

► The West African Protected Areas Newsletter



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

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THE WEST AFRICAN CONSERVATION TERRITORIES PROJECT

IUCN-Papaco is launching a new project that relates to conservation territories in West African, with the support of French GEF. Below is a short description of this project, more to come while project's implementation...



I. WHY THIS PROJECT?

Historically carried out in “national parks and reserves” directly managed by public services, the conservation of West African natural areas has been progressively opened to new stakeholders. Indeed, the last decade has been illustrated by the

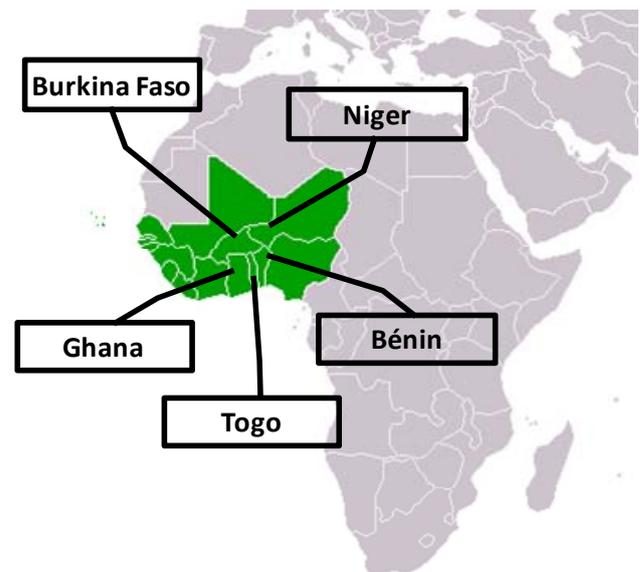
emergence of new stakeholders involved in conservation, in most countries of the continent. Now conservation concerns, among others, local populations, their elected organisations, civil society's associations, local NGOs...

Thanks to decentralization, conservation areas management is therefore being progressively transferred, *de jure*, to communities; but often without the means required to integrate their management in local or regional territorial planning. One observes that associations are starting to enhance their presence on the ground for areas management, directly or through advice provided to collectivities and local communities, for example for raising children or students' awareness.

At the same time, international debates on the protection of biodiversity show that it is becoming very important to constitute bigger biodiversity conservation areas face to the ecological disruption induced by climate change or the division of habitats in smaller units (inter alia).

In West Africa, this approach is supported by many regional initiatives. Among those initiatives are the APAO and IUCN PPI projects, both financed by the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM). This “Conservation Territories” project is in line with the various initiatives

taken at the regional level in order to take into account the participation of local populations in the establishment and management of protected areas or, let's say, areas for conservation.



II. WHICH STAKES? WHICH PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED?

2.1. Degraded or degrading protected areas

The deficit in terms of management and the destabilization of ecosystems due to a high human pressure greatly contribute in the degradation of protected areas, and to a greater extent of natural areas in West Africa. In concrete terms, this is shown by:

- A lack of effective management (absence of updated management document, insufficiency of competencies, no involvement of bordering communities),
- Increasing destabilization of ecosystems essentially due to the increase in the demand of basic resources, the monopolization of lands in the absence of user's

right devolution and the use of chemicals in agri-sylvo-pastoral activities. Fauna disappears, forest becomes smaller and humans encroach upon the often virtual limits of the still "natural" areas.

- Increased pressure on natural resources in natural areas within and also outside protected areas due to demographic growth and urbanization. And yet, these "unprotected" natural areas are sometimes home to biodiversity as or more rich than the samples preserved within classical protected areas. Their protection is therefore important and is perfectly in line with the recommendations of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

2.2. New stakeholders involved in decentralization and in the emergence of civil society

The local territorial management authorities (IGTL) were born from the decentralization in progress in most West African countries. This movement is accompanied by a transfer of responsibility at the territorial level, at least in theory, and is more or less effective depending on the country. The new local communities are sometimes given the authority to manage the environment and the natural areas of their territory, but more often they are not given the necessary means to do so. Eventually, a community can decide to preserve and gazette a natural area for conservation and thus get the entire legitimacy of its management.

According to a study specifically conducted in West African community areas by the APAO project, local communities are already at the origin of the creation of a quarter of the above mentioned community areas in the region, while only 35% are created by the state. However, we need to recognize that the priority of communities is on social services rather than natural resources management.

