

## TIPA ASSESSMENT: SAALA WATERFALLS, LABE PREFECTURE

### ABSTRACT

The Chute de Saala waterfalls and rapids are one of the most important national sites for Podostemaceae including three (3) threatened species. Other threatened rheophytic species include *Eriocaulon sulanum*.

Charlotte Couch, Martin Cheek, Muhammad Yaya Diallo and Catherine Andre

# TIPA Assessment: Saala Waterfalls, Labé Prefecture.

## IPA criteria under which the site qualifies: A (i,iv), C (iii)

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## IPA assessment rationale

The Saala Waterfalls and rapids are one of the most important national sites for Podostemaceae including three threatened species. Other threatened rheophytic species include *Eriocaulon sulanum*.

## Site overview

Site Name: Saala Waterfalls	
Country: Republic of Guinea	Administrative region: Labé
Central co-ordinates: 11°17'45''N, 12°31'23''W	Area: 7 km <sup>2</sup>
Altitude minimum: 560 m	Altitude maximum: 930 m

## Site Description

Touristic waterfall site near the town of Labé, in the Fouta Djallon. There are numerous rocky rapids leading up to the main waterfall that have Podostemaceae present. The area around the waterfall site has a mixture of riverine forest and woodland species. The area at the base of the waterfall has denser riverine forest. There is a tourist camp present near the waterfall that is seldom used, but day tourists regularly visit.



Map showing the proposed area for protection as a TIPA. Core area in red.

### Botanical significance

The rocks in the river are rich in Podostemaceae species endemic to Guinea. This family of plants is known to have species which are endemic to particular rivers or to specific points in a river. They require fast flowing clean water and do not tolerate pollution or silt in the water. All rapids and waterfalls in Guinea are threatened due to the expanding hydroelectric sector.

### General habitat and geology description

The underlying geology of the areas is Ordovician quartzite rich sandstone. Around the edge of the upper part of the river Saala, near the tourist village there is some riverine vegetation with *Raphia* sp., *Pandanus candelabrum*, *Carapa procera*, *Heisteria parviflora* and *Gnidia foliosa*. The rapids and waterfalls of the Saala River are the second richest in Guinea for Podostemaceae.

### Conservation issues

There is a hydroelectric dam planned for this river. If it goes ahead, is likely to alter the flow of the river and negatively affect the populations of Podostemaceae. This has been seen at other hydroelectric dam sites e.g. Grandes Chutes near Kindia.

Litter from tourists is polluting the area both in and out of the water. At is one of the major tourist attractions for the Fouta Djallon and should be given more protection.

## Protected area status and Management

The Chutes de Saala was designated a Classified Forest in 1945. Not all classified forests have protected area status in Guinea. It is also listed as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Birdlife International in 2001.

## Threats

- Infrastructure: Planned Hydroelectric dam for the Saala river will alter the flow levels of the river, the works could add silt to the river and more litter from workers.
- Human impact: Currently there is a tourist village next to the falls and litter has been found in the river and surrounding area. Washing of clothes and motorcycles also pollutes the water.
- Agriculture: There are local communities upstream of the Chutes de Saala using chemicals (fertilizers etc.) in their activities. This could potentially be leached into the water course.
- Poaching: Poaching is common. Plant species are indirectly impacted.

**Threat level: High**

## Criterion A: Threatened Species

Criterion A taxon present	IPA subcriterion	IUCN redlist assessment	Site contains...			Entire global population (single-site endemic)	Species is of socio-economic importance	*Abundance at site
			≥ 1% of global population	≥ 5% of national population	Is 1 of 5 best sites nationally			
<i>Eriocaulon sulanum</i> S.M.Phillips & Burgt	A (i)	CR	⊙	⊙	⊙			Infrequent
<i>Saxicolella futa</i> ined.	A (i,iv)	EN	⊙	⊙	⊙			Infrequent
<i>Macropodiella macrothyrsa</i> (G.Taylor) C.Cusset	A(i,iv)	CR	⊙	⊙	⊙			Frequent
<i>Stonesia heterospathella</i> G.Taylor	A (i)	VU	⊙	⊙	⊙			Frequent
<i>Apodiscus chevalieri</i> Hutch.	A (i)	EN	⊙	⊙				Infrequent
<i>Dissotis splendens</i> A.Chev. & Jacq.-Fél.	A(iv)	VU	⊙	⊙				Common

Key: IUCN category: CR Critically Endangered, EN Endangered, VU Vulnerable. Abundance: Abundant, Common, Frequent, Infrequent, Scarce, Unknown

## Criterion B: Botanical Richness

This criterion does not apply in this case.

