

# ► The West African Protected Areas Newsletter



“La lettre des aires protégées en Afrique de l’Ouest”

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## \*Assessing management effectiveness of protected areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) is in charge of *the effective and coordinated management of a network of protected areas for the sustainable conservation of the country's biodiversity*. It is a state-owned technical and scientific institution, placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism.

The network of protected areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo covers about 11% of the national territory. It includes diversified landscapes, from upland forests, thick and wet, to savannah areas, mountain ecosystems and fresh water ecosystems and it notably hosts five world heritage sites: Virunga national park, Garamba national park, Kahuzi-Biega national park, the Okapis fauna reserve and Salonga national park ; these sites are also inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger. Despite the high pressure on them, the biodiversity is very rich and is still home to emblematic species such as Okapi, Gorilla, Congolese peacock, etc.

In addition to their biological importance, PAs remain essential for bordering populations, insofar as they draw many resources for their subsistence (medicinal plants, subsistence fishing, wood, honey, etc.). In addition, these PAs provide jobs to local communities. Indeed, most of the

PAs assessed employ local staff generally for surveillance and for the rehabilitation of infrastructures. At Bushimaie and Maiko for example, more than 75% of the staff come from local communities, and in the case of the Virunga national park, it is almost all the local economy which depends on the PA.

In addition, PAs contain many sites of cultural or spiritual importance with high value for the bordering population. For example, at Mont Hoyo, cave carvings represent mystic forces, at Mangaï the ponds within the park serve for purification, at Kahuzi-Biega national park, some sites are used by bordering populations for their traditional rites.

But these protected areas are also tragically coveted and this can be seen on the ground by a multitude of pressures, the most common being poaching, land use conversion (farming, illegal use of the PA's pasture lands, traditional mining in protected areas, settlement of populations in the PA, etc.), the illegal exploitation of flora resources (for timber and firewood) and pollution (coming from surrounding mining industries). Poaching, which is present in all the protected areas assessed, has increased for the last five years in most protected areas. This recrudescence is mainly linked to the developing climate of insecurity that encourages authorities' corruption and seriously hinders the surveillance and control of parks. Harvesting is done by both bordering populations and gangs settled in some parks.

Most of the protected areas do not have any management document and, apart from the PAs supported by partners, funding remain very low and human resources insufficient.

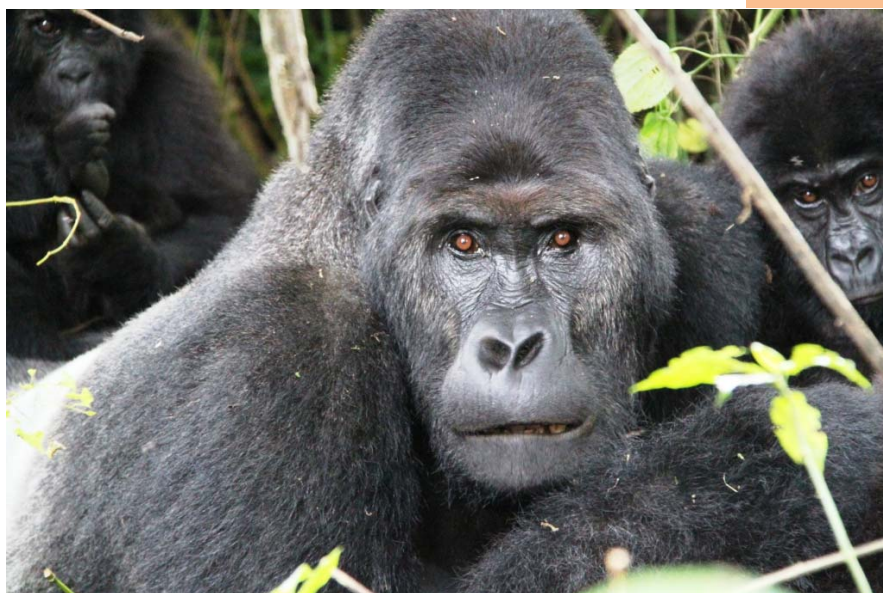


This evaluation tends to highlight three categories of protected areas management effectiveness in DRC:

- the most advanced ones, effectively supported by partners: Garamba, Kahuzi Biega, Okapi, Lomako and Virunga ;
- those which are still far from ensuring their primary function of conservation: Kundelungu, Maïko, Salonga and Upemba national parks, Itombwe natural reserve, the Mangroves park, Nsele integral reserve and Bombo Lumene and Bushimaïe hunting domains;
- those which are practically virtual on the ground: Basse Kando, Bili Uere, and Mangaï hunting domains, and Mont Hoyo integral reserve.