Local NGOs specialized in the protection of the environment

are involved at different levels in the direct management of natural areas and environmental education. They support local communities in charge of these areas are more and more developed. These associations receive support from donors and Northern NGOs. FFEM PPI, IUCN Netherlands EGP and GEF SGP are examples of programs that focus on these small funding. One objective of those programs, and particularly PPI, is to help the most effective national or local NGOs emerge for them to benefit from important funding and thus make their actions sustainable. This

Conservation Territories project, by building on the results of these programs, will enable this change to occur.

2.3. New assumptions, new challenges

These observations and developments offer new opportunities, bring new challenges and lay on many assumptions.

• ASSUMPTIONS

The first assumption is that decentralization of natural resources management will be effective eventually in terms of legal attributions. Indeed, we have observed a general political will in this sense in West African countries for the last few years, even though decrees take time to be implemented. It is not sure that the corresponding fund transfers will be "automatic".

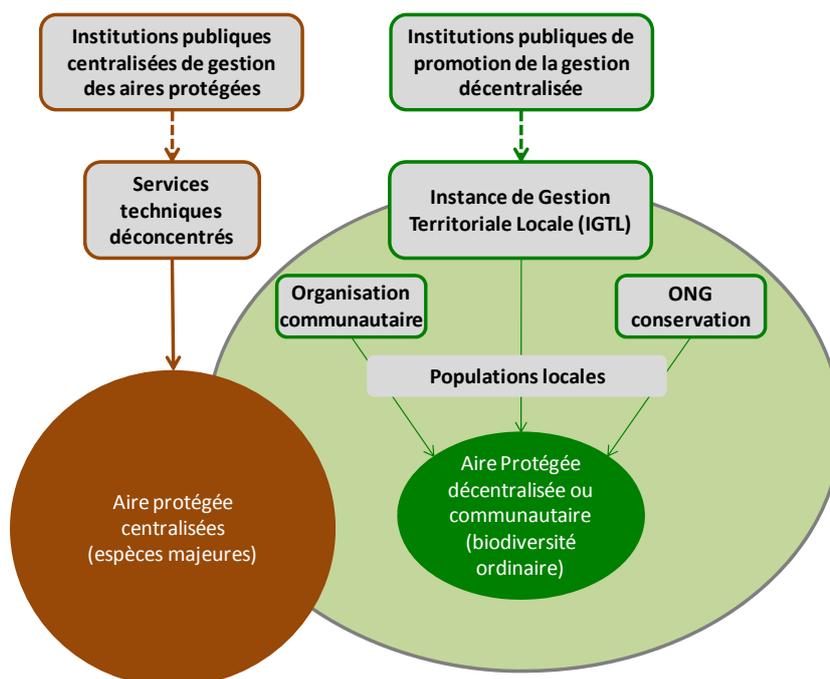
The second assumption is that collaboration between NGOs and IGTL will allow consolidating sustainable governance systems (in terms of the definition of rules, incentives and actions for implementing or enforcing the respect of these laws, in terms of funding...). This will ensure the cheap and sustainable conservation of outstanding natural areas.

Finally, the last assumption is that the preservation of natural areas by IGTL and the populations living close to the traditional protected areas will be beneficial for the conservation of these protected areas.

• OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

If these assumptions are correct, they offer new opportunities, both for conservation NGOs on one hand (new "markets" and potential influence spheres) and for IGTL on the other hand (implementation of territorial management actions likely to attract external funding and improve the quality of life for the population).

The challenges are diverse. They are, among others, the consolidation of institutional arrangements (between local populations, NGOs, IGTL and decentralized services), the strengthening of institutions and the ability of the various stakeholders in charge of the project management (capacity to plan, finance, implement, control...).





III. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSERVATION TERRITORIES PROJECT

The global objective of the project is to *consolidate, capitalize and disseminate a referential of 7 experiences of natural areas management, by reinforcing the capacity of decentralized or community-based local territorial management bodies (IGTL) and local conservation NGOs.*

Four specific objectives are to be achieved:

- 1 : To build the capacities of 7 local NGOs for the conservation of outstanding natural areas, not necessary gazetted,
- 2 : In these 7 areas, to strengthen the project management capacities of decentralized or community-based local territorial management bodies (IGTL) for the conservation,
- 3 : In these 7 sites, to provide support for the implementation of actions for conservation of natural areas. Actions will be provided by decentralized or community-based IGTL with the technical support of local conservation NGOs and in close association with local populations,
- 4 : By learning from the experiences on the 7 sites, to contribute in the effective implementation and in the adaptation of public policies of decentralized natural resources management in West African countries.