## Criterion C: Threatened Habitat

*Habitat type	IPA subcriterion	IUCN redlist assessment	Site contains...		Estimated area at site (if known)
			≥ 5% of national resource (for C(i) and C(ii))	≥ 10% of national resource (for C(iii))	
Waterfalls and Rapids with Podostemaceae	C(iii)		○	⊙	7 km <sup>2</sup>

### Bibliography

IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: [www.redlist.org](http://www.redlist.org)

Lisowski, S. 2009. Flore (Angiospermes) de la République de Guinée. Scripta Botanica Belgica.

Couch, C; Magassouba, S; Rokni, S; Cheek, M. (2018) Threatened plants species of Guinea-Conakry: A preliminary checklist. PeerJ Preprints. <https://doi.org/10.7287/peerj.preprints.3451v1>

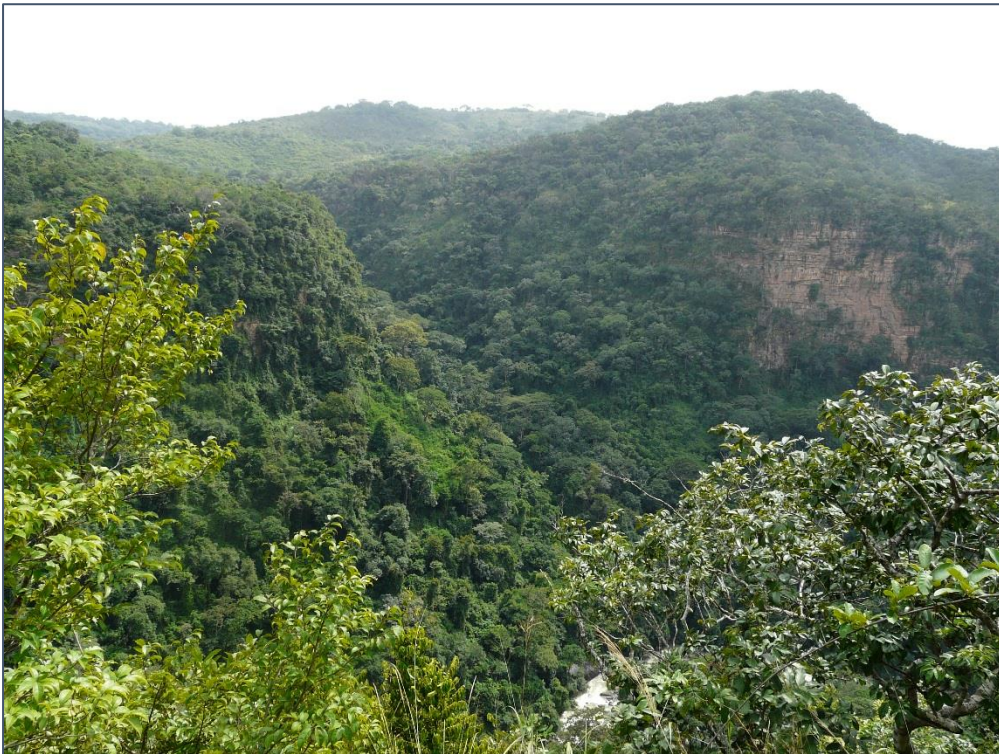
BirdLife International (2018) Important Bird Areas factsheet: Chutes de la Sala. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 16/10/2018.

Protected Planet: [www.protectedplanet.net](http://www.protectedplanet.net)

