

CEPF Final Completion and Impact Report

Organization's Legal Name:	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Project Title:	Building Networks for Key Biodiversity Area Monitoring and Protection in the GFWA
Grant Number:	CEPF-112513
Hotspot:	Guinean Forests of West Africa
Strategic Direction:	4 Build the capacity of local civil society organizations, including Indigenous People's, women's and youth groups, to conserve and manage globally important biodiversity
Grant Amount:	\$88,125.00
Project Dates:	November 01, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Date of Report:	August 02, 2022

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

Guinee Ecologie, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), the Society of the Conservation on Nature in Liberia (SNCL) and the Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS) all received sub-grants to lead the work in their respective countries, where each is the national BirdLife Partner. In each country, they organised national training workshops for a broad set of stakeholders and organised follow-up meetings on establishing KBA National Coordination Groups (NCGs). The Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) received project co-funding from the RSPB to conduct similar activities in Nigeria, where an NCG is already in place, so a NCG meeting was held and there was less emphasis on training. Four of the five partners (not SNCL) also coordinated collating KBA assessments. Staff from GWS and NCF, who were well trained on KBAs, also went to Sierra Leone and Liberia respectively to deliver training at the workshops.

BirdLife International supported to coordinate the project through regular communication with national anglo-phone partners and being part of a regular core coordination team. BirdLife could not receive funding from CEPF, but participated through in-kind support, largely funded by the RSPB. Coordination meant regular communications One staff delivered training in the workshop in Liberia.

BirdLife South Africa (an independent NGO affiliated to BirdLife International) received a sub-grant for one staff member who is KBA Regional Focal Point, to participate as part of the core coordination team, advise on implementation and gave training on-line and in-person at the training workshop in Sierre Leone. He also reviews KBA assessments. Staff and a consultant to Missouri Botanic Garden delivered the training in Guinea in French. Consultants were as follows

Dayo Osinubi - overall project advisor

Natalia Cisneros - advise and on-line training on NCGs

Charles Agbemashior - produced 4 videos on KBAs

The KBA Secretariat was regularly consulted and provided datasets.

CONSERVATION IMPACTS

Planned Long-Term Impacts: 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>Regional networking has been strengthened by experiences shared and links made between all 5 countries in relation to NCGs</p>	<p>This was achieved in each of the 5 countries. In Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia workshops convened stakeholders to receive training on the KBA standard, but importantly to discuss establishing a KBA national coordination group (NCG). Follow-up meetings led to TORs drafted and agreed upon for each NCG by the core group of stakeholders. In Liberia the KBA NCG was decided to be a sub-group of the Species Working Group. Government representatives was involved in each country. Generally considered important for NCGs to be effective. The process of full government approval wasn't expected to take place during the project period.</p> <p>In Ghana, there was already a provisional NCG. Through the project the TOR was revised and approved by members, of which there are currently 12 signed up (out of 25 currently expected). A meeting with government is planned for August to go through the process of government approval. In Nigeria an NCG meeting led to a identification of 20 KBAs for assessment and invigorated communications and collaboration between members. In each country the project built or developed moment for stakeholders to work together on KBAs. Trainers in Sierra Leone and Liberia were from Ghana and Nigeria and and 3 webinars were held allowing sharing of regional experiences.</p>

Planned Short-Term Impacts: 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>Three short films promote the importance of KBAs and how to monitor and protect them within the region.</p>	<p>Achieved. Four films were produced in Ghana that were applicable to the region in general. Each is about 5 minutes long and serves as a light introduction to a theme.</p> <p>Part 1: Overview of Key Biodiversity Areas. https://youtu.be/D17-HI7RiFk</p> <p>Part 2: Overview of Ghana's Key Biodiversity Areas. https://youtu.be/wnhstFlgX6k</p>

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	<p>Part 3: Overview of Stakeholder engagement within the Key Biodiversity areas process. https://youtu.be/JJpAr5fN65c</p> <p>Part 4: Identifying Key Biodiversity Areas and the site monitoring framework. https://youtu.be/zyosHCCdvqY</p> <p>Each film was presented by Joseph Afrifa from the Ghana Wildlife Society. They were originally conceived when he received a Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) grant while an intern for BirdLife in Accra. He moved straight from that position to GWS to be involved in this project. So these videos were part funded by CLP albeit prior to the project commencement and are not considered co-funding. The project covered the time of the producer and studio time.</p>
<p>KBAs are understood by groups of key national stakeholders and NCGs are advanced in their establishment in 5 countries.</p>	<p>Achieved. Training was provided to at least 132 people (of which at least 22 women) in five countries. In Liberia a 2 day training workshop, because there was already a basic understanding of KBAs. In Nigeria a 2 day workshop on KBA evaluations which included necessary refresher training. The other three countries followed a 3 day training workshop. Participants include NGOs, academics and government staff. In all except Nigeria the training used most of the modules prepared by the KBA secretariat. Feedback from the workshops in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (n=24) indicated that participants had either moderate (79%) or high (21%) confidence that they could apply the KBA standard without assistance.</p> <p>NCGs were advanced in all three countries. In Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone there was discussion and agreement to establish an NCG, each workshop having a session to discuss an NCG. Follow up meetings led to selection of members of the NCGs and draft Terms of Reference (TOR). In Liberia the NCG was effectively established. In Ghana, an interim NCG was in place. This was expanded and established, with TOR agreed and membership forms submitted. In Nigeria, the NCG held a meeting at which they reflected on its functioning and conducted a SWOT.</p>
<p>NCF, as the coordinating organisation of the Nigeria NCG, has demonstrated its support within the region to provide technical advice to other NCGs and sets a standard for the region in KBA delivery.</p>	<p>Achieved. Joseph Onoja who was leading KBA work in NCF led the training workshop in Liberia alongside Agyemang Opoku from BirdLife International. He was also involved in meetings of a core group of trainers, which were held early on in the project to design the project delivery, share experiences and</p>

