



Annual report

2004

**IUCN**

The World Conservation Union

Regional Office for West Africa

# Legal mentions

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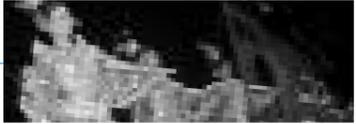
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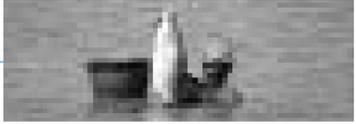
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“ Protecting the Environment is  
to guarantee social and economic livelihood  
of populations in West Africa ”

# Foreword

**Ibrahim Thiaw**  
IUCN Regional Director for West Africa

## “ Substantial Development of the Regional Programme in 2004 ”

This annual report is the second of a new series of reports that IUCN West Africa has chosen to issue for its members and partners. It should be mentioned that we have been highly encouraged by the positive feedbacks following the publication of the 2003 annual report. In spite of the shortcomings induced by a number of problems that the reader may come across, this report along with its appendices is the outcome of remarkable teamwork. Like the previous year, the annual report is published in both English and French. However, the detailed Office and Project annual reports saved in the CD enclosed, are published in the language in which they were drafted.

The highlight in 2004 was the steady development of the Regional Programme,

with new activities funded in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and in the region at large. A number of programmes have closed after reaching outstanding results whose effects are still visible long after.

Another event worth mentioning is the organisation of the third World Conservation Congress that took place in Bangkok, Thailand. The Congress, held every four years, was marked by the World Conservation Forum which provided a genuine cross-learning opportunity for those involved in the conservation of nature all over the world. Then came the Members' General Assembly allowing the 1,000 IUCN members to make decisions, resolutions and recommendations on the internal life of the organisation. IUCN

West Africa Members, up to date with the bylaws of the Organisation, were all represented at this meeting. This truly is the IUCN spirit.

I wish to seize this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to our members and partners who either individually or collectively and on personal or professional grounds greatly contributed to making our common endeavours successful. I also would like to extend my sincere thanks to our financial partners whose unceasing support has proved invaluable in reaching the results we are all proud of.

*The World Conservation Congress prevailed the year 2004 - Photo : QSNCC*



My appreciation and personal congratulations also go to my colleagues within the region and elsewhere, to all members of IUCN Commissions and Network of Experts for their readiness and commitment. The level of discipline and loyalty they have exhibited, in my view, stand as one of the pillars underpinning the success of the Union.



*The launch of the Water Governance Project on the Volta River shows how IUCN Programme is developing in West Africa - Photo : A. Nianogo*

# IUCN donors

“ Unfailing support dedicated to nature conservation ”

## AMERICA

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)



International Development Research Centre (IDRC)



United States Agency for International Development (USAID)



Department of State, United States of America



## EUROPE

**Germany**  
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)



**Danemark**  
Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DANIDA)



**Finland**  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for International Development Cooperation



**France**  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale et du Développement



Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM)



**Italy**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGCS)



**The Netherlands**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS)



**Sweden**  
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)



**Switzerland**  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

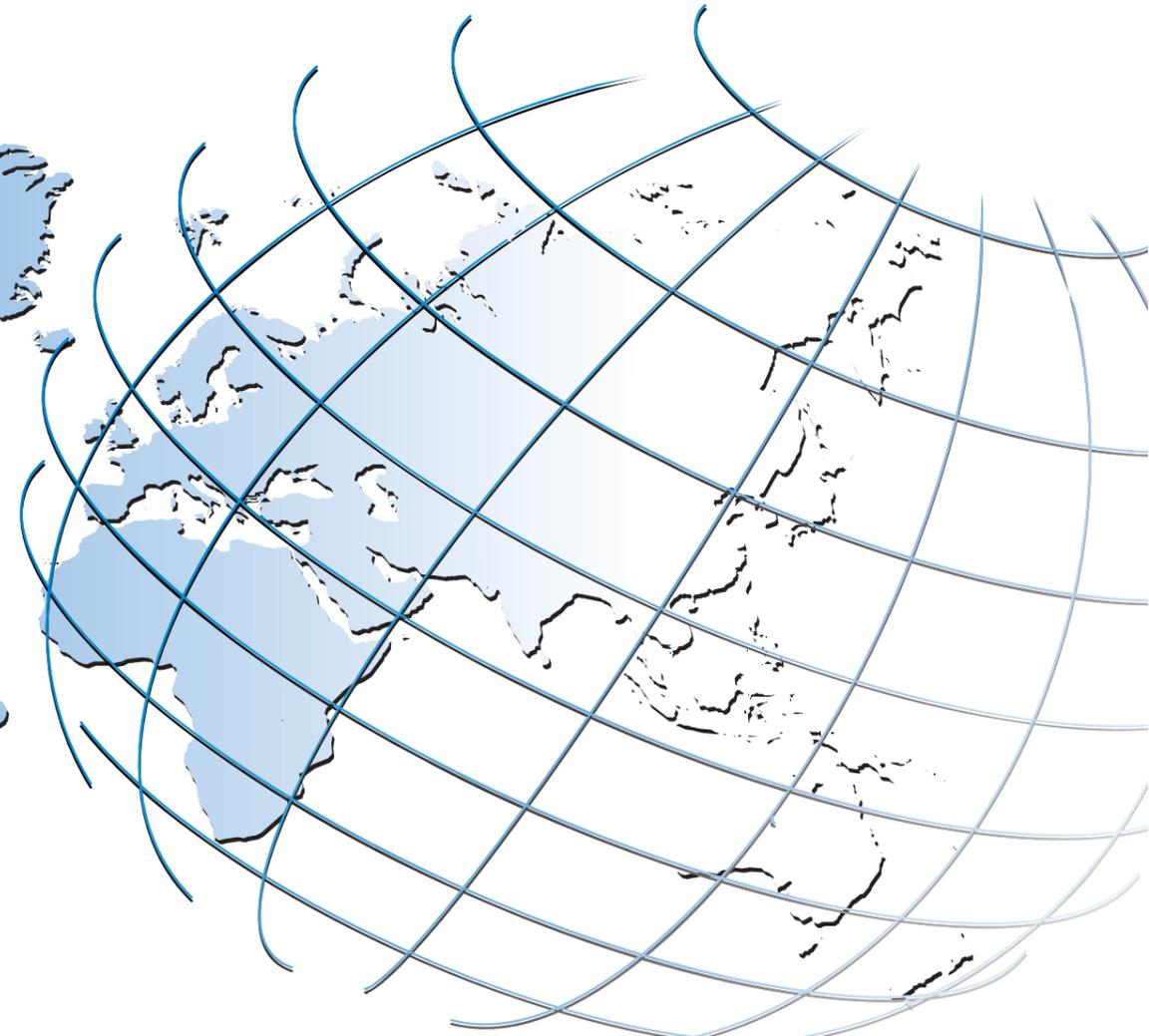
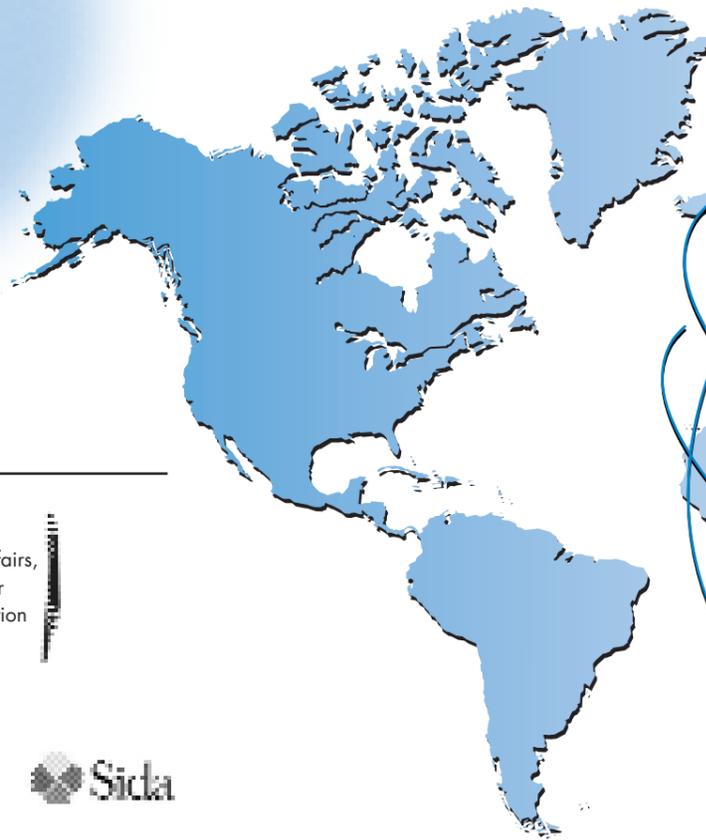


