



Activity report – Semester 2, 2025

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## Halting the decline of vultures in West & Central Africa

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# Information on the document

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**Date:** January 2026

**Cover picture:** Four Rüppell's vultures of different age classes, exhibiting varied plumage, perched on a *Balanites* tree in the Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Faunal Reserve.

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This document provides **a summary of the main achievements of the vulture program** implemented by Sahara Conservation, in collaboration with local stakeholders in Niger and in Chad, **from July to December**. Project implementation in Niger covers the Gadabeji Biosphere Reserve (GBR), the Koutous Massif, and, from this year onward, the Termit Massif within the Termit & Tin-Toumma National Natural Reserve (TTNNR). In Chad, activities mostly take place in the Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Faunal Reserve (OROAFR).

Within this conservation program, activities are organized around two main objectives:

- (1) Monitor and improve our knowledge on vulture populations in Chad and Niger.
- (2) Protect the remaining vulture populations by fighting against the main threats.

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# What we aim to accomplish

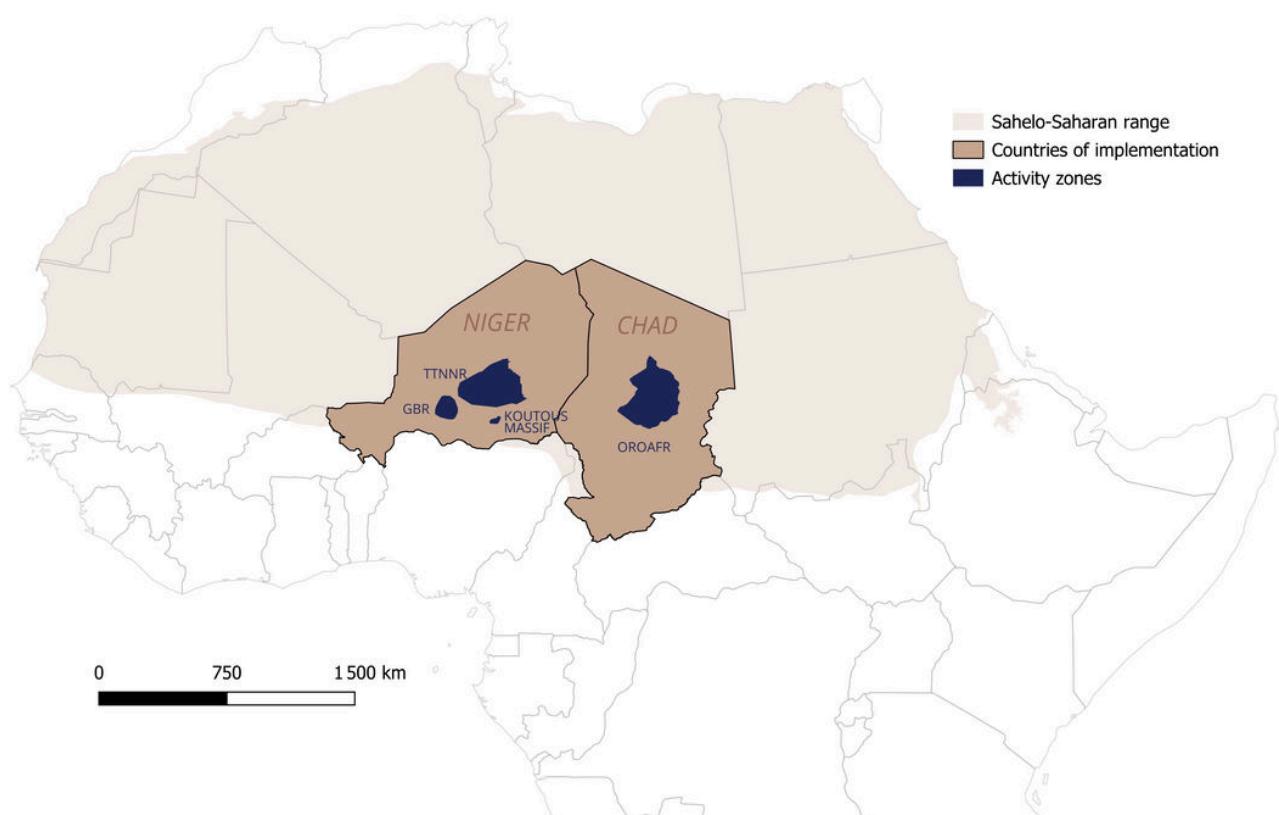
## The challenges

As scavengers, vultures play an unparalleled role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Yet, they are among the species most threatened with extinction. Throughout Africa, vultures have declined drastically over the last decades, with the highest rates of decline in West Africa. One of the major drivers for this decline is poisoning and illegal taking of vultures for belief-based use.

