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Capacity development for monitoring biodiversity policies in Africa: Joining Science and Policy

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Need for biodiversity monitoring

We are facing a world biodiversity crisis!

We need to:

- understand its evolution and propose solutions
- develop monitoring schemes to understand its trends

Indicators, including temporal baselines, are crucial to:

- measure the change in biodiversity over time
- evaluate progress towards its conservation and sustainable use
- set conservation priorities
- feed into the national reporting on international agreements such as the CBD and SDGs

Focus on Africa

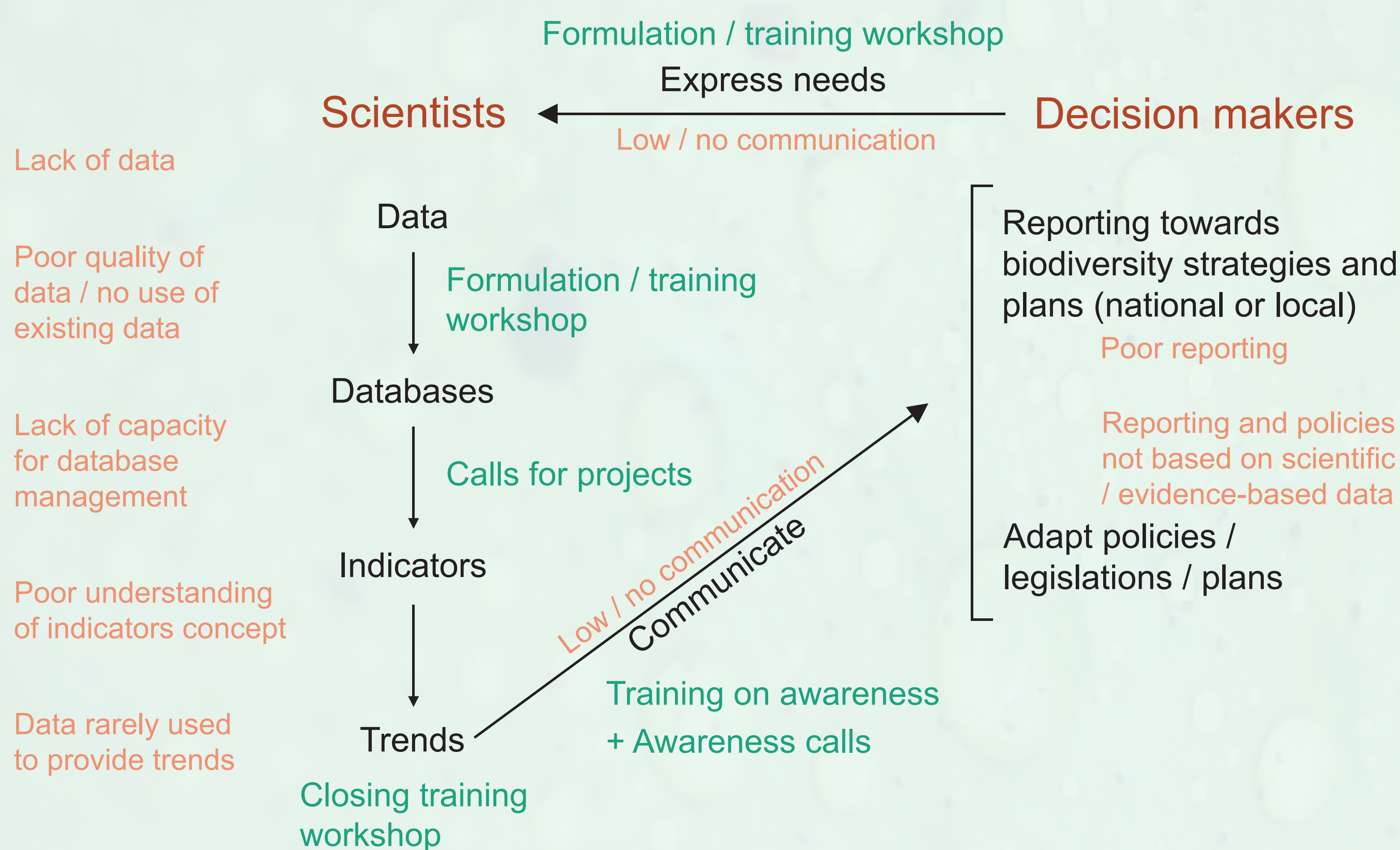
The challenge of biodiversity loss is particularly acute in Africa:

- multiple biodiversity hotspots and rich natural resources
- high direct dependency on ecosystem services
- expected to suffer an ever-increasing decline in biodiversity, in part due to a rapidly expanding population (expected to double by 2050)

Huge gaps exist for biodiversity monitoring in Africa:

- data quantity and availability (biodiversity data richness is skewed towards the poles)
- data quality
- data accessibility (lack of collaboration and publication)
- technical barriers (e.g. availability of software or internet)
- lack of collaboration and communication at the science-policy interface

Our approach for capacity building to improve biodiversity monitoring and reporting in Africa



In brown: key partners

In black: key steps for biodiversity monitoring and reporting

In orange: main issues identified for each step

In green: our capacity development activities (further developed below)

Some numbers...

- 3 calls for projects (2015, 2016, 2018)
- 24 projects from 10 partner countries (Benin, Burundi, DR Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Palestinian territory, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda)
- 15 follow-up awareness projects
- Southern partners involved:
 - » 3 NGOs
 - » 20 universities and research institutes
 - » 21 administrations and agencies in charge of biodiversity conservation
- 4 Training workshops (in Belgium, Benin, DR Congo and Uganda) gathering 94 scientists and decision-makers in total

Our capacity building activities

Call for projects

- Objective: developing policy-relevant biodiversity indicators
- “Tandem” approach (scientists-decision-makers) enabling decision makers to express their needs for policy-relevant data
- Learning by doing + distance support
- Key themes about the sustainable use of biodiversity: protected areas, bushmeat, fisheries, charcoal