**European Commission**



## ASIA

**Japan**  
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)



## Multilateral Organisations and Non Governmental Organizations

<p><b>World Bank</b></p> 	<p><b>Fondation MAVA</b></p> 	<p><b>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)</b></p> 
<p><b>Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)</b></p> 	<p><b>Conservation International</b></p> 	<p><b>United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)</b></p> 
<p><b>Global Environment Facility (GEF)</b></p> 	<p><b>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</b></p> 	<p><b>Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin (FIBA)</b></p> 

# Four Years in West Africa

## “ Introduction ”

**Ibrahim Thiaw**  
IUCN Regional Director for West Africa

The Kenyan environmentalist, Wangari Maathai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2004. Deeply moved, completely in tears and staring at Mount Kenya on this eighth day of October and in her 64th year, she said she did not expect such a reward. Indeed, it was the first time ever that an African woman was selected for this prestigious prize. Moreover, Ms. Maathai is the first environmentalist woman to be awarded a prize by the Nobel Prize Committee since its creation in 1901.

In congratulating Wangari Maathai, IUCN extends, at the same time, its thanks to the Nobel Prize Committee for publicly disclosing what IUCN has been advocating for years, i.e. “peace on earth is tributary to

our capacity to improve our environment”. Most of the contemporary conflicts and tensions in West Africa are directly or indirectly connected to access to natural resources; Côte d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Senegal (Casamance); Liberia, and Nigeria (Niger Delta) provide good examples. For major conflict prevention and



Kakabadse Y., Outgoing IUCN President (left) with Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand (right) at the World Conservation Congress - Photo : QSNCC

management programmes to be successful, room should be made for the conservation of nature whose capacity to provide for basic human needs will soon be exhausted due to the soaring population growth, one of the highest in the world.

The MDGs have well been noble and commendable, they do not seem to be of great use, at least based on the slowness with which they are put to implementation. Indeed five years after their adoption, UNDP has come to the conclusion that, should the current pace continue, MDGs will not be reached by the year 2147. The takeoff will be effective 132 years after the initially scheduled time. Who should be held responsible? It does not matter who. It remains true, however, that development public aid, amounting to \$ US 50 billion in 2004, just represented a tiny proportion of the annual amount spent on weapons budget that adds up to \$ US 900 billion.

It was also in 2004 that the third World Conservation Congress was held. West Africa was well represented at this gathering as all its members were enjoying their voting rights, which made them eligible to being sponsored by IUCN and its partners. It now remains to implement the ambitious Programme 2005-2008 adopted at the Bangkok Congress. Indeed, IUCN BRAO, in full growth, intends to add to the current programme new thematic prospects, intervene in new areas in the region, link up with new technical and financial partners, and open up new communications avenues.

