



# IUCN RED LIST ASSESSMENT COURSE FINANCED BY DARWIN INITIATIVE

27-30 January, Conakry

## ABSTRACT

In collaboration with Herbar National de Guinée and trainer Emily Beech from BGCI, a Red List Assessment course was run with 24 participants at the University Hotel at UGAN, Conakry for 3.5 days in January 2026. The aim of the course was to give participants a grounding in the categories and criteria and how to do assessments for the IUCN Red List.

**Charlotte Couch**  
Course Facilitator



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## Introduction

Output 1 of the DARCC044 project “Improving capacity for plant biodiversity planning in Guinea” is to increase national capacity of researchers and local authorities in plant identification, surveying, red listing and enhance the data available for future national red listing. A Red List assessment course was planned for year 2 of the project. This requires a francophone trainer, who are in short supply. Emily Beech from Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) agreed to do the training for us, she is part of the Global Trees Assessment specialist group for IUCN. Our Guinean Red List assessor, Tokpa Seny Doré of the National Herbarium and Charlotte Couch (TIPA project coordinator) facilitated.

The course was planned for the 27-30 January 2026 at Hôtel de l’Université, UGAN, Conakry. In early January, we launched a call for applicants. Similar to our Plant ID course, candidates had to submit their application through a Google form, answering questions about how much they know about the red list (see Fig 1 for aggregated results), if they are a member of a specialist group already, what their motivation for doing the course is and how they will use the skills acquired. Although this course was specific for plants in Guinea, we still received c. 30 applications from regional countries (Senegal, Benin, Cote d’Ivoire Burkina Faso) and some from Cameroon and Gabon. We received 211 applications in total for 25 places. We tried to select candidates that showed a genuine interest in using the training in the future. Though it can be hard to gauge this from a form. The interest from across the region underlines the importance of running a regional course in the future, which will be taken on board by the West African Plants RLA of which the course facilitators are members.

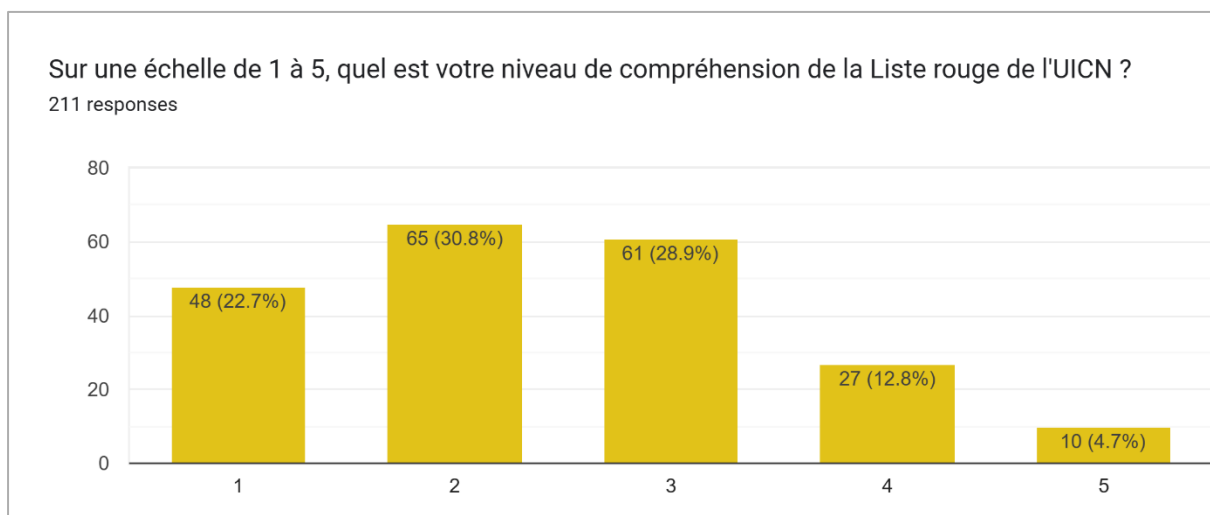


Figure 1: On a scale of 1 to 5 what is your level of understanding of the IUCN Red List?