This first analysis should be confirmed by a refined comparison based on quantified data, some of which already exist, particularly in the sites supported by international partners.

Participants have made many recommendations. They are essentially directed to ICCN and are about improving the planning and coordination of actions (within the institute, with partners and among all the actors). Of course, this requires more means: financial, technical, but mostly human, particularly through a more enhance use of the skills available, but also through ambitious training programme for the staff. These means also include improved knowledge of the situation in order to be able, in the end, to measure the impact of the work done.



© Bertrand Chardonnet - Gorilles au parc de Kahuzi-Biega

Also, they underline the need to develop new behaviours (including at the highest level of the State) or modes of management with partners (public, private and communities). Even if they do not take up all the challenges identified in this document, we can consider that their implementation will enable to make important progress towards the conservation of protected areas in DRC.

### Recommendations made after assessing PAs' management effectiveness in DRC:

1. Increasing the staff number in the whole network
2. Enhancing the existing skills and improving the socio-professional skills of the network's staff through a mechanism of motivation (training sessions, study and research grants, etc) of PAs' officers.
3. Endowing the network with substantial and sustainable material and financial means to ensure the establishment of basic infrastructures and enough means for the PAs' functioning.
4. ICCN lobbying with political authorities to get them actively involved in the conservation of natural resources
5. Directing the partners who intervene in PAs according to the network's management priorities
6. Involving site managers in the conception and implementation of the memorandum of understanding concluded with the private sector
7. Establishing a formal communication system between the sites
8. Revitalizing research in the whole network by developing a master plan for research
9. Updating mapping and land occupation data in the whole network
10. Developing a standardized data collection system within the network
11. Making the planning cell operational to ensure periodical monitoring and evaluation of PAs' management
12. Implementing the national community-based conservation strategy
13. Promoting money-making activities in PAs' bordering local communities
14. Marking the limits of PAs
15. Developing management plans for each PA
16. Improving access to PAs

\*This evaluation has been conducted during a workshop held in April 2010. It was organized by IUCN-Papaco, in collaboration with the IUCN office in DRC, Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) and GTZ, and brought together the managers of the PAs assessed, as well as six evaluators and other technical partners.

The evaluation document is available on Papaco website: [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org), Publications / evaluation section





## Training on protected areas management: the programme is in progress...

A University Diploma has been established by the Senghor University (Egypt) and Papaco to train parks and reserves managers or partners. It is organized, this year, in collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the French GEF (FFEM). It is intended for protected areas' managers (and their partners) and has started on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011 at Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). It now continues. Indeed, "strengthening capacities for protected areas management" is essential for the development and the conservation of parks and reserves in West Africa. Planning methodologies, monitoring and evaluation tools, consultation approaches and legal or technical standards remain generally insufficiently known by most of the protected areas' managers. Therefore, the purpose of this training is to endow protected areas' managers (and their partners) with specific tools and technical skills to improve their modes of management and make their action sustainable.

The present training which is entitled "strengthening capacities for protected areas management in West Africa" brings together 21 young actors (managers of protected areas, environmental NGOs' executives, etc.) from Benin (4), Côte d'Ivoire (6), Niger (4) Burkina Faso (4) and Togo (3).

This short training session (eight weeks) is structured around modules of five days mixing theory and a field application of the tools.

The first four weeks were on the following modules:

1. General context and tools: definitions, management categories, management effectiveness and monitoring and evaluation of PAs, main international related conventions
2. Management plans and business plans, fundamentals of sustainable financing of conservation, and projects' development
3. Participatory approaches, territorial dynamics and biodiversity management at the interface of protected areas
4. Environmental law applied to protected areas

The theoretical courses were conducted with a participatory approach with very dynamic students who showed passion for the various subjects. This approach enabled to bring out participants know-how and enhance their knowledge. The exchanges were thus made easier and gave the opportunity to better identify the topics in which students have gaps.

The first weeks ended with an assessment of the first modules given.



