



# NAPA

## News from African Protected Areas

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## A road map for African protected areas: act now!

As you'll recall, our roadmap for African Protected Areas (PA) - see the full document on [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org) – focuses on **three main axes** to lead us towards **healthy, efficient and sustainable protected areas** (see thereafter). This NAPA newsletter presents rapidly the **three directions** that are included in the first axe: **healthy PA**. The two other axes will be presented in details in the next newsletters (NAPA n°54 and n°55) in June and July. Then in September, the NAPA n°56 will present a synthesis of all your reactions, ideas, comments, proposals... received about this roadmap and how to better implement it for more sustainable and efficient results.



**Healthy =**  
transparent  
governance  
and  
integrity of  
the territory



**Efficient =**  
modern  
management  
and  
responsible  
managers



**Sustainable =**  
long-term  
ambition and  
the rich  
biodiversity  
secured forever

## First axe: Healthy Pas

Because without transparent and shared governance, legitimate decisions on conserving the integrity of the area are not possible

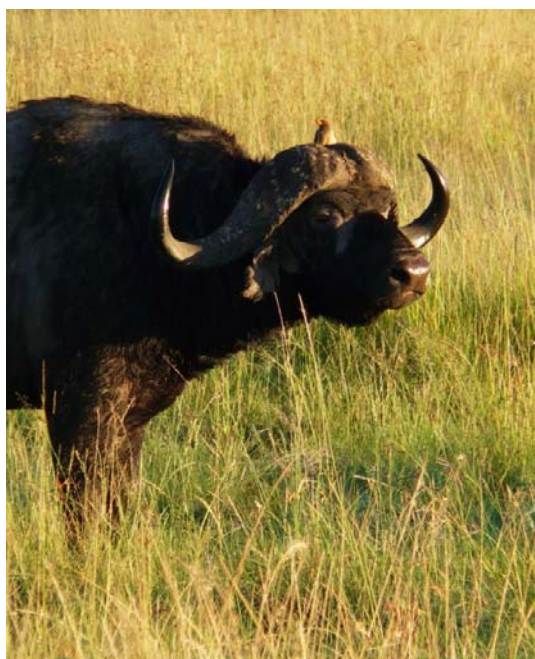
### Direction 1: promote governance that involves a wide circle of stakeholders

Following **company boards models**, we need to **widen the available skills of governance structures** in order to **ease and share decisions, strengthen the role of local actors**, provide a solid basis for the relevance and **legitimacy** of choices made, and finally, **provide a more solid framework for the work of the managers** who are ultimately **responsible** for the protection of the PA.

(what was done last year is reproduced) or choices are made that solely depend on the interest, tastes, or abilities of the decision maker. This is an open gate to corruption... Individual decisions also hinder the continuity of management (it changes according to the conservator) and doesn't allow for an effective discussion of the choices that are made with the other stakeholders (and therefore, it puts in jeopardy their acceptance of these choices); nevertheless, these discussions are indispensable for implementing adequate decisions. There are many examples of parks where results have greatly changed (positively or negatively) after the conservator was removed, while the context remained the same.

This is why the decision-making process regarding PAs has to be widened. Not in order to obtain everybody's opinion, not to try to gain consensus around the "one requesting the less", not to follow a fashion or a philosophy... but because decisions have to be strengthened. This goes through either significant improvement of the skills of the decision-makers in place (but this is not going to happen on its own and will take a while, like any capacity-building process), or through gathering the lacking abilities to quickly fill in the gap. Thus, setting up « boards of directors » for parks is a rapid answer to this situation; it also enables us to go from "collaborative management" as an idea (this notion has been talked about for years) to really implementing it in the field. It is also the opportunity to bring the decision closer to local stakeholders, who are not sufficiently consulted in the field (and often only because it is required), and who would become – as far as possible and useful - leaders. The risk exists that unfortunate decisions emerge from this type of governance, but it seems moderate and the benefits expected from this opening are much bigger, if it is well conducted and directed towards respecting the primary vocation of the territory, that is conservation of nature.

