

Alan Bird - My five items:

1 Rain and floods in NE Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin

Notes:

Show sat image 1st January 2021

Point out international boundaries and places

Show marked up Michelin map dated 2019

Rivers, Lake Chad, Lagone, Chari, Yobe, Lake Lere

-Alau dam failure near Maiduguri, 9th September 2024

This flooded 15% of the area of Maiduguri city with 400,000 people displaced (out of a population of 870,000), with at least 38 killed (Nigerian Guardian newspaper), 280 convicts escaped from the prison including some Boko Haram members. 80% of the local zoo animals killed some others including dangerous one escaped. Schools were closed for two weeks to provide emergency shelters.

The dam was built between 1984-1986 (I trained the surveyors who did the land loss assessment work in 1981), it was 9m high,

It had over-topped in 1992 and in 1994 floods in Maiduguri were attributed to it. 2021 the outlet was opened to protect it from failing.

A very well written article in the Law and Society Magazine dated 21st September 2024. Better than anything produced in the UK during the Whaley Bridge episode.

Incredibly intense rainfall, dams like this are just not designed to take this. There is a flaw in the way the hydrology data is used. Mean of ten day blocks. Decad data. This smooths out the data when what you need is real peaks

-Lagdo Dam in Cameroon. Concrete, unlikely to fail even if overtopped but the fear is that the spillway may be over-whelmed and the operators may decide to open the bottom gates. Impact on the Benue valley downstream in Cameroon and Nigeria.

Impact of climate change/emergency

Africa has been struggling for over 50 years (1970 the key point)

This is a major driver of:

-the human migration crisis

-Conflicts in Lake Chad: Fisherfolk, Pastoralists and Farmers leading to economic instability and destitution

-Also fuelling the Islamic insurgency, Boko Haram

I was working in northern Nigeria on the Nigeria/Niger border in 2010 just as Boko Harum were kicking off.

Note also recent floods in south east Morocco on the Algerian border. 2nd October 2024 drone footage on Guardian newspaper website. One years rainfall fell in two days in September. "Worst for half a century"

Toumani Diabate

He died on 19th July 2024 aged 58

Obituary in the UK Guardian newspaper

Also one in "Songlines" magazine which I have not been able to access

His first tour outside of Africa was organised by Dr Lucy Duran (now an ethno-musicologist at SOAS) who brought him to the UK in 1988.

A very shy young man, spoke no English with a bad limp from Polio. Lucy had to interpret from French to English for him.

He played Cambridge Junction 1 (the converted warehouse) on this tour in 1988. It was one continuous acoustic performance. There were not that many people there but it was a life changing experience for many, real trance music.

His first UK LP Kaira was recorded in 1987 and released in 1988. See samples on the class website. This recording set the stage for the introduction of the Kora into Europe. In 1988 the LP Songhai was released which was an example of a very early "world music" fusion recording. Songhai was Toumani with the double bass player Danny Thompson (house bass player with CMJ in the back room of the Portland Arms at Mitchams Corner in the mid 1970's).

Where Mike Gibbs and I were at just two nights ago!