## Locust Invasion in the Sahel

**Ibrahim Thiaw**  
IUCN Regional Director for West Africa

*Tensions and conflicts continued to hit West Africa in 2004, hampering once more economic growth trends. Equally, or even more harmful to the environment was the desert locust invasion in the Sahel. In addition to the damage caused by the powerful mandibles of the locusts are the innumerable environmental consequences resulting from the spraying of millions of tons of chemicals. Admittedly, Sahelian countries facing this locust invasion have no choice. Yet, had they been a little bit far-sighted, they could have resorted to biological means and thereby saved populations from a double disaster, namely the locust invasion and the massive spray of pesticides whose effects on human and animal health are countless.*



*The Beninese Section of ITAI (International Tropical Agriculture Institute), jointly with other international and regional centres (CABI, GTZ, AGRHYMET), declares to have developed the “Green Muscle”, a biological weapon meant for locust control. It is obvious that biological locust control could be more salutary. Truly, a substantial amount of reluctance and technical constraints crop up on the way, but the political will being exhibited to ensure an efficient and synchronised struggle, makes room for optimism.*

## “ A 15-Year Programme for a Long Term Process ”

**Birguy Lamizana**  
Regional Programme Officer, Wetlands



Population growth exacerbated harmful effects on fisheries resources - Photo : IUCN

West African countries long remained powerless before the degradation of wetlands that started in the 1970s. The need therefore arose to provide technical, financial, and methodological support as a way of ensuring the rehabilitation and sustainable conservation of wetland ecosystems.

It is in this context that IUCN, with the financial support of the Netherlands, launched the Regional Wetlands Project : "Strengthening Institutional capacity to manage Wetland Resources in West Africa". In 1989, four countries were covered by this Programme : Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Due to decentralization on which the Netherlands Co-operation has embarked, the project has shifted its focus to Mauritania (since 1989) and Senegal (since 1994) and a number of regional activities. The main feature of this project is the diversity of its activities. The scope of the Programme includes rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, biodiversity

conservation, eco-development, knowledge generation and dissemination, training, and exchanges. Similarly the sites of intervention greatly differ based on their status of protecting or not protecting wetlands, their location, or their socio-economic environment encompassing predominantly agricultural, pastoral or fish-breeding activities. The players involved in the Programme are also different, ranging from public departments to local governments through donors.

Strengthened by this diversity, the Wetlands Project is organised around two strategic areas: intervening on the sites and building the capacity of national and regional players. It was possible, thanks to the project, to revitalise the Diawling National Park after it completely dried out. The current satisfactory state of ecosystems in the Diawling and Djoudj Parks and in the Saloum Biosphere Reserve testifies to the value of the development plans and the relevance of management approaches agreed on with local communities. The management of yellow mullet fishing in Mauritania has been considerably structured following the study on the littoral which showed its frailty and the need to adopt concerted planning. It is often difficult, however, to have field success accepted. Moreover, no significant and sustainable change can be introduced in the future of West Africa's wetlands on the sole basis of such successes. In an attempt to have its intervention outcomes accepted, the Programme has come up with training, at the University level, particularly university training in institutional and social communication. New institutional schemes

have been designed and implemented for the management and Monitoring & Evaluation of the Project. The various committees, comprising of the steering committee, the inter-village committee, the management committee, the scientific committee, etc. whose mandates and compositions have been set by the stakeholders involved, have interacted a great deal. With such bodies in place, it has been



possible to set up an institutional framework more conducive to new successful field approaches. Thus, project consultation forums emerged to harmonise interventions and better contribute to the project implementation while taking account of the interests of the site and people as well as the means and skills of each intervener.



Desertification Control ...  
photo : IUCN

Consequently, and as captured in the 2003 external evaluation report the "Programme operates in frequently conflicting sectors. Prior to carrying out activities, it is important to create a social forum whereby partners could win their mutual trust and identify common objectives. This is time-consuming, as there may be several failures. Nevertheless, the Programme has been able to keep the process on track with satisfactory though often minor results".



... Integrated Agriculture ...  
photo : IUCN

The achievements of the Programme were disseminated with all the segments of the society and decision-making bodies of the countries concerned. The dissemination of the findings of the networks and training sessions, however, reached far beyond the sites and the countries covered. Discussion was also held under the Programme to disseminate experiences, methods, success stories and expectations across the region. People with different backgrounds and sensitivity were gathered by the Committees to learn from the Programme. All in all, players directly or indirectly involved in the Programme implementation were far beyond the number of projects stakeholders, which implies that lessons were learnt in places very much remote from IUCN.



... Woodless Construction...  
so many projects that  
prove efficient - photo : IUCN

Yet, there is one aspect to be strengthened about the Programme. Although this is not the end of the support process and that new projects are taking over, the lack of a clear-cut IUCN phasing out strategy is detrimental to a number of players who suddenly find themselves in a situation of autonomy for which they have not been prepared. In 2004, IUCN developed a regional strategy for West Africa's wetlands. This strategy was supposed to provide an overarching framework to pursue the dynamism created and scale it up to the whole region.

#### To find out more

[www.iucn.org/brao/zh/realisations.htm](http://www.iucn.org/brao/zh/realisations.htm)  
[www.iucn.org/themes/wetlands/](http://www.iucn.org/themes/wetlands/)  
[www.iucn.org/places/mauritania/](http://www.iucn.org/places/mauritania/)

## “ Social and Economic Equity as a Core Principle of Conservation ”

**Jean Marc Garreau**  
Regional Programme Co-ordinator

In predominantly rural countries of West Africa, the bulk of people derive their livelihoods from nature and its resources. Unfortunately, economic development is carried out without giving due consideration to either natural resources or underprivileged populations. For this reason, conservation activities should necessarily encompass a significant human dimension to ensure that development or natural resource conservation efforts are not detrimental to the future of people. For instance in Guinea Bissau, the efforts by IUCN in collaboration with community

members towards the conservation of exceptional land and water biodiversity in the Bijagos Archipelago are accompanied by investment in such public infrastructures as schools and community clinics. At the time in the inner Delta of the Niger River in Mali, forests flood vanished under the combined effects of siltation, logging, and the overexploitation of waters teeming with fish as well as the pastures they irrigate, migrating birds are not the sole victims. Indeed, the already isolated and underprivileged populations of the Delta are also deprived from part of their resour-



Restoration of critical sites in West Africa - Photo : J.F. Hellion N. Van Ingen - FIBA



Taking account of the contribution of vulnerable sections of the population to national economies.  
Photo : J.F. Hellion N. Van Ingen - FIBA

ces and suffer the consequences of the numerous conflicts entailed by the competition over access to natural resources. In this context IUCN's intervention, which consists in establishing dialogue between fishermen, cattle breeders and farmers in order to agree on rules for using natural resources that meet their needs and allow for the regeneration of the forest, *burgu pasture*, and fish populations, aims to restore social peace, boost the regional economy, and provide shelter to migrating birds in these flood areas at the edge of the Sahara.

