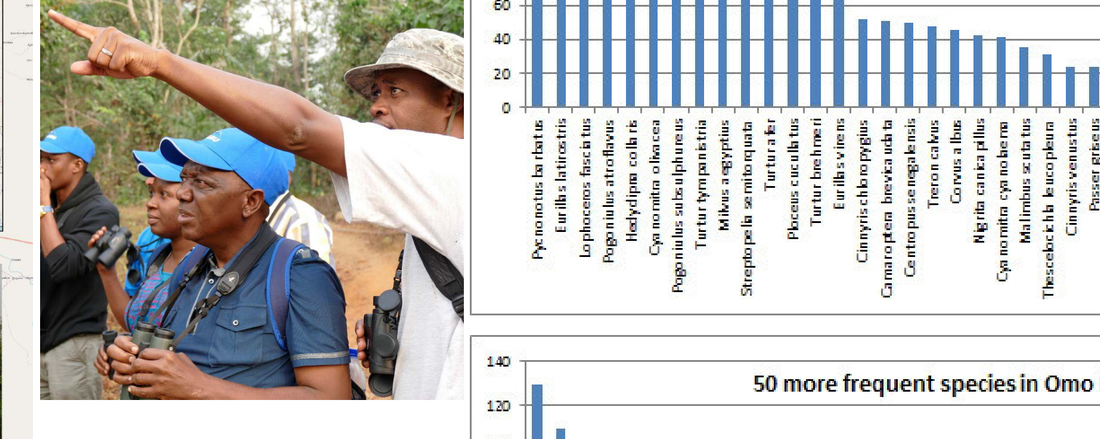

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Supported by: Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

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‘African Biosphere Reserves as pilot sites for monitoring and conservation of migratory birds’

Authors: Ahon, D. B. (bahon2013@gmail.com), Ouattara, A., Zéan, G. M., Zago, H. M., Egnankou, W. M., Ngari, A., Fournet, S.

DBA, GMZ: Univ. Jean Lorougnon Guédé / SOS Forêts, Ivory Coast; AO: Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves, Ivory Coast; HMZ: Univ. Félix Houphouët Boigny, Ivory Coast; WME: Univ. Félix-Houphouët-Boigny / SOS Forêts, Ivory Coast; AN: BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat, Kenya; SF: The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, Germany

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Merops apiaster / Coracias abyssinicus / Bustastur rufipennis

Project goal

The AfriBiRds project develops and implements an up-scalable pilot scheme for long-term monitoring of common bird populations at the Comoé National Park as a nucleus for replication among African Biosphere Reserves, Important Birds and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and for replication at the national level. Results are used to regularly report bird population counting/census, to study landbirds trends and to monitor effects of reserve management conservation strategies.

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Dry Herbaceaous Savannah / Wet Wooden Savannah / transition to gallery rainforest

Top achievments

1. Bird monitoring training workshop

A 1-week workshop was organized on-site to train 37 people on establishing a bird monitoring and conservation scheme representing 8 West African Biosphere reserves, 5 Ivoirian research organizations and 2 environmental national agencies. The Comoé monitoring team received additionally 2 birds identification training on the field.

AfriBiRds training workshop participants

Conservation awareness WMBD celebration

2. Setting monitoring scheme protocol

Fields data on birds were collected by using point counts laid along semi-randomly located 2.8 km-long transects and spaced at 400m intervals. The transects are laid within 4.5km by 4.5km squares derived from a 9km by 9km pentads grid. Data collection is scheduled in two seasons. The 1st round of bird counting was done in August 2018 during the wet season when migratory birds are away and the 2nd in February 2019 during the dry season.

Anthus Trivialis / Ficedula hypoleuca / Hippolais polyglotta

3. 1st bi-annual pilot bird summary

The first year enables to compile 120 effective observation hours with 240 point counts through 168 km wandering path covering 30 squares representing ~5 % of the park area.

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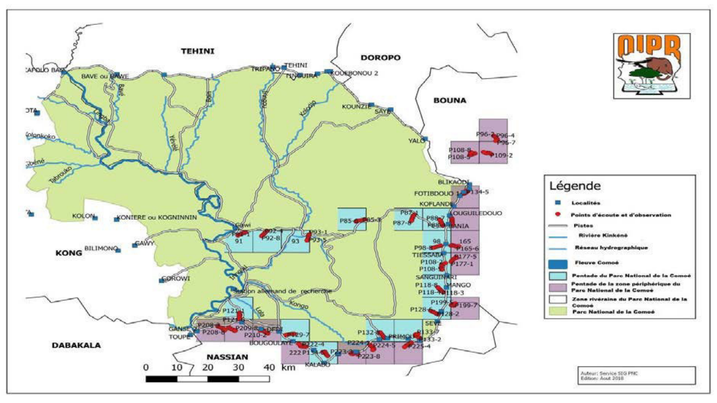