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	<p>discuss structures and formation of NCGs, where he provided insight from the structure and function of the NCG in Nigeria. The NCG in Nigeria remains well ahead of the other four countries in terms of technical capacity. This is demonstrated in its progress in assessing another 20 KBAs which were identified as priorities for assessment during the project KBA validation workshop.</p>
<p>The functioning of the NCG in Ghana has been defined and the NCG has been established and possibly for Liberia too.</p>	<p>Achieved. In Ghana, a Terms of Reference is fully developed defining function of the NCG and roles of members and the process of members submitting application started. An expected output was full government endorsement from the National Biodiversity Steering Committee (NBSC), although this didn't yet happen representatives of the NBSC are on the NCG. A meeting with the NBSC is planned in August 2022.</p> <p>In Liberia an NCG was agreed to be included as a sub-group of the Species Working Group of Liberia. A terms of reference has been developed. It is headed by the Forest Development Authority and coordinated by SCNL</p> <p>The NCG is therefore effectively functional in both countries.</p>
<p>Concept papers for NCGs have been developed for Sierra Leone and Guinea to raise awareness among governments of the KBA standard, criteria and how it relates to respective nations.</p>	<p>Partially achieved. At both workshops in Sierra Leone and Guinea there were representatives of relevant national government ministries, so there is already understand of the KBA standard and criteria. Guinee Ecologie has worked closely with the Office of Parks and Reserves which has agreed to preside over the NCG. In Sierra Leone representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Fisheries, Forestry Division and Environmental Protection Agency have responded to be included within the NCG. Concept papers for this purpose were not deemed necessary at the time.</p>
<p>About 20 areas are assessed against KBA criteria as a part of training exercises and results are recognised by interim or established NCGs in each country</p>	<p>Achieved. One KBA assessment form was prepared in Guinea, with 2 more in progress. The English language assessment form represented a barrier for more advancement. In Sierra Leone, one assessment form was submitted. In Liberia no KBA assessments have been submitted yet. In Ghana, 11 KBAs were selected for assessments and are in various states of completion. 5 have been completed for bird trigger criteria 0 of which 4 are awaiting to enrich data on another species. 2 have been completed with the CR tree species <i>Talbotiella gentii</i> as a trigger, but global information on this species is currently not on the KBA.database/IUCN Red List. For one new KBA, a delineation process is required which is outside the scope of the project. For 2 KBAs with potential primate triggers, GWS is planning to</p>

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	soon support the NCG member with the data to complete the forms. Another potentially new KBA has identified species, but a site visit is required to collect data on them. In Nigeria 20 KBAs were selected by NCG members and are at varying stages of validation. 9 are awaiting for submission, 7 have been submitted and are being reviewed, 1 has been fully validated and 3 the stage is unclear. 3 are freshwater KBAs of which one is new. The differing capacities between countries is quite clear.

Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

In general the take-up of NCGs advanced more quickly than expected. The project has opened up opportunities for further funding for KBAs in most countries, for both supporting the NCG and validating KBAs. It is too early to confirm funds approved. The RSPB and BirdLife are working with partners to develop funding proposals and the RSPB is increasing its funding support to KBAs in the region.

PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES

Overall results of the project:

The project successfully implemented activities directly in 5 countries of the hotspot as well as having a regional component.

Regionally, the project brought together a team, partly from the region itself to coordinate activities and to learn from one another and develop capacities that would remain supporting the region. That team brought together individuals from the BirdLife Partnership; BirdLife International itself, those from BirdLife partners in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and the UK, and an ex-BirdLife staff as a consultant. Staff of Missouri Botanic Garden were also occasionally involved. Four members of the group met usually on a weekly basis to discuss project coordination. Training was provided on the KBA Standard to bring everyone up to a standard so could act as trainers, through use of (at the time) a Beta version of the online training course. A deepening of understanding on the KBA Standard, the KBA assessment form and regional level scoping was carried out through semi-formal on-line training and discussion with the KBA Secretariat. Training was also provided by Simmy Bezeng on IUCN Species Red List assessments. The establishment of KBA National Coordination Groups (NCGs) was a key component of the project and is less prescriptive than KBA assessments. Natalia Cisneros shared her experiences with the group on NCGs drawing from her academic study, which had been supervised by the KBA Secretariat. In summary, a coordination group was established with increased technical understanding on the KBA standard and the challenges and processes of establishing NCGs. This group will remain linked through the BirdLife partnership and continue to support the region in advancing the KBA agenda.

