

Introduction

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is located on the west coast of central Africa, between Cameroon and Gabon in the Gulf of Guinea and the Bay of Biafra. It includes two islands, Bioko: off the coast of Cameroon and Annobón, off the coast of Gabon, and three islets Corisco, Elobey Grande and Elobey Chico. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea share the waters of Corisco Bay but remain in dispute regarding the uninhabited islands of Mbanie, Coctotiers, and Congas. Equatorial Guinea's 350 km coastline includes a variety of habitats: sandy beaches, mangroves, seagrass beds, riverine estuaries and steep cliffs. The rainy season (December to February in the south, June to August in the north) brings strong winds and heavy rains.

At Risk Wildlife

In this section some individual wildlife species are mentioned followed by a letter in parentheses. These are species included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species within the top three categories of risk - Vulnerable to extinction (V), Endangered (E) or Critically Endangered (CR).

Equatorial Guinea has two Ramsar sites of importance for migratory birds, the Isla de Annobón and The Reserva Natural del Estuario del Muni. Valuable mangrove habitat for manatees is also found in the Estuario del Muni.

Avian species – Equatorial Guinea's islands and islets are important feeding and nesting areas for seabirds both resident and migratory. The Cape Gannet (V) and Damara tern (V) are species of concern in these areas.

Marine mammals – the African manatee (V) inhabits coastal waters off Equatorial Guinea. Extensive coastal mangrove areas, important habitat for the manatee, are found in the estuaries of the Mbini, Muni and Ntem Rivers. Marsh mongoose may be found in estuarine and coastal areas.

A variety of whales and dolphins are found offshore but there are no inshore species in the region.

Marine reptiles – Hawksbill (CR), leatherback (V), green (EN) and Olive Ridley (EN) sea turtles nest on southern Bioko Island, the most important nesting area, off the coast of Cameroon and at least two of those species nest on Annobón Island. Corisco Bay, shared by Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, accommodates an extensive sea grass ecosystem, which is important for green turtle foraging. Turtle nesting season runs from September to April with peak numbers in January. Leatherback and green turtles are the most frequent nesters in the country.

Regional Seas

South Atlantic Ocean

Central and West Africa Regional Sea

Past experience

There have been no major spills in the waters of Equatorial Guinea, however there have been a number of minor incidents, including an oilfield pipeline leak in 2003, none of which resulted in reports of impacts on wildlife.

Response: the role of the authorities

The National Oil Spill Contingency Plan or Plan Nacional de Contingencia para Derrames de Hidrocarburos al Medio Marino, was last approved in 2011 and was due for further updating as of 2015.

Under the present plan, the Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources is the Competent National Authority for oil spill response. The Ministry of Forests and the Environment and the Ministry of Transport would also be involved in response oversight.

Oiled wildlife response

Formal guidelines?

There are no formal guidelines for oiled wildlife response in the National Contingency Plan.

Response objectives and strategy

N/A

Euthanasia or rehabilitation?

It is expected that rehabilitation would be allowed but no formal strategy or local expertise exists.

Impact assessment

There is no reference to impact assessment in the National Contingency Plan, however, the Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial (UNGE) in Malabo has an Environmental Sciences Faculty involved endangered species conservation and ecological issues, and may participate in impact assessment. The Institute for Development of Forests and Protected Areas (INDEFOR) is the most likely government agency to be involved in impact assessment.

Notification and early response

There is no system for notification and early response to oiled wildlife within the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

Wildlife responders

No dedicated wildlife rescue or rehabilitation organisations exist in Equatorial Guinea.

The Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program (BBPP), a joint effort between Drexel University in the US and the Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial (National University of Equatorial Guinea-UNGE) is involved in conservation projects on Bioko Island including protection of nesting sea turtles, avian conservation and protection of primates from the bushmeat trade. BBPP has an MoU with the National Institute for Forestry Development and Protected Area Management/Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Forestal y Gestión del Sistema de Áreas Protegidas (INDEFOR-AP)

Tortugas Marinas de Guinea Ecuatorial (Proyecto TOMAGE--Sea Turtles of Equatorial Guinea), which is a project of INDEFOR-AP, does some conservation and education work on the mainland of Equatorial Guinea.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) works with INDEFOR-AP on developing Marine Protected Areas. These organisations may be able to assist with logistics in country and evaluating areas of greatest risk.

Cooperation between stakeholders

There is some collaboration within and among the NGOs and government agencies involved in wildlife conservation and habitat protection (see Wildlife Responders).

As a collaborator in the Global Initiative-West And Central Africa (GI-WACAF) Equatorial Guinea works with other countries in the region on oil spill response preparedness.

Equatorial Guinea has ratified the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Program (GCLME) Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and the Bamako Convention (Ban on the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa) but is not a signatory to the Abidjan Convention.

Permanent facilities

There are no permanent facilities for wildlife rehabilitation in Equatorial Guinea.

Current processes

A national workshop on Contingency Planning will be held in autumn of 2017 as part of the GI-WACAF project, with the aim of drafting documents to ratify relevant IMO conventions and implement them within national laws and to complete the national oil spill contingency plan.

Documentation and references

General references

General References

GI-WACAF Country Profile

Birdlife International Country Profile

USFWS Equatorial Guinea Fact Sheet

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

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A Summary of oiled wildlife response
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