Following the construction of the Diama antisalt intrusion dam – designed to expand rice farming – that caused the wetlands of the Mauritanian bank of the

inner delta of the Senegal River to dry up, fishermen, cattle breeders, and craftsmen migrated to less arid lands in order to survive. Ever since the rehabilitation by IUCN of the basins of the Diawling National Park, family members have been able to come together and the economy has reflat- for the benefit of both men and women.

When the Niger legislation, on grounds of construction, promotes the exploitation of Gaya borassus palm timber along the Niger River rather than supporting the traditional and diversified exploitation of the living tree, the consequences are the slow extinction of the borassus palm species and the decline of the local economy.

By delaying the transfer to rural communities of the management of lands and natural resources they live on (forests or wetlands), Governments close their eyes on the looting of resources which is beneficial to the richest and well organised but detrimental to the poorest, and entails the rapid destruction of their livelihoods. It is within this context that IUCN promotes the decentralisation of natural resources management.

When, in developing major dams, riparian residents lose their invaluable pastures and the opportunity to grow recession crops, are laid open to acute water borne diseases, and do not benefit from the electricity produced, then development becomes counterproductive from the view points of the environment and welfare of the underprivileged. When IUCN endeavours to restore dialogue and mutual recognition among riparian residents and river management organisations, not only does it render justice but also it rehabilitates natural resources.

When national legislation and accounts ignore the economic role of petty collectors, fishermen, craftsmen, and traditional healers, they also overlook the most vulnerable section of the populations as well as their active participation in national economies through the development of a tremendous capital, i.e. the so-called "wild-life"

The vision of IUCN is that of *a just world that protects and values nature*. Such a vision calls for the articulation of the interests of all stakeholders and the consideration of those of the underprivileged, in particular marginalised groups, the youth, and women. In this sense, the conservation and promotion of natural resources will not be detrimental to the weakest but will rather be envisaged in a long term vision combining the interests of rural people, the majority in West Africa, and those of the Governments. Further, it will be important under this vision to assess the welfare of humans and the health of ecosystems on which African countries thrive.



Typical daily scene of a popular neighbourhood in Conakry, Guinea - photo : Louis Gérard d'Escrienne

## “ Creating Dialogue for Influencing Policies ”

**Abdoulaye Kane**  
Head of IUCN-Senegal Country Office

*Since the opening of IUCN-Senegal Office, the governance of natural resources, especially protected areas, has become central to the successive strategic programmes. The 2001-2004 Programme, drawing from the gain of lessons learnt from the management of the Djoudj National Park and the Saloum Biosphere Reserve, has further focused on this notion and highlighted those aspects linked to the improvement of local communities' social conditions, the economy, and equity in distributing conservation costs and benefits. The various activities conducted in Senegal revolve around the promotion of and support to the dialogue process and collaboration between Governments, local communities, and private individuals with a view to achieving the conservation as well as sustainable and equitable use of natural resources.*

### Dialogue Involving Resource Managers, Economic Players, and Users

The local participatory management and consultation institutions set in place in Djoudj and Saloum by IUCN continue to play an increasingly significant role. In Djoudj, specifically, they have helped improve the outcome of the consultation between the Park administration, adjacent communities, tourist operators, and other stakeholders involved in the park management. Today, the adjacent community group is able to freely make the most of tourist visit to the Djoudj River on an equal footing with professional operators. The financial assistance received from the Dutch Co-operation has made it possible to build a new tourist camp in addition to the shop and ecomuseum already in place. Furthermore, the outcome of this ongoing dialogue has been greatly instrumental to extending the current discussion on the Government's recent policy on the full privatisation of most national parks, starting with the Djoudj Park. Equally, the ongoing dialogue has substantially contributed to establishing open discussion on the participatory management of the River Senegal flows while making room for environmental needs.

Thanks to the participatory and consultative mechanism set in place in the framework of the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve, IUCN was able to develop a knowledge and reference base common to all players. In turn, this platform paved the way for a set of development and conservation actions under the management plan agreed on by stakeholders. For example, the Government has allowed local communities to delineate and manage five community protected areas, including four basic sea areas. The dialogue between local communities and the Government resulted in the drafting and adoption of a *Code of Conduct on Natural Resource Management* in the Saloum Delta. Both community protected areas and the Code of Conduct have had a remarkable effect on the regeneration of fish and mollusc populations. In one year, the size of the individuals species caught has increased sharply, which testifies to the relevancy of measures adopted. Since the management of sea zones and zones so classified fall outside the competences devolved to local governments under decentralization, it is important for the Government to legally recognise this mechanism for it to survive.

In the forestry and pastoral zones of the North East, the great vulnerability of ecosystems to bushfire and to the unsuitable land use calls for sustained social communication and wide-ranging consultation on views about environmental management. IUCN is currently testing information and communication technologies in this area.



Consultation in the Saloum Delta – photo : IUCN-Senegal



Inform and train the civil society to turn it into a conservation partner – photo : IUCN-Senegal

A community radio and communication centres have been established and a geographic information system developed for pastoral communities. It is hoped that the dialogue mechanism allowing for an insight in natural dynamics will positively impact on pastoral policies and rangeland management by local governments.

### Dialogue Involving Scientists and Politicians for Biodiversity Promotion

IUCN Senegal Office has supported the formation and extension of a national network of MPs for the environment and a network of environmental journalists. Both networks come to supplement the national wetlands network and the national coastal planning network born from the actions of the wetlands programme. Their activities (including baseline studies, wetlands mapping, and awareness raising seminars) are, inter alia, at the root of the current process for developing a national policy on wetlands management.

The first phase of the VALEURS Project consisted in the collection of baseline information and data highlighting the economic significance of wild resources in Senegal not only for low-income people but also for their contribution to the national economy. Though moderate, the findings of Phase I are already having an influence on political and administrative decision-making processes. Local governments in the Project impact areas, the Ministry of Economy and Finances, and the Ministry of Environment and Protection

of Nature appear as those most interested in turning the project results into management decisions and strategic actions. The gradual extension of the number of stakeholders and the transfer of the project management to a State agency are some of signs of how important the project is for decision-makers.

