Enhancing the uptake of research results in conservation decisions in Madagascar
H. Patrick Rafidimanantsoa & Julia P.G. Jones
Bangor University

Background
- The research-practice gap is widely acknowledged in the field of conservation and needs to be addressed consequently.
- Most studies have been carried out in developed countries (e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, France) on a wide range of conservation topics.
- Relatively fewer studies have been done in biologically-rich and poverty-stricken countries.
- Impact is high on the agenda of research funding bodies.

Methods
- We surveyed headquarter-based conservation managers (i.e. professionals with some decision-making power that affects on-the-ground actions).
- We used questionnaires to gather data on:
  - The information sources managers frequently use to inform their decisions (1)
  - Their information search and reception habits (2)
  - The barriers to accessing and using RR in conservation decisions (3)
- Our suggestions are based on the analysis of (1), (2) and (3).

Results

Fig. 1: Barriers to using peer-reviewed publications [X axis: number of respondents (n=16); Y axis: barrier statements]

Fig. 2: Barriers to using non peer-reviewed publications [X axis: number of respondents (n=16); Y axis: barrier statements]

Fig. 3: Other barriers mentioned [from a thematic analysis of open-ended questions]

Fig. 4: How managers search for and receive research results [X axis: how often a response option (on Y axis) was reported (n=16)]

Suggestions

Create a repository of Madagascar-relevant research results
- Centralised for easy retrieval of research results (RR)
- Need for metrics (e.g. number of citations, downloads, etc.)

Metrics reflect the utility of the RR to potential users and enhance the recognition and visibility of the holder

But further considerations are needed
- Maintenance costs of the database
- Willingness of stakeholders (i.e. researchers, managers) to engage
- Effectiveness of metrics to deliver their promises
- Terms and conditions of RR/data sharing and use

Acknowledgments
We thank all participants. The findings are from a MPhil thesis in Conservation Leadership at the University of Cambridge. The placement project was undertaken at Bangor University.