**The first direction offered by the road map is therefore to consolidate each PA's decision-making body by widening it to new stakeholders in order to deal with gaps and mistakes more efficiently. It will make the decision-making system more sustainable, beyond the only persons involved. This requires an in-depth evolution of the governance strategies of many sites or PA systems, but some countries or sites have showed that this is possible and that we can achieve positive results through this approach.**





## Direction 2: raise awareness by all partners of the conservation value of PAs

We need to make better use of **the various media outlets and social networks** that exist today because **PAs are not sufficiently well known** or acknowledged for their many contributions to conservation and development; they should be **appreciated by the citizens, supported by civil society and benefit from policy decisions** that are taken by stakeholders who are **more informed** by good practice and proven success, and therefore **have a greater desire to conserve PAs** and **are more demanding** of the results attained.

main public, the people living in and around PAs, citizens, pupils...remain unsatisfied and even if they see their direct benefits (there are always some), they also measure the direct drawbacks (and there are always some) of these PAs. And yet, it is known that political decisions, *in fine*, come from the street. Hoping that ministers will change their mode of governance on the basis of experts' reports, this is forgetting that they don't read them or do not understand them. However, they listen to, they feel the wind that agitates the potential electors, the opinion-makers... and this wind, sometimes they follow it. Therefore, this "opinion field" has to become our target. We have to make sure that PAs will be considered as an element of our common heritage that has to be protected (like a cultural or religious element). Of course, this must come without minimizing its other existing values. This will be long and complicated, but the modern means of disseminating information and messages probably enable us to significantly reduce the time required to induce tangible changes in the public, and therefore in its representatives. This goes through **education, information, awareness raising, lobbying, media, social networks** and certainly new channels to be invented... finally, there are many ways and they have to be added up to reach the scale required for the expected change. Otherwise, without clear and univocal adoption of PAs by populations (widely speaking), there is little hope that favourable decisions will be spontaneously made regarding them, and even less that they will be able to counteract the disadvantageous decisions they are subjected to, for example when they face a mining project.



Therefore, the second direction proposed by the road map is to work on public opinion, on the largest scale possible. Starting with the general public, new generations, children... It is a huge task, but it is the key of success for the future. Without radical change of mentalities (meaning that we go from PA only seen as a "consumer good" to PA perceived as a common heritage to be protected as a priority), there is no chance that good and sustainable political decisions be made in their favour, while pressure to consume more resources and more land is continuously increasing.

### Direction 3: improve consultation in and around protected areas

We must **strengthen the participation of protected area managers in land-use projects** that impact on their protected area, whatever their nature and place of implementation; we should also promote ways of aligning efforts in surrounding areas that enable **a good understanding between different partners**, reduce constraints, control conflicts, **improve the sharing of benefits linked to PAs** and thus increase their acceptance, even adoption, by all actors.

Protected areas are included in a wider landscape they influence and depend on. Nothing new there and yet, very often, we act and decide as this was not the case. These contiguous territories are managed by different administrations; stakeholders do not communicate, often do not know each other... everyone acts on his territory and complains about his neighbour. Hence, conflicts rise regarding the use of the same resources (but for different management objectives); frustration due to possible inadequate sharing of

potential benefits (in general over or under estimated according to who is talking of them) grows; and at the end, we observe the rejection of PAs by people because they only see or feel their constraints. And yet these protected territories and those having an impact on them (logical definition of their periphery) are finally the same and should not be managed independently. These fights of prerogatives (“I am in charge of...”) have to end finally and we must open the way to synergies of interests (“this common decision enables us to reinforce each other”). Just like the first direction of this roadmap, the intention here is not to seek a weak consensus because we know that there are issues that divide and will keep dividing us. But at least we need to make sure that reciprocal information is always in place, that decisions are made on the basis of this information and that, at no time, one or the other party is acting alone (this is mostly seen for example when mining projects are drafted or when unilateral decision is taken to gazette a PA). This is not so complicated but requires unambiguous political decisions (transparency, which is the most difficult to obtain because one cannot see it!) leading to corruption eradication. And it requires new or strengthened capacities (because a dialogue of “ignorant” people will only result in nothing consistent). It is thus necessary for managers to have a volunteer and structured openness approach to ensure that the PAs are no longer considered like a black hole (at best) or a problem (at worst), but on the contrary like a credible element to construct a global territory planning policy.

