

Project Update: April 2006

The project team visited Lake Chilwa wetland area to meet local hunters (Fig. 1), local communities and other stakeholders from 19th April to 30th April 2006. The aim of the visit was to meet, coax and mobilize them to form active working groups to combat uncontrollable and widespread bird hunting in the area. During the visit, ten consultative meetings and eighteen consultative workshops were held with traditional leaders, local communities and stakeholders. At each consultative workshop, the participants were asked to form a wetland management committee whose aim would be to protect the water birds from local hunters, local farmers and local communities but also to rehabilitate degraded areas of the wetland. Then each committee was asked to elect officer bears (chairman and secretary) to ensure the smooth running of the committees. It is pleased to note that twenty-one bird management committees (Fig. 2) have been established in the area. Many women have joined these committees and nine of them have been elected to a post of either a secretary or chairman. The senior posts that some women are currently holding in these established committees have encouraged many women to join the committees and this is really encouraging.

