



Together for birds and people

**Threatened Birds of Africa**  
**International Action Plan for White-necked**  
**Picathartes**

*Picathartes gymnocephalus*



**A BirdLife International Africa Partnership Publication**

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## **International Species Action Plan for the White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus***

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### **New Information**

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## Preface

The relationship between BirdLife and IUCN-The World Conservation Union stretches back into the formative years of both organisations. BirdLife International is IUCN's main partner and advisor on issues related to bird conservation and has played a leading role in the Consortium formed to develop the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species ([www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)) into a global tool for biodiversity conservation.

A particularly close relationship exists between BirdLife and IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC). Each being extensive networks of species conservation expertise, the two organisations have worked together to produce several coordinated global assessments of the world's birds since the 1980s.

As an active member of the Red List Consortium, BirdLife has taken a leading role in the development of the Red List criteria and standards, and has pioneered the development of Red List indicators. Using this system, BirdLife's 16 years of Red List data is allowing us to see meaningful trends in the status of the world's birds.

In Africa, BirdLife International has already taken a lead in site-based bird conservation, culminating in its landmark publication Important Bird Areas in Africa and Associated Islands. The concept of Important Bird Areas (at both national and regional levels) has proved very useful and is already showing direction for other types of biodiversity conservation on the continent.

However, the conservation of key sites alone may be insufficient to protect many species. Species with dispersed ranges, with only a small proportion of their population inside protected areas, or species facing a multitude of threats, often require a more integrated approach. Conservation efforts for such species require careful planning, taking into account the views and interests of all stakeholders, so allowing conservationists and ecosystem managers to mobilise their resources in an effective and strategic way.

This action plan is one in a series produced by BirdLife International for threatened birds in Africa. I urge all readers and users of this publication to push the conservation of Africa's birds, cornerstones and indicators of the continent's natural wealth, to a new level. Awareness of the need to conserve species and their habitats is slowly growing amongst policy makers. What we often lack are the tools and guidance to implement the appropriate measures. This series provides that critical service. In raising the profile of the problems facing Africa's avian species and the measures needed to secure their future, I believe, these plans will have a long-lasting impact on the conservation, not only of birds, but of the continent's rich biodiversity.

Achim Steiner  
Director General  
IUCN – The World Conservation Union

## Foreword

Birds are part of the global ecosystem and studying them tells us about the natural environment, upon which we all depend, and its biodiversity. Humankind values birds for educational, economic, recreational, cultural, ethical and spiritual reasons. Because birds are important, 105 organisations worldwide are working together through the BirdLife International Partnership to conserve the world's birds and their habitats.

The Africa BirdLife International Partnership, currently represented in 18 African countries, has so far documented 1,230 Important Bird Areas (IBAs), sites that are internationally important for the conservation of birds and biodiversity in Africa. Unfortunately, 43% of these have no legal protection, leaving a fifth of the continent's globally threatened bird species at greater risk of extinction.

Africa has a total of 349 globally threatened bird species. Some of these are residents of more than one country, others are migratory or widely dispersed. The conservation of cross-border, migratory or widely dispersed species requires concerted strategic species-based approaches such as Species Action Plans, to complement long-term site-based strategies such as National Parks and other protected area systems. Species Action Plans are scientifically authoritative documents that, with wide consultation and agreement with the major stakeholders, provide the relevant agencies with specific and time-bound actions for conserving priority species. Species Action Plans therefore provide a framework for action at local, national and international levels, in addition to being used as fundraising and advocacy tools.

With funding from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under the Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species and with financial and technical support from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB, the BirdLife International Partner in the UK), the Africa BirdLife International Partnership has developed a format and process of species action planning involving the participation of representatives from governments, species experts and interest groups, conservation NGOs and local communities. This Species Action Plan is one of seven international and 15 national plans for priority bird species in Africa, which were produced as a pilot to test the new approach. It is hoped that the format and process used in the production of these plans will act as a model for the production of other plans for the conservation of priority threatened fauna and flora in different countries of Africa and beyond.

The production of action plans is just the beginning of the process, because it is important to translate the plans into action. The involvement and agreement of national government representatives in the production of these plans will help stimulate the inclusion of the plans into existing and proposed national conservation strategies. In addition, members interested in the conservation of individual species will evaluate the successes and failures of the implementation process.

It is hoped that all those interested in the wise use of Africa's natural resources and the conservation of her breathtaking bird diversity will make effective use of these plans.

*Achilles Byaruhanga*

Chairman, Council of BirdLife Africa Partnership 2004/5

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## Acknowledgements

This Action Plan is an output of a three year project - "*Action Plans for the conservation of Globally Threatened birds in Africa*" which in turn is part of the Species Conservation Programme of the African Partnership of BirdLife International. Major support for the project came from the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) under the Darwin Initiative and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB, BirdLife in the UK). Special thanks are due to these two organisations.

The project was co-ordinated on behalf of the BirdLife Africa Species Working Group (ASWG) (a technical arm of the BirdLife International Africa Partnership) by *Nature*Uganda, BirdLife South Africa and the RSPB (BirdLife in Uganda, South Africa and UK respectively). A Steering Committee comprising members of the above organisations plus representatives from the Cameroon Biodiversity Conservation Society (BirdLife in Cameroon) and the BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat supervised project implementation. The project was supported and implemented by 17 African BirdLife Partner Organisations. Their efforts were unrelenting and BirdLife International thanks them all sincerely.

A network of dedicated people throughout Africa formed Species Interest Groups (SIGs), which were led at national level by National Species Co-ordinators. The SIGs worked to promote the aims of the project and species conservation in general. The White-necked Picathartes Species Interest Group played a pivotal role in developing this Action Plan by pooling and sharing information and organising an International Stakeholder Species Action Plan workshop that was attended by individuals from all the range states of the species - Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. For Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana, conservation activities are co-ordinated nationally by Guinee Ecologie, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia and the Ghana Wildlife Society respectively. There was also very strong support for the development of this Action Plan from the relevant government departments and academic and research institutions of these countries. Warm thanks are due to all those involved in these organisations.

Many other individuals both inside and outside Africa contributed information, advice and support. BirdLife International thanks them all. May their efforts for species conservation continue to flourish and bear fruit.

## Acronyms and Definitions

**ASWG:** African Species Working Group. ASWG is a technical arm of the BirdLife International Africa Partnership. Its role is to promote single species conservation initiatives within the BirdLife African Partnership through continuous development and implementation of an African Bird Species Conservation Programme.

**CAP:** BirdLife Council for the African Partnership (see back cover)

**CBD:** Convention on Biological Diversity

**CITES:** Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora`

**CSSL:** Conservation Society of Sierra Leone

**EIA:** Environmental Impact Assessment

**EBA:** Endemic Bird Area. EBAs are defined as places where two or more species of restricted range i.e. with world distributions of under 50,000 km<sup>2</sup> occur together (Stattersfield et al, 1998)

**GEF:** Global Environment Facility

**GSBA:** Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas

**GWS:** Ghana Wildlife Society

**IBAs:** Important Bird Areas. IBAs are sites of global biodiversity significance identified using international, objective standard scientific criteria. Places may be considered IBAs if they hold globally threatened species; restricted range species (world range <50,000 km<sup>2</sup>); biome-restricted species and/or congregations of significant numbers of the global population of a bird species. An IBA should as far as possible, be different in character from the surrounding area; exist as an actual or potential protected area; and, alone or with other sites, provide all the requirements of the birds, when present, for which it is important. (Fishpool and Evans, 2001).

**ISAPC:** International Species Action Plan Coordinator

**IUCN:** The World Conservation Union

**NSAPC:** National Species Action Plan Coordinator

**RSPB:** Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

**NGO:** Non-Governmental Organisation

**NBSAPs:** National Biodiversity Strategies and action plans

**NIBACS:** National Important Bird Area Conservation Strategies

**SAP:** Species Action Plan. . “A Species Action Plan (SAP) is a scientifically authoritative, strategic document that defines specific, measurable objectives and actions for conserving priority species. The plan should be achievable, time-bound and involve all appropriate stakeholders” (BirdLife International Africa Partnership, 2001).

**SIG:** Species Interest Group. A Species Interest Group is a group of people interested in the conservation of a species. It usually includes experts who have a lot of knowledge of the species and are interested in promoting its conservation but could also include a variety of other stakeholders such as local communities, hunters, business people etc. (BirdLife International Africa Partnership, 2001).

**SCNL:** Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia

**SSG:** Site Support Group. Local people based in or around sites who are concerned about biodiversity loss and who draw on the experience and achievements of the wider BirdLife International Partnership to create local solutions for biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods.