IV. OUTLINING OF THE PROJECT

4.1. The project's technical partners

• PAPACO

The West and Central Africa Protected areas programme of IUCN (PAPACO) is responsible for the management and the coordination of the project, together with the other partners.

• Local partner NGOs

Seven conservation NGOs have been identified to implement the project on the ground. Some of them are

common NGOs, others are federations of natural resources management village associations. All of them have recognized skills in the field of conservation and have a strong presence and a long lasting institutional experience in the project's areas of intervention.

N°	Country	NGO name	Status
1	Burkina Faso	Association Faune et Développement au Burkina(AFAUDEB)	Conservation NGO
2	Burkina Faso	Association inter-villageoise de Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et de la Faune de la Comoé – Léraba (AGEREF/CL)	Federation of village conservation associations
3	Ghana	Nature Conservation Research Center (NCRC)	Conservation NGO
4	Ghana	AROCHA Ghana	Conservation NGO
5	Togo	AGBO ZEGUE- ONG	Conservation NGO
6	Benin	Union des Associations Villageoises de Gestion des Réserves de Faune (U-AVIGREF)	Federation of village conservation associations
7	Niger	Association Aménagement des Terroirs et Productions Forestières (ATPF)	Conservation NGO

• Local territorial management authorities (IGTL)

Two categories of local territorial management authorities (IGTL) take part in the project: territorial authorities created as part of the decentralization process (regions and districts in francophone Africa, district assemblies in Ghana) and the village or inter-village organizations for community-based protected areas management. These authorities are presented in the following table:

N°	Country	Local territorial management authorities
1	Burkina Faso	2 districts (Fada N'Gourna, Matiacoali) 11 village hunting areas (ZOVIC) village committees
2	Burkina Faso	3 districts (Banfora, Niangoloko, Mangodara) 17 Land and natural resources management (AGTREN) village associations, members of AGEREF/CL
3	Ghana	Wechiau District 1 Community Executive Committee du CREMA de Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary
4	Ghana	West Gonja District Mole National Park 4 CREMAs (Murugu Mognori, Kadin Yasori, Bawena Kpolombo, et Sagya Kparia)
5	Togo	4 Associations Villageoises de Gestion Participative des Aires Protégées (AVGAP) in 4 villages 22 AVGAP through U-AVGAP
6	Bénin	2 districts (Tanguieta, Mieta) 22 Associations Villageoises de Gestion des Réserves de Faune (AVIGREF), members of U-AVIGREF
7	Niger	Districts of Harikanassou, Fakara, N'gonga, Kouré

• Technical partners

The technical services involved in the protection of the environment and protected areas management through their decentralized structures will also be involved in the project. They are:

- The regional departments of the Ministry of Environment and sustainable Development in Burkina Faso;
- The National Centre for wildlife reserves management and Nature protection (CENAGREF), Department of the Pendjari National Park, in Benin;
- The Wildlife Division of Forestry Commission, the Mole National Park Division and the Ghana Tourism Board in Ghana;
- The department of Environment, wildlife and fisheries in Niger;
- The departments of wildlife and hunting and the Oti Kéran Park in Togo.

4.2 The project's targets

The seven technical NGOs, partners of the project, the local territorial management authorities- IGTL and the decentralized technical institutions in each area of intervention are the first project's targets. They will be the direct beneficiaries of the project.

Other conservation NGOs and IGTL that will welcome the exchange trips or will be invited to participate in the project's broadened seminars will also indirectly get benefits from the project.

The second public target is composed of local populations living within the 7 territories where the project intervenes, often near protected areas with which they don't have any kind of exchange.

The third target is composed of policy decision-makers. Indeed, the project wishes to put at their disposal the results of the experiences lead in the 7 sites. The aim is to influence the formulation and adaptation of public decentralization policies of natural resources management.

4.3. The project's components

The project is built in one cross-cutting component and 4 complementary thematic components, directly related to the project's specific 4 objectives:

- **Cross-cutting component:** It concerns the coordination, animation, technical support and monitoring and evaluation of the project. It is directly managed by IUCN-Papaco.
- **Component 1: Capacity building of local conservation NGOs**

The activities to be implemented in this component concern NGOs' individual or collective training sessions and exchange trips.

- **Component 2: Capacity building of local territorial decentralized or community-based management authorities (IGTL)**

The aim here is to implement sensitization, training and exchange activities for IGTL. These activities will be animated by local NGOs.

