NGO 12

Implementation of camera trap networks at the national level as contribution to provide monitoring tools and indicators to targets 11 & 12

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- I am making this statement on behalf of Conservation International and the Wildlife Conservation Society in reference to Target 11 and 12. Species and community trend data are particularly difficult and expensive to collect but are crucial to inform Targets 11 and 12, and to assess protected area management effectiveness in a new dimension beyond the size and extent of protected areas.
- Using Camera traps is a cost-effective monitoring option for the medium and large birds and mammals in terrestrial ecosystems, in particular forests where animals are difficult to detect. Camera traps provide photographic evidence that can be verified by experts. They are passive detectors that do not interfere with natural animal behavior. Camera traps are active 24 hours/day and pick up a great variety of cryptic, rare and nocturnal species, increasing the breadth of biodiversity inventories. Inter-observer reliability is high relative to human data collectors. Finally, properly designed camera trap monitoring programs can generate monitoring metrics for entire communities that are unbiased, reducing uncertainty about trends in biodiversity.
- An initial analysis of the costs of camera trapping suggests that monitoring costs would take up between 10-20% of current monitoring budgets. For countries that monitor PAs by sending teams into the PA for more than a few weeks annually, camera traps may be a viable monitoring alternative.
- We have just launched with the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership a new indicator, the Wildlife Picture Index specifically designed to track changes in diversity of vertebrate communities using camera trap data. This indicator is very flexible and it is ideal indicator to monitor the trends of species and whole communities.

- The Tropical Ecology Assessment and Monitoring network and its partners will be contributing more detailed documentation to the CBD secretariat and to GEO-BON, that will include design guidelines, available data base structures, data standards and open source tools to collect and process camera trap data. We will also release soon an application to calculate the Wildlife Picture Index for analysis and visualization of this index at many different spatial levels (Protected area, country, region, globe).
- We would like to promote and encourage Parties to seriously consider adopting these new approaches, as they contribute to solve the problem of monitoring species and communities of terrestrial vertebrates, the problem of monitoring protected area effectiveness in a new dimension, and the problem of developing an indicator for these data.