**WAPF:** Western Area Peninsula Forest (Sierra Leone)

## Executive summary

This Action Plan provides a framework within which a vision for improving the conservation status of White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymocephalus* from Vulnerable to Near-Threatened may be achieved. It sets out conservation strategies aimed at stabilising or increasing the populations of White-necked Picathartes at the species' strongholds in all the range states. Seven strategic objectives are set, of which the priorities are to ensure that realistic estimates of population size and distribution trends are available and that unsustainable human-related development and activities at major White-necked Picathartes sites are reduced by 50-75% in all range states within 5 years. The activities and projects required to achieve each of the seven strategic objectives, are outlined under broad headings of Policy and Legislation, Species and Habitat, Monitoring and Research, Public awareness and Training.

The plan was developed by representatives of stakeholder groups that included governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as academic/research institutions from the species' range states. These and other important stakeholders are assigned roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the various projects/activities in the plan that will not only benefit the conservation of the White-necked Picathartes but the entire forest-dependent biodiversity of the Upper Guinea Forest where habitat degradation and fragmentation has been severe in the last 50 years.

Under the umbrella of the African Species Working Group, an International White-necked Picathartes Interest Group was formed, coordinated regionally by the International Species Action Plan Coordinator (ISAPC) and at national level by National Species Action Plan Coordinators (NSAPCs) or national focal points. The ISAPC working in conjunction with the NSAPCs/focal points will take a lead in the overall monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the plan and produce an annual report. Various opportunities and on-going projects that may enhance the implementation of the plan exist within the range states. However, there are also risks that may hamper implementation and should therefore be borne in mind.

The process of developing this plan was participatory and interactive, to provide a training opportunity for the participants to develop their skills in species conservation approaches. The skills and experience gained will enable them to train others and produce other priority Species Action Plans at national or international levels. The involvement of government representatives will stimulate the production of the relevant priority national plans and facilitate the process of incorporating the new species conservation approaches into general national biodiversity conservation frameworks in different countries.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Species Action Plan history and objectives

In Africa, action for the conservation of birds by BirdLife International has mainly been through the identification and conservation of priority sites known as Important Bird Areas (IBAs). However, some species do not benefit much from such site-based conservation approaches because they are migratory, disperse widely or occur in small, fragmented, isolated populations over a wide area. They therefore need a species-based conservation approach across their entire range. The BirdLife International Africa Species Working Group (ASWG) was formed in 1998 by the BirdLife Council for the Africa Partnership (CAP) to lead single species conservation initiatives across the continent on behalf of the BirdLife Africa Partnership. It was recognised that the interests of BirdLife Partners in the conservation of particular species could be used as a nucleus to form African Species Interest Groups (SIGs), working for the conservation of their species of interest. The Picathartes Species Interest Group was one of the earliest BirdLife SIGs formed and together with other SIGs served as a platform for the development of an international species action plan project in Africa.

In April 2001, the BirdLife Africa Partnership initiated a three-year Species Action Plan (SAP) project entitled *Action Plans for the Conservation of Globally Threatened Birds in Africa*, coordinated by Nature Uganda, BirdLife South Africa and the RSPB (the BirdLife International Partners in Uganda, South Africa and UK respectively). In the course of the implementation of the project, international action plans have been prepared for seven species: Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* (VU), Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata*, Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* (VU), Spotted Ground-thrush *Zoothera guttata* (EN), White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* (VU), Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* (VU), Grauer's Rush Warbler *Bradypterus graueri* (EN).

The project has also prepared 15 national action plans for the following species in the countries listed: Wattled Crane (*Grus paradisea*) (VU) (Botswana), White-winged Flufftail *Sarothrura ayresi* (EN) (South Africa), White-winged Flufftail *Sarothrura ayresi* (EN) (Ethiopia), Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* (VU) (South Africa), Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* (VU) (Zambia), Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* (VU) (Zimbabwe), Cape Parrot *Poicephalus robustus* (LC) (South Africa), Spotted Ground Thrush *Zoothera guttata* (EN) (Kenya), Spotted Ground Thrush *Zoothera guttata* (EN) (Tanzania), White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* (VU) (Ghana), White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* (VU) (Sierra Leone), Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* (VU) (Cameroon), Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* (VU) (Nigeria), Grauer's Rush Warbler *Bradypterus graueri* (EN) (Uganda), Grauer's Rush Warbler *Bradypterus graueri* (EN) (Rwanda).

Prior to holding workshops for the preparation of international and national Species Action Plans, five training workshops were organised for stakeholders involved in species conservation especially targeting representatives from NGOs, governments, species experts and interest groups, research and academic institutions and the local community.

## 1.2 Why this plan?

White-necked Picathartes (*Picathartes gymnocephalus*) is Vulnerable (BirdLife International, 2004) and listed in Appendix 1 of CITES. Current distribution is highly fragmented and most known breeding colonies are small, isolated and close to the minimum for long-term viability (Thompson, 1997). The apparent continued decline in the species' population throughout its entire range necessitates special attention, particularly at regional level, for appropriate intervention. This Action Plan provides a generalized framework to promote the conservation of the species through regional collaboration.

Since White-necked Picathartes is found in small and isolated populations, it may not benefit fully from site-based conservation action like the Important Bird Area approach. Indeed, a number of

habitat conservation programmes (e.g. the Gola Forest Conservation Programme) have failed to reduce some of the key threats to the White-necked Picathartes. Fortunately, all the White-necked Picathartes range states are signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity and several articles under this convention, particularly Article 8k, oblige member states to promote the recovery of threatened species through the development and implementation of Species Action Plans. The above factors create an opportune situation to initiate a combined regional effort to address the conservation needs of this species and to build capacity in species action planning across the range states.

### 1.3 Methodology

This International Action Plan was produced at an international stakeholder workshop using a process and format developed by the BirdLife International Africa Partnership (Birdlife International 2001). The workshop process involves four main steps.

- 1 Presentation and discussion of background information in order to identify gaps in knowledge on the species and capture new information.
- 2 A thorough analysis of the threats to the species and the relationship between the threats using the problem tree development approach.
- 3 Use of the agreed threats, their interrelationship and differing priorities to draft mitigating interventions.
- 4 Development and agreement on a monitoring and evaluation plan

Further details can be obtained from a Training Manual developed during the project (Sande *et al*, 2004).

### 1.4 Geographical Scope

The Family Picathartidae comprises only two species; White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* and Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas*. The former is restricted to the Upper Guinea forests of West Africa in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana whilst the latter has been recorded in Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Bioko. This action plan addresses the conservation needs of the White-necked Picathartes in the Upper Guinea forest (a separate action plan is being prepared for the Grey-necked Picathartes)

## 2 Background information

### 2.1 Taxonomic status

The taxonomic position of *Picathartes* has been the subject of some controversy. The genus has been variously placed with the crows, starlings, flycatchers, babblers, and the warblers. *Picathartes* is now placed in a separate monotypic family (Picathartidae) in or near the thrush-babbler assemblage (Sibley and Munroe, 1990). Recent DNA analysis of cytochrome b sequences (Thompson, 1997) suggests that *Picathartes* is closer to members of the thrush-babbler assemblage (Passerida), which includes the flycatchers, starlings, tits, warblers and babblers, than to corvine taxa (Parvorder Corvida) such as crows, jays and birds of paradise. Because of the uncertain taxonomic position of *Picathartes*, several taxa have been postulated as the nearest relative, most recently the South African Rockjumper *Chaetops* (Sibley and Munroe, 1990). The problem is still unresolved.

### 2.2 Distribution and population status

Global distribution of White-necked Picathartes is restricted to the West African forest belt in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana (see Figure 1). Tables 1 & 2 show the known numbers of individuals in each of the range states. All known populations are small, isolated and close to the minimum for long term viability. The global population in the Upper Guinea forest is almost certainly far fewer than 10,000 mature individuals (threshold for Vulnerable status).