## Our impact

Sahara Conservation and its partners have initiated a dedicated conservation program on uniquely placed vulture populations in Chad and Niger. The primary objective is to understand better these vulture populations while strengthening local capacities to effectively reduce their threats.

The success of our actions relies on strong partnerships and the implementation of complementary activities involving key stakeholders. These include raising awareness among local communities about the consequences of vulture decline, engaging traditional healers to address the demand side of wildlife trafficking, collaborating with community leaders to drive meaningful change, working with authorities to disrupt supply chains, and conducting systematic monitoring to fill knowledge gaps on vulture populations and threats—ultimately informing effective conservation actions.



# What we achieved

**~114 000 km** traveled and monitored by satellite transmitters in Chad over the period

**294** pupils in key vulture areas of rural Niger received school materials and environmental awareness education

**639** members from local communities benefited from direct support to their livelihood in key vulture areas of rural Niger and Chad

**108** stakeholders (hunters and tradipractioners) engaged in awareness raising activities in Niger

**677** members from local communities directly involved in sensitization campaigns in Niger

News on our vulture program reached over **15 000** accounts on social media



**Picture:** A lappet-faced vulture in the Termit Massif, where 24 individuals were recorded during the latest field mission, including five juveniles from this year. The area is known as one of the main breeding site for the species in Niger.

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# Vultures in focus

## Guiding conservation action

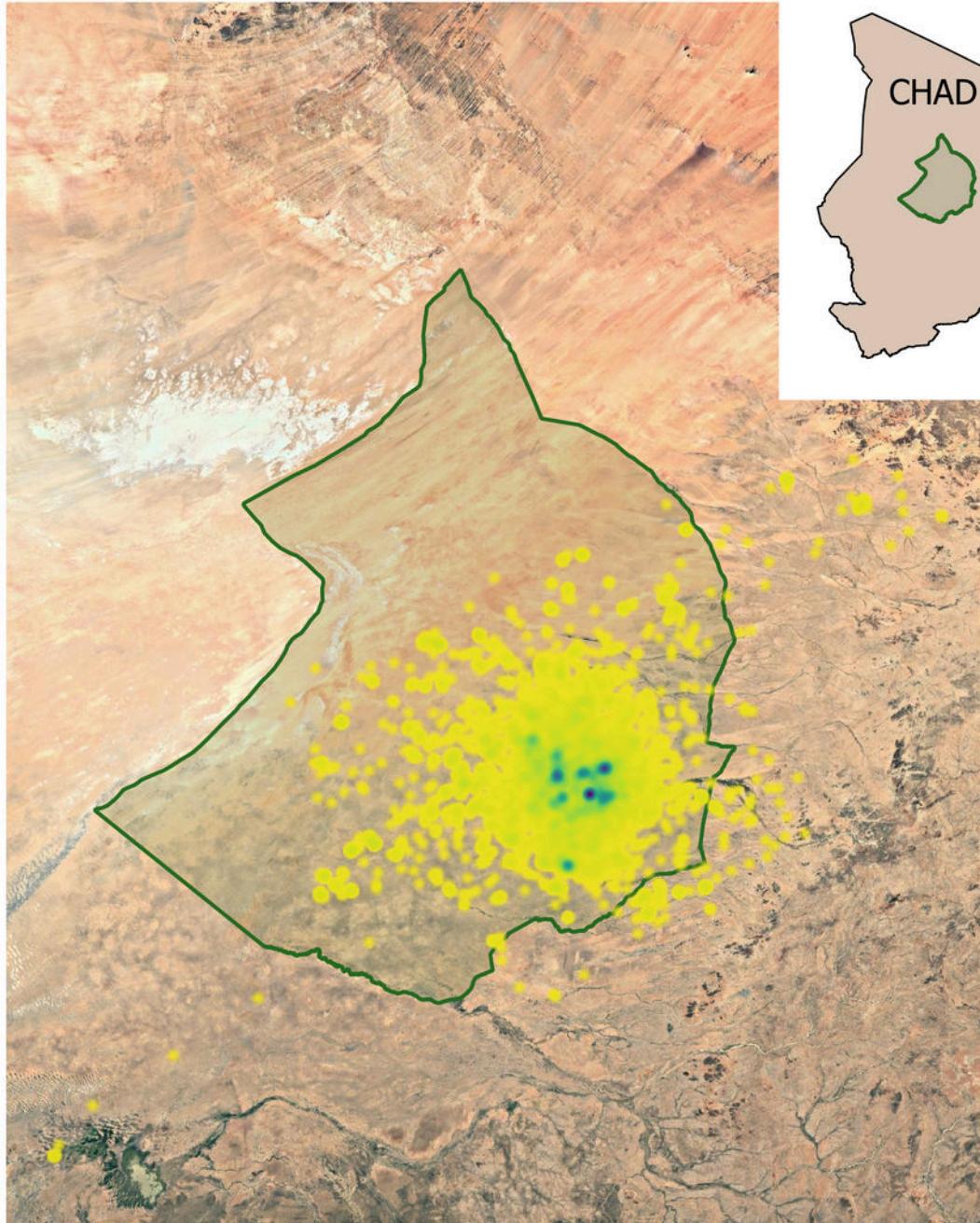
- **Organized response to vulture poisoning in Chad** for the first time through strengthen collaboration with wildlife authorities on two incidents involving 27 and 60 Rüppell's vultures killed for use in traditional practices. Field investigations enabled the securing of carcasses and contaminated areas to prevent secondary poisoning, while documenting cases and collecting evidence to identify patterns and methods.
- **Supported law enforcement enabling the release of rescued vultures** - three Rüppell's vultures and one Egyptian vulture- illegally captured in Niger.
- **Observed seasonal movements of the six tagged vultures** in OROAFR, which restricted their range and remained mostly within the reserve with the start of the cold season (November–February). Repeated visits to the same trees, visible on the map below, indicates the start of breeding, providing data to complement ground monitoring.



