

**ETHIOPIAN WILDLIFE & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
(EWNHS)**

**Proceedings of a Workshop on Prioritisation of
Important Bird Areas for Conservation Action**

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Background

1.1 Rationale

It is widely understood that we are facing two major difficulties concerning the conservation of biodiversity. On one hand, environmentally destructive practices are increasing at an alarming rate and on the other we are confronted with limited resources or options for conservation. This situation entails targeting our limited resources for conservation to those components of biodiversity in most urgent need of conservation attention. This can be done if and only when we can establish an appropriate approach of prioritising our biodiversity for conservation action. There are many different ways of addressing this issue and each approach has strengths and weaknesses.

Prioritisation for biodiversity conservation is a process that involves intentional planning for conservation action. It requires a strategic approach to assessing what we have, defining what we need, setting a goal, realistically ranking what we have relative to our goals and listing actions for conservation.

The need for prioritising for biodiversity conservation arises from the need to meet conservation and sustainable use goals with the limited amount of resources at hand. Saving all of the world's biodiversity is impractical for many reasons. Some of these reasons stem from the fact that a preservationist approach is against the ideals and perceptions of millions if not billions of people throughout the world. This kind of approach is also impractical because there are usually limited resources available to conserve all biodiversity. Consequently, it has become practical to think and act on priorities for conservation action. It is actually this fact that persuaded the EWNHS to undertake prioritisation of key biodiversity sites identified through IBA process in Ethiopia.

1.2 The Case of Ethiopia

While Ethiopia has reserves of genetic, species and ecosystem diversity, there seems to be little being done to systematically conserve and sustainably use these resources. While conservation and sustainable use of resources is a hefty issue by itself, the crux of the problem lies in not even knowing what needs to be conserved. In another words, the priorities for the conservation of biodiversity remain an illusion. In the past, efforts to conserve biodiversity have mainly centered on "large and cuddly" wildlife species. Although this approach is just one method to conserving biodiversity, its fallacy lies in the fact that it does not incorporate other essential values of biodiversity. Largely, past efforts of concentrating on large and visible species were not complemented by other forms of biodiversity conservation approaches. Past efforts to protect biodiversity have not been participatory in their formation and management.

In an effort to redress the problem of prioritising for biodiversity, the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society undertook a study of locating and identifying 73 sites throughout Ethiopia that signified priorities for biodiversity conservation. The 73 sites are located in 9 Regional States and represent a wide variety of ecosystems. This study, which was completed in 1996, made birds a basis for the selection of sites. A set of globally accepted criteria developed by BirdLife Secretariat was used to prioritise sites for conservation in the country. The sites thus selected are known as Important Bird Areas though not only important for birds. This first phase of the study, using information on species, has been able to define and select sites important for birds and other biodiversity.

While these 73 sites are priorities in themselves, the work of prioritising is not complete until we are able to say which sites are more important than others. In other words, it is necessary to prioritise among priorities if we are to apply practical actions for biodiversity conservation. The second phase of the work will assist the Ethiopian Important Bird Area Programme to define where primary effort in terms of time and other resources should be spent. This is done with the understanding that resources to conserve all biodiversity are limited. The first phase of the selection is a primary exercise that needs refining. The process of refining the already selected priority sites (all important bird areas are priorities) has a challenge of defining values as well as finding and applying a robust system for the final selection process.

This three-day workshop on the “prioritisation of important bird areas for conservation action” brought together major stakeholders in the conservation of biodiversity in Ethiopia. As prioritisation for biodiversity is a new approach to conservation, Ethiopia was fortunate to hear from and synthesise the experiences of participants from Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania.

1.3 Objectives of Workshop

a. Broader Objective

Prioritise Important Bird Areas to target limited resources and options for conservation action, decision-making, advocacy and fund-raising.

b. Specific Objective

The main specific objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Involve as many concerned government stakeholder institutions as possible in the biodiversity prioritisation process that is taking place for the first time in the country.
2. Synthesise sub-regional experiences and incorporate the same into the Ethiopian prioritisation process.
3. Develop a framework for the prioritisation of Important Bird Areas in Ethiopia.
4. Define and agree on a set of criteria for the prioritisation of Important Bird Areas in Ethiopia.

5. Group prioritised sites into clusters on the basis of urgency for conservation actions.
6. Propose appropriate conservation actions for each of the cluster

1.4 Outputs of Workshop

The refining process of prioritising for biodiversity conservation has dwelt on two main outputs:

1. A ranked list of sites where we can invest our limited resources and or options for conservation action
2. A categorised list of actions that are relevant to the selected sites.

2. Opening of Workshop

2.1 Opening Remarks

By Ato Abay Assefa
Executive Director, Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society

In his oral opening address, Ato Abay Assefa welcomed participants on behalf of the Society and himself. In his introductory remarks, he said that the three days of the workshop are crucial to the future of the Society's actions in conservation-oriented works. Thanking everyone for coming, he ended his speech by inviting Prof. Shibru Tedla, Honorary Chairman of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society to deliver a keynote address.

2.2. Keynote Address

By Professor Shibru Tedla
Hon. Chairman, Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society

Dear Participants and Colleagues,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to this technical workshop, on behalf of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society and myself.

First and for most, I would like to say a few words about our Society to provide some background information to today's workshop. The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society is a membership organisation that is concerned with awareness creation and wise and sustainable use of Ethiopia's natural resources and the protection of the environment. Two of the Society's main objectives are to conduct, participate in, promote and support research on Ethiopia's flora and fauna and to assist national efforts to conserve them and protect the environment in its totality for the benefit of the present and future generations. Towards this end, the EWNHS has been co-operating with various international and national organisations including government agencies.

In line with the above-cited objectives, EWNHS has been working with BirdLife International in popularising the concept of using birds as important indicators of biodiversity hot spots through identifying and designating sites that qualify as Important Bird Areas based on internationally agreed criteria. Back in September 1995 the Society undertook the task of compiling the Important Bird Areas inventory for Ethiopia in collaboration with BirdLife International and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation. The collaborative research project, over eighteen months period, culminated with the publication of a book entitled '*Important Bird Areas of Ethiopia: A First Inventory*'. Additional information has been collected on previously designated sites, and also new sites have been identified since 1997.

The initial inventory has provided valuable information on Ethiopia's avifauna and other fauna and flora and conservation status of more than sixty-three sites. As stated

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earlier some additional sites have also been identified since the inventory was published bringing the total to seventy-three. With such a large number of sites the need to prioritise them is very much apparent for the following two main reasons:

All of the sites are not facing the same level and types of threats thus those requiring immediate actions or actions in the near future should be identified. Available scarce human, financial and material resources should be optimally deployed for effective conservation work.

Thus over the coming three days, your task will be to develop the criteria for prioritising the sites and to evaluate each and every site against those criteria and to draw up a priority list of sites for conservation action. The exercise will be an important input to the regional 'African NGO- Government Partnership for Sustainable Biodiversity Action Project' currently under progress in ten African countries. In Ethiopia the EWNHS is co-operating with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation (EWCO) to implement the IBA programme entitled 'A Project to Enhance Biodiversity Conservation in Important Bird Areas of Ethiopia' as part of the regional initiative. The main objective of this five years project is to conserve all globally and nationally important biodiversity sites in the country. The project encompasses monitoring, advocacy, action plan development and long-term conservation planning for species, sites and habitats. The importance of this workshop, which is expected to identify those sites requiring immediate focus and attention, can not be overestimated.