With candidate selection we did our best to create gender equality, however fewer women applied for the course. We had 24 participants, due to a participant who did not



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inform us that he could no longer make it. If this had been done early enough, we could have replaced him, as we had a long reserve list. The male: female split was 15:9. The percentage of males to female applications can be seen in Fig.2.

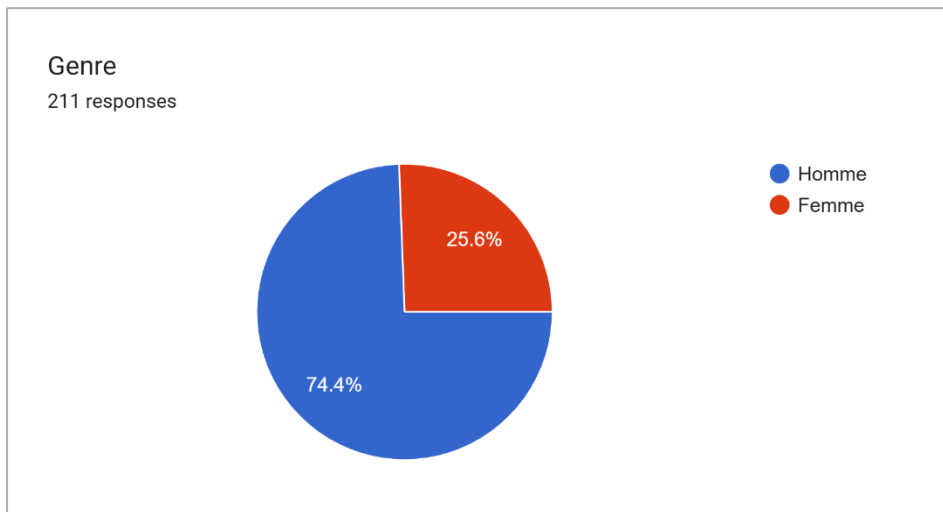


Figure 2: Gender split of applicants for the course

To assist those coming from the interior of the country, their transport and accommodation was paid for by the course, to ensure we could be as inclusive as possible.

## Course content

Most people had heard of the IUCN Red List or looked something up on it before the course, but few had any concept of what it takes to do an assessment or any understanding of the categories and criteria.

The course was opened by the UK Ambassador to Guinea, Mr Daniel Shepherd and Dr Sekou Magassouba of the National Herbarium of Guinea. The first day of the course gave a grounding in the language and terms used by IUCN followed by the categories and criteria A-C. An example of an imaginary cycad species was used for participants to work in groups to assess it against the various criteria.



Figure 3: Group photo at start of the course with UK Ambassador

Day 2 completed the criteria D-E and there was more group working to apply the criteria to the cycad and then also to use their own data on an endemic species to assess it against the criteria. They also looked at non-endemic taxa and the concept of regional and national red listing.

Day 3 Started with asking the participants what they would give as advice for new assessors. We then moved on to look at mapping and the tools available for calculating Area of occupation (AOO) and Extent of occurrence (EOO) such as GeoCat. In the afternoon session, we reviewed five assessments made by the facilitators to see if the criteria used were correct or if the assessment needed refining. This was a very useful experience for both the participants and the authors of the assessments. Emily explained and discussed after every assessment what she thought was the correct assessment if they disagreed.



Figure 4: Group working and presentation of outcomes



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Day 4 of the training was for revision and the test. The test consists of 20 questions and they had one hour to complete it. The test was mostly to gauge the level of understanding, but the score was not the objective. The questions were discussed afterwards to make sure everyone understood the answers.

The full programme can be found in Annex 2.

Participants received copies of the IUCN Categories and Criteria booklet in French along with other materials such as the example species. A copy of the presentations were shared with the participants after the end of the course.

## Evaluation of candidates

This training highlighted some issues around the materials from IUCN. Some of the materials have not been translated into French, particularly some of the guidelines and examples for the training. Emily will feed this back to IUCN's Red List Unit. This is partly why although we have recorded the scores of the participants, we are not using them as a benchmark. The exam is open book, but if you do not have access to all the materials it makes it difficult.

We asked them to self-assess themselves before and after the course for their level of comprehension of the Red List, see Fig 5.