In Guinea, Guinee Ecologie organised a 3 day KBA training workshop from 9-11 February for 28 participants from government, environmental NGOs, media and research centres. Training was provided by staff of Missouri Botanic Garden. The workshop covered most components of the structured KBA training. It is the only workshop where training was provided on the ecosystem-based KBA criteria, which is a more complex criteria and something one of the trainers was familiar with doing in Guinea. All respondents to feedback (n=9) on the workshop expressed a good (3) or moderate (6) confidence in applying the

KBA standard without additional support. During the third day of the workshop a presentation was given on-line by Natalia Cisneros on NCGs and discussion was held on establishing an NCG. 9 KBAs were identified for assessment and another potential 11 KBAs were identified. 20 potential members of an NCG were listed. A basic resources needs plan and budget for the NCGs and KBA assessments was developed. Following the workshop internal meetings were held within Guinee Ecologie, with the government and with proposed NCG members on formalising establishing an NCG. A TOR for the NCG has been drafted. On 4 May a meeting was held online between Guinee Ecologie, Natalia Cisneros and Paul Insua-Cao (RSPB) to give feedback on the TOR. 3 groups were set up to be conducting KBA assessments for Diecke, Ziama and Mont Bero. So far only Ziama has been done. Immediate plans are to continue the process of setting up an NCG and continuing with the other 2 KBA assessments. RSPB will support immediate continuation of activities.

In Sierra Leone, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) organised a 3 day KBA training workshop from 2 -4 March for 32 participants from government, environmental NGOs, a private company, UNDP and chiefdoms. Training was provided by staff of GWS (Joseph Afrifa) and BirdLife South Africa (Simmy Bezeng). The workshop covered most components of the structured KBA training. Workshop feedback (n=11) expressed a good (2) or moderate (9) confidence in applying the KBA standard without additional support. At the conclusion of the third day of the workshop it was agreed to establish an NCG, with 46 potential partner organisations and some basic principles of operation for a TOR identified. 15 organisations and individuals have so far responded to be part of the NCG and a technical committee of 6 identified. During the workshop the representative from UNDP encouraged the NCG to submit a proposal for a small grant (~US\$50,000) to support the NCG and KBA assessments. Next steps are to formalise the membership of the NCG, develop a funding proposal for UNDP and continue with KBA assessments. 2 legacy KBAs were selected for assessment of which one (Yawri Bay) has been prepared for submission.

In Liberia, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) organised a 2 day KBA training workshop from 16 - 17 March for 33 participants from government, national and international NGOs, the EU and UNDP, and private companies. Training was provided by staff of NCF (Joseph Onoja) and BirdLife International (Agyemang Opoku). The workshop covered most components of the structured KBA training. Workshop feedback (n=4) expressed a moderate (4) confidence in applying the KBA standard without additional support. The workshop was organised through the Species Working Group of Liberia (SWGL), to which SCNL is a member. A follow-up meeting was held to draft the TOR of the NCG as well as a review by email to which the project team and Natalia Cisneros contributed. It was agreed that the NCG be a sub-committee group of SWGL and has now been set-up as such headed by the Forestry Development Authority and with SCNL as coordinator.

In Ghana, an interim NCG was already in place and the Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS) coordinated a series of meetings for its advancement on 19th Jan (identification of potential members), 14th February (drafting TOR), 8th Mar (reviewing TOR). GWS then organised a 3 day KBA training workshop on KBA from 6-8 April for 28 participants from government, protected areas, NGOs and universities. Training was provided by staff of GWS (Joseph Afrifa) and BirdLife International (Agyemang Opoku). The workshop covered most components of the structured KBA training. Some time was given to validating NCGs and advancing the NCG process. At the end of the workshop, together with the interim NCG, an expanded NCG was nominated and participants conducted a gap analysis of KBAs in the country. Although the workshop could not complete a proposal form for sites, participants understood the data requirements and a process for validating KBAs initiated. 11 legacy and potential KBAs have been prioritised for assessment, most of which are in advance stages of

completion. The NCG is functional now but, to strengthen it, the National Biodiversity Steering Committee (NBSC) of the government needs to endorse it. A meeting is being held with the NBSC in August, rather than during the project period as planned. The RSPB continues to support GWS coordinate the NCG with a plan to validate 15 KBAs this year. Further funding is being sought with GEF as a target.

In Nigeria, the NCG was well established. The Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) hosted a meeting of the NCG on 29th March at which they reflected on a presentation given by Natalia Cisneros on monitoring NCG functioning. The NCG then conducted a SWOT analysis of the NCG. On 30th and 31st March a workshop was held for 30 participants on KBA validation, which included some refresher training. 20 KBAs were identified for validation. Until now, 7 have been submitted to NCF as coordinator and the remainder are on-going by NCG partners. RSPB continues to provide funding to support NCF coordinate the NCG.

3 webinars were held, open to all stakeholders in the project. 8th Feb- introduction to NCGs by Natalia Cisneros, 2 May-sharing experiences on establishing NCGs, 8 May sharing experiences on KBA assessments.

4 videos were produced in Ghana on NCGs, now available on YouTube.

Results for each deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1.0	Regional coordination on KBA development	1.1	List of trainers with training completion certificates on KBA assessments and identification to help deliver the project and beyond.	3 trainers with training certificates completed. Paul Insua-Cao, Agyemang Opoku, Joseph Afrifa. Altogether 7 people gained experience on giving training on KBA assessments, in addition Joseph Onoja, Simmy Bezeng, Ehaorn Bidault and Bruno Senterre
1.0	Regional coordination on KBA development	1.2	Minutes of monthly meetings, updated workplan and lessons learned	Meetings were held usually held at least once a week among the coordination team and the team kept updated through Whatsapp. There was therefore a continuous updating of project progress. The three webinars were recorded and saved. The final two webinars were occasions for lessons learned, exchanging experiences and seeking advice. Following coordination team meetings towards the end of the project, lessons learns/project conclusions were prepared on KBA assessments by Dayo Osinubi, NCGs by Natalia Cisneros and submitting KBA assessments by Simmy Bezeng. The workplan was updated regularly until it was clear that dates for all workshops were set. The limited time constraint of the project meant that the workplan was changing frequently.
2.0	Establishing a KBA National Coordination Group in Ghana	2.1	Ghanaian KBA National Coordination Group effectively established through TOR agreed, participants identified and	The NCG in Ghana is functional. A TOR has been agreed and a membership form developed. 13 members have registered as members so far. GWS is coordinating the NCG. Training has been provided to