The next modules will be on:

- Ecological monitoring, mode of development and enhancement of protected areas.  
This module will mix theory and practical experience at the Nazinga Ranch (200 km from Ouagadougou). This field visit aims particularly at learning techniques of ecological monitoring and inventories, getting notions on fight against poaching, learning how to assess conflict situations and identify the actors involved, and how to set up consultation frameworks.
- Environmental economics basis and principles
- Ecology and Biology of savannahs for a practical use in PA management

Trainers are experts coming from and/or having experience of the West African region. Each training session is assessed by students in order to continue improving the courses all along the training process.

At the end of this training, participants should have acquired essential skills for protected areas management. They should be able to implement appropriate planning methods for sustainable environmental resources management. Their capacities in ecological monitoring, human/animals conflicts' resolution, local conciliation and consultation... will be strengthened. Their knowledge of common tools (conventions, environmental laws and rules, management instruments, standards, etc.) will also be improved, allowing them to propose and conceive conservation policies.



After having been tested, students will receive a University Diploma from Senghor University... Next edition in November 2011...

## Rehabilitation of Deux Balé Park - Burkina Faso

The Papaco provides technical and financial support to the *Office National des Aires Protégées* (OFINAP) for the implementation of an emergency plan for the rehabilitation of Deux Balé (56,000 ha) and Dibon (24,000 ha) classified forests, and for starting the activities of Deux Balé (a small town 150 km West of Ouagadougou) management Unit. These classified areas are located in a transition area, between shrub savannah and savannah woodland and has the particularity to be home for a population of elephants moving seasonally. For twenty five years, some of the mammals have seen their number reach critical thresholds (antelope, warhog, bushbuck, oribi, and hippo) and some species have already disappeared locally (buffalo, kobs, hartebeest). The main causes of forest degradation are: poaching, intensive grazing of cattle, gold washing and forest exploitation.

Papaco funding first phase in 2009 enabled to significantly reduce the main problems, and the first results are:

1. More than 2,000 cattle seized and impounded at Boromo, and a greater number driven off the park;
2. More than one hundred people arrested for illegal grazing, poaching, illicit wood exploitation and gold mining; and
3. More than sixty reports made and more than fourteen millions contentious receipts collected from April to October 2009.

A second phase is on-going until May 2011 and will consolidate the benefits of the first phase. Indeed, most of the activities of 2009 have been continued: raising awareness, reducing the various forms of attacks in the park, completing the management plan, providing support to development activities, ecological monitoring. Other activities have been initiated and the main activities carried out in 2010 are:

- fighting against poachers' straying, poaching, illicit exploitation of wood and gold mining in the park;
- ecological monitoring through observations of wildlife and its habitat;
- making early burning;
- maintaining the tracks and constructing the dyke on the Petit Balé River;
- monitoring tourism activities;
- strengthening partnership with NGOs;
- raising bordering populations' awareness;
- recovery of receipts.

The following results have been obtained:

### PA planning:

**Tracks:** 150 km tracks have been opened within the park and 100 km tracks around the parks reopened. A landing strip of 700 m long by 100 m wide, as well as 10 hard ways have been developed. The 200 km tracks opened in

2009 have been maintained.



A new track has been opened in the park.

**Development of rivers:** the dyke on the Petit Balé River has been reconstructed. The construction of a water column of 3.6 km long will enable the dam to keep water all the year. This dam will have an ecological function (spatial distribution of wild animals) and an economic function (fish production).

**Managing fires:** wild animals' grazing has been renewed, and this is imperative after the rainy season. This enables to pay attention to late burning which destroy vegetation on their way.

**Signage:** A concrete panel directing and informing visitors in the park has been installed.

### Ecological monitoring:

**Monitoring of fauna:** field surveillance and ecological monitoring enabled to do the following direct observations: kobas, elephants, patas monkeys, Abyssinian hornbill, baboons, jackals, bushbucks, wild ducks, duikers, warhog, francolins, hippos (during the rainy season in the Mouhoun River), oribi, white-bellied Bustard, Nile monitor lizard, grasscutter. Note that kobas have been observed many times during the year 2010. The most important group was composed of 27 individuals. Babies were observed particularly in the herds of elephants and kobas. There were also indirect observations: kobas and elephants' tracks and droppings, bushbuck track, warhog and duiker's tracks.

