

Project Update: July 2014

Field Survey

Beginning from February 2014 to June 2014, our research team surveyed 14 local communities across Cross River State to assess the prevalence and drivers of the trade on wildlife body parts. In each community we interviewed not less than 10 people across different age classes and occupation types. Structured questionnaires designed to capture the prevalence and socio-economic drivers of trade on avian body parts were presented to interviewees. In all, we interviewed 216 people across the surveyed communities.

Awareness campaign

Our survey team has so far visited and held conservation awareness meetings with 11 groups in nine of the already surveyed communities. In every community where awareness meetings have been held, we worked closely with community and youth leaders to ensure good attendance at meetings. An average attendance of 21 people per meeting was achieved during this phase of the project. We have also printed 900 copies of our conservation awareness poster and have distributed over 500 of these in all the communities that we have visited. Posters were distributed during awareness meetings, around town halls and restaurants. Also, to reach a wide audience, some posters were posted in public places including town halls, market squares, drinking bars and restaurants that are believed to be frequent by most community members. Doing so, we are confident that many who did not attend our awareness meetings or get personal copies of the awareness posters will still be able to access them and hopefully comprehend the message.

Work in progress

We are currently working on completing our surveys in the remaining seven communities selected for this study. We are also planning conservation enlightenment meetings in the communities that are yet to be surveyed. We are currently finalising arrangement with the management of the Cross River Broadcasting Corporation (the state radio and television house) for a time slot in one of the corporation's top environment talk shows "The Ecosystem". This will be an opportunity to communicate current and potential threats of the trade on wildlife body parts on the region's biodiversity to a wider audience. We are also hopeful that this media talk show will draw the attention of policy makers to this emerging threat facing biodiversity in the region.