- **Component 3: Implementing conservation activities by IGTL and NGOs**

It is in this component that natural areas that exist or are to be identified on the concerned territories will benefit from direct protection and planning activities in order to improve the conservation of biodiversity. It will be jointly implemented by IGTL and local NGOs, and other partners as necessary.

- **Component 4: Contributing to the debate on decentralized natural resources management policies**

It concerns the activities that will bring together local, national and sub-regional actors of resources management in order to take stock, define actions to be taken and analyze what will have been done during the project's implementation in order to draw lessons and widely diffuse the project's outcomes.

4.4. Implementation schedule

The project will be implemented in three phases: one starting phase, one full operation phase and one closing phase.

- The starting phase: this phase will start in June 2011 and will last six months. It will be used to finalize the project's documents, both for its ground interventions on the 7 sites proposed (consolidation of the logical frameworks, budgets and co-financing...) and for its general organization.
- The full operation phase: It will last twenty seven months. All the activities planned in the project's four components are implemented during this period.
- The closing phase: This 3-month phase will be used to close the project. It will be about finalizing the project's technical and financial reports and enhancing the project's benefits with other funding sources likely to continue supporting the conservation actions initiated.

V. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

- The project will be managed by IUCN through the regional office in charge of the central and west African programme (IUCN-PACO) based in Ouagadougou.
- The project contracting will be shared between a main project contractor and several associated project contractors. IUCN-Papaco will then be considered as the *main project contractor*. It will pilot the project, notably the coordination of the

different associated partner project contractors. The seven conservation NGOs, notably in charge of management and implementation of training, conservation and capitalization activities in the 7 sites covered by the projects are called *associated project contractors*.

- A project scientific and technical committee (CST-project) composed of sub-region experts in natural resources management has been set up. It will be the advisory body of the project manager and will be regularly kept informed on how the project goes on (contractual and consultants' reports made available). The CST-project will also have a key role to play on the occasion of the capitalization and enhancement of the training during the broadened seminars organized by the project.
- The development of this innovating project will be detailed over time in coming APAO newsletters...

- providing channels to exploit protected areas potentialities;
- generating direct and indirect revenues for local actors, source of motivation for appropriation and conservation within local communities;
- developing, at various scales, opinion groups in favour of conservation;
- fostering the sustainable use of natural resources;
- reducing the threats on the protected area.



More information on www.papaco.org, « our programs ».

Enhancing natural resources: which contributions for the sustainable management of protected areas?

By Cosme KPADONOU

Tourism promotion

Pendjari National Park – e-mail : colnis4@yahoo.fr

(Pictures made by the autor)

One of the reforms necessary to improve protected areas management in Africa in general is the reform of the mode of management which does not often take into account the evolution and realities of our current societies. Protected area management certainly refers to the functions of intensified surveillance and ecological monitoring, but in reality, it cannot be done sustainably without taking into account other tools including tourism enhancement, and sharing the profits with bordering populations in view of appropriation. The development and implementation of a relevant enhancement plan through various ecotourism initiatives is therefore a considerable asset. Nowadays, ecotourism is an important constituent of protected areas management strategy and its concept, if well applied, offers many advantages to the manager, including:

In the practical case of the Pendjari Biosphere reserve located in North-West of the Republic of Benin, the development of ecotourism initiatives enabled to reinforce the joint management of resources with local stakeholders, mainly the bordering populations. The bordering populations have got various advantages through this channel, including the creation of jobs and support to ecotourism micro entrepreneurship. The profit made from the management of the reserve in 2010, excluding the incomes generated from the creation of jobs, is 30,531,000 CFA (more than 60,000\$) which have been directly given to bordering populations. One advantage in continuously providing incentives to populations is that the reserve surveillance as well as the reserve resources conservation strategies will be more effective and sustainable.

Based on the Pendjari experience and other examples of the same kind, we notice that the capacities of ecotourism to express the values of protected areas make it an effective tool that becomes more and more important for heritage conservation strategies in general, and protected areas in particular. In this process, the main challenge is to aim for the junction of these two essential elements in order to create a winning symbiotic relationship because ecotourism needs protected areas to exist, and protected areas also need ecotourism to better fit into their human, economic and social environment.



News from the countries...

In Congo-Brazzaville, the **Congolese Wildlife and Protected Areas Agency** (ACFAP in French) has just been created. This structure is attached to the office of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment.