In Sierra Leone, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, a high proportion of individuals occur in protected areas but in Ghana and Liberia, populations occur almost wholly in unprotected areas (Table 2). However, in Liberia, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Liberian Government to significantly increase the size of the Protected Area System in the country. This may well have a positive impact on the national conservation status of the species

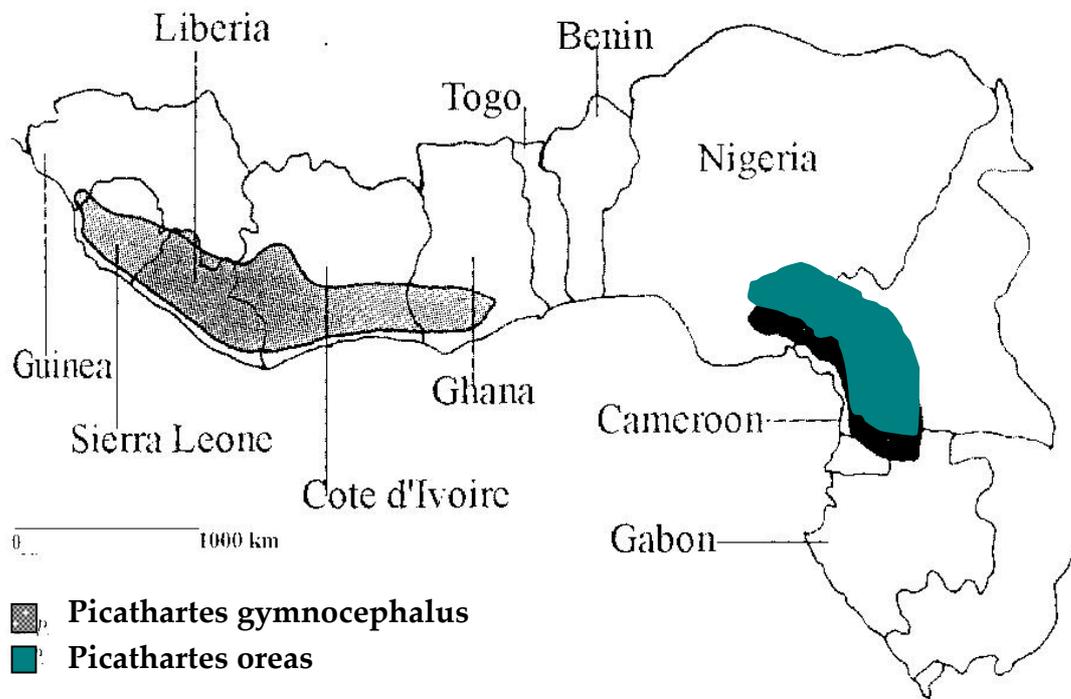
### **2.3 Movements**

The species has previously been thought to stay close to breeding/roosts sites all year round but new information suggests movement over a wide area and regular use of non-forested habitat (Siaka, 1998). Adults and juveniles may use nests for roosting in the period following the end of the breeding season.

### **2.4 Protection status**

White-necked Picathartes is classified as Vulnerable under IUCN/BirdLife threat criteria (BirdLife International 2004). The species is considered to have suffered, or is likely to suffer, a 20% population decline in 10 years or three generations. This is thought mainly to be due to declines in the extent and/or quality of its habitat. More specifically, the total population is thought to be less than 10,000 individuals and there is likely to be continuing decline of more than 10% of numbers of mature individuals in 10 years or three generations. White-necked Picathartes is listed in Appendix 1 of CITES and is protected by national legislation in most range countries. The species also benefits from various International Conservation Conventions, many of which have been signed and ratified by the range states (Table 3).

Figure 1: The Geographical ranges of the White-necked Picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* and Grey-necked Picathartes *P. oreas*



**Table 1: Population, distribution and seasonal occurrence of White-necked Picathartes (Quality code according to the World Bird Database; A = reliable, B = incomplete; C = poor; U = unknown)**

Country	Population (plus quality code)	Distribution	Population trend (plus quality code)	Notes
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	1000 – 1500 individual birds. (Density estimate = 0.365 birds per sq. km) (Thompson, 1997) (A)	Fragmented, patchy and localized: Rare but widespread throughout the country except in the north	Stable or decreasing slowly	Picathartes has lowest population density of all threatened species for which records available in the country; largest population in Gola forest
<b>Liberia</b>	500 to 1000 sites so minimum of 1000 – 2000 individual birds (Gatter, 1997) (B)	Rare to not uncommon; Numbers increase from the coast; most records in northern highlands	Not known but probably declining	Liberia probably holds largest population in Upper Guinea
<b>Guinea</b>	Unknown (Information not available) (U)	Rare to common and widespread in the South, from SW to SE; unrecorded from North.	Not known but probably declining	The species is almost certainly under severe pressure
<b>Ghana</b>	400-600 birds (King 1979, using 1965 data) (C)	Uncommon and very localised; records confined to southern third of country	Probably has declined rapidly in the last 30 years	Until recent discoveries of nesting sites in 2003, White-necked Picathartes had not been seen in Ghana since the late 1960s
<b>Cote d'Ivoire</b>	Minimum population size for known sites: 500-1000 individuals. Best guess estimate: 1500 individuals in the whole country (Hugo Rainey pers. comm.) (B) .	Localised but not uncommon; mainly occurs in the west and south	Unknown but likely to be declining as forest is lost	Cote d'Ivoire has experienced the highest rate of deforestation in the world (Fishpool & Evans, 2001)

**Table 2: Distribution, numbers & protected area status of known White-necked Picathartes colonies**

Country	Region/Province	Site (IBA site no. if applicable)	PA status	Total no. of known colonies	Total no. of nests recorded to date	References
Sierra Leone						
	Western Area	WAPF (SL007)	NhFR	8	18	Thompson (1997)
	Southern & Eastern provinces	Gola Forest (SL010)	FR	47	204	Allport, et al (1989), Thompson (1997).
	Eastern Province	Kambui Hills (SL009)	FR	6	51	Thompson (1997)
		Kangari Hills (SL006)	NhFR	11	35	Thompson (1997)
		Dodo Hills	None	9	25	Thompson (1997)
	Northern Province	Loma Mountains (SL003)	NhFR	9	23	Thompson (1997), There are unconfirmed/unpublished reports from Tama – Tonkoli (300 nests; Woolls in litt, ) and Tingi Hills. Known not to occur in Kasewe Forest Reserve
		Nimini Hills	FR	1	3	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (2003)
Liberia	Lofa (Northwest)	Wologizi mountains (LR001)	None but Proposed NR	Total of 116 reported in all of Liberia but presence of 500 - 1000 sites estimated	Not known	Gatter (1997); Fishpool & Evans (2001).
	Lofa (Northwest)	Wonegizi mountains (LR002)	None but Proposed NR			
	Lofa/Grand Cape mount (West)	Lofa-Mano (LR003)	None but Proposed NP			
	Nimba (North)	Mt Nimba (LR004)	SNR, WHS			
	Grand Gedeh (North East)	Zwedru (LR006)	None			
	Sinoe	Sapo (LR008)	NP			

Country	Region/Province	Site (IBA site no. if applicable)	PA status	Total no. of known colonies	Total no. of nests recorded to date	References
Guinea	Kindia	Grandes Chutes (GN012)	FR	??	??	Two birds (presumably a pair) observed, March-April 2003, in a narrow strip of gallery forest. This appears to be the westernmost site for this species. Demey (2003)
	Kindia	Kounounkan (GN014)	FR	2 (rare)	14	Hayman <i>et al</i> (1995); High encounter rate – 3 birds seen in 10 days
	Nzerekore	Massif du Ziama (GN016)	FR & BR	9	??	Halleux (1994 )
	Nzerekore	Mont Nimba (GN017)	SNR, FR, BR, WHS	??	??	Fishpool & Evans, 2001
	Nzerekore	Diecke (GN018)	FR	??	??	Fishpool & Evans, 2001
	North of Nzerekore	Mont Bero Forest Reserve	FR	1	2	H. Rainey (pers. Comm.); Old nests damaged by fire
Ghana	Central region	Fumso	None	??	??	McArdle (1958)
	Ashanti region	Aduamoah	Forest reserve	2	11	Grimes (1964)
	Ashanti region	Mpraeso	Forest Reserve	8	??	Grimes and Darku (1968)
	Eastern region	Kwahu-Tafo	None	??	??	Grimes and Darku (1968)
		Abetifi, Bekwai, Kumasi (to NW)	None	??	??	Grimes and Darku (1968)
		Akwapim Hills	None	??	??	Grimes (1987)
		Goaso	??	??	8	Erasmus Owusu (pers comm., 2004)
Cote d'Ivoire	Man, Odienne	Mont Sangbe NP – CI002	NP	2	4	Fishpool & Evans, 2001; Rainey (pers comm.)
	Man (West)	Mont Nimba CI003	SNR	1	6	Bruenel and Thiollay, 1969

Country	Region/Province	Site (IBA site no. if applicable)	PA status	Total no. of known colonies	Total no. of nests recorded to date	References
	Man	Gieoule, Mont Glo, Mont Momi and Sangouine CI 004	NP	1	9	Yaokokore (1997); also Hugo Rainey (pers comm.).
	Man (East)	Mont Peko NP – CI005	FR	7	51	Yaokokore (1997); Rainey & Lachenaud (2002); Hugo Rainey (pers. comm.)
		Lamto – CI009	BR	2	32	Demey and Fishpool, 1991; Salewski <i>et al</i> , 2000;
	Sassandra/Man (Southwest)	Tai – CI011 (Mt Nieneokoue)	NP, FnR, BR, WHS	6	6	Gartshore et al, 1995; Potential habitat in Cavally and Goin-Debe Forest reserves (CI008)

Key: NhFR = Non-hunting Forest reserve; FR = Forest reserve; FnR = Faunal reserve; SNR = Strict Nature Reserve; BR = Biosphere Reserve; NP = National Park; WHS = World Heritage Site.