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
			trained and government support	participants of the NCG. Government are on the NCG, but a key meeting with the National Biodiversity Steering Committee could not be held during the project period and is planned for August. A regular meeting of the NCG will also be in August.
2.0	Establishing a KBA National Coordination Group in Ghana	2.2	NCG participants are trained and assess KBAs in Ghana as demonstrated by at least 10 KBA assessments, gaps, potential KBAs, and priorities for field survey identifications and workplan and budget for full assessment.	11 KBAs have been prioritised for assessment of which 10 are in good progress, in several cases looking to enrich species trigger criteria to those that are already there. A brief resource needs plan has been developed for fundraising purposes. GWS plans to support the NCG conduct 15 KBA assessments in 2022 to early 2023.
3.0	Capacity building for the NCG in Nigeria	3.1	KBA proposals submitted and workplan and budget developed for the Nigerian NCG.	20 KBAs have been prioritised for assessment by the NCG at a data validation of which 7 have already been submitted, 9 are awaiting submission and 4 unclear status. This includes 3 potential freshwater KBAs, of which one was not previously identified. The RSPB and NCF are currently developing a workplan and budget for supporting the NCG and continuing KBA assessments this year. Other funding proposals have been submitted.
4.0	Establishing an NCG in Liberia	4.1	Liberian NCG TOR, plan and budget prepared by stakeholders (including government)	An NCG has been established in Liberia headed by the Forestry Development Authority and coordinated by SCNL as a sub-committee of the Species Working Group of Liberia. The TOR has been agreed. A plan and budget for its functioning have yet to be

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				developed, however under the SWGL there is already a structure for continuing the functionality of the NCG.
5.0	Building capacity on NCG understanding in Sierra Leone	5.1	Plan of action for a Sierra Leonean NCG developed by in-country stakeholders	Still to be developed. There is a planned follow-up meeting of the NCG in August, which should lead to the development of a funding proposal for continuation of work.
6.0	Scoping an NCG partnership in Guinea	6.1	Feasibility study for establishing an NCG in Guinea developed by national stakeholders	The NCG in Guinea advanced rapidly. A TOR has been developed defining the structure of the NCG with government chairing and Guinea Ecologie coordinating. During the workshop a plan for the NCG including KBA assessments was developed with budget. The NCG requires final authorisation within government but is effectively functional. The RSPB is providing resources this year to maintain the NCG and some activities, while further funding opportunities identified.
7.0	Cross regional communications	7.1	Production of three short films on KBAs in English and sub-titled in French	Four films produced. Subtitled in English.
8.0	CEPF project management and monitoring for compliance	8.1	Stakeholder Engagement Plan effectively implemented and monitored as evidenced by the programmatic reports to CEPF	The Stakeholder Engagement Plan was effectively implemented. A coordination team was established of Paul Insua-Cao (RSPB project manager), Agyemang Opuku (BirdLife International KBA officer for Africa), Dayo Osinubi (consultant) and Simmy Bezeng (KBA Regional Focal Point). The team usually met weekly and coordination with different national partners was divided between them. In addition, early in the project staff of Missouri

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				<p>Botanic Garden, GWS and NCF met with the coordination team for training and planning, often with support of the KBA secretariat. National partners coordinated work in each country where government, NGOS and universities were included in workshops and meetings and occasionally other sectors. The IUCN KBA coordinator was consulted at the beginning and end of the project. Towards the end of the project two feedback webinars were held that were open to all national stakeholders through invitation by the national partners. The KBA secretariat participate in some national workshops and the webinars. Videos were produced at the end of the project as communications tools. The coordination team will continue to work together under the aegis of BirdLife. The Grievance mechanism was presented at all workshops. Mass media were invited to some workshops.</p>
8.0	CEPF project management and monitoring for compliance	8.2	Communication materials are shared with the RIT and the Secretariat	<p>Main communications materials were the four films produced by the project. Shared through this report via the YouTube links. The first film of the series was presented at the final CEPF evaluation workshop. All four films were shared with the CEPF RIT and Secretariat and the KBA Secretariat prior to finalising them.</p>

Tools, products or methodologies that resulted from the project or contributed to the results:

The project didn't develop any tool or methodologies and rather trialled KBA Secretariat tools for giving training. The online training tool was used by the main coordination team of trainers and a meeting was held with Charlotte Boyd of the KBA Standards and Appeals Committee to provide feedback on the Beta version prior to launch. Feedback was also provided through a BirdLife meeting held with the BirdLife KBA coordinator. The training materials in English and French were used extensively throughout the project. All workshop feedback (n=24) expressed that presentations were good or excellent. Likewise all but 3 (fair) for the exercises and 2 (fair) for the knowledge checks.

Four films were produced in Ghana that were applicable to the region in general. Each is about 5 minutes long and serves as a light introduction to a theme.

Part 1: Overview of Key Biodiversity Areas.

<https://youtu.be/D17-HI7RiFk>

Part 2: Overview of Ghana's Key Biodiversity Areas.

<https://youtu.be/wnhstFlgX6k>

Part 3: Overview of Stakeholder engagement within the Key Biodiversity areas process.