**The third direction proposed in the road map is structured around the notion of consultation, which has to be put into practice. As a spontaneous positive evolution of peripheral stakeholders is not to be expected soon, it is PA managers and decision-makers (therefore boards of directors, see *direction one*) who have the responsibility to achieve this by opening their doors to better communicate, better inform, better share and mostly by opening up to inquire about the arrangements concerning them, and become indispensable interlocutors for “planners” of neighbouring territories.**



The few steps proposed in this road map provide an **initial framework** to direct our **ambitions, choices, and strategies** towards **stronger and more effective protected areas, acknowledged and recognized in the green list. Build on this framework, innovate and communicate... share your experiences, ideas, and wishes or expectations...** on the following address: [geoffroy.mauvais@iucn.org](mailto:geoffroy.mauvais@iucn.org)

The NAPA newsletter n°56 (September 2012) will publish your comments and the new website of the partnership for protected areas and conservation: [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org) will follow our progresses towards success, month by month.

## LOCAL GOVERNANCE TO THE RESCUE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (direction 3 of the road map)

As it is often noticed in the field, discussed in experts' meeting, reminded in many publications (and also regularly brought up in this letter!), there are multiple threats on African protected areas, and more globally on biodiversity and ecosystems. The impact of the extinction of some species, but also of the degradation of the related ecosystems and services (like water supply, climate regulation, cultural heritage, etc.) is clearly perceptible.

If we consider that keeping fauna species numbers is one purpose (among others) of PA establishment and management, we have to notice, with few exceptions in some parts of Africa, that these PAs management is ineffective due to multiple and complex reasons.

This situation refers us to the issue of African PA governance. They were traditionally created on the initiative of States that, via their department of nature conservation, are also often in charge of managing them. Today, this model remains dominant but some alternative, local and decentralized forms of governance of PAs (generally of category V or VI), and more globally of natural resources are being developed, building on the current process of decentralization in many countries.

This approach sometimes puts various organizations of the civil society at the heart of the territory management process. These historically new experiences on the continent are inherently changing. From now, they are holding an important place in the conservation of ecosystems and species and are sparking off many debates. An evidence of this trend is the organization of a big forum of West Africa environmental NGOs, in Ouagadougou, in June 2010. By gathering about forty NGO managers from 14 different countries, this forum was a first step that enabled to show the dynamism of these stakeholders, the reality of their work while allowing them a 4-day platform to discuss about their potential successes but also the difficulties met.

About two years after this forum, the purpose of this article is to emphasize local conservation initiatives that are being implemented across the continent to shortly illustrate this dynamics regarding conservation and the role that local governance may play.

## 1) LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES ENHANCEMENT

### In Burkina-Faso

The fauna and development association (**AFAUDEB**) was created as a result of a quite long process for empowering the partners of the Swiss NGO ADAP (Protected Areas Development Association) in Burkina Faso. It is composed of the beneficiaries and technicians of the community-based wildlife management project, supported by ADAP in the Gourma region since 2004.

Created in 2008, the association promotes small game hunting within villages' hunting areas (ZOVICs) which are community-based forests dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and its habitat. This form of enhancement enables bordering communities to benefit from the returns of hunting tourism. AFAUDEB approach consists in helping Village associations for wildlife management (CVGF) organize hunting in their ZOVIC. This process is supported by a ZOVIC restoration plan, and the set-up of rules and regulations governing the share and use of the generated incomes for local development.

Since its establishment, AFAUDEB has provided assistance to bordering villages of wildlife areas through the official recognition of 5 ZOVICs and a communal forest. A local committee is in charge of monitoring, supported by the State forestry department. Inventories have been done in some of them, and they have management plans and an official decree that details the management rules. Besides, AFAUDEB endeavours to have 7 new ZOVICs recognized and made operational. The town councils involved in this process have already given their agreement, the borders have been identified and inventories done in some of them.

The economic exploitation of ZOVICs is essentially done through small game hunting by hunters that are generally external to the village areas. The receipts include, among others, payment of daily duties with, of course, great disparity of the amounts perceived which depend to their proximity with big game hunting concessions, their surface area and their interest in terms of wildlife.

It is authorized to harvest non timber forest products (NTFP) in ZOVICs, under the supervision of the local management committee. This activity is another section of the work done by AFAUDEB which supports the activities of groups harvesting honey, baobab fruit, tamarind pods, Arabic gum and groups of producers of Karite butter, vegetal oils (balanites,



baobab, neem) and soap made with vegetal oils. Thus, juice and syrup production units from baobab fruit, tamarind, ginger and bissap (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) have been established by the NGO.