?? = Information unconfirmed or unknown

**Table 3: National legislation and signatories to international conservation treaties relevant to White-necked Picathartes in range states**

Country	National legislation	CITES	CBD	UNESCO: Man & Biosphere	Africa Convention	World Heritage Convention
Sierra Leone	Protected: Wildlife Act 1972; hunting & trapping prohibited; Act updated, awaiting ratification.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ghana	Protected: Wild Animals Preservation Act No 43 of 1961	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guinea	Unprotected	✓	✓	✓		✓
Liberia	Protected : listed among Liberia's protected wildlife under the 1988 Wildlife and National Park Act.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cote d'Ivoire	Unprotected	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 2.5 Relationship with other Species Action Plans and biodiversity strategies

Relevant biodiversity strategies in the range states are National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plans (NBSAPs), National Environment Action Plans, and National Important Bird Area Conservation Strategies (NIBACs). In Sierra Leone and Ghana, the BirdLife Partners in these countries (CSSL and GWS) contributed to the development of NBSAPs and a link has been made between the NBSAPs and IBAs (which may contain *Picathartes*). In Sierra Leone, the Gola forest, which is a major White-necked *Picathartes* stronghold, is highlighted as the “key representative” of the Upper Guinea Forest in the country. Implementation of the Sierra Leone NBSAP may therefore contribute significantly to White-necked *Picathartes* conservation and this process must be supported and encouraged. In Liberia, GEF funding for development of a NBSAP has been approved and the BirdLife focal organisation in Liberia (SCNL) will be involved (see also Section 5.2.1.).

## 2.6 Habitat requirements of the species

Typical habitat for White-necked *Picathartes* is rocky hilly terrain (presence of inselbergs makes occurrence more likely) in lowland forest (up to 800m) with proximity to flowing streams and rivers (wet mud is essential for building nests) but some sites are known in montane forest in Sierra Leone and Liberia. A forested area large enough to host army ant swarms is more likely to contain White-necked *Picathartes*. Rocks, caves or cliffs are essential for nesting; forest litter and undergrowth for foraging (Thompson, In press - a). Recently, birds have been recorded in disturbed habitats such as forest clearings, farmbrush and secondary growth (Siaka, 1998), and in some cases quite close to human activity e.g. less than 50m from a charcoal production pit in the Western Area Peninsula Forest (WAPF) in Sierra Leone (Thompson, 1997). This suggests fairly high tolerance of disturbance and that birds may continue to exist in degraded habitats.

There seem to be stringent requirements for the birds nesting on particular rocks. Factors that contribute to making a rock surface suitable for nesting are:

- a) Rock area (height and width). Minimum distance above ground at which a nest has been found is 1.04m (n = 79) and minimum inter-nest distance is 1.5m (n = 34) (Thompson, In press - b). Height above ground is important for protection from predators. Rock area would determine the number of nests that would fit on a single surface.

- b) Angle of slope of the rock face from the perpendicular. This is important to protect nests from rain and water run-off. All nesting rocks found so far slope forward by at least 10 – 20 degrees or have been built below an overhang or rock pelmet (Thompson, 1997).

## 2.7 Biology and ecology

White-necked Picathartes build cup-shaped mud nests on rocks, cliffs or cave roofs, or occasionally on tree trunks (Waltert & Muhlenberg, 2000). Nesting sites can comprise as many as 15–20 nests but more usually hold only one or two (Thompson, in press - b).

The species is usually encountered in primary and secondary forest, usually singly or in pairs, but occasionally in small groups of three to four birds. The birds forage on the forest floor and on low vegetation not more than one metre high. They rarely make sustained flights and typically progress in bounding hops, through the undergrowth. Picathartes feed mainly on forest floor invertebrates, primarily insects, earthworms and spiders. Beetles, termites, ants and grasshoppers are the most frequently taken insects and the birds frequently follow columns of army ants to capture flushed prey. The birds also eat vertebrates - frogs and lizards - and these constitute most of the food biomass of prey fed to nestlings (Thompson, 1997; Thompson, in press - a ).

Contrary to early suggestions of co-operative breeding (Grimes, 1976), it now seems that White-necked Picathartes are monogamous. Breeding pairs defend their nests from conspecifics and vicious fights occur (Thompson, in press-b). However, outside the breeding season, 6-12 birds sometimes gather at roosting sites and engage in group displays involving “chases” and “bows” (Thompson, in press - c). Two eggs are usually laid, mostly in the wet season, and both parents incubate in turns for 20 days (median). Nestlings hatch blind and naked and are fed for 25 – 26 days. They fledge whilst still 30% smaller than adult size (Thompson, in press - b)

Recent studies (Thompson, in press - b) indicate low nesting success levels (e.g. 23% in Sierra Leone in the 1990s down from 71% in Ghana in the 1960s) where nesting success is defined as the probability of eggs laid surviving both the incubation and nestling stages. The Sierra Leone data indicated that only 0.44 chicks fledged per nesting pair (Thompson, in press - b). A theoretical predictive life-table model constructed from this data indicates that populations in Sierra Leone could be declining slowly because of natural causes alone. An alternative scenario is that White-necked Picathartes is very long-lived (adult survival >90%), and that there is strong competition for nest sites, so that populations are self-sustaining as long as adult mortality remains low (Thompson, 1997; Thompson, in press - b).

Known causes of nest losses (eggs and nestlings) are predation (e.g. raptors, snakes, squirrels, monkeys and humans), infanticide, competition from intruding conspecifics and infertile eggs (Thompson, 1997; Thompson, in press - b)

### Breeding dates

Breeding (eggs or young in nest) generally coincides with the wet season

- **Cote d'Ivoire:** March, April, May (Brunel and Thiollay, 1969; Gartshore 1989, Salweski, 2000)
- **Ghana:** March – June; September – November (Grimes and Darku, 1968)
- **Guinea -** breeding season, July – Jan (Halleux 1994);
- **Liberia:** laying dates: September, October – December (mainly October), March, May (One record of a female laying in May), and July (Gatter 1997 in Fry *et al*, 2000). Apparent dry season laying in Liberia December & March -may be explained by location e.g. high altitude locations like Mt Nimba.
- **Sierra Leone –** eggs laid from June – December (peak numbers in October); Chicks in the nest from August – January with highest numbers in November (Thompson, 1997).

## **2.8 Threats and potential threats**

In a systematic problem analysis (BirdLife International, 2002; Annex 1), it was determined that the current low White-necked Picathartes population estimates probably stem from one or more of the following: a decline in the area of suitable habitat, declining population trends estimates, lack of knowledge on the species' distribution and naturally low population densities. Habitat destruction (particularly deforestation), habitat fragmentation and degradation seem to be the main causes for the decline in the area of suitable habitat and recurrent declining population trend estimates. However, the species seems to occur in naturally low population densities (Thompson, 1997) and there is a lack of knowledge of the distribution and abundance of the species in some parts of its range (see Tables 1 & 2). Threats to the species across all range states are summarised in a problem tree (Annex 1).

## **2.9 Stakeholder Analysis**

A detailed stakeholder analysis for the conservation of White-necked Picathartes is shown in Annex 2. Because it is not possible to involve all the people or groups of people who affect the species directly or indirectly at national and international levels in the implementation of an Action Plan, the five most important national groups per country and five international groups were considered. The interests and activities of these groups, the impacts and intensity of their activities and the proposed SAP activities to address the impact of these activities were outlined. The main stakeholder groups were agreed to be: government ministries and departments, local communities (site-adjacent residents, farmers, loggers, etc), NGOs and development companies (BirdLife International 2002, Annex 2).

# **3 Action programme**

## **3.1 Vision**

The vision of this Action Plan is to "improve the conservation status of the White-necked Picathartes such that its threat status can be changed from Vulnerable to Near-threatened in the IUCN and BirdLife International Red Lists.

## **3.2 Aim**

Within five years, this action plan aims to stabilise or increase the populations of the White-necked Picathartes at strongholds or major nesting sites in all the range states.