<https://youtu.be/JJpAr5fN65c>

Part 4: Identifying Key Biodiversity Areas and the site monitoring framework.

<https://youtu.be/zyosHCCdvqY>

They were produced at the end of the project and the first video was presented at the CEPF Final Evaluation Workshop in Accra on 9th June. Nevertheless they remain as a resource to be promoted through KBA networks, especially in West Africa.

PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
5a	Number of networks are formed among civil society, government and private sector actors	4	The NCG will be established in Ghana. Groups will be established in 3 other countries with	4	NCGs established in Liberia and Ghana and in process of being established in Guinea and Sierra Leone as a result of the project.

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
	to facilitate capacity building, avoid duplication of effort and maximize impact (target: At least 15).		varying degrees of progress to becoming an NCG		
2.2	Number of key biodiversity areas with locally-relevant information on natural ecosystems generated and used to influence political and economic decision-making in favor of their conservation (target: for at least 20).	5	A least five KBAs will have new locally-sourced information collected through co-funding to the project or by other stakeholders.	7	4 potential new KBAs in Ghana have been identified and are being assessed and 3 in Nigeria, the latter being freshwater KBAs.
3.2	Number of inventory of Key Biodiversity Areas in the hotspot is updated to fill critical information gaps, particularly with regard to the Lower Guinean Forests subregion, and freshwater ecosystems.	1	In Nigeria, where an NCG is established, the project will support up the national KBA inventory.	1	Assessments for 20 KBAs for Nigeria are in process including 3 new freshwater KBAs. Nigeria currently has 27 KBAs. This will led to a significant update of the national KBA inventory soon.
4.3	Number of local civil society organizations demonstrate increased communication	5	In 2 countries NCGs will have increased their communication capacity as formalised	5	In each country stakeholder groups were convened and national partners led or advanced establishment of

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
	capacity in ways that support the delivery of their mission (target: At least 20).		institutions to network with partner members. In the other three countries, partners to the project will be in a stronger position to network and support NCG formation.		a national coordination group.

GLOBAL INDICATORS

Protected Areas

Protected areas that have been created and/or expanded as a result of the project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

Name of Protected Area	WDPA ID*	Latitude	Longitude	Country	Original Total Size (Hectares) **	New Protected Hectares ***	Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion
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*World Database of Protected Areas

**If this is a new protected area, 0 should appear in this column

*** This column excludes the original total size of the protected area.

Key Biodiversity Area Management

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under improved management—where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation—as a result of the project.

KBA Name	KBA Code	Size of KBA	Number of Hectares with Improved Management
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Production Landscapes

Production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity as a result of the project.

A production landscape is defined as a site outside a protected area where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

Name of Production Landscape	Latitude	Longitude	Hectares Strengthened	Intervention
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Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
110	22	<p>In general, the following training modules were given in each country</p> <p>Module 1.1: Introduction to KBAs</p> <p>Module 1.2: KBA Standards</p> <p>Module 2: Overview of the KBA identification and delineation process</p> <p>Module 3.1: Single species criteria</p> <p>Module 3.2: Multi-species criteria</p> <p>Module 4: Ecosystem-based criteria (Guinea only)</p> <p>Module 7: Delineation</p> <p>Module 8: Consulting and involving stakeholders</p> <p>Module 9: Documentation</p> <p>Module 10: Mapping standards</p> <p>Introduction to multi-site KBA form</p> <p>Establishing National Coordination Groups</p> <p>Reduced in Nigeria because of the greater experience.</p>

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
		<p>3 webinars were held for anyone from each of the countries:</p> <p>8 February - Supporting KBA National Coordination Groups</p> <p>2 May- Updates on NCGs and discussion on progress and challenges</p> <p>8 May - Updates on KBA validations</p> <p>A core group of trainers met online for training and discussion on NCGs, the KBA assessment form, KBA scoping, red list species assessments. On line training course was followed</p>

- **Cash Benefits:**

Number of Men – Cash Benefits	Number of Women – Cash Benefits	Description of Benefits
		n/a

Benefits to Communities

View the characteristics column below with the following corresponding codes:	View the benefits column below with the following corresponding codes:
1- Small Landowners	a. Increased Access to Clean Water
2- Subsistence Economy	b. Increased Food Security
3- Indigenous/ Ethnic Peoples	c. Increased Access to Energy
4- Pastoralists / Nomadic Peoples	d. Increased Access to Public Services
5- Recent Migrants	e. Increased Resilience to Climate Change
6- Urban Communities	f. Improved Land Tenure
7- Other	g. Improved Use of Traditional Knowledge
	h. Improved Decision-Making
	i. Improved Access to Ecosystem Services

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Type of Benefit									Country	Number of Males Benefitting	Number of Females Benefitting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i			

Characteristics of "Other" Communities:

Policies, Laws and Regulations

View the topics column below with the following corresponding codes:			
A- Agriculture	E- Energy	I- Planning/Zoning	M- Tourism
B- Climate	F- Fisheries	J- Pollution	N- Transportation
C- Ecosystem Management	G- Forestry	K- Protected Areas	O- Wildlife Trade
D- Education	H- Mining and Quarrying	L- Species Protection	P- Other

No.	Name of Law	Scope	Topics															
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P

“Other” Topics Addressed by the Policy, Law or Regulation:

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
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Companies Adopting Biodiversity-friendly Practices

A company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Name of Company	Description of Biodiversity-Friendly Practice	Country/Countries where Practice was Adopted
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Networks and Partnerships

Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable.