For this important task we have the support and guiding hand of experienced and knowledgeable people from sister conservation organisations, from the BirdLife family and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). We in Ethiopia are fortunate to draw upon the experience of Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania that have already done their prioritisation work. The key persons who were involved in the process in their respective countries are also with us to facilitate the task at hand. Thus your unreserved participation and sharing of information will be very valuable and crucial for the successful undertaking of this task. Accordingly, we expect the workshop to be as participating as possible in order to arrive at informed decisions and to make appropriate recommendations.

This workshop is organised with the financial and logistical support of the BirdLife East-Africa Sub- Region Co-ordination Office and I want to thank Mr. David Mutekanga, the Sub-Region Co-ordinator for his support. His unreserved support to this workshop right from its inception is highly appreciated by EWNHS.

My particular gratitude goes also to Dr. Leon Bennun, Chairman of The East Africa Natural History Society, for agreeing to participate in this workshop despite his busy schedule. I also want to thank Ato Yilma Dellelegn very much for preparing the background paper and also for his personal presence to assist us and to share his considerable knowledge regarding the avifauna of Ethiopia.

All those colleagues from East Africa, South Africa and the various Federal and Regional Agencies of Ethiopia should be commended for giving the workshop the

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importance it deserves and for being present at this workshop today. I want also to thank the Society's IBA programme staff for their effort in organising the workshop.

I wish all of us the best time and success in this important endeavour.

Thank you.

2.3 Introduction of Participants and Workshop Programme

In his oral presentation, Mr. David Mutekanga thanked the EWNHS and other collaborating institutions for the preparations that have gone into organising this workshop. He gave an overall remark on the Sub-regional programme and the BirdLife partnership. He also expounded on the expected outputs from the next three days. The Sub-regional co-ordinator, emphasised that introductions are always necessary at the beginning of workshops so that all would get a chance of meeting everyone else in the course of the next three days. As a preliminary ice-breaking activity, everyone was asked to introduce him/herself to the rest of the group. As suggested, participants introduced themselves by calling out their first names and the institutions they represented. Mr. David ended the session by introducing the details of the workshop programme for the three days.

PART II OVERALL APPROACH OF THE PRIORITISATION PROCESS

3. Country Presentations

3.1 Introduction to IBAs

Ato Mengistu Wondafrash, EWNHS

Ato Mengistu Wondafrash gave an introduction to the Important Bird Area Programme in Ethiopia. His speech included a description of the process and significance of IBAs in the conservation of biodiversity in Ethiopia and the world in general. The following is a summary of his presentation. For the complete presentation in the form provided, see annex 10.3

IBAs are places of international significance for the conservation of birds at global, regional and sub-regional levels. They are sites of exceptional importance (hotspots) for birds. Although a site can be a hotspot for other biodiversity, not all sites with importance for other biodiversity can be hotspots for birds.

The IBA process is an initiative of BirdLife International. BirdLife is a global partnership, represented in over 100 countries by conservation NGOs. In Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society represent BirdLife. BirdLife International is the leading authority on the status of birds and their habitats globally. Through the Important Bird Areas Programme, BirdLife International is working to identify and document sites vital for long-term conservation of birds. Hence is the motto of BirdLife International for the year 2000 is “together for birds and people”.

The main significance of designating sites as IBAs is that the conservation of the IBA network throughout the globe would ensure the survival of a correspondingly large number of other taxa. Besides this important function, the data from the IBAs would assist in prioritising for conservation action, advocacy, awareness/education programmes, fund raising, and networking.

The selection and designation of IBAs follows a standardised, scientifically defensible, quantitative and internationally agreed criteria. These criteria are applied to local conditions using common sense.

Though the IBA programme began in Europe in 1985, it did not reach Africa until mid-90s. The Programme started in Ethiopia in 1995 and culminated in 1996 by publishing the directory entitled, “*Important Bird Areas in Ethiopia: A First Inventory*”. All national Programmes are undertaken by local non-governmental conservation organisations in partner countries.

The process of commencing an IBA country programme is a mixture between policy, administrative/management and technical issues. It begins with the identification of a lead organisation or a BirdLife partner in a country and goes on to assigning a project

co-ordinator, carrying out a literature survey, consulting relevant institutions and ministries, holding workshops, training surveyors, conducting field surveys, publishing findings, prioritising IBAs, preparing management plans, soliciting funds for conservation and promoting conservation.

In conclusion, this workshop will prioritise sites that are bird hotspots and not biodiversity hotspots. It is understood that bird hotspots can overlap with biodiversity hotspots. Consequently, we expect a number of biodiversity hotspots will be prioritised during this workshop.

3.2 Data Available on Ethiopian IBAs

Ato Yilma Dellelegn, IUCN-EARO

Ato Yilma Dellelegn, emphasising the importance of data, delivered a presentation on what this workshop can use as information to do the prioritisation exercise.

We can look at the subject of information available on Ethiopian IBAs from five points of view.

- ◆ Collection of information and data
- ◆ Need for information and data
- ◆ Types of information and data
- ◆ Strength of present information and
- ◆ Other sources

The IBA work in Ethiopia dealt with two types of data. These are literature surveys and field surveys. Literature surveys were carried out in libraries and information centres both inside and outside the country. The main centres consulted were the Ministry of Water Resources, International Livestock Centre for Africa (now the International Livestock Research Institute), Ethiopian Heritage Trust, the National Herbarium, Land Use Department and BirdLife International in Cambridge.

The Ethiopian IBA surveys heavily relied on field surveys as well. Protocols for field data collection were used and various scientific equipment including GPS and Altimeter were used to gather data. Besides the biological information collected, consultation and interviews were carried out at most sites. Consultations and interviews were aimed to collect information on socio-economics, land use and conservation issues at sites. Local people including farmers and District Administrative and Agricultural Offices collaborated in making the social surveys successful.

Information gathered from IBA surveys can be used in various ways. It can assist in decision-making and forecasting. Without reliable and available information, it is difficult to get guidance on issues necessitating action-oriented decisions. Information is also necessary to compare sets of conditions or sites over time and space. To a large

extent, the IBA information database aims at building records that will allow monitoring of sites and track changes over the years.

The collection of IBA data can be divided in to two main categories - biological and non-biological. Bird information and other biodiversity define biological data. Non-biological data are the non-bird information, and include mainly geophysical, vegetation (habitat), and human use aspects.

The strength of the present data or their reliability can be determined by the depth (mainly in quality), and the coverage. The quality of the data is believed to be integral to the way it has been collected and its robustness. The present data was collected using a set of standardised and universally accepted criteria. It also has a quality of being repeatable and comparable. The main aim of the programme has not been on the gathering of information for quantity's sake. This aspect of the database will be strengthened and maintained over time. On the other hand, the surveys have covered a total of over 30,000 km in 9 Regional States in the time period of 18 months. While 63 sites were selected as IBAs by the end of 1996, 10 more have been added since then bringing the total number of sites to 73. An important feature of the IBA surveys was to conduct consultations with different sectors of the Society.