## **3.3 Objectives**

Stabilising or increasing populations of White-necked species Picathartes at strongholds within five years will be achieved through seven strategic objectives as shown in Table 4

**Table 4: Vision, aim, objectives of the White-necked Picathartes International Species Action Plan**

Vision (10 years)	Indicator
Conservation status of White-necked Picathartes improved from Vulnerable to Near-threatened in BirdLife International and IUCN Red Lists	
<b>Aim (5 years)</b> The populations of White-necked Picathartes are stable or increasing at strongholds of the species in all range states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2007, counts of individuals at all sites holding &gt;1% of the total population (estimate) of White-necked Picathartes should not be less than 95% of the baseline count (2004).</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	
1. Level of off-take across range states determined and these levels reduced by 10-20% in 5 years (◆-◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off-take known in all range states by 2005 and campaigns to reduce it ongoing in at least 3 countries</li> </ul>
2. A realistic estimate of population size, distribution trends in all range states known and data used to identify strongholds (◆◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Populations at known sites in all range states determined by end 2005</li> <li>Key sites surveyed at least twice in five years</li> </ul>
3. Breeding success at selected strongholds of the species determined and baseline levels increased by 10-20% (◆◆-◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breeding success known for at least three strongholds across the species' range by 2006</li> <li>Factors affecting breeding success known at these strongholds and measures to mitigate them ongoing by 2007</li> </ul>
4. An enabling environment for White-necked Picathartes conservation created by raising awareness among all stakeholders (especially local communities) (◆◆◆-◆◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local communities adjacent to White-necked Picathartes strongholds are aware of and support their conservation and ultimately there are measurable White-necked Picathartes population increases at these strongholds.</li> </ul>
5. Management plans for White-necked Picathartes strongholds developed and implemented (◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management plans for at least one Picathartes stronghold in each range state developed within five years</li> <li>Implementation of the management plan for at least two strongholds across the Upper Guinea Forest initiated by the fifth year</li> </ul>
6. Unsustainable human-related development and activities at White-necked Picathartes stronghold reduced by 50-75% in all range states (◆◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent and quality of habitat for at least one stronghold in each range state stable</li> <li>Sustainable income-generating activities at three strongholds ongoing within five years</li> </ul>
7. White-necked Picathartes Species Action Plan incorporated into national conservation strategies (◆◆-◆◆◆)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration in the implementation of about 50% of the projects in Species Action Plan by relevant national stakeholders including government agencies ongoing by 2007</li> <li>One national priority action plan produced in each range state using the White-necked Picathartes SAP approach by 2007</li> </ul>

Priority: ◆=low, ◆◆=medium, ◆◆◆=high, ◆◆◆◆=critical

### **3.4 Projects concepts/activities**

Project concepts were developed that will need to be implemented in order to achieve each of the seven strategic objectives of the White-necked Picathartes Action Plan. These concepts and the main attendant activities envisaged are given below.

#### **Objective 1: Level of off-take across range states determined and these levels reduced by 10-20% in 5 years (◆-◆◆)**

- 1 Conduct national and international surveys to determine off-take levels and assess demand (if any) using questionnaires, information exchange, interviews, literature reviews (including the internet), market surveys and direct field observations involving Picathartes strongholds, zoos, bird parks and markets, and international and national organisations with potential information on any trade (e.g. CITES, TRAFFIC). Although, there is now apparently virtually no traffic in Picathartes - this survey should provide definitive proof or otherwise of the need for action.
- 2 Review existing laws and make recommendations to strengthen and standardize them among range states. Facilitate the enactment and enforcement of these laws through lobbying, workshops, and advocacy and publicity materials.
- 3 Conduct training seminars and awareness raising campaigns to promote identification and publicity of protected status of the species, targeting local communities, law enforcement officers, tourism operators, zoos, bird trappers/exporters, custom officials, local NGOs, legislators.

#### **Objective 2: A realistic estimate of population size, distribution trends in all range states and data used to identify strongholds (◆◆◆◆)**

- 1 Conduct field surveys to estimate population size and determine distribution in all range states and obtain data to determine strongholds. Conduct regular field surveys to monitor selected strongholds during the breeding season at specific time periods to obtain data that can be used for habitat monitoring. Publish results in the scientific literature.

#### **Objective 3: Breeding success at selected strongholds of the species determined and baseline levels increased by 10-20% (◆◆-◆◆◆)**

- 1 Undertake carefully designed scientific studies of breeding success at selected strongholds in range states (excluding Sierra Leone where this has already been done) to determine factors affecting success. Outline and implement recommendations to increase breeding success (if appropriate). Review and update the work already done in Sierra Leone.
- 2 Institute and maintain a wardening system at strongholds involving local communities and SSGs.

#### **Objective 4: Provide an enabling environment for White-necked Picathartes conservation by raising awareness among all stakeholders (especially local communities) (◆◆◆-◆◆◆◆)**

- 1 Design, implement and monitor national and international advocacy and publicity programs including standardized sensitization documents using literature reviews, lobbying, workshops, and advocacy and publicity materials.
- 2 Design international and national training and capacity building programmes for all stakeholders (including experience exchange) targeting SSGs, local ornithologists and bird guides, local communities and representatives, local government officials, and NGO personnel (especially communications).
- 3 Establish and ensure functioning of SSGs at selected strongholds and promote income generating activities through livelihood programmes to reduce poverty and pressure on forest resources around strongholds
- 4 Ensure functioning of Species Interest Groups (SIGs) across all range states that can spearhead species conservation work including fundraising and information exchange between range states.

**Objectives 5: Management plans for White-necked Picathartes strongholds developed and implemented (◆◆◆)**

- 1 Produce and agree participative management plans for White necked Picathartes strongholds and fundraise for their implementation, ensuring that community knowledge and needs are incorporated.

**Objective 6: Unsustainable human-related development and activities at White-necked Picathartes strongholds reduced by 50-75% in all range states (◆◆◆◆)**

- 1 Monitor and assess the impact of human-related activities on the species and sites.
- 2 Produce sensitization programmes for local people to reduce threats from land clearance and fire and promote the importance of Picathartes for biodiversity conservation wherever necessary and appropriate.
- 3 Identify, develop and promote alternatives to unsustainable human activities at sites where this is necessary. This may include development of new initiatives, introduction of improved methods of farming, introduction of animal raising programme. Involve agricultural extension services in developing alternatives.
- 4 Assess legal status of human-related activities threatening sites and enforce law where appropriate
- 5 Determine the size of the area around strongholds that will ensure survival of White-necked Picathartes and lobby for their legal protection.
- 6 Review legal aspects of land-use and status of enforcement; make recommendations for improvement and lobby for adoption of these improvements in national laws (e.g. mandatory EIAs) and forest authorities to ensure better monitoring of logging, encroachment and poaching.

**Objective 7: White-necked Picathartes SAP incorporated in national conservation strategies**

- 1 Produce, agree and promote a national Species Action Plan, distribute widely to relevant stakeholders and institute review process in the light of received comments. Lobby for inclusion of SAP objectives in national conservation and development strategies, circulate and promote international action plan.

The specifics of each project are tabulated under the broad headings of “Policy and Legislation”, “Species and Habitat”, “Monitoring and Research”, “Public Awareness and Training” (Table 5). For each project, priority countries for implementation, lead agencies, time scale, cost estimate, measurable indicators, risks and opportunities are tabulated

**Table 5: The project categories, priorities, lead agencies, time scale, cost estimate, indicators, risks and opportunities for projects required to implement the White-necked Picathartes Action Plan**

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
<b>A) Policy and Legislation</b>								
Review, strengthen and standardize existing laws among range states (Refer Objective 1.2)	All	◆◆	Implementing NGOs & National Governments	2004-2006	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National reviews completed and recommendations publicized</li> <li>○ -Existing legislation amended and publicized</li> <li>○ -Laws standardized in at least two range states</li> </ul>	National governments might not be interested in changing laws	Laws already in place in some range state
Assess legal status of human-related activities threatening sites and support law enforcement (Objective 6.4.)	All	◆◆◆	BirdLife Partner or implementing NGO with relevant government agency.	2004 - 2006	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Legislation and activity assessed at all sites</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing collaboration and commitment from local communities and law enforcement agencies</li> </ul>
Determine area around White-necked Picathartes sites required to ensure survival of the species at strongholds and lobby for legal	All	◆◆◆- ◆◆◆◆	BirdLife Partner or implementing NGO with relevant government agency.	2005-2007	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Buffer zone” around White-necked Picathartes strongholds identified by 2005</li> <li>○ Lobbying for the protection of the identified “buffer</li> </ul>	Essential that conflict is avoided with site-adjacent communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local stakeholders already collaborate in protection of some sites</li> <li>○ Mitigation measures need to be identified and put in place to compensate for any</li> </ul>

