



**Project Title:** Do Protected Areas work? Assessing long-term land-cover change in priority sites for conservation in Africa using remote sensing

**Region and Countries:** Africa  
**Donor:** Cambridge Conservation Initiative  
**Focal Area:** Important Bird Areas/Protected Areas in Africa  
**Duration:** 2years 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012  
**Total Amount of Financing:** £73,433.85  
**Total Amount to BirdLife International:** £31,210  
**Collaborators:** RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, Zoology Department - Cambridge University  
**Project Status:** Ongoing

### **Project Description:**

Protected Areas represent one of the central pillars of global biodiversity conservation. Past studies demonstrate that PAs are effective in reducing deforestation, but the effectiveness of PAs at conserving other land-cover types remains poorly known. The paucity of biodiversity monitoring, especially in the tropics, is well documented, and our ability to assess the effectiveness of legal site protection in slowing or preventing long-term adverse land-cover change is consequently low, greatly reducing opportunities to identify characteristics of PAs that have been successful and those that have not and by doing so to strengthen the network.

### **Aims of the project and roles implementing institutions**

- Assess the effectiveness of protected area status in reducing adverse land-cover change (BirdLife, RSPB, UNEP-WCMC)
- Develop long-term indices of land-cover change in PAs in Africa, which can be disaggregated and compared by region, habitat, management etc., (BirdLife, RSPB, UNEP-WCMC)
- Identify characteristics of sites at high risk of land-cover change and identify correlates of PA success and failure (Cambridge University)
- Using these characteristics, identify PAs at high risk of degradation (Cambridge University, UNEP-WCMC)
- Make a major contribution to the debate on the effectiveness of PAs at preventing adverse land-cover change (all partners)
- Publish results in high-ranking scientific journals (all partners)
- Feed the results into existing CBD, IBA and PA monitoring (UNEP-WCMC, BirdLife)
- Produce a protocol to guide the future monitoring of African PAs using remote sensing (UNEP-WCMC, RSPB, BirdLife) and so contribute to the development of GEOPAAM, the UNEP-WCMC led GEOSS initiative

### **Measure of Success**

The measurable indicators by which the success of this project will be assessed are

- increased availability of information derived from remote sensing on land-cover changes on Protected Areas and other sites of conservation concern to the conservation community
- quantification of the extent to which legal protection of sites reduces rates of land-cover change
- identification of the drivers of land-cover change inside PAs

- characterisation and identification of sites that may be at particular risk of land-cover change
- increased flow of information into PA, IBA and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) reporting processes
- publication of results in high-impact journals
- integration of the findings into national IBA monitoring systems by BirdLife Partners in Africa.

**Progress made:**

Land cover change analysis of over 200 candidate sites in Africa been drawn up and analysis being done and efforts to disseminate to the outputs wider audience have been initiated.

**Contact us:**

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