While it is true that our main information stems from the birds, we are not totally discounting other aspects of biodiversity. I feel that this workshop will complement any failures to have been done so by its make-up. We have resource persons from various institutions whose respected views will make this prioritisation process a success. I hope your views and perspectives will enrich the discussions so that we will come up with a strong case for prioritising the Ethiopian IBAs. Thank you.

3.3 Kenya's IBA Prioritisation process

Dr. Leon Bennun, NatureKenya, Nairobi

Dr. Bennun explained the experience of IBA prioritisation in Kenya by going through the process that took place in a two-day workshop in Naivasha, Kenya. The aims of the Kenyan prioritisation process were to set clear IBA priorities for action and to develop an explicit, simple and robust approach to priority setting that can be applied elsewhere.

Conservation action needs prioritisation because resources are usually scarce and justification is needed for a clear and defensible agenda. Kenya carried out a two-day prioritisation workshop where 14 participants from 8 institutions were represented.

Kenya used a different approach by setting clear priority questions. Questions such as "what factors do we look at? Threats/biological diversity/functional value/or economic value? Economic values and functional values were left out and threats and biological importance were considered more applicable to the process of prioritising the Kenyan IBAs. Functional values were difficult to define and presented the setback of distracting the process from the main aim of biodiversity conservation. Economic value was built into threats.

In dealing with the prioritisation process, there were four major challenges. These were the fact that all IBAs were priorities in themselves, the four categories (threatened, range-restricted, biome and congregatory species) presented different currencies against which there was no variable to compare them against, limited information on non-bird values and variation of sites.

Biological importance was seen for importance for birds and other biodiversity. The whole process combined measure of threat with measure of biological importance. All priorities for action were primarily determined by level of threat and under each threat class, biological importance determined priorities.

Biological Importance and threats were next assessed and given scores. The scoring enabled uniform application to different entities so that comparisons could be made easily.

While it is possible to come up with a prioritised list of sites by combining biological importance and threats, this was not enough. We had to know which sites need priority attention than the rest. To do this, the participants decided that sites should be ranked within threat classes according to biological importance. Our threat classes ran from 1-4 (# 1 indicating sites with slight threats to #4 which indicated sites with critical threat) and biological importance ran from 2-8 (#2 being the lowest score a site could get and #8 for the highest a site could score). A matrix of threats against biological importance provided a list of sites for critical, urgent and high considerations.

While the above important exercise provided a set of sites where NatureKenya should concentrate, it went a step further and elaborated on conservation actions necessary at the priority sites. Accordingly, sites were identified with actions at the **critical**, **urgent and critical** and **all sites** categories. This afforded a foresight into the activities NatureKenya could tackle and those things which needed linking up.

Technical as it was, the Kenyan IBA prioritisation process was a good experience, which drew upon the experiences of many people. Since one of its aims is to come up with a robust but at the same time simple method for prioritisation, it is hoped that the process will provide ideas for countries embarking on such a task. Thank you.

3.4 South Africa's IBA Prioritisation Process

Mr. Steve Evans, BirdLife South Africa, South Africa

Mr. Steve Evans who is the IBA project manager for South Africa explained that S. Africa is very diverse both ethnically and ecologically. He stressed that any programme including the IBA programme, had to take into consideration this fact and involved both the national and government authorities that are concerned with environment and conservation.

The process of prioritising South Africa's 122 IBAs was not complicated but addressed important social issues. The 122 IBA sites were divided into three broad categories. IBAs with formal protection were assigned category 1, those with partial protection came under category 2 and those with no form of protection were placed under category 3.

Although there happens to be a central government department responsible for environmental conservation, all of the 9 provinces have an authority for conservation of nature. Provinces have the mandate to establish nature reserves as much as the national body responsible for conservation. The South African National Parks is responsible for the creation of national parks irrespective of which province it is located in.

The prioritisation process in South Africa IBAs is based on seven criteria.

The criteria are:

1. Unprotected and partially protected IBAs
2. Geographic spread
3. IBAs with immediate threats
4. IBAs located within the least protected biomes
5. IBAs with habitats inadequately conserved
6. IBAs that have active conservation NGOs
7. IBAs containing globally threatened South African endemics

Using these seven criteria, ten priority sites were selected for conservation action, advocacy and monitoring work. The selection process ensured that the distribution of IBAs was geographically spread across the provinces. Ensuring the spread of IBAs throughout the provinces of South Africa provided a means whereby all BirdLife South Africa members participated and contributed to the conservation programme of the IBA.

The process of selecting the priority sites involved ranking the sites with a scoring of High (H), Medium (M) and Low (L) for each of the seven criteria chosen before the exercise.

The prioritisation work of IBAs provided the basis for the establishment of Site Support Groups and other conservation-oriented actions at sites. The development of the programme and actions taken will rely on consultations with local conservation authorities and the National Liaison Committee.

3.5 Tanzania's IBA Prioritisation Process

Mr. Maurus Msuha, WCST, Tanzania

Mr Maurus Msuha, IBA a Project officer at the Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania, explained that the system of prioritisation used by Tanzania was almost similar to the one used in South Africa. It used criteria based on existing management systems and biological importance.

Tanzania used a fairly simple approach, which based itself on the level of protection afforded to the site and the threats it is facing. Before the actual prioritisation considered criteria including limited resource for the conservation of the site, conservation status, ease of access, habitat representation and biological importance.

The protection status of a site was determined to be the key to assessing its importance relative to others. Tanzania used the national protected area system to facilitate this work. It is important to note though that wetlands and grassland habitats are not well protected especially when they fall into the above categories.

Tanzania has a total of 67 IBA sites of which 13 are national parks, 6 are game reserves, 25 are wetlands, 20 are forest reserves and 3 are other different sites. The prioritisation process used by Tanzania shows that the concentration of priority activity should be at sites with little or no protection status. These sites are mainly found in wetlands, and forest reserves.

3.6 Synthesis of Partners' Experiences

Kenya used biological (bird information) data as a major input while S. Africa used social (regional spread and equity) data.

South Africa used a more subjective approach where the involvement of people was seen more important. Regions in South Africa require assistance and the interaction with the provincial conservation authorities is high. Selecting regions before the sites can lead to exclusion of more important sites. But BirdLife South Africa had to sell the idea of prioritisation to the regions only by giving a fair chance of everyone to participate in the process equally. South Africa needed only a day to go through the prioritisation process.

The Kenyan process went through an objectively oriented approach by using criteria for threats and biodiversity values. It was more formal and decision-makers had to be convinced. A number of organisations had to be involved. There was no regional concern, but would have been possible to include a regional perspective. It would have been possible in the Kenyan process to allocate regions to sites after the prioritisation process. Acquisition of data was central to the Kenyan approach. Without data and information it is difficult to convince communities as well as decision-makers. In the final outcome, Kenya had to concentrate on a few sites because a number of NGOs and Site Support Groups play key roles in some IBAs. In other cases, indicating where others are actively involved has helped NatureKenya to

identify partners in the conservation of a site. Kenya needed three days to complete the process.