Priority: ◆ low      ◆◆ medium      ◆◆◆ high      ◆◆◆◆ critical

\$ < US\$ 10,000      \$\$ US\$ 10,000 – US\$ 50,000      \$\$\$ US\$ >50,000

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
protection (Objective 6.5.)						zones" ongoing by 2007 in at least two range states		inconvenience or loss of income to locals
Review legal aspects of land-use and status of enforcement (Objective 6.6.)	All	◆◆◆	Implementing NGO & National Governments	2005-2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Legal laws on land use reviewed in at least three range states</li> <li>○ Implementation of the reviewed land laws ongoing in at least two range states by 2007</li> </ul>	Restricted access to required information	Existing goodwill and collaboration and commitment from some local communities and law enforcement agencies
Produce, agree and promote national SAP (Objective 7.1.)	All	◆◆◆	BirdLife Partner or implementing NGO with relevant government department or agency.	Sierra Leone: 2004. All other range states - 2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At least three national plans in place by 2007</li> <li>○ Implementation of national plans in at least two range states on going by 2007</li> </ul>	Low levels of participation from SIGs and other stakeholders	Existing commitment from SIGs
<b>B) Species &amp; Habitats</b>								
Wardening at key sites (Objective 3.2.)	All	◆◆◆	Implementing NGO, SSG, Government staff	2004-2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wardening system in place at one stronghold per range state</li> </ul>	Sustainable wardening will require a long term financing plan	Existing knowledge, goodwill and collaboration and commitment from local communities at some sites (e.g. in Sierra Leone)
Identify, develop and promote alternatives to unsustainable human activities (Objective 6.2.)	All	◆◆◆-◆◆◆◆	BirdLife partners and implementing NGOs with relevant government	2005 - 2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proposals for alternative income generating activities for at least three strongholds per range state in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interest in alternative income generating activities from local</li> </ul>	Existing collaboration and experience of some local communities

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
			departments and local communities (SSGs)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ by 2005</li> <li>○ Income generating activities in at least one stronghold per range state being implemented by 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ communities</li> <li>○ Lack of a stable market for alternative products</li> </ul>	
Ensure functioning of SIGs across all range states (Objective 4.4.)	All	◆◆◆	Implementing NGOs, International NGOs, Governments, SIG, SSGs	2004-2007	\$\$	Each of the range states has a national SIG with at least five members and contributes to the international SIG's annual report	Interest from SIGs and members and other stakeholders not sustained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Existing sustained interest and commitment from SIG leader and members</li> </ul>
<b>C) Monitoring &amp; Research</b>								
National and international surveys to determine off-take levels (Objective 1.1.)	All	◆◆◆	Implementing NGOs, International NGOs, Governments and SIG	2004-2007	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Off-take levels known in at least three countries</li> <li>○ International markets identified (if any) and yearly parameters of the trade determined</li> </ul>	Difficulties in accessing relevant information	-Trafficking is believed to be virtually non-existent
Undertake field surveys to determine estimate of population size and distribution in all range states (Objective 2.1.)	All	◆◆◆◆	Implementing NGOs, International NGOs, Governments and SIG	2004-2007	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Population size known and strongholds identified in at least five range states</li> <li>○ Species' habitat assessed in at least two range states</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Some areas not accessible.</li> <li>○ -Lack of trained personnel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Some existing expertise.</li> <li>○ -Already some baseline information available, especially in Sierra Leone</li> <li>○ Charismatic species generates interest</li> <li>○ World-wide Interest from birders, scientists and others</li> </ul>

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
Conduct regular field surveys to monitor selected strongholds during the breeding season (Objective 2.2.)	All	◆◆◆◆	Implementing NGO, International NGO, Governments, SIG, SSGs	2004-2007	\$\$\$	At least 2 strong holds in at least 3 range states surveyed twice by 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ --Some areas not accessible.</li> <li>○ -Lack of trained personnel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Some existing expertise.</li> <li>○ -Already some baseline information available, especially in Sierra Leone</li> <li>○ Charismatic species generates interest</li> <li>○ World-wide Interest from birders, scientists and others</li> </ul>
Undertake scientific study of breeding success and its determinants at selected strongholds in all range states (Objective 3.1)	All	◆◆◆	SIG, implementing NGOs, Universities	2004-2007	\$\$\$	Breeding success of White-necked Picathartes known and factors that influence it determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ - Some areas not accessible.</li> <li>○ Lack of trained personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Some existing expertise.</li> <li>○ Already some baseline information available, especially in Sierra Leone</li> <li>○ Existing ringed population in Sierra Leone</li> </ul>
Identification of White-necked Picathartes strongholds through surveys (Objective 2.1)	All	◆◆◆- ◆◆◆◆	BirdLife partners or implementing NGOs and relevant government Depts.	2004-2006	\$\$\$	At least three strongholds identified per range state	Unstable security situation in some range states.	Some strongholds already known
Monitor and assess the impact of human-related activities on the species and sites (Objective 6.3.)	All	◆◆◆	BirdLife partners or implementing NGOs, SSGs and relevant government Depts.	2004-2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report on impacts of human activities on White-necked Picathartes in place by 2005</li> <li>○ Sensitisation of local people through</li> </ul>	Collaboration and commitment from local communities and law enforcement agencies not sustained	Some existing collaboration and commitment from local communities and law enforcement

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
						workshops on going by 2007		
<b>D) Public awareness and Training</b>								
Design, implement and monitor national and international advocacy and publicity programmes (Objective 4.1.)	All	◆◆◆	Implementing NGO and SIG	2004-2007	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advocacy programme in place and being implemented in at least two range states</li> <li>○ White-necked Picathartes publicity materials available in all range states</li> </ul>	Conservation of the species may be seen as a low priority activity by some stakeholders	A charismatic species which may already have cultural significance in some areas
Establish and ensure functioning of SSGs at selected strongholds (Objective 4.3).	All	◆◆◆◆	Implementing NGO, other NGOs and local communities	2004-2007	\$\$	At least one functional SSG in place at every stronghold per range state	Might be seen as low priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ -Cultural significance of species may engender interest.</li> <li>○ -Potential for carefully controlled ecotourism exists.</li> <li>○ -Community groups might already exist in some areas</li> </ul>
Training seminars and awareness raising campaigns to promote identification and publicize protected status (Objective 1.3)	All	◆	Implementing NGO, other NGOs, local communities and government	2004-2007	\$\$	At least two training workshops in three out of the five range states	Some communities might not be interested.	Existing programmes in some range states e.g. Guinea and Sierra Leone
Design international and	All	◆◆◆◆	Local and International	2004-2006	\$\$\$	By the end of 2007, at least three stakeholder	May not be given high priority by	Existing national expertise in some range states

Project	Countries	Overall Priority <sup>1</sup>	Agencies responsible	Time scale	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Indicators	Risks	Opportunities
national training and capacity building programme for all stakeholders (Objective 4.2.)			NGOs			representatives from all the range states trained in White-necked Picathartes conservation	some stakeholders.	
Produce and agree participative management plan at strongholds and fundraise for implementation (Objective 5.1.)	All	◆◆◆	BirdLife partners or implementing NGOs, SSGs and relevant Government Depts.	2004-2005	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At least two management plans for strongholds in each range state in place by 2007</li> <li>○ Implementation of at least one management plan in each range state on going by 2007</li> </ul>		Some areas in which strongholds exist may already have management plans
Sensitisation programme for local people to reduce threats from land clearance and fire and the importance of Picathartes for biodiversity conservation (Objective 6.1.)	All	◆◆◆- ◆◆◆◆	BirdLife partners or implementing NGOs; SSGs and relevant Government Depts.	2005-2006	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training programme designed by 2005</li> <li>○ At least 10 local people representatives trained to train others in Picathartes conservation in each range state by 2005</li> <li>○ Workshops organised by the trained local people on-going in all range states by 2007</li> </ul>	Local interest and commitment may not be sustained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing national expertise in some range states</li> <li>○ Some existing collaboration and commitment from local communities</li> </ul>

## 4 Monitoring and evaluation

**What & Why?** A monitoring and evaluation plan is needed to determine whether activities are progressing according to schedule. By obtaining information on the progress made in the implementation of the activities and using this information against the set indicators (Table 5), it will be possible to assess progress of implementation of the plan towards achieving the aim and objectives that were set (Table 4). Monitoring and evaluating progress on a regular basis means that priorities can be assessed and adjusted when required. This also serves as a basis for keeping everyone informed.

**Who?** It was agreed that the Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) plan for the White-necked Picathartes at international level will be coordinated by the Species Interest Group with the International White-necked Picathartes Action Plan Coordinator taking the lead across all range states. The task involves co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation, and includes financial reporting when appropriate. National Focal Points will take the lead at national level and are expected to involve other important stakeholders, such as conservation NGOs, Government departments, scientific experts and local community representatives. International Conservation NGO should be involved in the M&E process where appropriate and should be encouraged to implement some of the required projects that lie in their areas of competence.