In Djoudj as well as in Saloum, such processes of participatory assessment of the role of wild resources, especially medicinal plants, in local and national economies have brought about the signing of binding local conventions between community members, between communities, and between communities and the Government. Eventually, such conventions proved more efficient than any other legislation or regulations passed without prior negotiation. Fortified by this experience, IUCN has established partnership with institutions like CRDI, GTZ, IIED and ENDA towards an in-depth analysis of and enhanced influence of these institutions on both local actions and national policies for natural resources management and poverty control.

### Policy Dialogue on Transborder Resources

*In the context of the "Wetlands" Regional Programme, IUCN Senegal and Mauritania staff have built on the local consultation on the Djoudj management and the dialogue between the Djoudj and Diawling Parks to initiate discussion with technical, administrative, and political authorities of both countries over the integrated management of the Senegal River Delta ecosystem. Moreover, this consultation helped check the invasion of the Delta by the water fern – Salvinia molesta – and set off a process for creating a transborder biosphere reserve. Coupled to this, is the opportunity provided to populations by the OMVS to participate in the basin management and thereby prevent the introduction of invading aquatic plants.*

### Dialogue as a Means to Preserve the Transborder WAP Park Complex

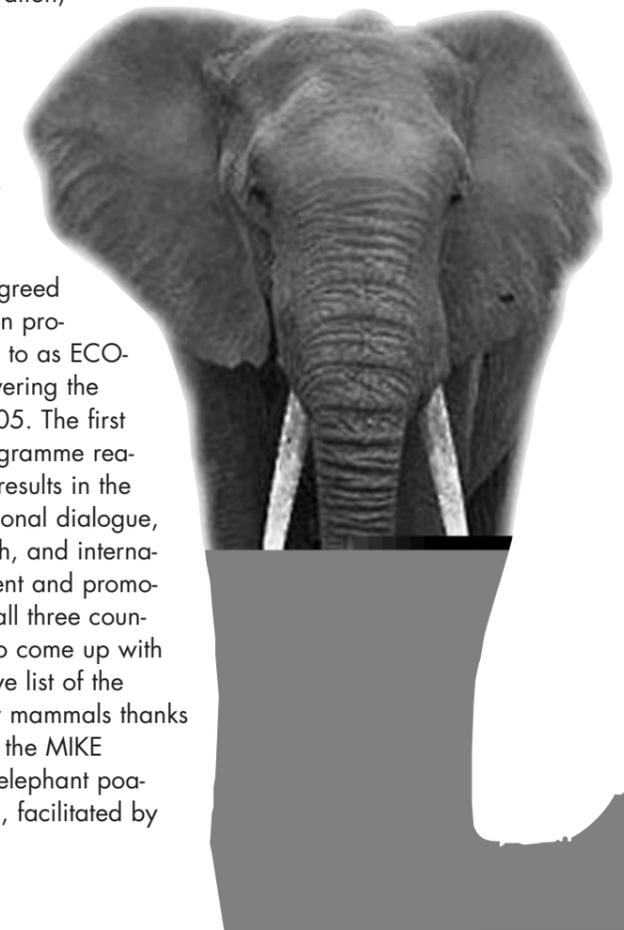
**Aimé Joseph Nianogo**  
Head of IUCN Burkina Faso country office

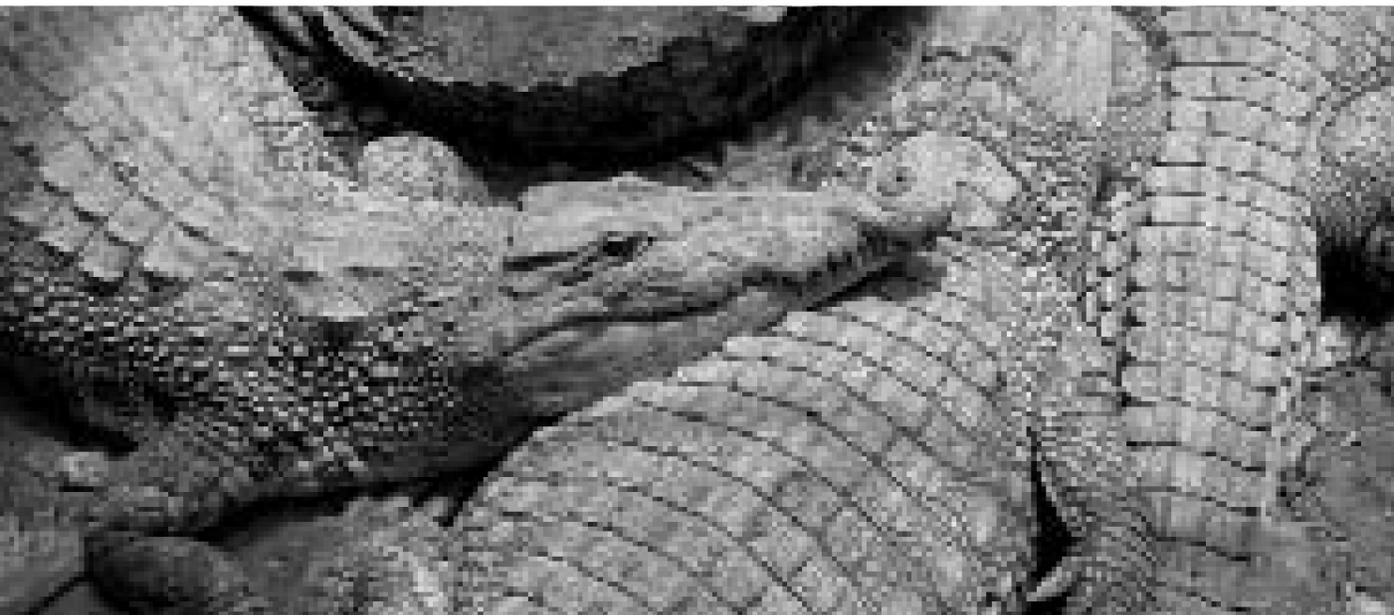
The Complex of the W, Arly and Pendjari (WAP) Parks is located at the edges of Niger, Burkina Faso and Benin. The continuum of the conservation zone that includes the transborder W Biosphere Reserve (shared by all three countries), the Biosphere Reserve of the Pendjari National Park (Benin), the Arly Park, the Madjoari, Singou, and Pama Reserves, cover a surface area of over 30,000 sq km. By adding the periphery zones, i.e. "village zones with a cynegetic interest", this area extends to 50,000 sq km and stands as the most significant conservation zone in West Africa. Although it is a continuum, this zone has a great variety of climates and soils resulting in a major heterogeneity of landscapes, ecosystems, and habitats that range from the Sahelian type in the north to the Sudanese and Guinean type in the south.