Ethiopia is divided into regions and a regional approach may be an important consideration in the allocation and prioritisation of sites. There are national parks that are co-managed by two regions in Ethiopia, eg the Awash National Park. Similar management scenarios are found in South Africa where national parks like Kruger National Park is managed by the national government but provincial authority is also involved.

The core issue in the management of a site (whether prioritised or not) is the question of ownership (tenure). A representative from the Amhara Region of Ethiopia explained that the concept of creating protected areas is well accepted and there are plans to carry out the initiative. The idea of creating a protected area is not pushed on to local communities but is transpired to and a consensus reached before a major step is taken. Similarly, a representative from Southern People's Region indicated that the creation of protected areas is in many ways not compatible with the needs and aspirations of local populations. The creation of a protected area usually means denial of agricultural and pasture land to the local communities. The Regional Government believes that communities should be given a chance to see the benefits of conserving wildlife and their habitats. One way of doing this is by sharing benefits. Benefit sharing is innovative and strong incentive that will attract attention from the local communities. Benefit sharing of revenues from controlled hunting activities to Districts is believed to enhance the awareness and perception of local people about conservation of wildlife in their areas. This activity is planned to take place soon.

4. A Framework for Prioritising IBA Sites

4.1 The Framework (Model) for the Prioritisation of Ethiopian IBAs

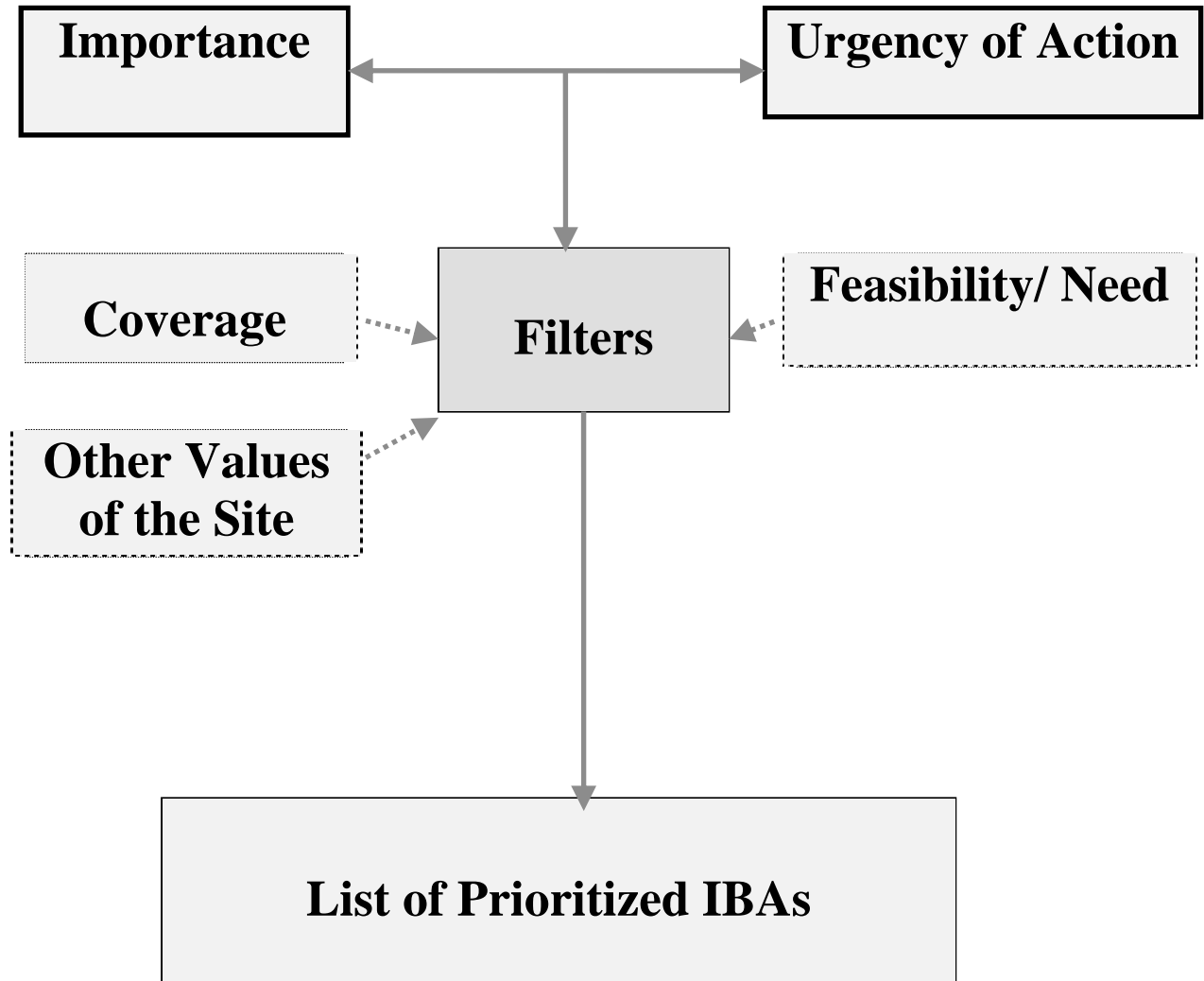
A strategy was needed to approach the prioritisation process. It was necessary to define a framework and a set of criteria to work on. While the criteria were decided upon after a brainstorming session (using cards and writing a criterion per card) asking people to give their ideas of criteria to be used, a framework for conducting the process was suggested by Dr. Bennun.

According to this model, Importance for birds and other biodiversity would be combined with urgency of action (threats the sites face). This combined result would then pass through filters which for example can include coverage (e.g. regional extent, gaps in knowledge, equity factors), feasibility/need (e.g. accessibility, security, other NGOs working in the area etc.) or other values (e.g. tourism, cultural and aesthetic potentials). The filters are necessary and will give us a balanced perspective of a site against others when it is possibly heavily biased towards either biological importance or threats. This would be applied on each and every sites so that the end result would be a list of prioritised sites for action.

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The framework for prioritising the sites presented by Dr. Bennun was acceptable to the Ethiopian situation and there was a consensus from the participants to use this model to prioritise the IBAs. The model can be pictorially represented as follows.

The Framework (Model) for The Prioritisation of Ethiopian IBAs



4.2 Selection of Criteria for Assessing IBAs

The next step of the work involved identifying and selecting criteria that can be used to make the framework useful. The exercise was carried out by handing out cards to participants and encouraging them to write down one criterion per card. Cards were stuck to a board and later grouped together if there happened to be ideas with the same or similar concepts. Cards with ambiguous statements were qualified and made clear. General statements were narrowed down to have a focused meaning. As shown below, criteria suggested varied and ranged widely.