**How & How often?** Annually (two to three months before the end of the year), the International White-necked Picathartes Action Plan Coordinator will circulate a table for monitoring and evaluating implementation of the White-necked Picathartes Action Plan (a derivative of Table 5) with two additional columns, one for completion date and another one for remarks. National Focal Points will provide information on national progress and return the table to the International Co-ordinator before the end of the year. A regional M & E report will be circulated by the International Co-ordinator in the first quarter of the following year.

## 5 Factors influencing success of action plan implementation

### 5.1 Socio-cultural effects

The species has had totemic value in parts of its range. In the south and east of Sierra Leone for example, the imposing and sometimes bizarre-looking rock formations on which the birds build their nests were once thought to house ancestral spirits and the birds themselves were considered guardians of these ancestral homes. Though these practices are now largely extinct, a residual fascination with the birds has persisted, and people are often reluctant to molest them or destroy their breeding sites. Enlisting local support for protection of Picathartes sites has therefore often proved an easy task. This is a strong base on which to build conservation action for the birds.

### 5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of current conservation measures

#### 5.2.1 Strengths

A single Picathartes (White-necked and Grey-necked) Species Interest Group was already in existence prior to development of this plan, so individuals interested in conserving Picathartes were already communicating, project proposals were being formulated and some site protection was already being undertaken. However, the SIG members have now agreed that the two species should have two different SIGs since the ranges do not overlap.

In Sierra Leone, the BirdLife Important Bird Area (IBA) programme is ongoing in Protected Areas where White-necked Picathartes occurs. This means that monitoring, research and community awareness activities targeted at White-necked Picathartes are already ongoing in these areas. Similarly in Ghana, an IBA Programme is in place although not specifically targeted at White-necked Picathartes. Some site protection involving Site Support Groups is already occurring in both Sierra Leone and Ghana. Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea have recently initiated IBA programmes. In Sierra Leone and in Guinea awareness-raising campaigns to promote conservation of the species have been undertaken.

In Sierra Leone and Ghana, a link has been made between the NBSAPs in these countries and IBAs (which may contain White-necked Picathartes). BirdLife Partners in these countries (CSSL and GWS) contributed to these NBSAPs. In Liberia, GEF funding for development of a NBSAP has been approved.

In Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone, there are ongoing specific projects that could be used as vehicles to further the conservation of White-necked Picathartes. In Ghana, the Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS) has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the national Government for the management of Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs). The GSBA programme could update information on the status of White-necked White-necked Picathartes in Ghana. In Liberia there is an ongoing bio-monitoring programme in Sapo National Park (contains Picathartes) and an ongoing Forestry Assessment Programme (with Fauna and Flora International) that will provide information on forest cover. An independent but similar study is due to start in Sierra Leone. A long-term project for the conservation of the Gola Forest in Sierra Leone (a major stronghold for White-necked Picathartes) is being re-activated with the end of civil conflict in the country.

National law in Sierra Leone and Ghana protects the species.

In Sierra Leone, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, a high proportion of known nesting sites occur in protected areas (see Table 2).

### **5.2.2 Weaknesses**

Weaknesses are similar throughout the range states

- Protective legislation enforcement is nominal due to lack of resources
- There is a lack of local community awareness at most sites
- There is a general lack of resources for Protected Area Management and other conservation measures
- Any existing populations in Ghana and Liberia occur almost wholly in unprotected areas
- The species had not been seen in Ghana for more than 30 years until it was re-discovered in 2003.

### **5.3 Appeal of species**

Because of its striking appearance, strange habits and rarity, White-necked Picathartes is fascinating to birdwatchers, tourists and scientific researchers. Since the 1990s, it has become an iconic symbol and flagship species for conservation and eco-tourism in West Africa.

### **5.4 Local Expertise and Interest**

Local expertise and interest exists amongst West African ornithologists, game rangers and forest guards (e.g. Gondho Man of Cote d'Ivoire) and local community workers (e.g. Augustine Macfoy in the Gola forest). A Species Interest Group for White-necked Picathartes is functioning.

There is comprehensive, up to date information on the species in Sierra Leone. One Ph. D and several masters' theses have been completed on the species in Sierra Leone.

### **5.5 Biology of the Species**

The species is very long-lived and has bred in captivity but stringent highly specialised habitat requirements and low breeding success in some parts of its range may mean that the species is naturally rare. This will hamper any recovery programme.

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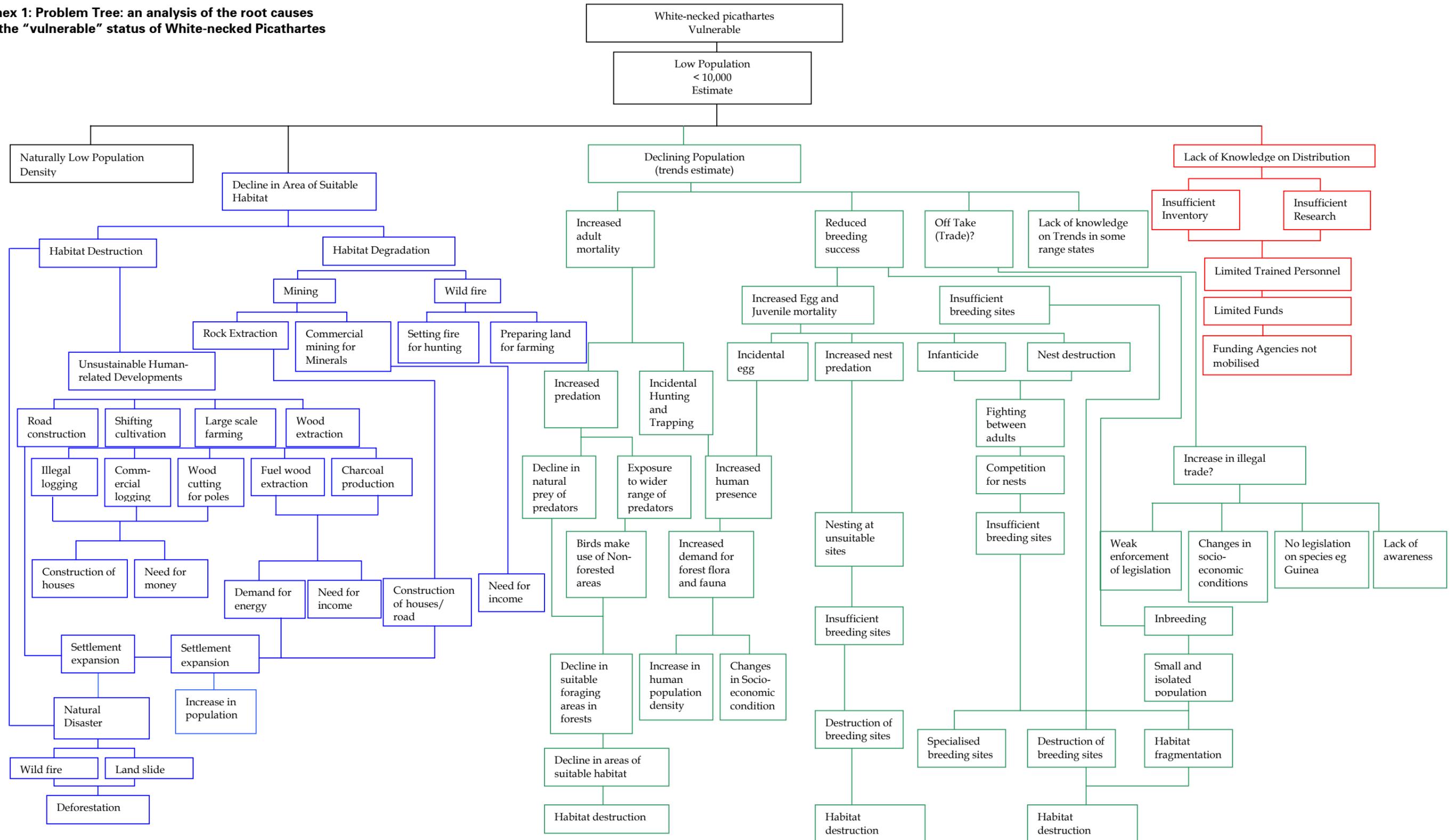
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# Annexes