The products are now sold in shops that are managed by the association, and in supermarkets in big towns where the association employs people in charge of

supplying the selling points.

Evidence of the success of these activities is that the association's sales specifically related to these NTFP enhancement activities have rapidly increased in 2011. Additional activities are also undertaken by AFAUDEB and concern tree production and planting, gardening essentially for women and microcredit with relatively low interest rates. Collective infrastructure (drill holes, wells, silos for the conservation of crops, alphabetization centres...) have been built and a capacity building programme implemented with, among others, practical training in alphabetization, NTFP enhancement, ecological monitoring of ZOVCs, bushfires management, plant production, cooperative organization and simple financial management.

In terms of prospects, AFAUDEB is planning the certification of NTFP (biological and equitable products), the development of ecotourism and support to the establishment of the regional union of wildlife management village groups.

AFAUDEB's experience illustrates, at a local level, the directions 1 and 3 of our road map for African protected areas: the development of a multi-stakeholder (State-privates-populations) participative model to manage a territory that needs to be conserved, altogether. It is a decentralized approach that enables to better empower local actors regarding conservation management.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### In Cameroon

In Cameroon, a Community Forest (CF) is a forest of 5,000 ha maximum under the "State non-permanent forest domain" and which is the object of a management convention between a village

community and the administration in charge of forest management.

In this matter, the forestry law of 1994 provides that *« forest products resulting from CF exploitation totally belong to the village communities associated to these forests »*.

The purpose of this decentralized management approach is to succeed in generating revenues and creating jobs in rural areas while enabling to sustainably manage forest resources and conserve them. In theory, community forestry is therefore a means *“to ensure to rural communities the right to get access to village forest resources. Villagers can thus manage and exploit in a participatory manner the products of their community forests and have prospects for development”*.

Although Cameroon legislative framework seems to be relatively favourable to local natural resources management, implementing a CF establishment/management process can be, in truth, very complex. Thus, in a 2010 study from Ingram *et al.*, the contribution of Cameroon CFs to supply wood market was only of 2 to 4%.

The difficulties met by CFs are various and can be explained by the length, complexity and high cost of the procedures of CFs and quotas assignments, as they are often assigned at the end of the year, what leaves little time to villagers to exploit the forest in good conditions.

Therefore, it is sometimes necessary to have external assistance to support local communities through the various steps of a CF's life. It is in this context that many Cameroon NGOs are working, among which **GREEN SAFE**, an NGO based at Maroua in the extreme North of Cameroon.

This region is a particular Cameroon ecosystem. No species directly destined for timber is growing there, but rather species exploited by communities to meet the needs in energy wood of the countries' large cities or bordering countries (Chad, Nigeria). According to the manager of GREEN SAFE NGO, Mrs Didja-Djaïli GARGA, the establishment of CFs in this part of the country meets the will of local populations to protect forests against external pressures. The purpose is not to organize themselves in view of enhancing and directly exploiting forest resources, but rather to protect environments from which rural communities strongly depend on. Some of these places are adjoining protected areas and therefore contribute to conservation as a whole.

Created and legalized in 2006, the GREEN SAFE association set itself the objective to support

communities in the establishment and sustainable exploitation of CFs.

Among the various activities undertaken by the NGO (soil restoration by agro-forestry, development of non timber forest products sectors, communal planning, community reforestations), three projects were aiming at assisting communities in structuring their activities within their CFs. GREEN SAFE's assistance consists in providing support to drafting reservation applications, to raising awareness and informing populations (cf. photo below) and in supporting the organization of communities within legally recognized management committees.



To characterize and understand the villages' and surrounding areas' environment is also an important aspect of this association's work; it regularly carries out participatory mapping activities within CFs. In the coming months, GREEN SAFE should start a new project supported by the FFEM Small Initiatives Programme (PPI.3). This should no longer consist in supporting the pre-existing CFs, but rather in supporting from the start communities that are willing to set up three new CFs of 5,000 ha each. The association will therefore provide support at each step of the establishment process, and this a relatively new challenge for all the stakeholders.

« To improve consultation in and around protected areas » is the third direction of our road map for African protected areas. The approach implemented on these territories, which can efficiently complete the role of protected areas *sensu stricto*, is an interesting local illustration of it. An NGO providing support to the structuring of a CF thus rises up debates between the stakeholders, facilitates problems formulation, helps actors to fully appropriate the territory management aspects and generates a common vision to ensure the conservation of the territory in its entirety. Then, partners like donors (see direction 7) are responsible for supporting this approach...

