

Conservation of marines IBAs in West Africa

Title

The coastal area of West Africa is historically known to be highly important for seabirds and palaeartic migratory birds. This evidence was clearly highlighted by the gap analysis of the West African Marine Protected Areas Network (RAMP AO) conducted by the International Foundation of Banc d'Arguin (FIBA) in 2012 (*l'analyse des lacunes du RAMP AO*).

Whilst most seabird nesting colonies are found on shore, to a great extent within Marine Protected Areas, their foraging and wintering areas are offshore outside existing MPAs with little or no protection measures.

Furthermore, a greater percentage of the palaeartic migrants are found in unprotected coastal wetlands.

The FIBA Foundation, with the support of the MAV A Foundation has initiated a first step towards protecting these offshore areas and coastal wetlands through a seabird conservation project (Alcyon) that will support identification of critical sites and resources for seabirds. This 3-year collaborative project with BirdLife International will build on the on-going Conservation of Migratory Birds project (CMB).

Alcyon project will promote the conservation efforts of La FIBA, BirdLife International and BirdLife project partners: Nature Mauritanie, Guinee Ecologie, Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, West Africa Bird Study Association (WABSA), Organizaçã o para a Defesa o Desenvolvimento das Zonas Humidas (ODZH). Association Nature-Communautes-Developpement (NCD), Biosfera I - Associaçã o para Defesa do Meio Ambiente.

The project will provide an opportunity to monitor seabirds and to understand the threats to seabirds and use of seabirds as indicator of good fishing areas by artisanal fisher folks. Additionally, the project will contribute to identification of candidate MPAs in West Africa.

Image not found

[Puffins Almadies](https://www.birdlife.org/community/wildlife/Almadies/Almadies-04/Puffins-Almadies-300x199.jpg) [Puffins Almadies](https://www.birdlife.org/community/wildlife/Almadies/Almadies-04/Puffins-Almadies-300x199.jpg)

Written by: Julien Semelin