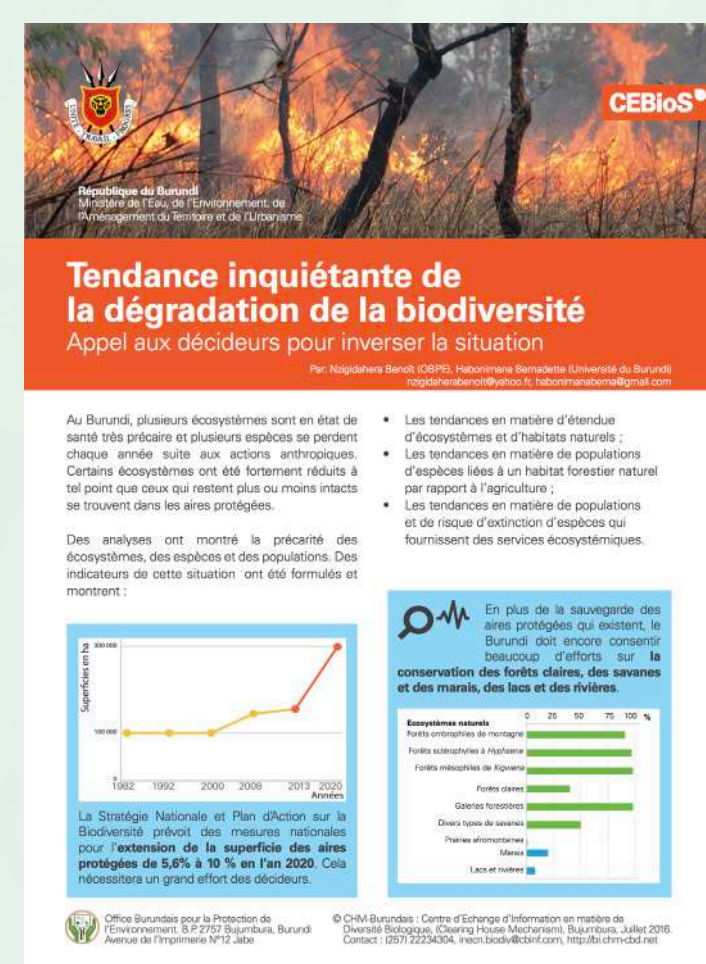
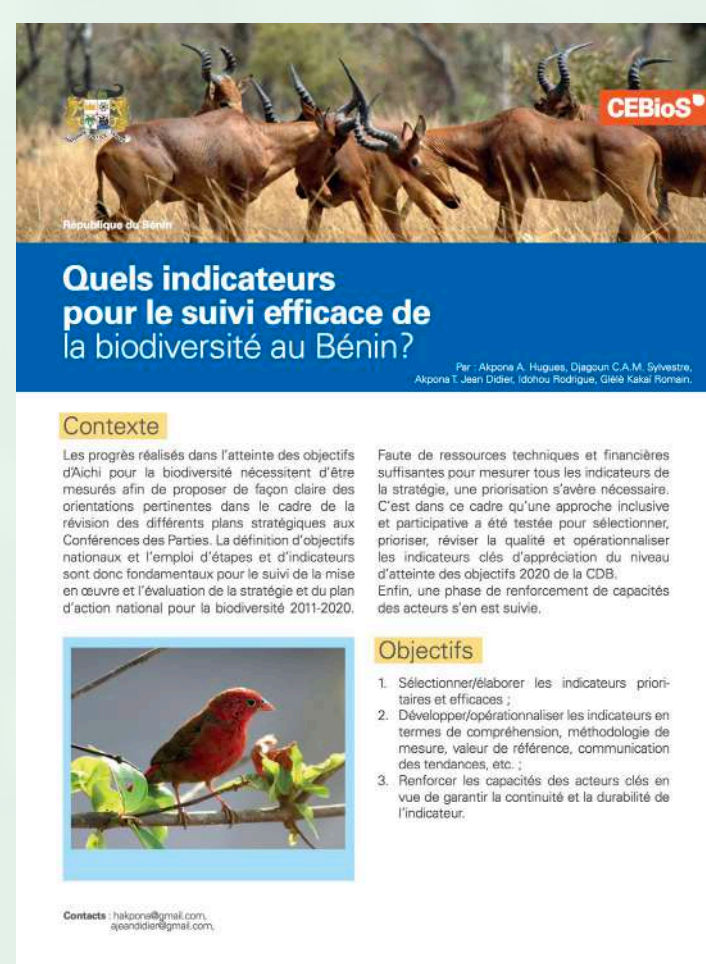
Formulation/training workshops

- Presentation and fine-tuning of the projects
- Training about:
 - » project management
 - » field methodologies
 - » use of online data sets
 - » database management
 - » indicator development methodology
 - » science-policy interface



Call for follow-up awareness projects to disseminate key results

- Policy briefs to decision-makers
- Other awareness products about the sustainable use of biodiversity (related to the theme of the developed indicator) to local communities



Closing/training workshops

- Exchange of best practices
- Training about:
 - » communication towards policy-makers and different target groups
 - » creation of policy briefs
- Common production of:
 - » policy briefs
 - » scientific papers about indicator development¹



Who are we? – <http://cebios.naturalsciences.be>

CEBioS: ‘Capacities for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development’.

- Programme of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS)
- Financed by the Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD)
- Carries out capacity building for partners of the Belgian cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management linked to poverty eradication

¹Published papers:

- Maarten P.M. Vanhove, Anne-Julie Rochette, Luc Janssens de Bisthoven, *Joining science and policy in capacity development for monitoring progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the global South*, Ecological Indicators, Volume 73, 2017, 694-697.
- Anne-Julie Rochette et al., *Developing policy-relevant biodiversity indicators: lessons learnt from case studies in Africa*, Environmental Research Letters, 2018.

In preparation: Challenges for policy-relevant monitoring of selected natural resources in DR Congo

Pictures credits: A.-J. Rochette & D. Akonkwa