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## 2) SPECIES CONSERVATION

### In Cameroon and Congo

According to the IUCN red list, among the five species of marine turtles nesting along the Central Africa Atlantic Coast, some are considered as vulnerable (Olive-greenish turtle, *Lepidochelys olivacea*), endangered (Loggerhead sea turtle, *Caretta caretta*, and Green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*), or critically endangered (Hawksbill sea turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricate*, and Leatherback sea turtle, *Dermochelys coriacea*).

The nesting sites of these species are stretching from Cameroon to Angola and some National Parks such as Pongara and Mayimba in Gabon and the National Park of Conkouati-Douli in Congo are considered to be among the most important ones for species like the Leatherback sea turtle. A recent study conducted on the only nesting sites of Gabon coast thus enabled to count more than 100,000 nests of this turtle species (Witt et al. 2009).

At the same time, significant pressures are particularly present during the laying period that generally extends from September to April. These can be of natural origin (nests attacked by predators, accumulation of dry wood near nesting sites, beach erosion, etc.) or anthropogenic (pollution related to littoral urban development, nests poaching for eggs or adult turtles poaching, turtles captured in artisanal fishing nests and pressure of industrial fishing which does not comply with fishing limits).

Facing this situation, many NGOs such as **RENATURA** in Congo and **KUDATUBE** in Cameroon progressively organized themselves in order to contribute to the conservation of these species.

KUDATUBE (marine turtles in local language) is an NGO that was created ten years ago, at the end of a project on Campo Ma'an National Park which was implemented by WWF. Historically, KUDATUBE activities are therefore concentrated in the Campo Ma'an coastal zone (southern part of the Cameroonian littoral, near the border of Equatorial Guinea).

The main activity of the 15 team members of KUDATUBE is night patrols to monitoring nesting between September and March, which is the nesting season of marine turtles. For about six months, monitoring consists in making observations, collecting biometric data (length, width, shell curb and head width) and marking a number of marine turtles that will then be released in the sea.



During this period, night and morning patrols are patrolling along the coasts between 21h and 5h00 a.m. to try to identify females that have just nested on the beaches and count marine turtles'

nests and tracks.

Some turtles identified on the beaches during patrols or accidentally captured by fishermen are also measured and marked before being released.

Regarding transplantation, the eggs contained in nests that are likely to be poached or destroyed and located closed to the Ebodjé pen are transplanted there. For the 2009-2010 season, 70 nests have thus been monitored and 2,300 young turtles released at sea.

These surveys of marine turtles, associated to wildlife surveys enabled to prepare the technical file for the establishment of Elombo Marine Park. It is an environmental compensation associated to the development of Kribi deep water harbour which is under construction.

Since 2008, progressively and according to the initial willingness of extending its activities along the Cameroonian littoral, KUDATUBE has started new activities within the Douala-Edea reserve.

In partnership with other Cameroonian NGOs intervening in this area, and thanks to a GEF funding, the NGO thus provides support to local communities living in the north of the reserve. The purpose is to look for alternative activities that will enable to progressively reduce pressures on the area's natural resources, more particularly mangrove. Small-scale stockbreeding has been developed and ecotouristic activities should be implemented progressively.

Additional surveys of species other than marine turtles have started and will be completed during the coming months in the reserve. Then, the objective would be to be able to characterize at best the wildlife richness of the reserve in order to contribute to the process of reclassifying the reserve into a National Park.

Created more than ten years ago (June 2001), RENATURA is a NGO that intervenes more in the south, in Congo. Since the beginning, this NGO has adopted an innovative approach, integrating many activities that are complementary. For instance, every year, RENATURA monitoring teams are deployed

along the Congolese littoral to undertake three different types of monitoring:

- *All-comprehensive clutch survey* which consists in studying clutches on 10 km length sites.
- *Estimated clutch survey* through clutch monitoring on 8 to 16km sites, including early morning nest counting patrols.
- *All-comprehensive track counting* with night patrols monitoring and counting marine turtles on a specific site along the laying season.

During the 2011-2012 season, about twenty workers of the association coming from the projects' areas of intervention took part in these monitoring patrols on three different sites.



