

International workshop on poisoning and vultures:

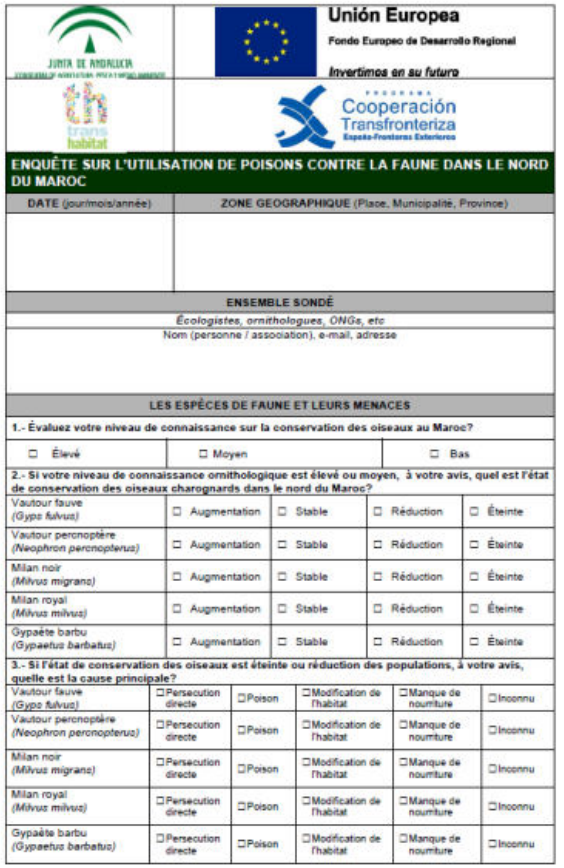
The situation in Morocco



2014 April

POISONING IN MOROCCO

- Everybody believes poisoning is a conservation problem in Morocco.
  - So, poisoning in Morocco would threaten local scavenger raptors population and European migrant populations: 100 % annual migrant Egyptian Vultures; near 10.000 annual migrant Eurasian Griffon Vultures; many migrant Red and Black Kites; dispersal Black Vultures, Bearded Vultures and Iberian Imperial Eagle.
    - Then, Andalusian Anti Poisoning Strategy has committed a POCTEFEX project to know:
      - Is poison a real threat and limiting factor for local and migrant vultures in Morocco?
      - What kinds of compounds are operating and what are the target species and methods used?
      - Is there any fighting against wildlife poisoning?



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ENQUÊTE SUR L'UTILISATION DE POISONS CONTRE LA FAUNE DANS LE NORD DU MAROC

DATE (jour/mois/année)	ZONE GEOGRAPHIQUE (Place, Municipalité, Province)

ENSEMBLE SONDÉ

Écologistes, ornithologues, ONGs, etc

Nom (personne / association), e-mail, adresse

LES ESPÈCES DE FAUNE ET LEURS MENACES

1.- Évaluez votre niveau de connaissance sur la conservation des oiseaux au Maroc?

☐ Élevé ☐ Moyen ☐ Bas

2.- Si votre niveau de connaissance ornithologique est élevé ou moyen, à votre avis, quel est l'état de conservation des oiseaux charognards dans le nord du Maroc?

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3.- Si l'état de conservation des oiseaux est éteinte ou réduction des populations, à votre avis, quelle est la cause principale?

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REVIEW CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Poisoning is forbidden in Morocco
  - Le dahir du 6 Hijja 1341 (21 Juillet 1923); sur la police de la chasse tel qu'il a été modifié et complété;
  - Le décret du 16 Joumada II 1432 (20 Mai 2011) pris pour l'application du Dahir du 6 Hijja 1341 (21 Juillet 1923);
  - L'arrêté du Ministre de l'Agriculture n° 582-62 du 5 Joumada II 1382 (3 Novembre 1962] portant réglementation permanente de la chasse, tel qu'il a été modifié et complété;)
  - L'arrête du Haut Commissaire aux Eaux et Forets et a la lutte contre la desertification, portant ouverture cloture et reglementation speciale de la chasse pendant la saison 2012/2013

