IMPORTANT BIRD AREA INDICES:
REFINING PROTECTED AREA COVERAGE INDICATORS FOR THE 2010 TARGET
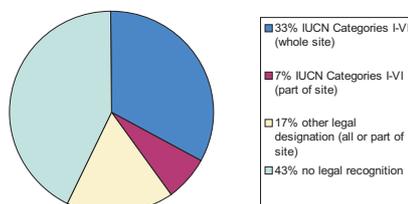
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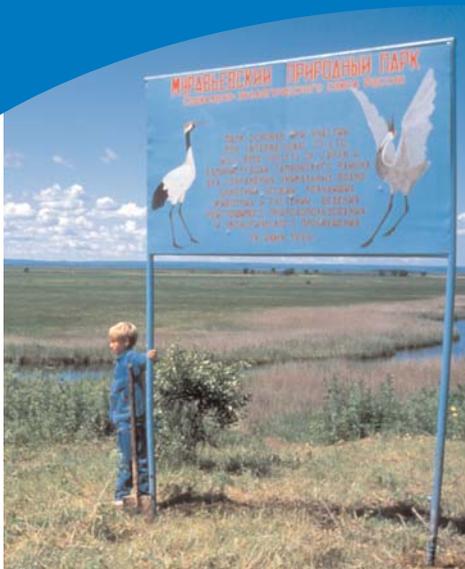
- Tracking the area and number of protected areas (PAs) is useful, but not enough. We need to ask: are PAs in the right places? What is their ecological condition?

- Important Bird Area (IBA) indices help to answer these questions. They show the effectiveness of PAs in protecting globally important biodiversity.

- IBA indices work at the national, regional and global levels. They are essential supplementary indicators for the 2010 target.

REGIONAL:
Finding the gaps in Africa's protected area network

- A comparison of the IBA and PA networks in Africa shows that 20% of the region's 225 Globally Threatened Bird species occur only at unprotected sites. This amounts to 44 species at 32 sites.

- 18 of these are highly threatened single-site endemics. Many of them define top-priority "Alliance for Zero Extinction" sites.

- The continent's PA network fails to cover 43% of IBAs (529 sites).

# of unprotected GTBs
- 1
- 2 - 5
- 9
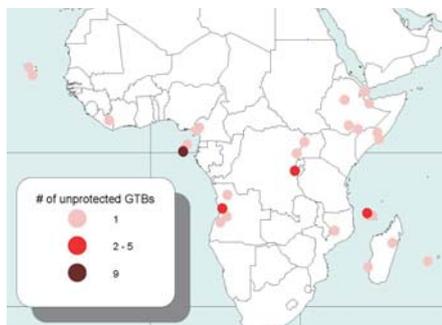
IBAs holding entirely unprotected Globally Threatened Birds (GTBs)

- 33% IUCN Categories I-VI (whole site)
- 7% IUCN Categories I-VI (part of site)
- 17% other legal designation (all or part of site)
- 43% no legal recognition

Protection status of Africa's 1,230 IBAs

Important Bird Areas: what are they?

- IBAs are sites of international significance for the conservation of the world's birds. More than 7,500 IBAs have already been identified worldwide, and first inventories are complete for many regions. Selection, based on standardized, objective criteria, takes full account of existing PA networks but is not limited to them. IBAs can therefore be used to indicate where there are gaps in coverage of particular species.

- IBAs are an integral part of the key biodiversity area approach to site-based conservation. The criteria for key biodiversity areas address the two central issues for setting site conservation priorities – *vulnerability* and *irreplaceability*. Since IBAs capture the bulk of diversity in many taxonomic groups, indices based on IBAs provide a good indicator of trends in the overall coverage of biodiversity by PAs.

NATIONAL:
Monitoring Important Bird Areas in Kenya

- Monitoring IBAs shows trends in condition (state), threats (pressure) and conservation action (response). Simple quantitative measures for each site are combined to provide assessments of trends across IBA networks.

- In Kenya, average site condition and threats deteriorated from 1999-2003. In response, however, conservation action increased substantially. Further monitoring will show if this is effective in addressing threats and improving site condition.
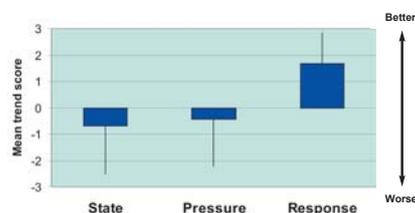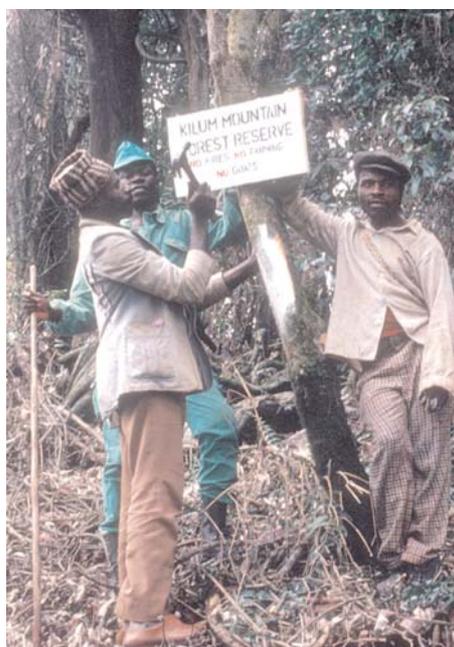

Summary of trends at Kenya's IBAs 1999–2003 (n=49)
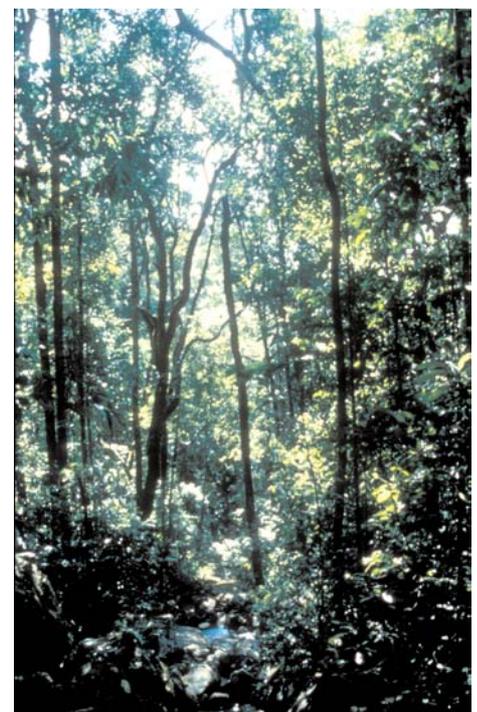
Tracking the increase in protected area coverage over time

BirdLife and UNEP-WCMC are working to show how the numbers of IBAs benefiting from legal safeguard have increased over time. This will demonstrate whether recent expansions of PA networks have been effective in capturing critical biodiversity, and refine understanding of the remaining gaps.