

# CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

<b>Organization Legal Name:</b>	BirdLife International
<b>Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement):</b>	Support for African Ornithologists from the Upper Guinea Forest to attend the eleventh Pan-African Ornithological Congress – PAOC XI.
<b>Implementation Partners for this Project:</b>	
<b>Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement):</b>	July 1, 2004 – September 27, 2005
<b>Date of Report (month/year):</b>	February 2006

## II. OPENING REMARKS

**Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.**

Every four years, the Pan-African Ornithological Congress (PAOC) is organized to promote research on Africa's birds and enhance their survival through conservation and awareness raising. The first congress was held in Livingstone, Zambia in 1957 and subsequent ones have been held in numerous other African countries. By bringing together Africa's ornithologists, the PAOC plays a vital role in building capacity for bird study and conservation in the continent. The congress provides an opportunity for sharing ideas and experiences, developing productive networks and assessing progress towards common goals. A meeting of this type is especially important for birds; whose migratory habits mean that international co-operation is often essential for their conservation.

Like other forms of biodiversity, birds are a common international heritage. They are also the world's best studied and best understood group of organisms. This is due in part because of their popular appeal associated with the relative ease in viewing them and their aesthetic allure. Societies and organizations worldwide value birds for economic, cultural, ethical and spiritual reasons, and bird-watching is probably the commonest route to environmental understanding and awareness. Because much more is known about birds than other animals and plants, they play a very crucial role as various types of indicators. Further more, it has been demonstrated that the health of bird populations tells us about the well being of the habitats on which we all depend.

The Eleventh PAOC was held in Tunisia from November 21-26. This was the first PAOC to be held in North Africa. The theme for the congress was 'Birds crossing borders', chosen because of the importance of Tunisia for European breeding birds wintering in Africa.

While most well-established ornithologists could fund themselves to the congress, most students and up-coming ornithologists required sponsorship to participate at the congress. During the eleventh PAOC, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)

provided sponsorship for five nationals from countries in the Upper Guinea Forest zone, which is one of the biodiversity hotspots of Conservation International and a focus area for CEPF funding.

### III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

The objective of this project was to facilitate the attendance of five African ornithologists from the Upper Guinea Forest (UGF) region at the eleventh PAOC; to share ideas and experiences, to develop productive networks and to assess progress towards common goals.

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

The objective did not change during implementation.

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

It is estimated that 70% of the project objective was achieved in spite of the fact that only one of the five candidates selected finally attended the congress. Candidates were assessed and selected on a competitive basis depending on the merit of their abstracts and the papers submitted to the PAOC XI scientific committee. Assessment and vetting of applicants was based on gender, geographical regions, and the abstracts' relevance to conservation. Logistical arrangements were made to ensure that the selected young African ornithologists working on conservation projects in Africa were to get to the congress and present papers on their work. All the beneficiaries prepared their presentations but only one finally traveled to Tunisia and participated in all the proceedings of the event. The lone attendee, Flavienne, participated very actively at the congress. She was one of the three females shortlisted for the best female presentation. If she had won, this would have permitted her to get a grant to further her research work.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

All logistics arrangements i.e. registration fees, air tickets, accommodation and subsistence were completed by the end of October, 2004, twenty one days before the start of the congress. However, only one candidate succeeded in traveling to Djerba to attend the congress. This was as a result of flight cancellation in Abidjan (where most candidates were to take their connecting flights) a few days before the departure of candidates to the congress. The cancellation was as a result of insecurity in the country resulting from a failed coup d'état. Only the candidate based in Côte d'Ivoire was able to make alternative arrangements to catch the planned flight which could no longer land in Abidjan but instead in Bamako. Difficulties in obtaining connecting flights and time requirements for visa arrangements in transiting countries coupled with the limited time to the start of the congress did not permit candidates from the other countries to make the trip on time for the congress.

To address this disappointment, CEPF agreed, at the request of BirdLife International, for the unused funds to be used to sponsor candidates to the BirdLife annual Council of the Africa Partnership meeting in Cameroon in July 2005. The meeting was attended by 63 delegates from 24 countries worldwide, almost all of whom took part in the PAOC congress in November 2004. Although this was a BirdLife Partnership meeting, it also provided an opportunity to address the objectives of the project as indicated by the objectives of the Partnership meeting which were, *inter alia*,

- To provide an opportunity for south-south exchange of experience, skills and learning in relation to bird and biodiversity conservation in Africa.
- To explore ways and means for funding, monitoring and facilitating implementation of the Regional BirdLife Programme for Africa for the four years from 2005 – 2008; especially in 2005/6.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

Although convenient, it is also risky to book all candidates for a meeting on the same flight. Any disappointment might have drastic consequences for the meeting.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

Production of the proceedings of the PAOCXI congress is pending and needs to be followed up. Copies will be sent to CEPF once they are available.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

N/a.

#### IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

***Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.***

No additional funds were required and/or raised for the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

***\*Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*

*D Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

The project will not continue in future.

## V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

N/a.

## VI. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes

If yes, please also complete the following:

**For more information about this project, please contact:**

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