Like in other parts of the region, decennial rainfall averages have been decreasing sharply in this zone since 1920. Worse still, landscape degradation and biotope alteration have been accelerated by the draught that hit the region in 1973, 1983, and 1998, anthropic pressure in this particularly poor area, growing soil and water pollution, and the persistence of illegal exploitation of natural resources (wildlife, timber and non wood products) in protected areas.

These already harmful phenomena have been aggravated by the poor enforcement of official regulations and bylaws and the inadequate coherence between the policies and strategies of the three countries concerned. In the face of this situation, the three Governments have pledged, through the Tapoa Declaration, to work jointly towards the conservation of the Complex.

With the support of the European Union, the three countries have agreed on a conservation programme referred to as ECO-PAS/W Park covering the period 2001-2005. The first Phase of the programme reached significant results in the areas of sub-regional dialogue, scientific research, and international development and promotion. Moreover, all three countries were able to come up with the first exhaustive list of the Complex's major mammals thanks to the support of the MIKE Programme for elephant poaching monitoring, facilitated by IUCN.





Crocodiles, ... - Photo : L.G. d'Escrienne

The aid provided by the United States and the German Co-operation helped organise the first consultation between Park Managers, as a prelude to direct talks between themselves for sharing their experiences and implementing concerted work plans. The components of these plans would include poaching control, ecological monitoring, and transhumance management.

Upon the request of the three states, the joint support of the Global Environmental Fund (GEF), UNDP, and IUCN has led to the drafting of a ten-year programme to

back the conservation of the transborder WAP Complex. It should be said that this programme, identified with the active participation of all players in the region, intends to closely involve communities in biodiversity management. Particular emphasis will be laid, under this collabora-



... Warthog, ...  
Photo IUCN

rating programme, on the consistency of policies and programmes, prevention and management of conflicts between farming and conservation activities, the growth of conservation-generated income, environmental education and communication, research, and monitoring & evaluation.

Such an approach will contribute to enhancing the efficiency of current conservation efforts hampered by the exacerbation of conflicts between methods of protected areas management and ways of life of riparian residents as well as by poor coherence at the regional level. Sudano Sahel region of Africa still abounds with natural biological wealth than can no longer benefit from the protection of isolated parks in countries facing generalised poverty and working on an individual basis. Conserving the heritage of global importance in the WAP Complex calls for a long term and region-wide approach involving all players concerned.



... hippopotamus, one of species found in WAP complex - Photo : J.F. Hellion N. Van Ingen - FIBA

## Unsuspected Fauna Wealth

The full census of the WAP Complex carried out in 2003 by the MIKE Project with the support of all players in the area, disclosed an undreamt-of fauna wealth distributed among countries in the sub-region.

Other recent census confirmed the presence of major carnivores such as lions, cheetahs, jackals and hyenas, a group seldom found in West Africa today.

Species	Number listed <sup>2</sup>
 Elephants	4.592
 Buffaloes	10.560
 Roan antelopes	7.500
 Hippopotamus	693
 Hartebeests	2.033
 Korrigums	132
 Kobs	1.040

<sup>2</sup> Source : Philippe Bouché et al, 2003. Recensement aérien total de l'écosystème « W » - Arli - Pendjari - Oti - Mandouri - Kéran (WAPOK) - Avril-mai 2003. Bénin - Burkina Faso - Niger - Togo. Rapport définitif, février 2004. MIKE/PAUCOF/UE/ECOPAS/AFD. 102 pages + annexes

# West Africa at Bangkok congress

**Ibrahim Thiaw**  
IUCN Regional Director for West Africa

“ IUCN-BRAO at  
the Bangkok Congress ”



*For a good number of West African participants in the IUCN Congress, locating Bangkok on a world map was a Chinese puzzle per se. Yet, Thailand is physically far away from us as much as it is present in our homes through its rice.*

In view of the number of delegates present, the turnout was exceptional. Indeed, all members up to date with bylaws were sponsored by IUCN. Politically, the region was effectively and actively represented by several personalities, including five ministers who all played a critical role at the Forum. I wish to congratulate Guinea Bissau in particular that was represented by three Ministers and two Members of Parliament.

Participating in such a congress attended by five thousand people from different backgrounds is definitely valuable both in terms of knowledge (as the Forum provided an excellent opportunity for technical learning) and human contacts and professional relationships. “The harvest was good” said one member “but how to take back home such an amount of documents?”



Valli Moosa, the new IUCN President  
photo : QSNCC

The key points included the re-election of Professor Amadou Tidjane Bâ from Senegal as Regional councillor for Africa as well as that of Professor Zohir Sekkal from Algeria; Mrs Amina Abdallah was also elected to the Council. The election of Mr Valli Moosa from South Africa as IUCN President was unanimously welcomed by West African Members. Finally the J.C Phillips medal awarded to Dr Luc Hoffmann, Chairman Emeritus of the Banc d'Arguin International Foundation was a source of pride for all people familiar with this man whose fascination with West African coasts has remained unchanged, in spite of his 81 years old.



Dr. Luc Hoffmann rewarded by IUCN for his commitment  
to protecting the environment  
Photo : IUCN

Should consideration be given to the growing number of members and partners participating in IUCN congresses, one may say that West African participants remained relatively unnoticed at the Forum and General Assembly. Was it out of intimidation, unpreparedness or linguistic barrier? A bit of all this, probably.