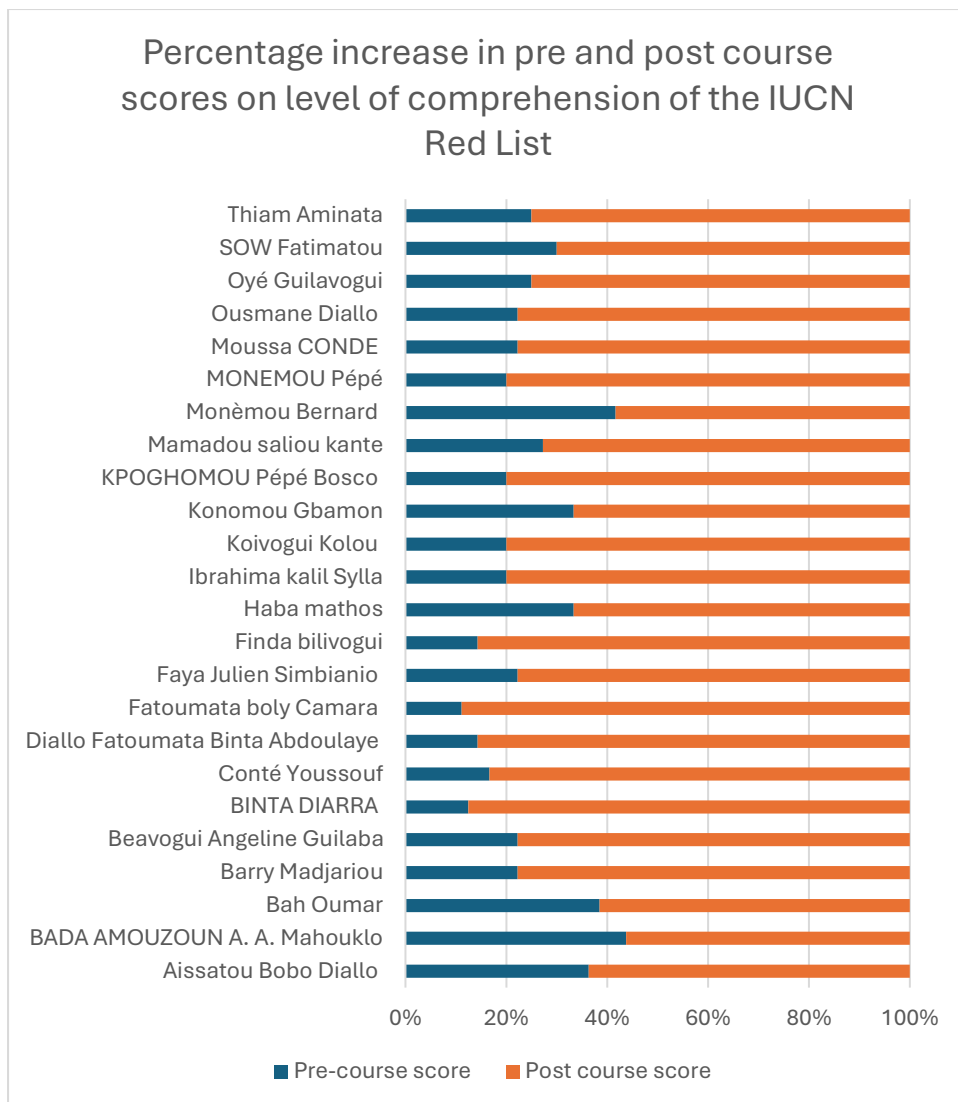


Figure 5: Self assessment scores for participants

## Conclusion

This is the first time this course has been taught in Guinea with a qualified trainer. This means that people could start compiling assessments and with assistance from someone who has access to SIS (the IUCN data input system) they could submit assessments. It was apparent that there is some enthusiasm for doing this at a national level. There is currently no national level red listing for plants in Guinea. National Red Listing is being encouraged through the Global Biodiversity Framework, so having this training is timely. We will submit this report (translated into French) to the Ministry of Environment with the suggestion that there are people willing to do national red listing and therefore this may be an opportunity to create a network of assessors to fulfil their international obligations.