Besides, undertaken almost since the beginning of RENATURA activities, the programme for releasing accidentally captured turtles is experiencing significant success and, since its beginning, has been replicated in other areas by other NGOs. An evidence of the success of this programme is that it has allowed releasing about 1,500 marine turtles for the only 2011-2012 season.

In 2011, 4 educators of the association were assigned to environmental education activities that allowed reaching 11,000 pupils of Pointe Noire public schools. Ecotouristic activities started at Bellelo in 2010. A bungalow of about 50 m<sup>2</sup> containing two separate rooms was constructed there to welcome tourists. The site also presents a series of pedagogical panels on turtles and tourists going there have the possibility, provided they are in good physical state, to participate in monitoring or release patrols undertaken by the members of the association.

35% of the incomes generated by tourist visits are then returned in a community fund specifically created for that purpose in the village. About forty tourists have so far visited the place since 2010.

The rigor of patrols' monitoring, the frequent presence on site and local rooting are strong points of RENATURA approach and the impact regarding turtle conservation and change of behaviours vis-à-vis this species seems considerable: according to the data the association has gathered, on the two strategic sites of Djeno and Bellelo, the presence of



the monitoring team members seems to have enabled to reduce poaching rate from 100 to 5%.

These two experiences underline the importance of the second direction of our road map for African protected areas that deals with raising public awareness for the conservation of PAs and their values. It is an important step to consolidate our actions, and eventually increase their impacts. With its quarterly newsletter, Natur'infor, RENATURA also gives a good example of the communication efforts to be done to raise readers' awareness on the status of their environment, the successful projects, but also the state of conservation of an emblematic and threatened species such as the turtle, with which men have however always shared the littoral. The setting up of different sources of incomes for conservation activities (direction 8 of the road map) is also a guarantee for the sustainability and the independence of activities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ...

IUCN Marine Turtles Specialists Group: [www.iucn-mtsg.org](http://www.iucn-mtsg.org)

RENAURA : [renatura.asso@gmail.com](mailto:renatura.asso@gmail.com)

[www.renatura.org](http://www.renatura.org) . Every quarter, RENATURA edits a newsletter that can be directly downloaded from this Internet site.

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### 3) SUPPORT TO ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSERVATION OF AREAS BORDERING A PROTECTED AREA

#### In Benin

Human-elephant conflicts are recognized by the African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) of the IUCN Species Survival Commission as a threat to the survival of the species. As an answer and to allow for a less confrontational cohabitation between humans and elephants, the village associations union for wildlife reserves management (**U-AVIGREF**) in Benin is trying to implement a model which results seem promising.

AVIGREFs are organizations representing the bordering populations of national parks. 23 of them (bordering the Pendjari Biosphere Reserve (RBP) and gathering about 2,000 members) are federated within this U-AVIGREF which is an umbrella organization recognized since 2001. By setting itself the objective to conciliate the needs of the bordering population with the requirements of conservation, U-AVIGREF aspires to make of this PA a model of co-management and a driving force for sustainable development of the sub-region.

One problem to be settled is crop destruction by pachyderms that makes cohabitation with humans very difficult. Face to this situation, in 2010, U-AVIGREF started, in collaboration with the park's management and thanks to a FFEM-PPI funding, a project that aims at reducing human-elephant conflicts by the production and the use of hot pepper. Quite surprising, the idea is undoubtedly ingenious as this condiment is likely to act like a powerful repellent while generating incomes for the populations living within the controlled settlement area (ZOC), a part of the park of about 30,000 ha where cultivation is authorized.

Firstly, an experience sharing trip to Ghana enabled to list a number of endogenous techniques used to drive back elephants and to compare their effectiveness. It was then decided to modify the cultivation systems and to relatively intensively introduce hot pepper growing on farmers' plots. However, setting-up hot pepper farms, only, is not enough effective to drive back pachyderms and it is necessary to associate the use of complementary techniques. In order to optimize the repelling effect, it is recommended to hang on a rope around the farming plots which has been soaked in a mixture of elephant dung, hot pepper powder and waste oil. The odour emitted by this mechanism will drive back elephants for about 3 months, at the end of which the mechanism will be renewed.

In total, 102 producers, that is 75% of the 136 producers present, currently implement these techniques. Globally, it is noted a decrease of elephants' intrusion in the farms since the project's activities have started, and only 6 farms have been destroyed in 2011, against 14 in 2010 and 22 in 2009. In addition, 35 producers have been trained to get the skills required to transform hot pepper into powder (the amounts used for setting-up the repelling mechanisms being much less than the harvest) and thus promote the value added chain and generate more incomes.