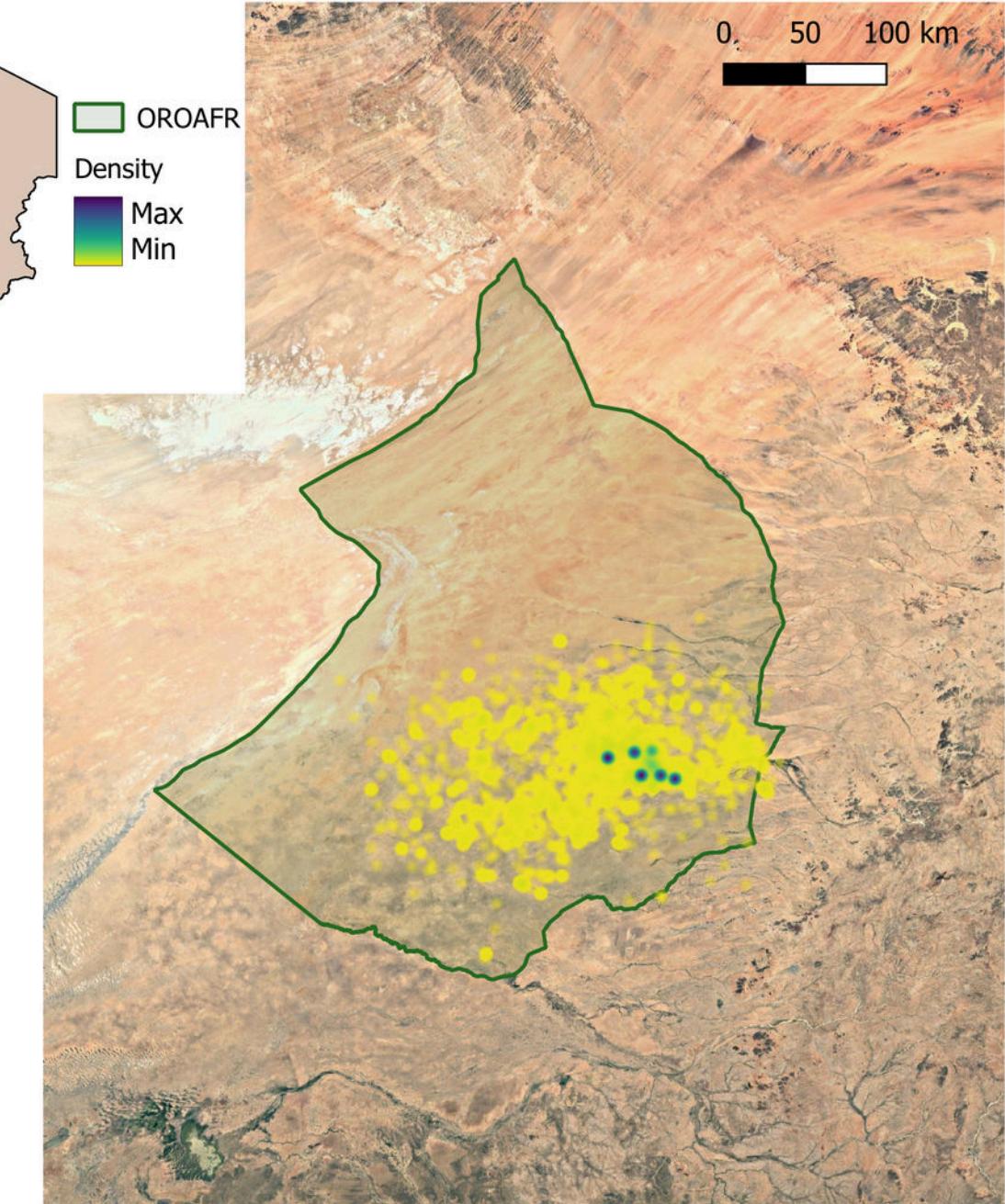
**Picture:** A Lappet-faced vulture incubating an egg on its nest in the OROAFR. Nest monitoring is conducted continuously during the breeding season to follow-up on the different stages and evaluate breeding success with the production of a fledgling.