Many signs of poaching have been seen (destroyed or collected): traps with teeth (small size), poaching hideouts, cartridge case of calibre 12, water barriers made by fishermen, bicycle tracks, feathers of wild guinea fowls killed, poachers camps.

**Monitoring of flora:** after the establishment of a system of three permanent parcels in three types of woodlands (gallery forests, shrub savannah and woody savannah), for monitoring the woody vegetation in the park, the following results have been got:

- 72 species in total were counted; the density in gallery forest is slightly higher with 953 stems per hectare



against 904 stems per hectare in savannah and 688 stems in shrub savannah;

- the most important land surface in gallery forest with the presence of big trees;
- 25 woody families are identified on the three sites;
- the range of [1-5] high is dominant in all the three sites
- 80% of the woody is alive (safe). The data collected on these parcels are being treated.

Other various observations have been made on the vegetation including: late bush fires, clearing in the buffer zone, illegal wood exploitation.

**Monitoring of rivers:** apart from the Mouhoun River which is permanent, the other rivers presented the following aspects:

- Drying up of all the ponds inside at the end of March 2010,
- Existence of a few water courses in the Grand Balé riverbed,
- A water reservoir of 3.6 km long thanks to the dyke built on the Petit Balé River at the end of the year.

**Monitoring of the human/animal interface:** the level of domestic cattle straying is decreasing considerably. Cultures have been damaged in the city of Boromo and in Poura banana plantations.

#### Studies and research:

In the aim of giving a permanent status to the park, a study has been conducted with the bordering populations, municipal authorities and technicians. The study's results show that they rather tend to choose the status of National Park which might nonetheless be confronted with the status of Classified Forest and game ranch, because the protected area's multiple resources can be managed through many ways (tourism, hunting, fishing, exploitation of forest timber and non timber products...), and this can be highlighted.



#### Protection and surveillance:

The surveillance teams have done in total 209 field visits, that is, an average of 17 field visits per month. These regular field visits enabled to impound about 1,000 heads of cattle and more than 150 people have been taken for various offences: forest exploitation, gold washing, poaching, illegal fishing, grazing, etc. Many items have been seized: 47 bicycles, 8 guns calibre 12, one locally made gun, 75 cartridge lead, 19 charts, 13 net hawks, axes, shovels, hand charts.

During their field visits, the surveillance teams have also destroyed huts, observation towers made by poachers and dams set up by illegal fishermen.

#### Local development:

Local development has been achieved by raising awareness of the populations of 22 villages. About 1,800 people took part in these fora aiming at presenting OFINAP and the Deux Balé Management Unit in particular, its functioning and attributions. In addition, the park's potentialities, the activities already carried out, the activities in progress and the ambitions of the Unit have been presented to the population.

#### Tourism:

There are no figures related to tourism for 2009. However in 2010, the Management Unit has recorded 607 tourists of any category, from 18 different nationalities. Since the beginning of 2011, there have been 446 tourists in January-February, representing tourist receipts standing at 2,991,700 CFA F (about 4560 €)

#### Managing partnership:

There was **partnership with other units:** the Provincial Directorate of Balé National Police (securing impounded animals), The Balé Provincial Directorate of Environment (support for surveillance and reforestation within the framework of the stay of "Association mille traces"), the Balé Provincial Directorate of Basic Education and Literacy Tuition (organisation of "nature class").

There was **partnership with territorial communities** (the pound of Boromo town council) which kept the cattle driven off the park.

**Partnership with organizations, projects, NGOs:** in addition to its partnership with IUCN within the framework of this project, the Management Unit has maintained good relationships with other organizations/projects. The

« Eléphants et Enfants de Boromo » NGO and the Management Unit have conducted an environmental education campaign: 19 nature classes have been carried out with the support of partners. In total, 190 pupils of CM1 class have participated

in the "nature class". The innovations introduced in the initial programme are forest outing and video projection.

Collaboration is being developed with the manager of the « Kaïcédrat » camp located around the park; this will promote tourism around the park.

In July 2010, the Management Unit has welcomed in its offices the *Milles Traces* NGO which works for the protection of nature in general and elephants in particular. The aim was to discuss with the Unit's staff about the issues related to the protection of the park. In addition to a

field visit, a tree planting session took place in collaboration with the Balé Provincial Directorate of Environment. The NGO has donated camping material and other various items.