**Annex 1: Problem Tree: an analysis of the root causes for the “vulnerable” status of White-necked Picathartes**



## Annex 2: Stakeholder Analysis for the conservation of White-necked Picathartes

Stakeholder	Interest	Activities	Impact	Intensity of Impact	Proposed SAP Activities
<b>International</b>					
BirdLife International	Bird and habitat conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Development of SAP</li> <li>➤ Co-ordination of SIG</li> <li>➤ Research</li> <li>➤ Site-based work</li> <li>➤ Capacity building</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Produce and promote SAP and raise funds for SAP implementation and co-ordination</li> <li>➤ Exchange of experience</li> <li>➤ Site-based work</li> <li>➤ Promotion and co-ordination of SIG</li> </ul>
Multi-national logging and mining companies	Extraction of timber and minerals for profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Deforestation</li> <li>➤ Habitat degradation</li> <li>➤ Job creation</li> </ul>	-	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lobby for protection of key sites</li> <li>➤ Potential for funding</li> </ul>
Development agencies	Capacity building and human development, poverty alleviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Medium and large scale human development projects possibly leading to habitat loss or sustainable development</li> </ul>	- +	◆◆ ◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lobby for sustainable development</li> <li>➤ Lobby for protection of key sites</li> </ul>
International conservation NGOs	Wildlife and habitat conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ As BirdLife but without SAP and SIG element</li> <li>➤ Non-bird conservation work</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Site-based protection</li> <li>➤ Potential collaboration and funding</li> </ul>
International conventions (CBD, CITES etc.)	Promoting sustainable use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Some protective legislation</li> <li>➤ Some funding opportunities</li> <li>➤ Obligation on Governments</li> </ul>	+	◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lobby for better enforcement</li> <li>➤ Potential funding opportunities (GEF)</li> </ul>
<b>Sierra Leone</b>					➤
CSSL	Conservation of species and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Information</li> <li>➤ Monitoring</li> <li>➤ Research</li> <li>➤ Awareness-raising,</li> <li>➤ IBA surveys</li> <li>➤ Education</li> <li>➤ SSGs</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formalise and strengthen SIG</li> <li>➤ Implement SAP</li> </ul>
Forestry and Environment Ministry	Management of protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Law enforcement and patrols</li> </ul>	+	◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase effectiveness of patrols</li> <li>➤ Law enforcement</li> <li>➤ Implement SAP</li> </ul>

Stakeholder	Interest	Activities	Impact	Intensity of Impact	Proposed SAP Activities
Local communities	Resource use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Farming</li> <li>➤ Logging</li> <li>➤ NTFP</li> <li>➤ Hunting,</li> <li>➤ Site protection</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p>	<p>◆◆◆◆</p> <p>◆◆◆◆</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formation of SSG</li> <li>➤ Site monitors</li> <li>➤ Involvement in SAP implementation</li> </ul>
Loggers (chain saws)	Timber harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Tree-felling and logging</li> </ul>	-	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote sustainable logging</li> </ul>
International NGOs	Conservation and protection of species and protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Expert knowledge</li> <li>➤ Funding</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote sustainable development</li> </ul>
<b>Liberia</b>					➤
Loggers	Income from logs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Extraction of logs</li> <li>➤ Road construction</li> </ul>	-	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advocacy regarding sustainable development</li> </ul>
Forestry Development Authority (FDA)	Protection of forest and wildlife (esp. endangered species) Law enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formulation of forest and wildlife laws and regulations</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Capacity building</li> </ul>
Society for Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)	Conservation of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advocacy</li> <li>➤ Awareness raising</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Capacity building</li> </ul>
Conservation International (CI)	Conservation of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Funding conservation programmes</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collaboration and co-ordination</li> </ul>
Fauna and Flora International (FFI)	Conservation of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Re-assessment of forests</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collaboration and co-ordination</li> </ul>
BirdLife International	Conservation of biodiversity, especially birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Funding</li> <li>➤ IBA Programme</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collaboration and co-ordination</li> </ul>
Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food production</li> <li>• Income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clearance of forest (shifting cultivation)</li> </ul>	-	◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Awareness raising</li> <li>➤ Sustainable agriculture</li> </ul>
<b>Ghana</b>		➤			➤
Government agencies	Protection and management of Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Research</li> <li>➤ Monitoring</li> </ul>	+	◆◆◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhance conservation of protected areas through technical assistance and resource</li> </ul>

Stakeholder	Interest	Activities	Impact	Intensity of Impact	Proposed SAP Activities
(Wildlife Division)		➤ Public awareness			mobilisation
Forest Service Division	Protection and management of Forest Reserves	➤ Research ➤ Timber production	+ -	◆ ◆◆◆◆	➤ Technical assistance for research ➤ Input for review of timber extraction procedures (MOPs) towards species conservation
Ministries of Environment and Lands & Forestry	Conservation of environment and natural resources	➤ Formulation of policies and legislation	+	◆◆◆	➤ Strengthen, review (by input) and enhance existing policies and legislation
National NGOs	Conservation of renewable natural resources and biodiversity	➤ Research Education ➤ Advocacy ➤ Community-based natural resources projects	+	◆◆◆	➤ Enhance research ➤ Enhance education ➤ Improve advocacy ➤ Provide basis for resource mobilisation
International NGOs	Conservation and sustainable development	➤ Funding for conservation and development projects ➤ Provide technical assistance for local NGOs	+	◆◆◆	➤ Identify sources of support towards implementation from the INGOs
Fringe communities	• Food security • Livelihood support	➤ Land cultivation	-	◆◆◆◆	➤ Strategy to collaborate to minimize impact
		➤ Setting wildfires	-	◆◆◆◆	➤ Public awareness
		➤ Cutting poles for firewood	-	◆◆	➤ Benefits flow and livelihood improvement
Quarrying and mining	Business Stones for infrastructure development (roads etc.)	➤ Stone quarrying or stone cracking	-	◆◆◆◆	➤ Advocacy strategy ➤ Strategy to minimize impact ➤ Means of mobilizing support for site acquisition
Traditional authorities	• Welfare of local people • Reducing poverty • Safe housing	➤ Leasing of land for development projects	+ or -	◆◆◆ ◆◆◆◆	➤ Strategy to collaborate for conservation ➤ Provision of benefits flow ➤ Alternative livelihood
District assemblies	Local administration and governance	➤ Formulation of bye-laws to assist conservation	+	◆◆◆	➤ Strategy to collaborate for conservation ➤ Opinion leaders for advocacy
		➤ Land use management	-	◆◆◆◆	➤ Opinion leaders for benefit flow and livelihood improvement
Researchers	Conservation of the species	➤ Research	+	◆◆◆◆	➤ Fill information gaps for species

Stakeholder	Interest	Activities	Impact	Intensity of Impact	Proposed SAP Activities
and SIG		➤ Education			management ➤ Input for further research on the biology and ecology of the species
<b>Guinea</b>					➤
Guinée Ecologie	Protection and conservation of threatened species	➤ Information ➤ Sensitisation ➤ Education on the environment ➤ Research ➤ Computer information	+	◆◆◆	➤ Sensitise the local population ➤ Production of relevant documentation on the species
National Water and Forest Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration</li> <li>• Conservation and protection of water, fauna and flora</li> </ul>	➤ Tree planting ➤ Rehabilitation and management	+	◆◆◆◆	➤ Location of species ➤ Distribution and documentation of findings ➤ Collection for research purposes
Ministry of Mines and Environment	Protection of ecosystem	➤ Law application ➤ Respect for conventions signed and ratified by Government	+	◆◆◆	➤ Production of relevant penal code documents
Community forest inhabitants	Biodiversity conservation	➤ Rational management of forest ➤ Detection of defaulters	+	◆◆◆◆	➤ Reinforcement of law on forestry regulations
CERE (University)	Impact research on environment	➤ Elaboration of documents for posterity	+	◆◆◆	➤ Propagation of elaborated document to all interest groups
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>					➤
SODEFOR (Forest Department)	Income from timber production	➤ Granting timber concessions	-	◆◆◆	➤ Aid implementation of management plan ➤
		➤ Controlling forest clearance	+	◆◆◆	➤ Capacity building
Farmers	Food production	➤ Land clearance and setting of fires	-	◆◆◆◆	➤ Awareness raising ➤ Extension programmes
Loggers	Timber extraction	➤ Road construction, tree felling	-	◆◆◆	➤ Advocacy regarding sustainable logging (see SODEFOR) ➤ Capacity building
Département pour la Protection de	National park management	➤ Controlling forest clearance and poaching	+	◆◆◆	➤ Capacity building

Stakeholder	Interest	Activities	Impact	Intensity of Impact	Proposed SAP Activities
la Nature (DPN)					
BirdLife International	Conservation of biodiversity, especially birds	➤ IBA programme	+	◆◆◆	➤ Collaboration and capacity building
Afrique Nature International	Conservation of nature	➤ Supporting conservation programmes	+	◆◆	➤ Collaboration and implementation of projects
Conservation International	Conservation of nature	➤ Implementation of conservation programmes	+	◆◆	➤ Co-ordination of management programmes
SCNCI	Conservation of nature	➤ Survey and training staff	+	◆◆	➤ Collaboration and training

*Intensity of the impact:* ◆ *low*      ◆◆ *medium*      ◆◆◆ *high*      ◆◆◆◆ *critical*