REVIEW OF HISTORIC POISONING EVIDENCES

- Decreasing of scavenger raptors populations.
  - Griffon vulture: scarce common breeder in 1915 and 1960; rare in 1980s; extinct in 2000s
  - Egyptian vulture: common breeder in 1970s; nearly extinct 2011
  - Bearded Vulture: common breeder in first half of XX century; nearly extinct in 2014
  - Black Vulture: extinct in XX century (1970s?)
  - Iberian Imperial Eagle: extinct in XX century
  - Lappet-faced Vulture : extinct in XX century
  - Red Kite: Very scarce in 1910s, very scarce in 1990s, nearly extinct in 2011
- Governmental policies of extirpation of mammal and raptor predators from 1950s to 1970s through strychnine use: thousands of killed individuals.
- References:
  - Soto (1986): Poisoning was the main cause of Griffon Vulture breeding population decline
  - Bergier (1987): Poisoning is one of the main threats to big eating-carrion raptors species
  - Cuzin (2003): Poisoning is one of the main threats to Golden Jackal, Hyenas, Foxes, etc.
  - Thevénot *et al* (2003). Poisoning is one of the main threats to big eating-carrion raptors species
  - Cuzin (2011): "The main threats range from poisoning meant to kill dogs and jackals…"(Bearded Vulture)
- Eradication of feral dogs because rabies and predator control. From 1950 to today there was programs of control, including poisoning.

RECENT POISONING EVENTS

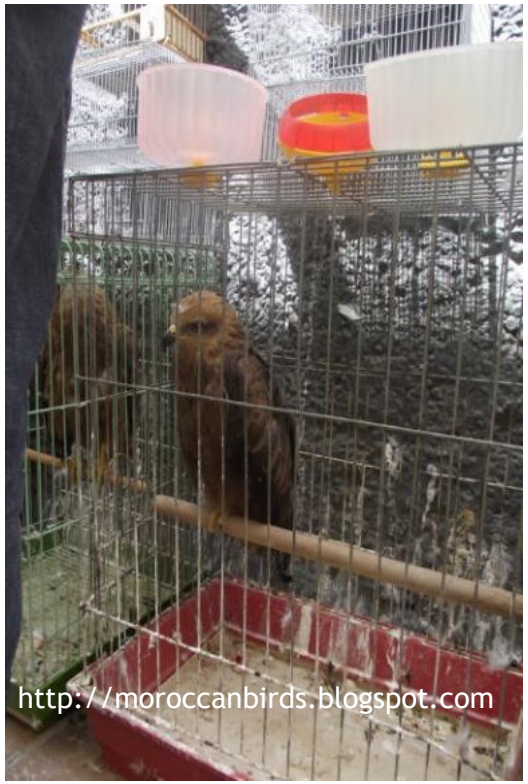
- Seven wildlife poisoning events, one in 1994 and five from 2000
  - 14 Red Fox in 1994 with strychnine
  - 1 genet with strychnine in a lentil stew bait to eliminate wild boards in 2005
  - One possible poisoned Black Kite
  - Several Red Foxes, Wild Cats, Rats and Mongooses with takaout (paraphenylene diamine) and methomyl (“Lannate”) in chicken heads baits to eliminate Feral Dogs
  - Wild Boards in human food baits (figs and sardines) with carbide.
  - One known event of poisoned Golden Jackals in last ten years.