More information directly with the Park Director:  
Léonard Ouédraogo ([wekaleo@yahoo.fr](mailto:wekaleo@yahoo.fr))



### A new staff in Papaco !

**Souleymane Konaté**  
newly recruited at IUCN regional office in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), as the **Regional Protected Areas Programme Deputy Coordinator** (Papaco).

**Mr Konaté** has already collaborated with IUCN, in particular for the evaluation of UNESCO World Heritage sites in danger.

He has a PhD in ecology from the University of Paris 6 (Pierre & Marie Curie) in France. Since 1999 he was lecturer and researcher at the University of Abobo-Adjamé (Côte d'Ivoire), where he was currently working on biodiversity and tropical savannahs functioning. He was also participating as team leaders in several regional projects such as (1) soil biodiversity and agriculture (CSM-BGBD), (2) biodiversity, climate change and savannah's fire (RIPECSA) and (3) biodiversity monitoring along a climatic and anthropogenic gradient in west Africa (BIOTA West). He was also the directors of the LAMTO Ecological Research Station in Côte d'Ivoire, where he was heading a research team on the ecology of social insects (termites, ants and bees).

He'll be particularly responsible of all training issues within Papaco now...

## Rüppell vulture (*Gyps rueppellii*) nesting in Gadabedji fauna reserve

By Ali Laouel ABBAGANA, E-mail : [aliabagana@yahoo.fr](mailto:aliabagana@yahoo.fr)

Gadabedji Wildlife Reserve was created in 1955 to protect the Scimitar-Horned Oryx (which have disappeared today) and the Dorcas gazelles. It is located in the North of the department of Dakoro, Maradi region in Niger at the gate of the Sahara desert and covers a surface of 76,000 ha. The climate is sahelian-type. Like the other protected areas of the country, it experiences an accelerated degradation of its ecosystems due to successive droughts, human actions including overexploitation of pastoral resources and lack of means.



© DPNR/SCF

In March 2010, the Niger Directorate of national parks and reserves has done an inventory of this reserve, with the support of the *Sahara Conservation Fund* (SCF). During the works, the Rüppell vulture (*Gyps rueppellii*) has been discovered through fourteen (14) direct contacts and twenty six (26) individuals observed. It is a black-feathered bird, with many pale marks particularly on its lower parts. The wings are very characteristic, with a very distinctive bar behind the arm, and two rows of white tasks across the flight feathers. The tail is dark and rounded. This vulture used to be very common in the reserve. Indeed, the Rüppell vulture is a vulture which is closely related to large herds of herbivores. Its preys are decreasing in number because of the development of agriculture and desertification of the sahelian area, so it becomes more and more difficult for it to get food and this is why its population is declining. Measures have to be taken to save these necrophagous birds of pray that play an important role of "garbage collectors for nature". With their surprising capacity to detect dead animals and their role in cleaning big fauna and cattle carcasses, they participate in disease prevention and avoid disease-spreading in the livestock.

All the scientists are unanimous on the fact that the Rüppell vulture nests only on the rocks, but the most important discovery done during this inventory is that this species nests on a tree of *Balanites aegyptiaca* (*desert date palm*); indeed, three nests with one chick each have been observed. Scientifically, this discovery might contribute in knowing the species, the population of which is decreasing in African savannahs.

## JOB OFFER AT UNESCO

### Consultant Programme Specialist in Ecology

**Duration of Consultancy:** 6 months

**Location:** Nairobi Kenya

**Start Time:** Immediate

#### **Terms of Reference**

Under the direct supervision of the Director of UNESCO-ROSTA, the consultant will have the following duties and responsibilities:

#### **A. General**

Develop, manage, co-ordinate and execute in the region, projects and programme activities related to ecological sciences for sustainable development, in particular those directly related to ecosystem research and capacity building for minimizing biodiversity loss; manage biosphere

networks for environmental sustainability and promote linkages between cultural and biological diversity

#### B. Duties and requirements

The incumbent of the post will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Plan and execute UNESCO regular activities in fields pertaining to biodiversity, ecosystems and protected area management, particularly those carried out under the UNESCO Man and biosphere Programme (MAB),
2. Maintain close collaboration with UNEP and serve as day-to-day liaison person for co-ordination with the UNEP Secretariat in Nairobi.
3. Provide technical and advisory support to Member States of the Eastern sub-region and interact with counterparts in the intergovernmental and Nongovernmental Organizations with a view to preparing and implementing mutually beneficial activities;
4. Mobilise extra-budgetary financial resources for project activities, for the consolidation of all UNESCO activities linked to biodiversity conservation, ecosystem and protected area management

#### Required profile

The incumbent must, possess the following qualifications: Advanced University Degree, preferably at Doctorate level, in environmental sciences field or relevant social or human science; knowledge of UNESCO Natural Sciences programmes especially MAB is an asset.

