

# Plan d'action Zones Humides et Oiseaux Côtiers - PAZHOC

Newsletter # 1

## The Action Plan and its objectives

We are delighted to announce the launching of the Action Plan for Wetlands and Coastal Birds in West Africa (PAZHOC). This Action Plan is funded by the MAVA Foundation up to 5.5 million euros for a 3 years 1st step period. It responds to the need to face the squeezes that threaten the wellness of the West African coastline, its resources and its biodiversity. The Plan centers on the main wetlands between Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau: Banc d'Arguin and Diawling National Parks, Senegal Low Delta Transboundary Biosphere reserve, Saloum Delta and Bijagós Archipelago. Besides the actions aiming to improve sites management, the focus will be on migratory waterbirds for which these sites play a crucial role.

PAZHOC aims to enhance the capacities of all categories of stakeholders, reason for which it brings together 27 direct partners who will be involved in the areas of research, management, development, communication and advocacy. A kick-off workshop gathered these partners in Dakar from 10 to 12 April 2018 to get to know each other and each of the projects constituting the Action Plan. It served in addition to that, to define the methods of management, collaboration synergies, internal and external communication mechanisms.

*«PAZHOC aims to enhance the capacities of all categories of stakeholders»*

## The key challenges to take

The West African coastal zone, real backbone of the development incur considerable press from multiple sources: town planning, infrastructure, offshore hydrocarbons, fishing, tourism, transport. The manipulation of the littoral space and its resources results in a degradation of the natural environments and the services provided by the ecosystems, as well as more frequent conflicts of use. The decrease in numbers of migratory waterbirds that share their existence between northern Europe and West Africa is a possible marker of this degradation. Climate change impacts add their specific threats to this set of pressures.



### Content

The Action Plan and its objectives:.....	1
The key challenges to take:.....	1
The answers provided by the PAZHOC:.....	2
PAZHOC Kick-off workshop:.....	3



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«The Action Plan focuses on key heritage sites using migratory waterbirds as an indicator of ecosystem health.»

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## The answers provided by the PAZHOC

The Action Plan focuses on key heritage sites using migratory waterbirds as an indicator of ecosystem health. Its core components are:

The Scientific research focused on understanding the ecological functioning of coastal wetlands and their importance to waterbirds. This component has the distinction of being collaborative and participatory: it involves European *universities and research laboratories* Portugal and the Netherlands, which will train researchers and technicians from the host countries and work with the participation of local communities in order to integrate their empirical knowledge.



These laboratories are linked to networks that study birds along their flyway, which will help link African sites to international conservation efforts.

*Main partners: University of Aveiro and Lisbon (Portugal), University of Groningen and NIOZ Oceanographic Institute (Netherlands); universities of Nouakchott, St Louis, Dakar and Bissau.*

Implications in site management are assigned to national institutions with jurisdiction over protected areas and biodiversity. They represent the center of gravity of efforts devoted to priority wetlands. They integrate the results of the research in their management plans, coordinate the implementation of the Action Plan in the field, including

logistic, establish platforms of exchange between the actors and the resident populations of the protected areas, developing communication and advocacy actions for better consideration of natural environments in national planning. Particular emphasis is placed on the Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas of Guinea-Bissau because of the importance of the Bijagós archipelago for waders and the low level of knowledge that we have on this site.



*Main Institutions: Banc d'Arguin National Park, Diawling National Park, Directorate of Protected Areas of the Coast (Mauritania); directorate of National Parks, Barbary Langu National Park, Saloum Delta National Park (Senegal);Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (IBAP).*

International NGOs bear cross-cutting responsibilities within the Action Plan. BirdLife International will develop a line of research, monitoring, management and conservation specific to coastal marine birds and support the strengthening of national NGOs in this area. His experience and international audience will be used for communication and advocacy, as well as education and local development. Wetlands International, which organizes international waterbird censuses, will be responsible for strengthening the technical and institutional capacity of national bird protection networks. Observers will be trained in census techniques, database analysis and management, and implications for site conservation. Wetlands will equally participate in liaison efforts with international networks.



National NGO partners will be involved in field activities related to site and bird protection. As well as education and environmental communication at local and national level,

and for development initiatives. The plan is based on their knowledge of the field and local actors. It is, in turn, an opportunity to enhance their capacity in these different areas.

*Main national NGOs involved: Nature Mauritania; Nature Development Communities NCD and Nebeday (Senegal); Tinguena, Palmeirinha and Organization for the Defense of Wetlands - ODZH (Guinea-Bissau).*

The local communities present on the sites will be direct partners of the Action Plan. They contribute to knowledge efforts, the definition and application of management measures, the monitoring of certain key species and the monitoring of territories. They are involved in education and communication actions and implement development activities where appropriate.

The Regional Program for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone in West Africa (PRCM) remains a principal partner of the Action Plan. He has several cross-cutting responsibilities in leadership, coordination, communication and advocacy. Its Coordination Unit will be responsible for facilitating communication among the 27 direct partners of the Action Plan. Also for building synergies at the regional and international levels in support of the objectives of the Action Plan.

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*«The local communities present on the sites will be direct partners of the Action Plan»*

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## PAZHOC Kick-off workshop

The workshop took place in Dakar from 10 to 12 April in the presence of the principal partners of the Action Plan. Each of them presented the contents of the component for which they are responsible for thus enabling everyone to better

understand their respective positions within the group. The logical framework of the project has been revised. Aspects related to the governance of the Action Plan, coordination, animation and communication were thoroughly discussed.



A Steering Committee will meet once a year on one of the priority sites. It will provide an opportunity to conduct a periodic review and plan activities for the following year. On this occasion, we will seek to bring together all the partners and take advantage of the event to organize communication, advocacy and training operations. It is expected the next CP will take place in the Bijagós archipelago by January 2019. The Workshop was an opportunity to present the website dedicated to PAZHOC (<http://zonecotiere.prcmarine.org>) and

discuss the different means of communication between the partners. This newsletter is intended to be published quarterly and will keep you informed of the achievements of the Action Plan. The quality of the communication will depend on the information that will be communicated by the actors. We therefore commit you to inform us of your initiatives as they relate to the West African coastal zone, priority sites or waterbirds.

*«The quality of the communication will depend on the information that will be communicated by the actors»*



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**Principal implementing partners**



**Partenariat régional pour la conservation de la zone côtière et marine**  
 Complexe Sicap Point E, Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop, Immeuble A, 2<sup>ème</sup> étage,  
 Dakar Sénégal - Tél : +221 33 869 02 87 • [www.facebook.com/prcmarine](http://www.facebook.com/prcmarine)  
 Twitter : @prcmarine • [prcm@iucn.org](mailto:prcm@iucn.org) - <http://zonecotiere.prcmarine.org>