Suggested Criteria after the Brainstorming Session

No	Criteria	# of cards	No	Criteria	# of cards
1	Biological importance		16	Regional representation of IBAs	1
2	Endemicity	5	17	Soil erosion	1
3	Threat status of birds	5	18	Habitat destruction	1
4	Threats to IBAs	5	19	Fragility of the area	1
5	Human impact	5	20	Poaching	1
6	Importance for migrants	4	21	Cultural values	1
7	Biodiversity	3	22	Uniqueness	1
8	Other biodiversity	2	23	Scenery	1
9	Plant biodiversity	2	24	Protection status of area	1
10	Potential for Ecotourism	2	25	Habitat representation	1
11	Accessibility	2	26	Deforestation	1
12	Capacity to work at sites	1	27	Ecosystem cons. status	1
13	Diversity of birds	1	28	Size of area	1
14	Protection status of IBAs	1	29	Restricted-range species	1
15	Support from Govt.	1	30	Status of area	1
			31	Unsustainable devt. in IBAs	1

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The outputs from the previous brainstorming activity were grouped under appropriate headings and tabulated as below.

Importance/Urgency	Feasibility/Coverage/Other values
<p>1. Biological importance</p> <p><u>Birds</u></p> <p>Threatened species Restricted-range Biome-restricted Congregations (migratory species)</p> <p><u>Other biodiversity</u></p> <p>animal diversity plant diversity bird diversity of endemism uniqueness</p> <p>2. Urgency</p> <p>human impact deforestation poaching erosion threat to IBAs threats to birds fragility of the area habitat destruction unsustainable development in IBAs</p>	<p>3. Feasibility</p> <p>Accessibility Capacity to work at sites Possible support from Government conflict resolution Ecotourism</p> <p>4. Coverage</p> <p>Biomes Habitats Representation in regions</p> <p>5. Other values</p> <p>aesthetic cultural scenery size of the area habitat representation ecosystem cons. status status of area/IBA</p>

The table had headings and the appropriate criteria were listed under each column heading. The main headings were *importance/urgency* and *filters* of *coverage*, *feasibility* and *other values*. Importance had biological importance under which birds and other biodiversity came under. Birds were categorised using the selection criteria for the IBA while other biodiversity was denoted by criteria including animal diversity, plant diversity, endemism and biological importance. On the other hand, urgency had under it criteria including human impact, deforestation, erosion etc. Under coverage and feasibility, criteria including biomes, habitats, accessibility, government support, and ability to work at the site were listed. Other importance such as Ecotourism, cultural diversity and aesthetic value were also under this

heading. It was evident that the several criteria listed had overlaps and it was necessary to evaluate each for its suitability. The whole day was used to discuss and decide upon the most suitable criteria for the prioritisation exercise. Participants were divided into two groups and were asked to discuss, assess and come up with criteria. Specifically groups were required to:

1. Assess the suitability of each column heading
2. Assess the suitability of each set of criteria under each column
3. Suggest best quantitative and qualitative ways of assessing the criteria

The two groups were further instructed to assess and weigh each suggested criterion in view of the available data and information at hand. The group work was really seen as a mechanism to refine the suitability of suggested criteria for prioritisation purposes. The final selection must also be applicable across the range of sites, which differ in size, biodiversity importance, threats, accessibility and numerous other factors.

The group work took all morning and the afternoon was used for reporting back to a plenary. The group reported on criteria selected and method of scoring and adding up of scores. Group 1 worked on “Importance and Urgency” while Group 2 worked on “Filters: Coverage, Feasibility and other values”.

4.3 Group Reports

A. Group One

The basics for the selection criteria should be biological importance because our knowledge and amount of information on other factors such as Ecotourism potential is very limited. As there is lack of information on endemic plants and crop diversity, it has been agreed **Biological Importance** to include “*Importance for Birds*” and “*Other Biodiversity*”. Endemicity and uniqueness are assumed to have been captured in the bird information. Importance for Birds included the criteria used in selecting the 73 IBAs of Ethiopia. These categories include:

- Globally Threatened Species
- Restricted-range Species
- Biome-restricted species
- Congregations

Globally Threatened Species: Ethiopia does not have “critically endangered” species and it was agreed that scoring for each category would be based on the Kenyan model. As a result, the remaining three categories (minus critically endangered) are endangered, vulnerable and near- threatened.

Scores:

Endangered = 3
Vulnerable = 2

Near- threatened = 1

Restricted-range Species: This was evaluated for the total number of restricted-range species in an area and the rationale is that a site with more restricted-range species was more important than one with less. Scoring is based on the Kenyan experience.

Scores:

Total No	Assigned score
0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
>3	4

Biome-restricted species: list total number of species in each site and find the percentage of site total against the total for that biome in the country. The total is the national total for Ethiopia seen against what the site holds. Scoring is based on the Kenyan experience.

Scores:

Proportion of biome species	Assigned score
0 - 16	0
17 - 33	1
34 - 50	2
51 - 67	3
> 67	4

Congregations: This criterion had a rationale that a site qualifies if any one site holds species, which exceed the threshold value or have high numbers of one or more species. This was assessed at two levels and combined to give an overall score. This was again taken from the experience of what Kenya had used before.

Scores:

1. **Multiples of Thresholds:** total number for any particular species, which exceeds the threshold figure. The threshold number divides the total for that species. The highest multiple determines the score.

Highest Multiple	Assigned Score
0 - 0.9	0
1.0 - 2.9	1
3.0 - 6.9	2
7.0 - 14.9	3
> 14.9	4

2. **Number of individual species** that qualify under category A (i) or A (ii).

Number	Assigned Score
0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
>3	4

The separated scores from the above two approaches is added and divided by two to obtain a mean score.

Importance for Other Biodiversity

Although birds can provide a great deal of information about a site, aspects of other biodiversity can give a fuller picture. The paucity of information on endemic plants and crop diversity at this gathering could not allow the use of these and other important aspects of Ethiopian biodiversity for the prioritisation process. As a result, the presence or absence of large mammals (which were well known as compared to other groups) at a site was taken as a rough guide and a complement for “other Biodiversity” and to the primary bird information already available.

The following categories and scoring was agreed upon.

1. Endemic large mammals and other certain agreed large mammals = 4
2. Endemic large mammals = 3
3. Certain agreed large mammals and other mammals = 2
4. Other large mammals = 1

Endemic mammal refers to those species for which Ethiopia was unique for: i.e. Abyssinian Walia, *Capra ibex walie* , Mountain Nyala *Tragelaphus buxtoni*, Gelada Baboon *Papio gelada*, etc..

Certain agreed mammals refers to those species that are also found in other countries in the region but are specially protected in Ethiopia or whose numbers are dwindling and are endangered with extinction: i.e. Elephant, Cheetah, Grevy’s Zebra, Giraffe, etc..

Other large mammals refers to those species that are found elsewhere in the region and are not endangered within the foreseeable future. Jackals, Hyaena, Grey Duiker, Anubis Baboon etc..

The rationale here was that while all mammals are important, an endemic mammal would score higher because it is unique to the country or the site. A combination of an endemic mammal and a mammal whose status is endangered would even score higher than a site with only an endangered mammal and other large mammals.

A discussion debated upon the issue of whether mammals could in reality act as indicators for overall biodiversity and the method of combining it with other bird information. While it is understood that mammals are not uniformly distributed and cannot act as indicators to overall biodiversity, in the absence of other information it was necessary to use what was available. Care should be exercised when assigning scores to IBAs using the mammal data because it was feared that the data would skew towards the sites with more information on mammals but little on birds. It was agreed in the end that birds should get an overall scoring of 80% while mammal data should account for 20% of the scoring.