At least ten years of progressively responsible relevant experience of which, at least 3 to 5 years' experience in Africa  
Proven ability to use various types of computer software for information networking purposes;  
Excellent knowledge of English and good working knowledge of French.

**Method of application:** Send CV to the following email address by **30 March 2010**

[ECO.Nairobi@unesco.org](mailto:ECO.Nairobi@unesco.org)

**Remuneration:** Salary at the UN rate of P-4 plus a return air ticket

## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS (IYFs) 2011 – ENHANCING PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT



By *Gloria Ujor, Abuja, Nigeria*

Yes, the International Year of the Forests (IYFs) 2011 has been observed to have crept in (not with the usual ovation and fanfare that accompanies such events) at the beginning of this year (2011). The decision to mark 2011 as the International Year of the Forests (IYFs)

2011) was however taken earlier by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 61/193 of December 2006. And so the IYFs 2011 was launched on the second of February, 2011 at the General Assembly of the United Nations, and during the High Level Segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. This occurred during the social/political problems/conflicts, particularly in some northern African countries in recent times, which has sent into oblivion, the potential awareness and recognition which should be accorded the usefulness of trees, forests, biodiversity and ecosystems, with such a pronouncement. Nevertheless it is the duty of humanity to accord due recognition to the IYFs 2011.

Lovers of nature have remained focused on the need to carry out significant activities to mark the year, with a view to improving the potentials of the forests for social and economic benefits mainly. The politics (new World order) now observes and recognizes the forests as a challenge for some countries to use in achieving an elevated, economic platform, while at the same time relieving some other countries of stress accumulated due to high contribution of green house gases to the global atmosphere. This is otherwise popularly regarded as carbon trading. Owners of remarkable forest areas, especially developing countries, have seen themselves as potential beneficiaries in the carbon trading

business. Such forest areas, existing as reserves or protected areas will benefit from the global carbon trading.

Furthermore, the annual global discourse on sustainable development usually accords space in its agenda to reiterate the need for continued conservation of the forests, through various thematic debates. This is to say the least about forests, home to every living organism on earth, including man.

And where are the forests? According to an adage, 'a tree does not make a forest'. So the discussion is not about an isolated tree or few single trees. Forest ecosystems of different types exist according to the ecology of an area. Most meaningful forests, implying forests having potentials for data generation occur in protected areas. And the forest cover is the 'all important' canopy, characteristic of arboreal protected areas. It is important to note that beyond the canopy, a host of fauna go about their businesses. Human managerial endeavours involving non-timber forest products mainly, also thrive in well managed protected areas. The above description recognizes the fact that sovereign nations should be able to define and delineate their respective forests, and consequential protected areas.

However, the IYFs 2011 seeks to raise awareness of the priceless role that forests play in keeping the planet healthy, in addition to ensuring sustainable management and conservation of all types of forests and their resources. In view of this, many stakeholder groups including the youth have sought information on how to key into programmes that are fallouts to mark the year of forests 2011. Institutions that are members of the collaborative partnerships on forests are expected to keep their doors open in order to facilitate correspondences and exchanges that will be engaged for the good of the forests during 2011. And what could be in the programmes of these institutions to mark March 21<sup>st</sup> 2011 in particular, as the 'International Day of Forests? It is therefore suggested that increased recognition be given to ecosystems that present substantial and good vegetative structures, especially the watershed areas. Also envisaged are those activities to be engaged to mark the year which will be of benefit to protected areas' management.

Finally, as the world continues to observe 2011 as the international year of forests, all the arboreal protected areas of the world should be seen to have added value in their management, which will attract both esthetic and economic values. These values in addition will present more tangible potentials and appropriate inputs for the forestry and protected areas' themes into continuing and upcoming global discussions like the Rio+20 (United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development), coming up in less than two years from now.

#### ► The APAO's newsletter ◀

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