IUCN Members in West Africa in consultation  
at the World Conservation Congress  
Photo : A. Nianogo

# Programme Development Prospects for IUCN West Africa

“ A new programme  
for new ambitions ”

**Jean Marc Garreau**  
Regional Programme Co-ordinator

Every four years, IUCN submits its work programme to the approval of its members at both the global and regional level. At the 2000 Amman Congress, IUCN developed a ten-year strategy that ushered it in the “new millennium”. The 2005-2008 Programme adopted at the 3rd World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, Thailand precisely comes within the framework of this strategy.

The vision of IUCN remains that of “a just world that conserves and protects nature” and its mission in West Africa is to “foster



View of participants at the workshop on the organisational development of IUCN Programme in West Africa - photo: A. Nianogo

a political, economic, and social environment conducive to the sustainable management and use of natural resources for and with populations”. The management of wetlands and water resources, the integrated management of coastal zones, the management of protected areas and forests as well as desertification control stand as IUCN’s key focus areas in West Africa. In spite of all these pending issues, significant progress is being achieved under the 2005-2008 IUCN Programme in West Africa. The analysis of the status of ecosystems, human wellbeing, and institutional players along with their actions has led to (i) the development of a programme that better embraces the rapid changes occurring in the region, emerging issues, the achievements by various institutions and the thriving environmental society, and (ii) the specification of the role and scope of IUCN in west Africa.

To enhance the consistency of the programme, only five objectives have been



Exploiting palm oil in Guinea Bissau - Photo : J.F. Hellion N. Van Ingen - FIBA

set to be achieved through 32 expected results by the year 2008. Although limited in number, these objectives are nonetheless ambitious, particularly in terms of the expected knowledge and progress. IUCN expects to show the relevancy of the ecosystem approach adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity. Such an approach is crosscutting as far as the objectives are concerned. Indeed, it will make for the balanced implementation of the various components of sustainable development, i.e. ecological management aspects/ecosystem rehabilitation, economic aspects such as fair benefit sharing and poverty control, and finally social aspects that are at the heart of the methods of natural resource governance.

Changing the objectives alone is not enough; the approaches should be revisited as well. For this reason, IUCN has chosen to reinforce and scale up its interventions and impact by renewing its organisational and partnership methods.

Highly consistent objectives should result in a better co-ordination of the Offices’ activities and a better articulation of local activities and the regional programme. In the face of issues made more complex by the diversity and acuteness of threats and the urgency to take actions at several levels in complementary areas, only complex strategies are likely to lead to a significant and sustainable impact. In an attempt to widen the range of skills that an organisation alone may not be able to exhibit, to increase the effects of its actions and correlate them with similar actions, IUCN seeks to partner with other organisations and institutions. These may be conservation or development organisations, regional organisations such as Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal (OMVS), Niger Basin Authority (ABN), Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), or Sub regional Fisheries Commission (CSRP), organisations with various but complementary skills and pro-



Transport of burgu on the Niger River - Photo : Jean-Marc Garreau

## Five ambitious objectives for years 2005/2008

- Restoring and ensuring the sustainable management of critical ecosystems in West Africa through the application of the principles of the ecosystem approach;
- Better considering the values of natural resources in development and poverty alleviation programmes;
- Improving the methods of decentralized governance of natural resources in West Africa;
- Supporting regional co-operation and implementation of pan African and international environmental commitments;
- Effectively and efficiently implementing IUCN Programme in West Africa.

pects which, on a case-by-case basis, share their strengths towards achieving common objectives.

Finally, it is important that the working tools and internal organisation of the Regional Programme always fall in line with the aims and objectives set. Hence the need to put in place an internal organisation that reinforces the consistency and synergy between projects, programmes and offices in the region and at the head office. Furthermore, this organisation should make room for the skills and expertise of both members and commissions who along with the Secretariat are the pillars of IUCN. The Programme has been equipped with more rigorous administrative and financial tools to monitor activities and their impacts.

IUCN expects, in a four-year period, to show more than even its critical contribution to the sustainable development of the region through the enhanced management of nature and its resources.

## “Better knowledge on the Mauritanian coast for better protection”

**Jean-Jacques Nduita**  
Communication Officer

As a fragile interface between the Sahara and the Atlantic Ocean, the Mauritanian coast –scantily inhabited up to the 50s – has become the backbone of the country. Not long ago, it used to be fully oriented towards the continental landmass and the fertile banks of Senegal River but is now going through a spectacular transformation. Thus, the coastal zone is becoming the focal point of economic development in six key sectors including fishing, energy (oil exploitation), water supply, transportation, urban development and agriculture. The fast pace at which activities expand on the coast constitutes a cause for concern in relation to the conservation of natural resources.

Actually, one major feature of the littoral strip is its biological diversity. The Banc d’Arguin National Park, considered as a world natural heritage site, is the key element of the northern coast with its bench labyrinth, islets and fairways, and its

varied and abundant sea fauna that attracts tens of thousands of migrating birds. In the south, the area of the lower River Senegal Delta hosts an exceptional wealth of landscapes, birds, mammals, and fishes in such refuge zones like the Chat T’Boul natural reserve and the Diawling National Park, both being Ramsar sites. In all likelihood, these sites play a major role in the ecosystems health and the status of resources in the sea and coastal zone. In this regard, the Banc d’Arguin National Park is considered as the most significant fish resource producing zone of Mauritania with a direct positive impact on the country’s economy.

This brought about the project entitled “Development Plan for the Mauritanian Coast” (PALM) has come about. As a joint initiative of IUCN and the Department of Merchant Navy (DMM), this project intends to be a participatory endeavour which combines various tools likely to help



Major towns have been built along the Mauritanian Littoral...  
Photo : Jacques Trotignon



... Arising from sands less than a century ago.  
Photo : Jacques Trotignon



Aerial view of Mauritanian Coast  
Photo : Pierre Campredon

So many species...  
Photo : IUCN-Mauritania



... that need to be protected with the support of local communities  
Photo : IUCN-Mauritania

make decisions on how to manage coastal activities while embracing the ecosystem approach.