A list of mammals, which are specially protected and can qualify for the “certain agreed mammals” was provided by EWCO.

B. Group Two

This group looked at threats to sites and filters for ranking. The group found it rather challenging because the amount of information available on the threats suggested is little. With the amount of expertise present at this workshop it was possible to proceed according to the following classification

1. Loss of Habitat

- private/government development actions
- subsistence farming
- human settlement
- drainage
- fires
- erosion
- siltation

2. Unsustainable Resource Use

- deforestation
- over-fishing
- overgrazing
- poaching

- grass cutting

3. Pollution

- pesticides
- fertilisers
- herbicides

4. Invasion of Alien Species

Filters: a filter is an add-on activity to the standard and agreed procedure of prioritising sites. It is a separate activity from the agreed prioritising work because it is meant to give a boost to those sites which might have scored less in the first prioritisation work. Coverage, feasibility and other values were chosen as the filters.

1. Coverage

In case there are 2 equal ranking IBA sites, priority should be given to an IBA site from a Region that is not represented in the priority list.

2. Feasibility

Accessibility (inaccessible = 1, less accessible = 2, moderately accessible = 3, highly accessible = 4)

Potential support from CBOs/NGOs/Gov't. (no support, some support, good support, v. good support).

This filter cannot be used at this workshop because the amount of information does not warrant its use. It has been suggested that the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society should make note of this and gather enough data on this. It is important because EWNHS has intentions of setting up site support groups in various areas where IBAs are located. Traditional conservation methods as the one in IBA site "Guassa" are important considerations for future assessment of this filter.

3. Other Values

Ecotourism potential can be seen from a feasibility point of view. But it has become difficult to assess because all IBA sites have Ecotourism potentials and also there are a number of issues involved which would need prior evaluation before one can fully understand the suitability of sites for Ecotourism. The paucity of information on **aesthetic, spiritual and cultural values** of sites equally makes it difficult to consider these as filters. The EWNHS should look in the future at the possibilities of collecting relevant information on these parameters.

5. Ranking of Sites

5.1 General

Two groups (a smaller group to deal with the more technical bird data and larger one to deal with the threats and filters) were established. The two groups worked up to lunchtime assessing each site for the criteria decided upon the previous day. Each group came up with its final scoring and ranking for all sites. These scores were later combined (importance for birds/other biodiversity & threats/feasibility) and final ranked list was created for all the 73 sites.

The final scores for sites were ranked according to their standing. To do this, biological criteria were divided into five rank codes.

Sites with a scoring of	0 - 2.9	= 1
“ “ “ “ “	3 - 5.9	= 2
“ “ “ “ “	6 - 8.9	= 3
“ “ “ “ “	9 - 11.9	= 4
“ “ “ “ “	12 - 14.9	= 5

Threat was also scored but rank codes ranged from 1 (slight threat) to 4 (critical threat). A final table with rank codes showed the prioritised list of sites.

Table 1. Threat, Biological Importance & Accessibility

Site Code	Site Name	Region	Biological Rank Code	Threat Rank	Accessibility
016	Bale Mts. NP	4	5	4	4
011	Awash NP	4,2	5	4	4
059	Simen Mts. NP	3	5	4	3
007	Ankober/Debre Sina	3	4	3	4
064	Yabello Sanctuary	4	4	3	4
040	Guassa(Menz)	3	4	4	3
055	Nechisar NP	7	4	4	3
002	Abijatta-Shalla Lakes NP	4	4	4	4
008	Arero NPF	4	4	3	3
012	Awash Valley	2	4	3	2
037	Genale River	4	4	3	2
052	Metu-Gore Tepi NPF	4	4	4	3
003	Aba Samuel Wetlands	4	3	4	3
044	Koka Dam	4	3	2	4
013	Awi Zone	3	3	2	4
015	Bahir Dar- LakeTana	3	3	3	4

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021	Bogol Manyo	5	3	2	1
035	Gambella NP	12	3	3	2
049	Mankubsa-Welenso NPF	4	3	3	3
061	Sululta Plains	4	3	3	4
062	Tiro Boter-Becho NPF	4	3	2	3
070	Chilimo NPF	4	3	4	4
073	Senkelle Sanctuary	4	3	4	4
024	Chelekleka Wetlands	4	3	2	4
006	Anferera NPF	4	3	3	4
023	Boyo Wetlands	7	3	4	3
027	Dawa- Wachille	4	3	2	2
031	Denkoro NPF	3	3	3	2
036	Gefersa Reservoir	14	3	1	4
042	Jemma/Jara Valleys	3	3	4	3
048	W/Shebelle River/Warder	5	3	2	1
051	Menagesha NPF	4	3	4	4
053	Mid-Abbay River Basin	3	3	3	1
025	Chew Bahir Lake	7	3	1	1
032	Entoto Escarpment	14	3	2	4
033	Fincha'a-Chomen Swamps	4	3	2	2
046	Langano Lake	4	3	2	4
047	Liben Plain/Neghelle	4	3	2	4
066	Yegof NPF	3	3	3	4
017	Baro River	12	2	2	3
038	Green Lake	4	2	2	3
005	Aliyu Amba/Dulecha	3,2	2	2	3
028	Desa'a NPF	1	2	2	2
029	Dilu Meda (Tefki)	4	2	2	4
034	Fogera plains	3	2	3	3
060	Sof Omar	4	2	2	2
066	Yangudi Rassa NP	2	2	2	3
072	Jibat Forest NPF	4	2	3	2
009	Ashenge Lake	1	2	2	4
064	Turkana Lake/Omo Delta	7	2	2	1
001	Lake Abbe	2	2	3	2
018	Berga Floodplains	4	2	3	4
039	Gudo Plains	4	2	4	3
043	Koffe Swamp	4	2	2	4
054	Mugo Highlands	7	2	3	3
070	Zuqualla Mountain	4	2	3	3
010	Awassa Lake	7	2	3	4
004	Alemaya/Adele Lakes	4	2	3	4
014	Babile Elephant Sanctuary	4	2	2	2
019	Bishoftu Lake	4	2	3	4
020	Bisidimo	4	2	2	1
022	Bonga NPF	7	2	4	4

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026	Choke Mountains	3	2	3	3
045	Konso-Segen	7	2	3	3
056	Mago NP	7	2	3	2
057	Omo NP	7	2	4	1
061	Shiekn Hussien	4	2	2	2
069	Zeway Lake	4	2	3	4
041	Hugumburda-Grat Kahsu NPF	1	1	2	2
058	Shire Lowlands	1	1	2	1
050	Melka Wakena Wetlads		*	1	2
068	Yerer NPF	4	*	4	3
030	Dindin - Arba Gugu NPF	4	*	3	2