The main difficulty met during the project implementation was about supplying some producers with quality seeds as they had almost nil germination rates at the first order. Once the plots were cultivated with quality seeds and enriched with compost, the outputs per hectare reached about the double of the regional average (1,5 ton/ha against an average of 800 kg/ha in the rest of the area).

Again, this example is a good illustration of the third direction of our road map for African protected areas: on the basis of a clear and shared identification of a problem (here a human/animal conflict), solutions adapted (to the needs and local capacities), and

shared, developed at a relevant scale to be effective, are possible. Much less costly, therefore rapidly sustainable, they are also direct benefit providers for populations (direction 8).

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG): [www.african-elephant.org](http://www.african-elephant.org)

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## In Congo

The Congolese VONA NGO intervenes in a context that is completely different from the one met at the periphery of Pendjari. Located at the west of DRC, the Sarambwe Reserve is part of the Virunga landscape and covers a surface area of about 950 ha. It is directly adjoining the « Bwindi Impenetrable National Park » (BINP) in Uganda, listed in 1994 by UNESCO in the world heritage list and which forest is the habitat for about half of the current population of mountain gorillas, that is, about 350 individuals.

Despite this, it has not benefited from enough investments and effective management that would enable it to sustainably conserve habitats and wildlife in regards of the multiple external pressures it is confronted with (timber and firewood harvesting, poaching, etc.).

Created in 1997 and employing 4 permanent workers, VONA, since early 2000, has collaborated with a local association in order to undertake lobbying activities and prompt the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) to assign guards in the reserve. About twenty guards were thus present in 2010.

Supported by Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe (BRD) and the FFEM-PPI, a project was conducted by the association from 2010 in the aim of helping conservation services to meet the set conservation objectives. As the reserve's borders had never been marked, one of the first activities undertaken was to effectively demarcate the PA.

To achieve that, each owner at the border of the Reserve has been sensitized and proposed, in exchange of remuneration, to open a path to mark the limit between his farm and the Reserve. This awareness raising effort has been done for about one month by a tracker, the Chief of Sarambwe, a representative of VONA and the head of ICCN guards. During the project, 11 tracks, of a total length of 33 kilometres were also traced and regularly maintained in the reserve to facilitate monitoring patrols and other activities.

Reforestation activities have been undertaken by the association. Four tree nurseries of *Caliandra*, *Leucaena*, *Cypres*, *Maesopsis* and *Marhamia* have thus been set up at Sarambwe and in the surrounding villages. All the 110,000 seedlings produced were planted in the beginning of 2011, with a plant survival rate of about 80%.

These tree nurseries were also used for demonstration and for training technicians destined to develop new tree nurseries in the reserve. Before planting and while distributing the seedlings produced, the populations who benefited from reforestation also received specific training in setting-up agro-forestry infrastructure and in planting micro afforestation and many schools of the area were provided with plantlets.



The progressive and effective return of guards in the reserve enabled to arrest many poachers and seems to have reduced their incursions. Signs of gorilla presence were observed by patrol

teams. Local trackers have been assigned to monitoring activities, but are not paid regular salary for that. For future tourist visits in the reserve, VONA proposes that gorilla observation activities be undertaken in the BINP to generate incomes for local populations.

The third direction of the road map for African protected areas is again at the honour in this experience (consultation in and around PAs, between all the stakeholders, in particular with traditional authorities). But it also illustrates direction 7 and the interest to adapt support projects to partners' capacity, in order to assist them at their own speed and according to their possibilities towards sustainable results. In particular in a very difficult "end of crisis" context (armed conflict in DRC), where it is so important to first meet expectations in order to restore confidence...

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION ...

[www.bwindiforestnationalpark.com](http://www.bwindiforestnationalpark.com) - [www.berggorilla.de](http://www.berggorilla.de)

VONA : [vonaong@yahoo.fr](mailto:vonaong@yahoo.fr)

## CONCLUSION

These experiences teach us many things related to directions 1 (governance), 2 (raising awareness), 3 (local consultation), 7 (support effectiveness) and 8

(support sustainability) developed in the road map for African protected areas.