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/ Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
KBA National Coordination Group - Ghana	2022	Ghana	Yes	From www.keybiodiversity.org "The KBA National Coordination Groups are groups of experts representing taxonomic groups and other biodiversity elements for which the KBA criteria may be applied within countries. They coordinate initiatives at the national level to

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/ Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
				identify KBAs to ensure the development of a single KBA list and to review proposals from individual proposers". In Ghana a provisional group was in placed, but it was enlarged with a formal Terms of Reference agreed upon.
KBA National Coordination Group - Sierra Leone	2022	Sierra Leone	Yes	From www.keybiodiversity.org "The KBA National Coordination Groups are groups of experts representing taxonomic groups and other biodiversity elements for which the KBA criteria may be applied within countries. They coordinate initiatives at the national level to identify KBAs to ensure the development of a single KBA list and to review proposals from individual proposers". In Guinea and Sierra Leone new groups were established.
KBA National Coordination Group - Liberia	2022	Liberia	Yes	From www.keybiodiversity.org "The KBA National Coordination Groups are groups of experts representing taxonomic groups and other biodiversity elements for which the KBA criteria may be applied within countries. They coordinate initiatives at the national level to identify KBAs to ensure the development of a single KBA list and to review proposals from individual proposers". In Liberia a new group was established as part of the Species Working Group of Liberia.
KBA National Coordination Group - Guinea	2022	Guinea	Yes	From www.keybiodiversity.org "The KBA National Coordination Groups are groups of experts representing taxonomic groups and other biodiversity elements for which the KBA criteria may be applied within countries. They coordinate initiatives at the national level to identify KBAs to ensure the development of a

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
				single KBA list and to review proposals from individual proposers". In Guinea and Sierra Leone new groups were established. In Liberia a new group was established as part of the Species Working Group of Liberia.

Sustainable Financing

Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation.

Name of Mechanism	Purpose	Date Established	Description	Country/Countries	Project Intervention	Delivery of Funds?

Globally Threatened Species

Globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, benefitting from the project.

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site

LESSONS LEARNED

The following lessons learned and recommendations draw from written recommendations provided by consultants to the project Dayo Osinubi, Natalia Cisneros, Bruno Senterre and Ehoarn Bidault and Simmy Bezeng (Regional Focal Point for Africa). Those written recommendations drew from regular weekly meetings held together, especially towards the end of the project that included specific discussion on lessons learned.

KBA training workshops and assessments

In terms of project planning and implementation, the project was time constrained by the close of the current phase of CEPF funding for the hotspot. Once they commenced, national KBA workshops occurred approximately every two weeks. A longer run-in time or having the project more spread out would have allowed greater technical support to be provided to each country, especially in terms of follow-up on the KBA assessments.

The countries selected were those where the RSPB already had a long-term working relation with a national BirdLife Partner, except in the case of Guinea. This enabled the project to hit the ground running, although there was still the need to develop the partnership between the "project" itself and some partners. Given the time constraints, which couldn't be avoided, we are pleased with the success of the project in meeting its objectives across five different countries.

Across all five countries, a keen interest in KBAs and KBA processes already existed beyond just the BirdLife Partner. This was apparent in the willingness of national partners to come to the table. What was however noticed was the need to first ensure all involved had the same information and understanding. The KBA workshop training modules provided by the KBA Secretariat remains the best way to achieve this, and continued attention needs to be placed on all trainers having prior training with these materials and making use of the same presentations. These presentations ensured a consistency and efficiency of KBA workshop delivery and were clearly appreciated by the workshop participants drawing from the feedback.

Each KBA training workshop could be considered a success in achieving two main goals of providing an introduction and first training on the KBAs and the process of identifying them; and triggering the establishment of an NCG. Most were three days, however at least one more day of training would have enabled participants to go deeper into the exercises and strengthening their knowledge of KBAs and giving more time for practical examples of filling a KBA assessment form. The workshop feedback generally led to the same conclusion. Although an additional day would have allowed for more time to be spent on assessment of some sites, given the starting point of some partners in understanding the KBA criteria and significant data gaps, expectations should be managed with regards to actually completing KBA assessment forms during the workshop.

Many trainees have years of experience in site-based conservation, so the benefit of changing the system to use the KBA Standard needs to be communicated in a manner appropriate to each audience, without judgement. One example of this shift in thinking is from "presence-absence" surveys to a quantitative approach that provides the necessary data to drive the KBA proposal, nomination and update. While concerns were raised about the anticipated increased field cost of quantitative surveys, the reality is that the man-hours needed for quantitative surveys are not significantly different, as a good number of citizen science tools are already providing quantitative data. A second mind shift, particularly regarding the initial update of "legacy KBAs" and their assessment against the global KBA standard, is that of getting the national KBA stakeholders to see the value of a desktop survey or literature review of existing publications and expert opinion on the national as well as site-level distribution and abundance of KBA trigger elements. The observed inclination once the topic of KBA updates is broached is to plan field surveys, with the associated

obstacle of financing such surveys. A desktop survey or literature review, at least for the initial update of legacy KBAs, is far cheaper and ensures that available historic and contemporary data is not lost.

A notable tool that was well received and catalysed discussions and action is the country-specific site data from the World Database on KBAs (WDKBA), as provided by Danielle Baisero from the KBA Secretariat. It in itself provided a guiding framework and data that national stakeholders could review. It does bear mention that many national stakeholders might not have data for all potential KBA trigger element taxa, but even in that, national gaps become apparent.