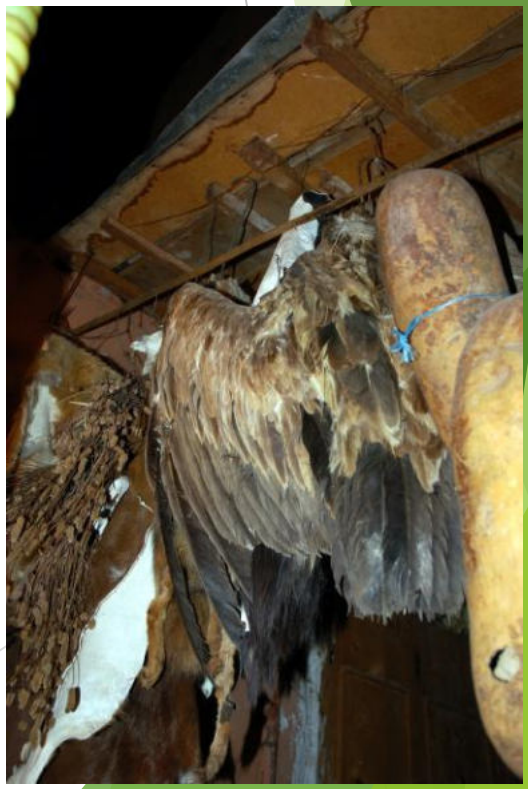
Barbary Macaque Conservation in the Rif

الحافظة على قردة زعطوط بجبال الريف

SO, CURRENT SITUATION COULD BE NOT A CONCERN…

- There are not clear evidences that wildlife poisoning is actually a conservation problem to vultures.
- Then, why are vultures population so small in Morocco?
  - Strong decreasing in XX century because human prosecution.
  - Low awareness to apply Conservation Laws. Wildlife shooting and illegal sale of any animal are habitual in all Morocco.
  - Very low wild and domestic carcasses availability.

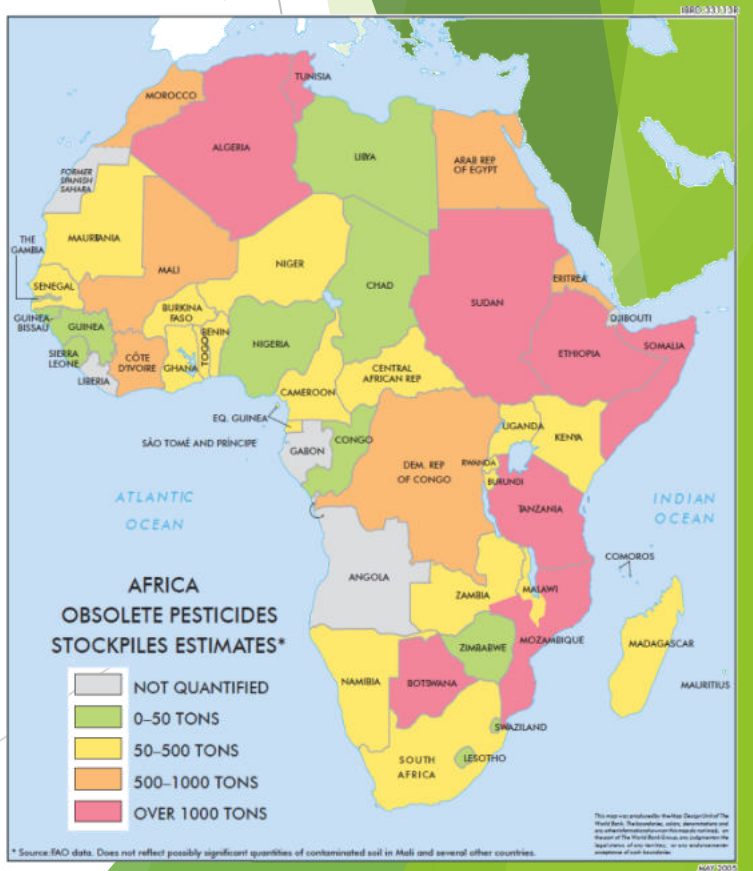


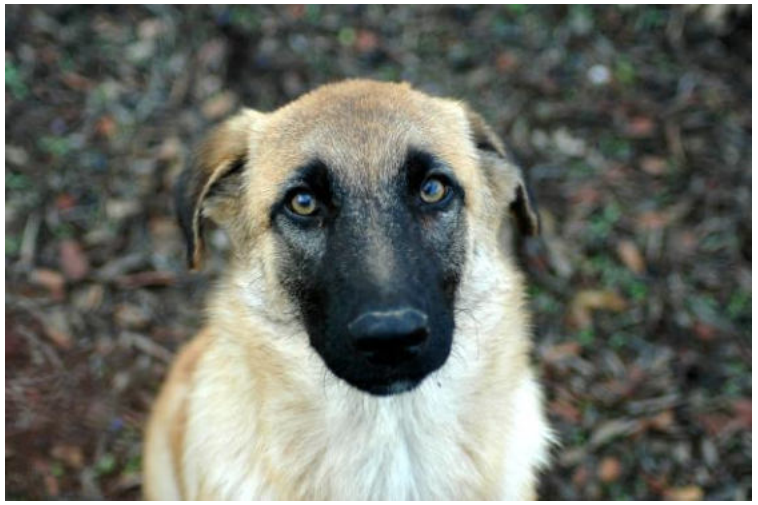


… THOUGH IT COULD BE

- There are not robust data on the magnitude of the problem
- Any single poisoning incident could extinct local populations of Egyptian Vulture, Bearded Vulture or Red Kite and kill migrant and dispersal European Vultures and Eagles crossing Morocco
- High obsolete pesticides availability.
- Pesticides (and maybe strychnine) can be gotten in any place for everybody.
- High chances of poisoning because conflicts with Wild Boards, Feral Dogs, African Wolfs, Golden Jackals and Foxes.