Table 2. Biological Criteria Used to Prioritise Important Bird Areas in Ethiopia

Site Code	Site Name	Region	Thr	R.R	B	C	M	O	Biological Rank Code
			R	R	R	R	R	S	
016	Bale Mts. NP	4	4	0	4	1.5	4	13.5	5
011	Awash NP	4,2	4	2	3	0	3	12	5
059	Simen Mts.Np	3	2	2	4	0	4	12	5
007	Ankober/Debre Sina	3	3	2	2	0	4	11	4
064	Yabello Sanctuary	4	4	2	3	0	2	11	4
040	Guassa (Menz)	3	2	0	3	1	4	10	4
055	Nechisar NP	7	4	1	1	0	4	10	4
002	Abijatta-Shalla Lakes NP	4	4	0	0	4	1	9	4
008	Arero NPF	4	4	1	2	0	2	9	4
012	Awash Valley	2	4	1	2	0	2	9	4
037	Genale River	4	4	3	1	0	1	9	4
052	Metu-Gore Tepi NPF	4	4	0	3	0	2	9	4
003	Aba Samuel Wetlands	4	4	0	0	3.5	1	8.5	3
044	Koka Dam	4	4	0	0	2.5	2	8.5	3
013	Awi Zone	3	2	0	3	0	3	8	3
015	Bahir Dar- LakeTana	3	4	0	2	1	1	8	3
021	Bogol Manyo	5	4	3	0	0	1	8	3
035	Gambella NP	12	2	0	4	0	2	8	3
049	Mankubsa-Welenso NPF	4	4	1	1	0	2	8	3
061	Sululta Plains	4	4	0	3	0	1	8	3
062	Tiro Boter-Becho NPF	4	1	0	3	0	4	8	3
070	Chilimo NPF	4	0	0	4	0	4	8	3
073	Senkelle Sanctuary	4	3	0	1	0	4	8	3
024	Chelekleka Wetlands	4	4	0	0	2.5	1	7.5	3
006	Anferera NPF t	4	4	1	0	0	2	7	3
023	Boyo Wetlands	7	4	0	0	1	2	7	3
027	Dawa- Wachille	4	1	2	2	0	2	7	3

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031	Denkoro NPF	3	0	0	3	0	4	7	3
036	Gefersa Reservoir	14	4	0	2	0	1	7	3
042	Jemma/Jara Valleys	3	2	2	1	0	2	7	3
048	W/Shebelle River/Warder	5	3	1	2	0	1	7	3
051	Menagesha NPF	4	0	0	3	0	4	7	3
053	Mid-Abbay River Basin	3	2	1	2	0	2	7	3
025	Chew Bahir Lake	7	1	0	2	1.5	2	6.5	3
032	Entoto Escarpment	14	0	0	4	0	2	6	3
033	Fincha'a-Chomen Swamps	4	3	0	2	0	1	6	3
046	Langano Lake	4	4	0	0	0	2	6	3
047	Liben Plain/Neghelle	4	3	1	1	0	1	6	3
066	Yegof NPF	3	0	0	2	0	4	6	3
017	Baro River	12	2	0	0	1.5	2	5.5	2
038	Green Lake	4	3	0	0	1.5	1	5.5	2
005	Aliyu Amba/Dulecha	3,2	3	1	0	0	1	5	2
028	Desa'a NPF	1	3	0	1	0	1	5	2
029	Dilu Meda (Tefki)	4	4	0	0	0	1	5	2
034	Fogera plains	3	4	0	0	0	1	5	2
060	Sof Omar	4	2	0	1	0	2	5	2
066	Yangudi Rassa NP	2	2	0	1	0	2	5	2
072	Jibat NPF	4	0	0	3	0	2	5	2
009	Ashenge Lake	1	2	0	0	1.5	1	4.5	2
064	Turkana Lake/Omo Delta	7	0	0	0	2.5	2	4.5	2
001	Lake Abbe	2	1	0	0	1	2	4	2
018	Berga Floodplains	4	3	0	0	0	1	4	2
039	Gudo Plains	4	2	0	1	0	1	4	2
043	Koffe Swamp	4	3	0	0	0	1	4	2
054	Mugo Highlands	7	1	1	0	0	2	4	2
070	Zuqualla Mountain	4	0	0	3	0	1	4	2
010	Awassa LAke	7	0	0	0	1.5	2	3.5	2
004	Alemaya/Adele Lakes	4	0	0	0	2	1	3	2
014	Babille Elephant Sanctuary	4	0	0	1	0	2	3	2
019	Bishoftu Lake	4	2	0	0	0	1	3	2
020	Bisidimo	4	1	0	0	0	2	3	2
022	Bonga NPF	7	0	0	1	0	2	3	2
026	Choke Mountains	3	1	0	1	0	1	3	2
045	Konso-Segen	7	1	0	1	0	1	3	2
056	Mago NP	7	0	0	1	0	2	3	2
057	Omo NP	7	0	0	1	0	2	3	2
061	Shiekn Hussien	4	2	0	0	0	1	3	2
069	Zeway Lake	4	0	0	0	1	2	3	2
041	Hugumburda-Grat Kahsu NPF	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	1
058	Shire Lowlands	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
050	Melka Wakena						1	*	*
068	Yerer NPF	4					1	*	*
030	Dindin - Arba Gugu NPF	4					4	*	*

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5.2 Priority Matrix

A matrix was used to show sites in the prioritised list of IBAs in relation to other sites. This allowed comparisons to be made and clustering.

Threats	Biological Importance				
	5	4	3	2	1
4	o o o a	o o o o a	o o o o o o o a	o o o b	o c
3		o o o o o a	o o o o o o o o b	o o o o o o o o o o o o b	o c
2			o o o o o o o o o o o c	o o o o o o o o o o o o o c	o o c
1			o o c		o c

The matrix is useful in presenting sites in relation to another and ranks them in terms of threat and biological importance. It is also used in giving guidance by indicating primary sites where we should concentrate our resources. The darkest shaded boxes (a) show all those sites with highest level of threat and biological importance (total 19 sites, 26% of total IBAs) while the lighter shaded boxes (b) show sites with intermediate levels of threat and importance (total 23 sites, 32% of total IBAs). Lightest shaded boxes (c) are sites with lower biological importance and threat (total 31 sites, 42% of total IBAs).

The methods used for classifying the sites into the above categories are arbitrary and were purely based on what participants believed to be the best compromise. Several participants were of the opinion that threats should receive higher importance as compared to biological importance. The clustering of sites into various importance categories will depend on how much the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society can do within a fixed amount of time. The sites as shown on the matrix was decided and agreed by the Society and workshop participants to be the favourable subset of sites where it can effectively gain results.

The matrix shows that there are too many sites at the critical level needing conservation action but nineteen sites are little compared to the need that should be filled for conservation action. The EWNHS can act on the different subsets to work in them as its capacity is enhanced through the years.