Specific to Guinea was the lack of important materials in the French language, especially the KBA guidelines and KBA assessment forms. This was identified as an important constraint by the lead national partner. Recently the online KBA training course has become available in French, which will be a good boost to the francophone community in developing capacity in KBA assessments and identification. Guinee Ecologie has been informed of this new tool and will encourage NCG members to follow the course.

The KBAs process in itself is new to most conservationists and this project gave an important opportunity for learn by doing. It also helped strengthen an important community of practice for experience and lesson sharing through peer-to-peer exchanges and webinars. In all countries where this project was implemented, data scarcity and especially data in the right format remains poorly available, especially important data on reproductive units and quantitative data of species at the site. This data limitation highlights the importance of improving the quality of data in biodiversity monitoring.

National Coordination Groups

The first step, which is pointing out the importance of incorporating non-technical aspects into the NCG process has been achieved for all countries. This was taken by different countries in different degrees and intensities. However, it is important that countries recognise that the establishment of an NCG is not a process that is realised overnight, as some of the dynamics and context-specific situations are only found out in the process of the establishment itself, and the very success of the NCG is very directly linked to the quality of the Theory of Change process to establish it. The project had enabled the important start of the process of establishing NCGs for three countries, from which they can be expected to evolve as multi-stakeholder fora. The concept and importance of these processes in an NCG are difficult to grasp, especially as groups do not necessarily see the importance of conducting them: it is easy for them not to see that these processes greatly support the smoother running of an NCG in the future. Many people are only able to see this importance once the Theory of Change process is being run, which in the case of this project was not done in each country, as a result of the limited project time frame. Overall, what has been achieved so far is a good starting point for NCGs, but considerably more needs to be done on their operationalisation to ensure their effectiveness in reaching their conservation objectives. NCGs need to focus on harnessing real and effective participation, as the general on-line KBA NCG Terms of Reference highlight, to make participation bottom-up and inclusive. Most NCGs' design phases do not transcend the technicalities of KBAs.

In retrospect, it could have been more useful to not go into too much detail about the monitoring process, since even the most advanced NCGs in terms of being established still needed to finalise that process, and to focus more on the establishment process itself. In Nigeria, where the NCG is established a process of reviewing the functionality through a SWOT was conducted and it was agreed to conduct a similar process once a year. In Guinea there was a stronger interest in seeking guidance on the process of establishing a KBA. Natalia Cisneros gave a direct on-line presentation during the KBA workshop there and

a meeting was convened with her to review in detail the NCG TOR. The evidence of Guinea's interest, more than that of other countries, could also have come from the fact that we presented this to them in a standalone country presentation in French with no other countries present, where they had the opportunity to ask questions, and engage with us to address their specific needs. For the anglophone countries one multi-country webinar on NCGs was held prior to the workshops with the expectation that there would be more detailed follow-up. The particular attention given to Guinea due to the different working language, could have, potentially, also compelled them to pay more importance (as there were no other "spectator countries") to what was being presented, as it tends to happen in webinars where multiple participants from different groups are present and who may feel less accountability to act as a country if the presentation is not targeted to them directly.

SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION

Establishing NCGs or being close to establishing an NCG in each of four of the project countries has been an important step in advancing the KBA agenda in the region. Nevertheless it is only an immediate step and without further support for the NCGs to improve their technical capacity and develop their process, they may flounder and exist just on paper. This is not a failure of the project, which was time constrained and continued immediate support in at least three countries is currently guaranteed by the RSPB while other funding opportunities are being sought by the RSPB and BirdLife working with national partners.

A notable success of the project is that there has been strong support in each country for the NCG. There is clearly a strong appetite for the tools offered by the KBA process. The challenge will be to maintain that interest, especially in the light of another challenge- using the KBA criteria correctly to assess and identify KBAs which in itself a very technical process. Nevertheless, the NCGs should provide a much stronger base in each country for KBA assessment, identification and protection. Having coordinators will ensure that there should be regular exchange of experiences, mutual support networks and a base for further training, which is needed.

Generally in the region, there is a paucity of good quality data for the process of KBA identification. This will inevitably lead to some frustration and importantly there will be the need for changing the mindset in how data is collected to ensure it is rigorous enough and fit for purpose. Nevertheless, during the project we regularly reminded KBA stakeholders to make the best use of available data, rather than immediately decide field work is needed. There is an important language barrier which is being addressed, which is the lack of materials available in French was a challenge in Guinea for conducting KBA assessments. Training materials as powerpoint presentations and online training are now available in French which is very useful. KBA assessment forms and guidelines also need to be translated for francophone countries not to be left behind. The project deliberately included a francophone country to confront the challenge and redress a potential widening gap of capacity between anglophone and francophone countries in West Africa.

The project made good steps in identifying and starting the process to assess 35 legacy and potential KBAs. Notably this was mostly from Ghana and Nigeria where there was already significantly better technical capacity and understanding. It can be expected that in Ghana and Nigeria, good progress will be made in the immediate future in validating KBAs. It shows what could soon be achieved in the other three countries if relatively few individuals have a strong competence in KBA assessments and can support other national partners. Likewise, the availability of good trainers from Ghana and Nigeria and their familiarity with the partners in Sierra Leone and Liberia means support is fairly close at hand.

The BirdLife Partnership provides a strong international network of support to ensure sustainability of project activities. Familiarity of IBAs provides a strong basis for national BirdLife Partners to play a strong and important role in their respective countries for supporting KBA programmes working with other national KBA stakeholders.

