

Kenya: George Eshiamwata

2.4.1. Status of Conservation Projects

Funded projects are on course. In fact one of the grantees was very impressed at the promptness with which the funds were transferred thus enabling him to start work as planned and complete on time. However, the start-up of one of the grantee's project is behind schedule as a result of delay in transfer hence the field work is likely to be delayed by a month. However, posting the grantees names, project period and title of the projects on the ABC website would be useful and informative. If possible including one paragraph summary of the funded projects so that people have access to this information would really help in creating linkages as well as avoid duplication.

2.4.2. Conservation Concerns

Unplanned development at key biodiversity sites is still a major issue of concern but concerted policy and advocacy efforts can go a long way in preventing. An emphasis on Environmental and Social Impact Assessments should be needed. Most of these developments come in the form of conversion of pristine environments, which are very sensitive and fragile into alternative destructive land uses (e.g. biofuels). There are also cases of renewable energy development projects such as wind (e.g. around Lake Turkana), damming of rivers due to hydro-electric power projects and related power transmission lines. This is a threat to migratory species. There is therefore a need for mainstreaming conservation considerations into some of these projects as well as encouraging developers to adopt best practices and guidelines including avoiding highly sensitive biodiversity areas.

Prospecting and mining are also key issues especially where investments target key biodiversity areas (e.g coastal forests). Proper EIAs and conservation considerations are needed. However, there is also need for documentation (through surveys and inventories) of biological knowledge especially for sites where this has not been done so that such information can be useful in evaluating the potential impact of the development projects on biodiversity. Bird poisoning is still an issue of conservation concern and needs to be closely monitored and conservation efforts put in place to address it. One approach would also to link poisoning on bird mortalities as well as impact or potential impact on human health. Trade in species especially for cage industry (e.g. Grey Parrot).

2.4.3. Significant Bird Sightings / Discoveries

Racquet-tailed Roller sighted in Masai Mara Game reserve. Based on the discussions arising from this sighting, the rarity Committee has circulated guidelines to be followed to authenticate rare sightings

2.4.4. New Contacts with other Bird Clubs

Provided important linkages and contacts to a potential birding club formed by Ecotourism and hospitality undergraduate students of Egerton University, Nakuru campus. The students had inquired if they could be linked to someone or a group that knows bird identification and is based in Nakuru. Based on this inquiry, the students were linked to the Friends of Lake Nakuru. I envisage that these linkages are useful. More follow ups and support is needed to sustain the students' interest in bird conservation and bird watching. Also provided advisory roles to visiting birdwatchers on potential places to visit and linked them to site-based guides, and technical support and advice to charitable organization starting a conservancy in Central Kenya. Vital contacts were also provided for possible engagement in further surveys and inventory work.

2.4.5. Promotional Activity for ABC (e.g. talks)

None. However, ABC materials were displayed alongside other NatureKenya's and BirdLife stands during events or workshops. PDFs of membership details and forms were also circulated to contacts. The sponsorship scheme for young people is commendable for they are now ABC ambassadors at the local site level. More promotional material is needed so that as many events as possible can be targeted. Talks will be held this year to raise the profile of ABC.

2.4.6. Other Concerns or Issues

Produce and share more promotional materials to target events. PAOC XIII is taking place in 2012 and ABC has been a stronger supporter of this event including support to delegates. Grantees will also be encouraged to present their work or results from their work as part of sharing and disseminating. Grantees are expressing their gratitude for the support from ABC conservation Fund, which has gone a long way to enable them undertake research and conservation activities.