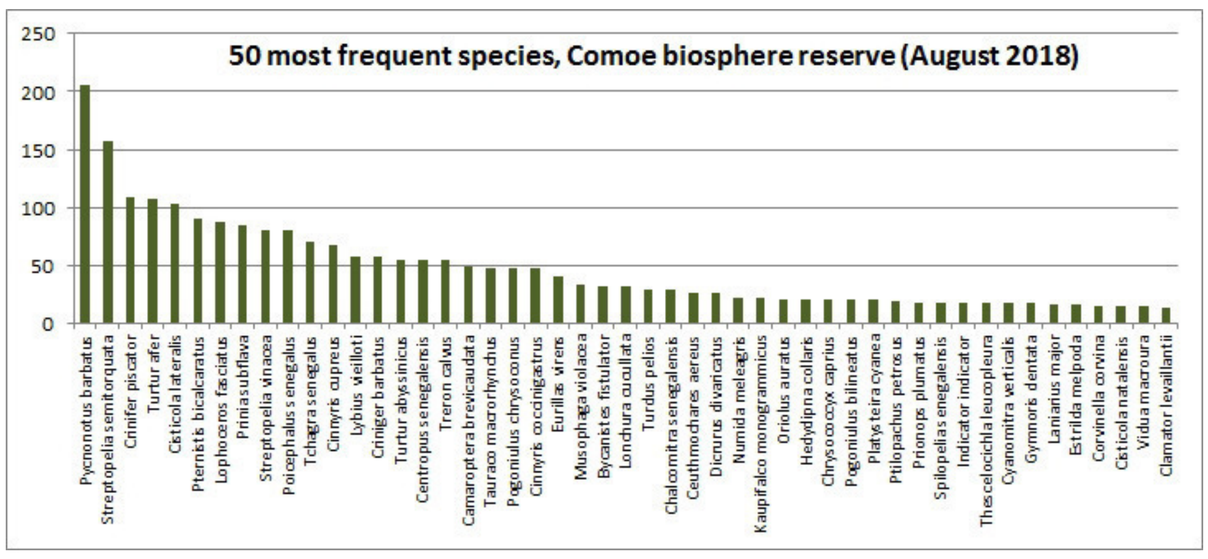

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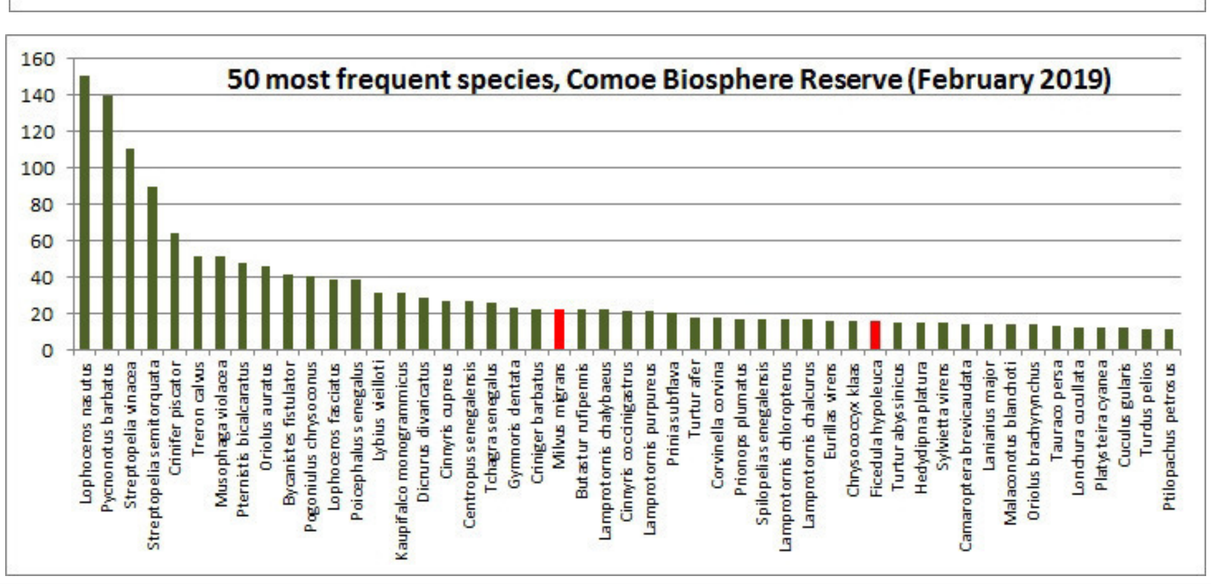

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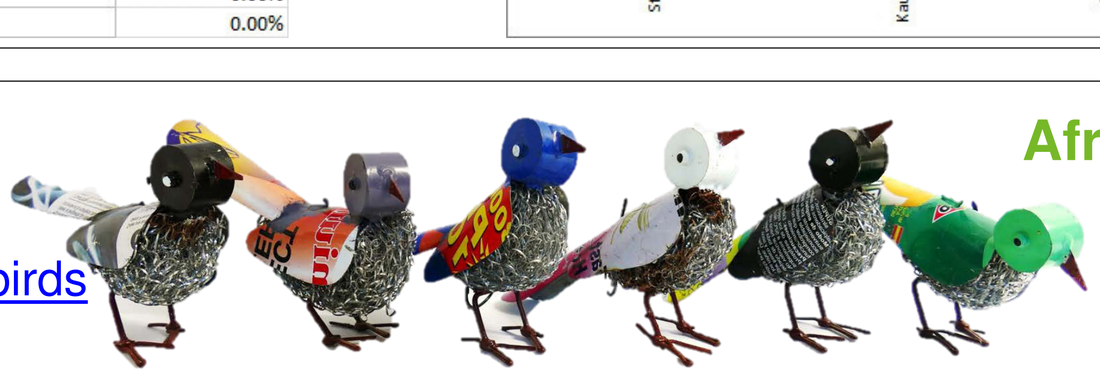

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