



West Africa Programme
BP 8060
Dakar-Yoff
Senegal

Waterbird and IBA surveys, training and public awareness in Guinea-Bissau, 2000-2002



The youth group complete their theatrical performance at the launch

Official Launch of the four project publications, 17th October 2005

Report to the Trilateral Working Group (TWG) on the Wadden
Sea



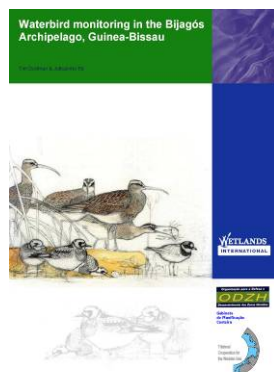
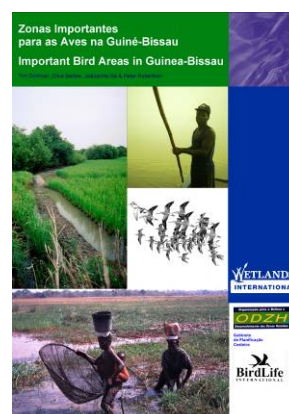
Introduction

In April 2000, Wetlands International and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat came to an agreement for the execution of activities under the project *Waterbird and IBA surveys, training and public awareness in Guinea-Bissau, 2000-2002*. The project started in July 2000. During the project, four publications were produced, the last of which was concluded in February 2005. All four were launched officially in Bissau in October 2005.

The Publications

1. Important Bird Areas in Guinea-Bissau

This bilingual report in English and Portuguese was published in November 2004. It identifies and describes 10 sites identified as Important Bird Areas (IBAs), and includes conservation recommendations for each site. An introduction describes the IBA process and gives general information about Guinea-Bissau, as well as an overview of threats to biodiversity at a national level. Much detail is given in the Annexes, including a comprehensive updated national bird list for the country.

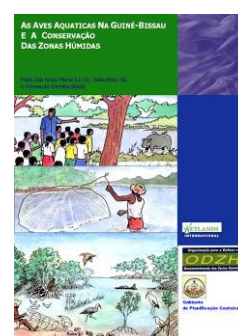


2. Waterbird Monitoring in the Bijagós Archipelago, Guinea-Bissau

This publication is also printed in English and Portuguese, and was published in February 2005. It presents an overview of the inter-tidal area of the Bijagós Archipelago and its waterbirds, reviews past surveys and research programmes and their results, and provides practical recommendations for future monitoring. It also includes a training manual in the annex section covering the main aspects of waterbird census and wetland inventory.

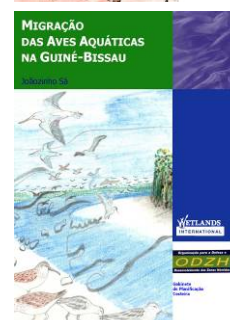
3. As Aves Aquáticas na Guiné-Bissau e a Conservação das Zonas Húmidas

This educational booklet is aimed at school children, but is also proving popular with wider age groups. It presents information on wetlands in Guinea-Bissau and on some of the more common and recognisable waterbirds. It carries illustrations by a local artist. It is available in Portuguese and was published in 2003.



4. Migração das Aves Aquáticas na Guiné-Bissau

This is another educational booklet in Portuguese aimed at children, and presents information on the migration and ringing of waterbirds. It was also published in 2003.