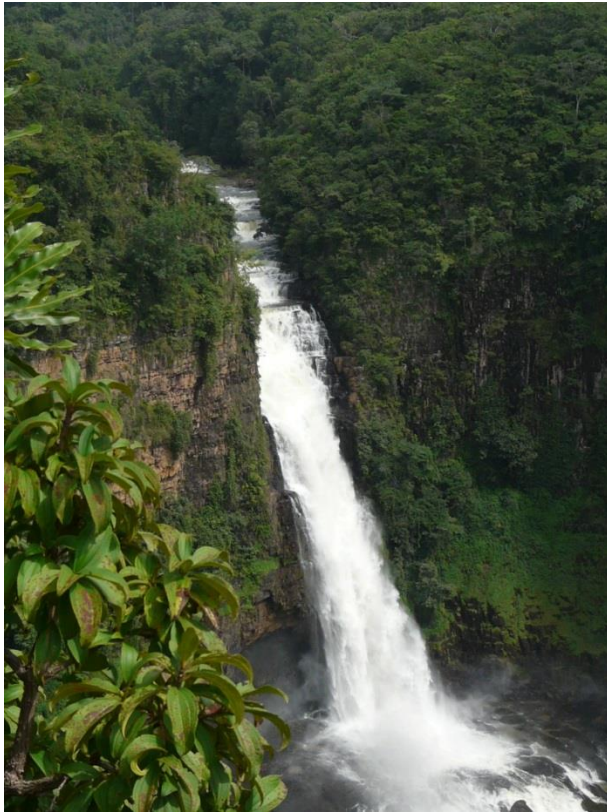
### Site in pictures



Rocks with Podostemaceae at the Saala Waterfalls, June. Photos: M. Cheek, ©RBG Kew



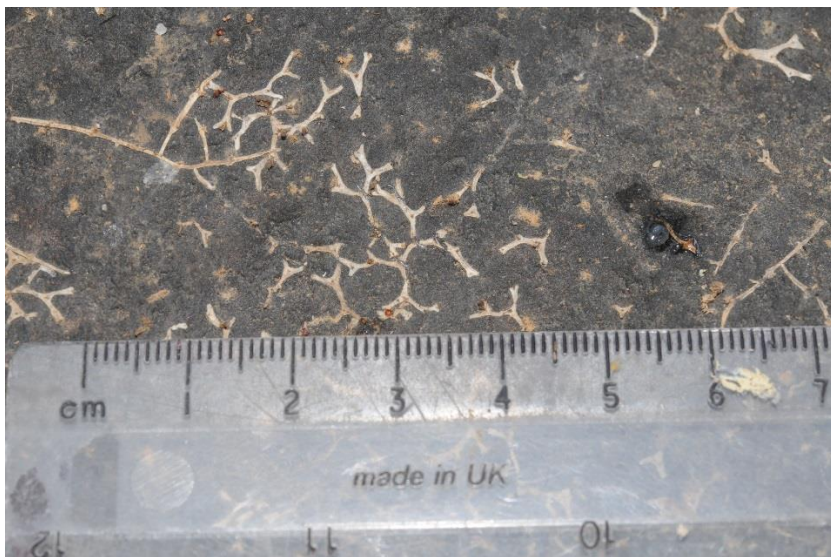
View of the Saala river valley. Photo: C. Couch, ©RBG Kew



Saala waterfall. Photo: C. Couch, ©RBG Kew



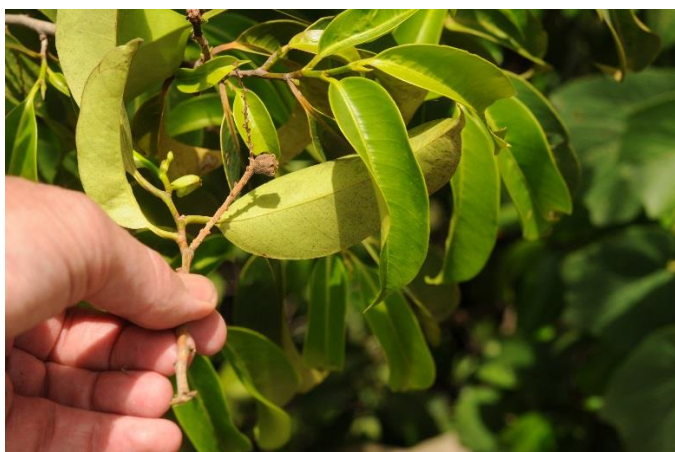
*Eriocaulon sulanum* S.M.Phillips & Burgt in flower, January 2018. Photo: M. Cheek, ©RBG Kew



*Saxicolella futa* dried on rocks. Jan 2018. Photos: M. Cheek, ©RBG Kew



*Dissotis splendens* A.Chev. & Jacq.-Fél. Photo: M. Cheek, ©RBG Kew



*Apodiscus chevalieri* Hutch. Photo: M. Cheek, ©RBG Kew