#### PAPACO is launching a call for interest

In view of providing support to the NGOs selected under the small initiatives programme (PPI3), we are looking for a **consultant-trainer**, specialized in **conservation projects' building, management and monitoring**, in view of organizing a training workshop in Yaoundé (CAMEROON). The TORs can be consulted on the PAPACO' site and the offers should be transmitted to Thomas BACHA (Thomas.bacha@iucn.org) by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012.

One lesson to be drawn is that it is possible to identify, develop or perpetuate local solutions to sometimes higher scale problems. For that, just little « technique » and much will are required from all actors. This goes with common awareness of problems, the need for real consultation to develop an acceptable response for all, and significant collaboration to implement it. That is local natural resources governance and each of these NGOs, for a precise and clearly identified problem, was able to invent a way to achieve it.

This may not be applicable everywhere, but for category VI PAs, it is certainly one possible way.

Then, it is interesting to quickly address the issue of support to local actors through small-scale funding for conservation. The main interest of this kind of support is that it enables to fund and try both experimental and flexible approaches, to implement concrete actions in the field, like those here presented which are tests, and which become, if successful, examples. Thus many donors ask themselves the question of the effectiveness of this kind of support and the impact *in fine* of conservation-related activities, due to their scale.

Shortly presented in the box hereafter, prepared by Simon Mériaux, coordinator, the TRANSCO project developed by the *Fondation Internationale pour le Banc d'Arguin* (FIBA- [www.lafiba.org](http://www.lafiba.org)) gives us some

food to continue the reflection on this topic. In the light of these experiences, it is fairly clear that all those small projects taken together are surely a wonderful starter to achieve change, and even though they are modest, these projects are nevertheless indispensable as a complement to other higher-scale actions.

More information on these experiences can be asked at: [thomas.bacha@iucn.org](mailto:thomas.bacha@iucn.org) and [arsene.sanon@iucn.org](mailto:arsene.sanon@iucn.org)

In 2007 and 2008, FIBA took stock of the NGOs working on the West African littoral. The idea was then to define conditions for NGOs' emergence, but also institutional and legal contexts for the West African countries supervising their activities. This panorama of NGOs for the littoral conservation thus showed that even though they implement key conservation activities, sometimes substituting the State services poorly equipped with human means and resources, these actors often have significant gaps in many fields of a project cycle and in "community life" (institutional structures operation, defining a work strategy, searching for financing, accounting, animation, reporting, etc.)

Based on this work, FIBA members reflected on the way to structurally support four NGOs through targeted partnerships for a first three-year phase.

The methodology is simple: 1) a comprehensive structural diagnosis is realized for each partner NGO that enables to know and thoroughly understand the functioning of the NGO, its assets, its weaknesses, etc. 2) based on this diagnosis, a capacity building strategy is defined. This allows to discuss the NGO priority needs in terms of operating resources, human resources, training, etc. 3) based on the defined diagnosis and strategy, a partnership convention is signed. FIBA has therefore then been able to provide well-focused technical and financial support, according to the activities and real needs of beneficiary NGOs.

As an example, in 2011, the Cape Verde NGO BIOSFERA benefited from financial support for its functioning (contribution to office rents, subscription to the Internet, etc.), training adapted to the needs (training in English, alpinism techniques- monitoring of birds nesting on cliffs, in the reptiles identification by the University of Algarve in Portugal and on marine turtles with the TAMAR NGO in Brazil) and support to take part in three international meetings (conservation of turtles, SPEA forum on Macaronesia birds and forum on Cape Verde coastal management). Thanks to the project, the members of BIOSFERA also developed collaborations with other partner NGOs.

Among the multiple lessons of the TRANSCO project, one is important to be retained at this level: a mid-term assistance, with targeted and well-identified supports, defined according to the real needs of NGOs seems essential to really strengthen capacities and make actions much more effective and durable.

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Coordination - Program on Conservation Areas and Species Diversity – ESARO (CASD)  
Coordination - Regional Program on Protected Areas – PACO (PAPACO)  
Program Officer - Protected Areas Assessment - Trainings  
Program Officer - Climat - Communication  
Program Officer - World Heritage  
Program Officer - Conservation Territories – Support to local NGOs  
Program Officer - Small Grants for Conservation (PPI) – Support to local NGOs  
Program Officer - Small Grants for Conservation (PPI) – Support to local NGOs

**See [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org)**

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