The Launch

The launch took place on 17th October 2005 at the Hotel Bissau in Bissau from 9am to 2pm. It was organised by Wetlands International-Bissau and the national NGO 'Organisation for the Protection and Wise Use of Wetlands' (ODZH), which was established by the project. The launch comprised the following components:

a. Welcoming speech

Joãozinho Sá, Wetlands International Coordinator in Bissau, welcomed participants to the launch and introduced the main speakers and the artistic troupe.

b. Artistic performance

A local drama youth group performed short songs and a play about birds and nature conservation. The leads of the play were a young girl as a bird (complete with pelican wings) and a young boy as somebody who finds the bird and tries to sell its ring to IUCN. There were some very amusing moments, especially when the boy was asking for Nelson Diás at the IUCN office to sell the ring to! All wore special T-shirts, which were produced for the occasion and distributed to participants.



c. Introduction to the books by Nelson Diás, IUCN-Bissau

Nelson Diás, Country Director of IUCN, presented all 4 documents, providing summary information about each one and related anecdotes. It was very good to note this positive contribution of IUCN to the launch ceremony.

d. Debate

Joãozinho Sá chaired a series of questions and comments about the books and about wetland and waterbird conservation issues in Guinea-Bissau. There was much interest in migratory waterbirds and some discussion on avian influenza. Contributors included the Honorary Consul of The Netherlands and representatives from veterinary, educational, environmental, forestry and fisheries departments, as well as from leading NGOs in the country, such as AD (Development Action). The debate was lively and informative.

e. Presentation of the Project by Joãozinho Sá

Joãozinho Sá gave a 20-minute power point presentation summarising the main activities and results of the project. The presentation was highly pictorial and gave an impressive overview of the project achievements and of the wetlands and waterbirds of Guinea-Bissau.

f. Official Presentations

There were official presentations by:

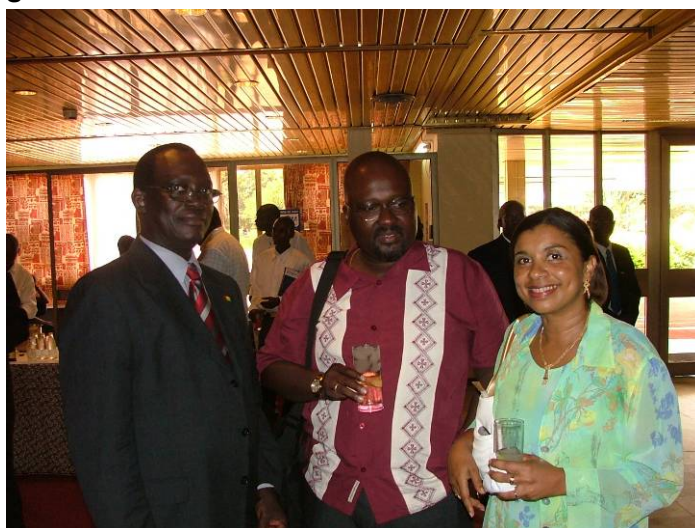
- Seydina Issa Sylla, Africa Programme Director of Wetlands International
- Alfredo Simão da Silva, Director of IBAB
- Mrs Helena Nosoliny Embalo, Minister of Fisheries
- Daniel Gomes, Minister of the Presidency and Social Communication

Mr Gomes, as the most senior Minister in Guinea-Bissau, then officially launched the publications, thanked Wetlands International and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and announced a new fund for 2005-2007 to be provided by Vogelbeschirming (BirdLife The Netherlands) of 50,000 euro for conservation of IBAs. Books were then handed out to those present, whilst ODZH will undertake wider distribution in Guinea-Bissau. Wetlands International will distribute remaining books outside of the country; (some have already been distributed).



Left to right: Tim Dodman (WI), Joãozinho Sá (WI-Bissau), Issa Sylla (WI), Nelson Diás (IUCN), Daniel Gomes (Minister), Helena Embalo (Minister), Alfredo da Silva (IBAP), Abdoulaye Ndiaye (WI-Dakar).

g. Cocktail and Press Release



The launch was followed by a cocktail, with refreshments and food, when participants mingled and discussed informally for over an hour. At the same time, a press release was held in the meeting room, and the whole event was broadcast on national television and radio.

Altogether, there were over 70 participants at the launch.

Budget

The budget for the launch was 5,000 euro. The main expenses were transport between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, hotel costs, the buffet and cocktail, book distribution, local transport and publicity. All receipts have already been submitted.

25th November 2005