© Mahamat Ali / Sahara Conservation. Date: December 2025

SEASONAL VARIATION OF TAGGED VULTURES SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION  
JULY TO DECEMBER 2025, OUADI RIME - OUADI ACHIM FAUNAL RESERVE - CHAD



TAGGED VULTURES SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION FROM  
JULY TO OCTOBER 2025 (RAINY SEASON)



TAGGED VULTURES SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION IN  
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2025 (COLD SEASON)

# Beyond the birds

We encourage knowledge, interest and collaboration

- **Strengthened synergies between conservation and community well-being** through the implementation of women-focused goat farming livelihood support and mobile health services in remote conservation areas.
- **An innovative approach using sport as a tool to raise environmental awareness** was pursued with the organization of two football tournaments featuring several teams representing emblematic species of the region, including vulture teams!
- **Continued engagement for vultures in Niger**, with sensitization activities expanded to a new area (Tanout) after vultures were seized there.
- **Promote dialogue** through activities that engage a wide range of stakeholders, from local communities to conservation practitioners.



**Picture:** Two football teams—Vultures and Giraffes—faced off in a match between the GBR Management Unit and youth from neighboring communes. This activity brought together these different groups and provided an opportunity for dialogue.

© Mamane Hassan/ Management Unit of the GBR. Date: October 2025.

# They make it possible on the ground

**Abdoul Razack Moussa Zabeirou** - Sahara Conservation Country representative in Niger, coordinates field activities in the country.

**Abdoul Razakou Abdou Mahamadou** - Project assistant, in charge of vulture monitoring in Niger and sensitization work.

**Abba Mamane** - Field officer in the Koutous massif in Niger, leads sensitization campaigns in the region and supports vulture monitoring.

The **monitoring team in the OROAFR**, with a special mention to **Mahamat Ali** who coordinates most of the vulture work in Chad.

**With the support of Marc Dethier** - Oryx Project manager, coordinating logistics and enabling work in OROAFR and **Tim Wacher** - Senior biologist, Zoological Society of London, supervising field work in OROAFR.

**The support teams** in Niger and Chad that provide assistance with accounting, administration and logistics for field missions.

**The coordinating team** (Cloé Pourchier and Violeta Barrios) provided crucial assistance on coordinating the activities, the administrative, financial and reporting side of the operations, as well as in fundraising.

Thank you to **all the other team members** for their punctual participation and support, and to the **authorities and communities** who help make this initiative a success.



**Picture:** The team in Niger conducting awareness-raising sessions with local community members, primarily herders, explaining different vulture species, their roles, and ecology. The activity aims to enhance understanding and promote positive attitudes toward the species, supporting their conservation.

© Abba Mamane /  
Sahara Conservation.  
Date: September  
2025

# Thank you

Funding from your organization helps to achieve the overall goal of preserving African vulture species in the wild. By preserving vultures, we highly contribute to healthier ecosystems. It contributes to support Sahara Conservation's vision of a Sahara where ecological processes function naturally; a Sahara that benefits all its inhabitants and where support for its conservation comes from stakeholders across all sectors of society.



## Together we make a difference