Below is some information on the newly created agency.

The agency was created on **14 March 2011** to replace the Congolese Wildlife and Protected Areas Agency Project (PACFAP). The headquarters is in Brazzaville.

The **support for creation** is the Memorandum N° 000663/MDDEFE/CAB of 14 March 2011, signed by the Minister of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment, Mr Henri DJOMBO.

The agency is a **public scientific and technical establishment** endowed with legal personality and administrative and financial autonomy, with the **mandate of implementing the national policy on wildlife and protected areas management throughout the territory.**

The **missions of the agency** are:

- to assure the preservation of habitats and the conservation of biodiversity throughout the territory;
- to provide technical, scientific and administrative support to protected areas, surveillance and anti-

poaching units (USLAB), as well as local councils and assure their coordination nationally;

- to contribute in scientific and technical research in biodiversity conservation and enhancement;
- to promote the economic enhancement of protected areas through ecotourism and hunting tourism;
- to promote the establishment and management of ecological corridors in consultation with the relevant administrations and all the stakeholders;
- to develop sustainable protected areas funding mechanisms and USLAB;
- to contribute in validating the impact

studies of infrastructures projects within and in the vicinity of protected areas;

- to participate in promoting environmental education;
- to contribute in the sustainable development and the well-being of populations living within and in the vicinity of protected areas and USLAB;
- to look after recruitment, staff training and management;
- to set up an information management system on wildlife, protected areas and USLAB;
- to propose and implement procedures for listing and un-listing protected areas;
- to coordinate cooperation and partnerships with other similar institutions at the international level.

The resources necessary to achieve these missions come from:

- grants from the State budget;
- endowments of the forest fund and the environment protection fund;
- the tax products that are allocated to it;
- the product of the commercialization of the bonds of carbon emission reduction that is allocated to it;
- the product of service deliveries and royalties of conceded activities;
- funding from partners;
- trust funds;
- donations and legacy.

The staff of the Wildlife and Protected Areas Management Agency Project has been transferred to the Congolese Wildlife and Protected Areas Agency (ACFAP) with its qualities and functions.

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... and in Ghana:

Towards the revision of management plans for five protected areas of Ghana

Following the evaluation of a sample of sites from the Ghana protected areas' network in 2009 (realized by IUCN PAPACO), one of the recommendations had been that the management plans of certain sites of the country should be revised. Indeed, these plans do not meet any more the conservation objectives established several years ago (some not having been revised since 1994).

The implementation of this recommendation is crucial for the improvement of PAs' management in this country. Therefore, Ghana commits itself in the revision of these management plans with the technical support of Papaco which provided PA managers and other stakeholders with the guidelines for an effective revision of the plans. This revision will be done by PA managers themselves for better ownership of the action. The sites concerned are the following:

*Bomfobiri wildlife sanctuary,
Kakum conservation area,
Kyabobo national park,
Mole national park,
Digya national park.*

For a few months the managers will review the current plans, identify the areas where the plan needs to be revised, fill in the gaps and produce a revised document, with the involvement of all stakeholders.

By the last quarter of this year, these PAs will thus have updated management plans.

More news then in the APAO newsletter...



Kakum NP in Ghana

Ensemble Innovation Competition



In 2011, the Fondation Ensemble is launching the '**Ensemble Innovation Competition**', to reward projects able of delivering, on the ground, new solutions, both sustainable and replicable, to the benefit of the poorest populations. Three prizes will reward these initiatives:

- '**Grand Prize of the Fondation Ensemble**'

This prize will honour a programme that demonstrates, in particular, the values underlying each intervention of the Fondation Ensemble. It will reward a completed programme which has already been capitalized and funded by the Fondation Ensemble. The jury will consist of the Founders and the Board of Directors of the Fondation.

- '**Prize 'Ensemble Feminine**'

This prize will reward, most particularly, initiatives which are vectors of sustainable development, involving women at every stage of the project. The allocation: 20,000 euros.

- '**Prize 'Embark Ensemble**'

This prize will reward, most particularly, initiatives which are vectors of long-term solutions, replicable locally and/or on larger scale... Economic development, job creation, financial independence and respect for the environment. The allocation: 20,000 euros.

Deadline for submitting proposals: **15th of June 2011**. The Prizes will be announced at an event on the 15th of December 2011 in Paris. **For further information about the prizes, please go to:**

<http://www.fondationensemble.org/indexa.php>

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