In each country there was good involvement of national governments in the KBA workshop to understand the KBA Standard and in being involved in the NCG. This is essential for KBAs to have practical meaning in identifying national biodiversity conservation priorities. Still, government processes are often slow and formal government endorsement of NCGs takes time, which was a challenge to planning this project. As a result the meeting with the Ghanaian National Biodiversity Steering Committee is only planned to take place in August. Overall good involvement of government in the training workshops and NCG was a success and a credit to the national partners who led the processes.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS

Safeguarding was not listed as a project component. Safeguarding requirements were included in all contracts and sub-grants. The grievance mechanism was verbally stated at each workshop, usually by Paul Insua-Cao as project manager during a brief presentation on the project.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

There is both the need to continue supporting efforts in developing the KBA programmes in each of these five countries, as well as replicating this process in other countries in the sub-region and more broadly.

Legacy KBAs need to be assessed by 2028 and many are quite out of date. To serve the purpose KBAs are intended to achieve – identifying and protecting the most important places for biodiversity – an updated network of national KBA is needed for each country in order to facilitate national planning and reporting on biodiversity outcomes. National KBA updates should be an immediate biodiversity conservation priority.

At this stage, further external funding will be a necessary fuel to ensure the motors of the NCGs keep running once started. Once there is a good understanding of the role and functioning of the NCGs amongst members, their momentum may keep it going.

Each country's NCG should run an assessment of the NCG's performance at least once a year. This should include aspects that transcend the KBA technicalities. One recommended example is CIFOR's "How are we doing? A tool to reflect on the process, progress and priorities of your multi-stakeholder forum".

Power differentials will need to be recognised and possibly addressed in NCGs, i.e. no single stakeholder or stakeholder group should takeover the process to fulfil their own agendas more than those of other stakeholders (e.g. because they are chairing, facilitating, hosting, financing, etc.). Likewise the "ownership" of the KBA should not be seen as belonging to any one organisation, in particular to the coordinating organisation which so far has been identified as the BirdLife Partner in each country of the project. Likewise NCG should avoid multi-stakeholder elite forums, where all individuals come from the same network of like-minded people, and ensure sectoral participation (e.g. other taxonomic groups and other stakeholder groups such as indigenous peoples or grassroots representation) and multilevel representation (national, subnational, local). NCGs need to integrate voices in a truly participatory and inclusive process.

If a local or indigenous leader is selected to participate, making sure that it is not just a tick-box exercise and that the person being invited has local knowledge or expertise to

support the process in. Similarly, if an organisation is acting on behalf of another stakeholder group (e.g. an NGO on behalf of local indigenous peoples), ensuring that the representing organisation is deemed as a legitimate representative by the people they are supposed to be representing. An important part of the process of further developing the NCGs in each country is to include more participation from the grassroots level. In each country, the NCGs will need to focus on broader national involvement at an early stage of development.

Ensuring that the process has national and local buy-in and acceptance, and that it is designed addressing the specific context each country faces rather than replicating an internationally designed process. NCG members need to recognise that the example TOR provided by the KBA Secretariat at www.keybiodiversityareas.org is an example and not necessarily a template. There was a tendency for some partners to consider the template an off the shelf and ready to use tool, rather than a starting point for discussing the needs of the NCG.

NCGs should draft conflict transformation strategies, in case conflict arises (e.g. if a vote cannot be decided upon, who has the ultimate decision-making power? Or between two stakeholders interests)

Conducting workshops with each country rather than with many countries as a whole when outcomes are expected from them would potentially increase their accountability (e.g. so that at the end of a webinar, concrete “next steps” can be decided on with the country on how to act next). Nevertheless, the NCG webinar held by the project was a legitimate starting point for introducing some of the lessons and challenges learned from earlier NCGs that had been established. More time on the project could have allowed the project coordination team more opportunity to organise country-specific meetings on NCGs to bring more attention to process for NCG establishment.

The organisation of a national data validation workshop to review existing data from the WDKBA can and should be encouraged as a first step in developing experience and expertise in reviewing and updating KBA information. The format of the data validation workshop that appeared to produce the most results starts with identifying national taxonomic and site experts with access to historical and current published work. These experts are invited to a workshop that ideally lasts for two to three days. Part of the invitation package includes the KBA multi-site form, explanations on how to fill the form and the existing WDKBA data for that country. The first day is spent introducing or refreshing understandings around KBAs using the modules from the KBA Secretariat, as well as introducing the work of reviewing and updating the KBA information. The key work is done on Day 2 in break-out groups that can either be taxa- or site-based. It is advised that a GIS expert be available to offer input and service in preparing shapefiles for trigger elements, based on the published work or expert opinion. This is broadly the format that was followed in Nigeria, but it should be noted that there was already greater capacity there for KBA assessments than other countries.

Involvement of the KBA Secretariat to provide broad national-level data pertaining to potential KBA trigger elements could prove useful in national level KBA scoping, given sufficient and appropriate data from the site level.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)	\$22,877.00
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Breakdown of Additional Funding	<p>The RSPB provided funding to partners, which contributed to this project.</p> <p>NCF in Nigeria; \$3,330 for staff time of Joseph Onoja and US\$ 8,751 for the workshop costs \$6,800 to BirdLife for the time of the KBA officer, Agyemang Opoku \$3,996 as co-funding for the KBA workshop in Ghana. KBA field work took place before the project started</p>
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INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. For more information about this project, you may contact the organization and/or individual listed below.

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