Site like Yerer is quite threatened but there is little information available to warrant its ranking. Similarly Dindin-Arbagugu forests and Melka Wakena wetlands also need further surveys to ascertain their status both biologically and threat wise. It was agreed that the three sites should be included in the list of nineteen critical sites so that EWNHS would look at the feasibility of collecting information on them. This discussion ended by assigning all the ranked sites a label for action. Accordingly,

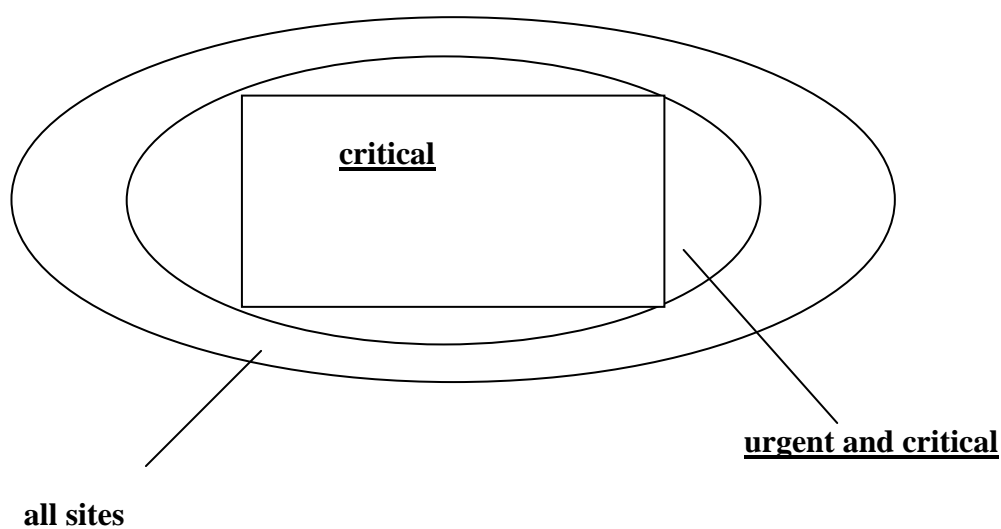
1. 19 sites are in the critical category
2. 23 sites are in the urgent category
3. 31 sites are in the high category

6. Proposed Activities at Prioritised IBA Sites

6.1 General

The diagram indicated below was used as an example to show the nesting of actions at the different sites clustered in the earlier activity.

The diagram explains that an activity targeted for a critical site is applicable to those only while activities targeted at sites urgent and critical are applicable at both identified sites. Activities targeted for “all sites” are more



demanding than activities only focusing on urgent and critical. These activities go hand in hand with the present capacity of the institution intending to carry out the work. This nesting also relates to a time frame. All activities in critical would need to be taken before one can tackle the ones in the other categories.

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To do this exercise, cards were passed out to participants and through a brainstorming session asked to put down as many activities as they can (one activity per card) which they thought were required at sites. Cards with activities were grouped and placed under **critical**, **urgent and critical** or **all sites**. The following tables summarise the findings:

6.2 Activities at Critical sites

No.	Activity	# of cards
1	Form site support groups	5
2	Habitat rehabilitation	3
3	Advocacy	3
4	Conservation/Development projects	2
5	Intensifying research on biodiversity assessment	2
6	Designation and gazettelement of sites	1
7	Active management at sites	1
8	Habitat restoration	1
9	Site exchange groups/info exchange	1
10	Lease land	1
11	Lobby for gazettelement	1
12	Start activities on the ground	1
13	Stakeholder analysis	1

6.3 Activities at Urgent and Critical Sites

No	Activity	# of cards
1	Benefit sharing	5
2	Training	2
3	Assist with EWCO's capacity to manage PAs	1
4	Promote local people's involvement in the conservation of sites	1
5	Train bird and nature guides to support eco-tourism	1

6.4 Activities at all sites

No	Activity	# of cards
1	Awareness and education	7
2	Monitoring	5
3	Develop policies	3
4	Law enforcement	3
5	Enforce water policy	3
6	Enforce conservation	2
7	Networking with concerned bodies	1
8	Establish bird watching clubs	1
9	Bridge information gaps	1
10	Suggest national/regional birds to promote conservation	1
12	Bridge information gaps	1

7. Summation of Workshop

Day one

β Announcement of workshop opening

- Opening remarks by Ato Abay Assefa, Executive Director, EWNHS
- Keynote address by Prof. Shjibru Tedla, Hon. Charman, EWNHS

β Introduction of workshop by Mr. David Mutekanga, Co-ordinator, EASR, Nairobi, Kenya.

- Introduction of Participants
- Introduction of Workshop Programme

β Presentations on background of workshop for the benefit of those who are not familiar with the IBA process in Ethiopia and the rest of the world.

- General overview on the concept of IBA by Mengistu Wondafrash, GEF-IBA Project Co-ordinator, EWNHS
- Data available on IBAs of Ethiopia by Yilma Dellelegn, Wetlands Project Officer, IUCN-EARO

β Country Presentations for experience exchange from three partners, who have undergone IBA prioritisation exercises.

- The experience of Kenya by Dr. Leon Bennun, Hon. Charman, NatureKenya
- The experience of South Africa by Mr, Steven Evans, GEF-IBA Project Co-ordinator, BLSA
- The experience of Tanzania by Mr. Maurus Msuha, GEF-IBA Project Co-ordinator, WCST

β The experiences of the three countries were synthesised and important

lessons that can be adapted for use by Ethiopia noted

β With interactive involvement of delegates from government institutions, a framework that can enable us prioritise IBAs of Ethiopia was developed

Day Two

β Workshop participants divided into two working groups to develop:

- Set of Criteria for Prioritisation (group I)
- Method of assessment or scoring (group II)

Day Three

β Grouping of sites into three clusters done on the basis of the criteria and Scoring methods developed in day two

β Appropriate actions proposed for each of the cluster

β Closing of workshop :

- Summation of workshop by Mengistu Wondafrash
- Closing remarks by Abay Assefa

8. Closing

Ato Abbay Assefa, in his closing remark stated that this exercise is perhaps the most important step next to the completion of the first directory of the Important Bird Areas book for Ethiopia. It took a long time to plan because the staff needed preparation and wanted to gain the full experience that was present with other partners. The results of this workshop will ensure what the next steps will involve in the promotion of conservation work using IBA sites. The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society will have a strong basis for forming the necessary site support groups and will also conduct major survey work where information is lacking. He thanked all the participants and especially the partners who came from far and wide to assist in the prioritisation of Ethiopia's IBAs. With this remark the workshop was officially closed.

9. Acknowledgements

First and for most, we wish to thank all those colleagues from East Africa, South Africa and the various Federal and Regional Agencies of Ethiopia for giving the workshop the importance it deserves and for being present at this workshop in person. This workshop would have been impossible were it not for the valuable time and input from several organisations and individuals.

The workshop is organised with the financial and logistical support of the BirdLife East-Africa Sub-Region Co-ordination Office. We are highly indebted to Mr. David Mutekanga, the Sub-Region Co-ordinator for his support. His unreserved assistance to this workshop right from its inception is highly appreciated by EWNHS.

Our particular gratitude goes to Dr. Leon Bennun, Chairman of the East Africa Natural History Society, for agreeing to participate in this workshop, despite his busy schedule, and for facilitating the workshop to the best of his ability.

We are particularly grateful to Ato Yilma Dellelegn for preparing a background paper for the workshop and also for his personal presence to assist and share with us his considerable knowledge on the avifauna of Ethiopia.

This proceedings has been assembled as a collaborative effort of several individuals participated in the workshop. We heartily thank those who devoted their time in reading and updating the draft and thus made possible the compilation of this proceedings.

Last but not least, the IBA project staff and other members of the Society should be highly commended for their effort and industrious work in organising the workshop.