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Many of the participants are interested in joining the West African Plants specialist group, when the call goes out later this month, so we hope to get people involved either in reviewing or assessing species across the region. Many of the participants had participated in the Tropical Plant Identification course and/ or vegetation survey courses run under this project. We hope that these people will continue to network and come together to assess and monitor Guinean plants.



*Figure 6: Participants with certificates at end of course*

Radio Environnement report on the IUCN workshop:

<https://radioenvironnementguinee.org/archives/9756>

# Annex 1

## Participant scores

Candidate	SCORE /20
BADA AMOUZOUN Akhénaton Adonaï Mahouklo	8
BAH Oumar	8
BARRY Madjarjou	9
BEAVOGUI Angeline guilaba	9
BILIVOGUI Finda	11
CAMARA Fatoumata Boly	12
CONDE Moussa	15
CONTÉ Youssouf	8
DIALLO Aissatou Bobo	9
DIALLO Fatoumata Binta Abdoulaye	9
DIALLO Ousmane	14
DIARRA Binta	7
GUILAVOGUI Oyé	11
HABA Mathos	7
KANTE Mamadou Saliou	11
KOIVOGUI kolou	12
KONOMOU GBAMON	8
KPOGHOMOU Pépé Bosco	12
MONEMOU Bernard	12
MONEMOU Pépé	8
SIMBIANO Faya Julien	14
SOW Fatimatou	13
SYLLA IBRAHIMA KALIL	11
THIAM Aminata	10



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## Annex 2

### Formation sur l'évaluation des plantes selon la Liste rouge de l'UICN

27 au 30 janvier 2026, Hôtel de l'Université, UGAN, Conakry

#### Mardi 27 janvier

Heure	Activité
9.00 – 9.30	Inscription
9.30 – 9.45	Mots de bienvenue, introduction de BGCI et GTA
9.45 – 10.00	Présentation des participants
10.00 – 10.30	Introduction à la liste rouge de l'UICN Importance et utilisations de la liste rouge
10.30 – 11.00	Pause-café
11.00 – 12.00	Principaux termes et concepts utilisés dans le cadre des critères de la liste rouge de l'UICN et exercice
12.00 – 13.00	Les Catégories de la Liste rouge de l'UICN, qualité et incertitude des données
13.00 – 14.00	Déjeuner
14.00 – 14.50	Critère A et exercice
14.50 – 15.45	Critère B et exercice
15.45 – 16.00	Pause-café
16.00 – 16.45	Critères C, D et E et exercice
16.45 – 17.00	Choix des catégories finales + comment aborder les critères, Questions/Conclusions

#### Mercredi 28 janvier

Heure	Activité
9.00 – 9.30	Récapitulatif de la séance de la veille, questions, commentaires
9.30 – 10.30	Evaluation des espèces pour la Liste Rouge – exemples
10.30 – 11.00	Pause-café
11.00 – 12.30	Evaluation des espèces endémiques – Données de participants
12.30 - 13.00	Discussion en plénière
13.00 – 14.00	Déjeuner

14.00 – 14.30	Utilisation des critères de la liste rouge pour les listes rouges régionales et nationales
14.30 – 16.00	Évaluation des espèces non-endémiques au niveau national – Données de participants
16.00 – 16.45	Conseils pour les nouvelles évaluateurs (global et national)

## Jeudi 29 janvier

Heure	Activité
9.00 – 9.30	Récapitulatif de la séance de la veille, questions, commentaires
9.30 – 11.00	Informations complémentaires pour les évaluations de la liste rouge
11.00 - 11.30	Pause-café
11.30 – 12.30	Évaluation des espèces endémiques – Données de participants
12.30 – 13.00	Utilisations de la liste rouge de l'UICN
13.00 – 14.00	Déjeuner
14.00 – 15.30	Cartographie et démonstration de GeoCat
15.30 – 15.45	Pause
15.45 – 17.00	Vérification des évaluations Kew

## Vendredi 30 janvier

Heure	Activité
9.00 – 10.00	Récapitulatif de la séance de la veille, questions, commentaires
10.00 – 11.00	Test de connaissance
11.00 – 11.20	Pause
11.20 – 12.30	Réponses au test
12.30 – 13.00	Certificats et fin de formation
13.00-14.00	Pause déjeuner et photo de famille



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