FIGURE 9 The African continent has some 50,000 tons of obsolete pesticides





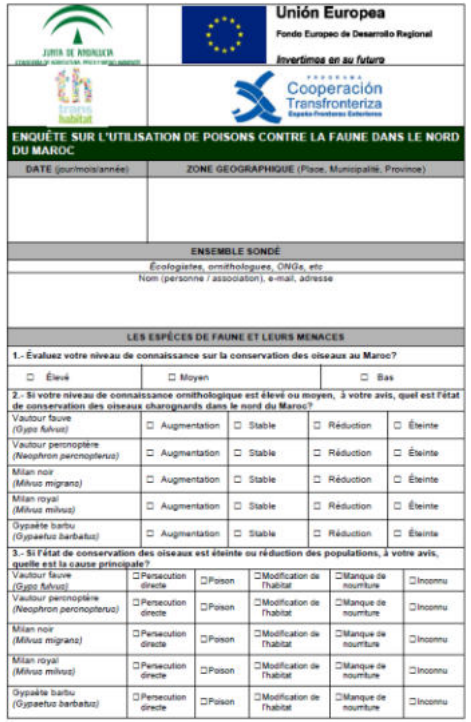
REVIEW CURRENT TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

- There are not current techniques and tools to fight wildlife poison
- Identification of a wildlife poisoning incident use to be through visual observation of naturalists. There is not professional and trained people.
- There are not implemented forensic methods to identify wildlife poisoning.
- There are not collection of samples to toxicological analysis neither laboratory analysis.
- There are not public awareness measures about wildlife poisoning

CURRENT GAPS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POISON

- Lack of standardized field information about poisoning incidents
- Lack of control of poisons
- Lack of designed and implemented techniques and tools to fight poison.
- Lack of trained people
- Lack of awareness about wildlife poisoning as a real problem

- POCTEFEX Project is working now:
  - Field missions
  - Local stakeholders
  - Poison sales point
  - Poisoning indexes



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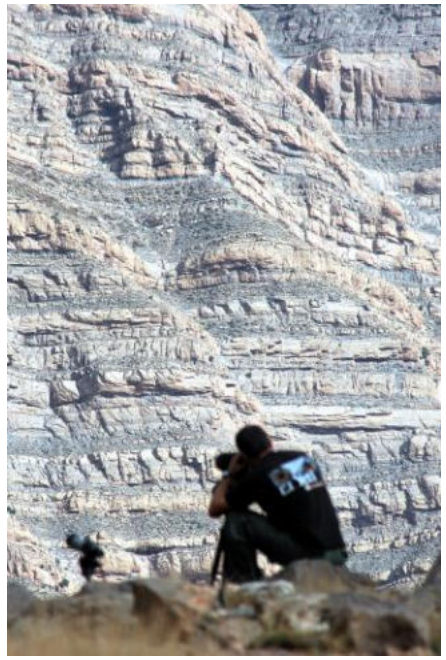
NEXT WORKS

- Identify to Moroccan main conservation actors to
  - Vigilance about poisoning. Awareness and formation
  - Monitoring of Vultures populations
  - Implementing techniques and tools to fight poison
  - Get funding
  - Making conservations actions on Vultures.
    - Creation of a feeding stations net to support survival and setting of Egyptian vultures and Eurasian Griffon Vultures and to make a sure vulture migrating flyway corridor
    - Management of human wastes disposal sites as sure vultures feeding sites
    - Recovering of wild ungulates populations
  - Pilot areas: Intercontinental Biosphere Reserve, Tazzeka N.P., High Atlas.
- GREPOM. Possible champion in country to promote investigation on poisoning issues. Moroccan Partner of BirdLife International



BirdLife INTERNATIONAL
برنامج المغرب
MOROCCO PROGRAMME
GREPOM

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Thank you!