For instance, the PALM project has supported the establishment of an Observatory on the Mauritanian Littoral. The prime goal of this Observatory is to collect and process data needed to monitor the littoral environment, understand long term changes of the coastal strip, and provide decision-makers with tools to assess environmental impacts. In this way, Mauritania

will be in a position to put in place a sustainable coastal development policy. With the monitoring of coastal erosion, and looking into access to water as well as sea and land pollution, the Observatory is gradually extending its scope to all the biological and physical features of littoral ecosystems. Hopefully, this new focus will lead to the emergence of a genuine integrated and sustainable system of coastal observations that might encourage similar approaches across the region.

Based on the information collected and the monitoring tools in place and in addition to the experience of the consultation forum that gathers all players periodically, Guidelines on the Development of the

Mauritanian Littoral (PDALM) are being drafted with the broad collaboration of the Mauritanian Government and its Technical and Financial Partners. Also the open days on the Mauritanian Littoral provided the opportunity to delve into scientific diagnoses and arouse Mauritians' interest in their littoral, as they are becoming more and more aware of its wealth and vulnerability.

The time has therefore come to put to use these tools and experiences to support the management of littoral resources by pulling resources together and fostering synergy between the strategic interests of the country. It is through consultation that all the players may decide on the orientation of the littoral development based on scenarios selected from promising strategic options in a range of possible situations. In particular, efforts should be made to restrain coastal developments prior to receiving data on project impact.

This is meant to reduce as far as possible the risks incurred by natural resources as no information is available, on the short and long term negative impact of their deterioration. This is the idea behind a new phase being supported by the Dutch Co-operation within the context of the Regional Marine Conservation Programme in West Africa.

## The PRCM is moving forward

**Ibrahima Niamadio**  
Programme Officer, PRCM

Launched in 2003 with the collaboration of WWF, Wetlands Int, FIBA and IUCN, the Regional Marine Conservation Programme is now ready to effectively implement its projects. Already equipped with relevant tools, including strategy, programme, and project documents – the PRCM has set in place its institutional framework. Indeed, this Programme calls for sound co-ordination of its activities across the region.

For instance, the Steering Committee of the PRCM has worked out a strategy for intervening, monitoring activities, and implementing results. Subsequently, a regional forum was held in Conakry, Guinea. In view of the significance of such an approach, the regional forum was institutionalised to ensure articulation of the diversity of the Programme's components and collaboration between the fifty or so institutions in the sub-region involved in the Programme. This Forum will play a strategic orientation role for the Programme.

The forum will be assisted by a group of independent experts forming the Scientific and Technical Orientation Committee (COST). The Steering Committee has been extended to include the Forum Chairman, the Regional Representative of the coastal planning network in West Africa and the Standing Secretary of the sub-regional Fisheries Commission. It is hoped that this structuring will ensure greater participation and transparency in the decisions made by the Steering Committee.



A fishing harbour in Conakry, Guinea  
Photo : L.G. d'Escrienne

**To find out more**

[www.iucn.org/brao/articles/0405/pr\\_forum.pdf](http://www.iucn.org/brao/articles/0405/pr_forum.pdf)

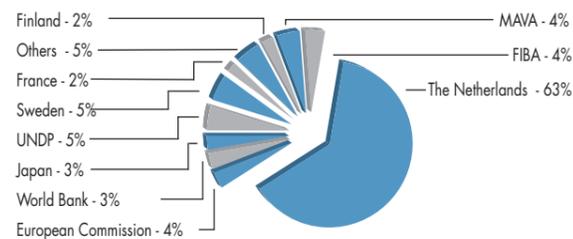
# Annexes

## Financial Report 2004

The following charts and tables are a summary of the financial situation of IUCN West Africa for the year 2004. From a general point of view, the levels of income and expenditures in 2004 were quite close to those of 2003, which points to the Programme's stability.

### Source of Funding

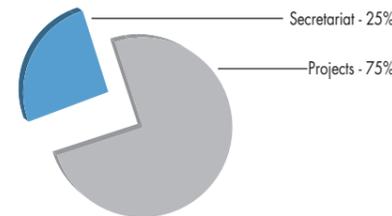
Funds allocated to the projects received in 2004 by the West Africa Regional Programme hailed from a high number of partners and amounted to 4.7 million of euro.



### Overall Expenditures by Category

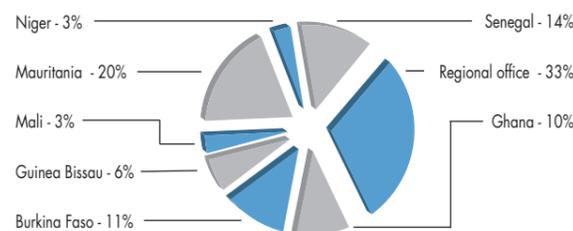
IUCN's expenditures are computed based on the funds earmarked for the functioning of projects, on the one hand, and for the Secretariat on the other, which amounted to 4.6 million. Project activities accounted for three fourth of the overall expenditures in the region.

The Secretariat's activities, i.e. projects technical support, programme development, support to members and administrative services, represent only one fourth of the expenditures. An amount of 560,000 was granted to the region by IUCN Head Office as core funds.



### Expense Distribution by Office

IUCN has seven offices in the region but implements activities in eight countries. The Regional Office deals with projects with a regional coverage or activities concerning all the countries in the region, such as training, support to regional strategies, etc.



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## BRAO Publications in 2004

**Reducing West Africa's Vulnerability to climate impacts on Water Resources, Wetlands and Desertification**  
Elements for a Regional Strategy for Preparedness and Adaptation  
GWP/WAWP, CILSS  
IUCN 2004  
84 pp., figures, maps, colour photos

**Les grands mammifères du complexe WAP**  
Union Européenne - CIRAD  
Parc régional ECOPAS  
IUCN  
272 pp - photos

**Water Governance in West Africa**  
Legal and institutional Aspects  
IUCN 2004  
247 pp., photos

**The Rehabilitation of the delta of the Senegal River in Mauritania**  
Fielding the ecosystem approach  
IUCN 2003  
88 pp - Photos

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