



# NAPA

## News from African Protected Areas



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**Edito (WPC – 4 months)**  
**Geoffroy MAUVAIS**  
PAPACO coordinator

### Local or global?

In general, those who work for conservation on a global level, the ones dealing with “important business” in this world, those who go to major conferences, attend international conventions, meet with opinion leaders, discuss with the media... those ones look at activities carried out locally with great condescendence. They see these activities like thousands of tiny buoys on the surface of an ocean swept away by the whirlwind of biodiversity loss and believe that they alone measure this reality. They think of them as small stories, amusing, refreshing, but whose impact ultimately doesn't go beyond their own scale.

Those working locally, “on the ground”, as we say, who day after day manage parks, reserves, environmental organizations, conservation projects, communities' initiatives... often look at most of these “speech makers” as tireless barkers. People who have the time to travel around the world to gather together and keep reassuring themselves about what they think or know, while the reality remains unknown to them, simply because they stick too far away from it. They talk, they write, they conceptualize but in the end, they do not change anything.

The best translation of this paradox is the concept of “think globally, act locally” which has become in recent years a leitmotiv for conservation. As if it was possible to do the opposite? As if we needed to consecrate this division: a scale for thought, another for action.

This division is useless but easy. Everyone should mind their own business and the trick would be played? The one whose concern is, every morning, to know how many rhinos may have been poached in his property during the night, this one do not care about international commitments that only commit those who write them, and in the end commit no one. The one who walks through the corridors of CITES trying to find the best compromise to halt the rhino horn traffic, who knows that without breaking this traffic at the global level, nothing will be sustainable, this one is not interested by the manager's morning anxiety. Yet both work for the same result. But they do not consider each other. And they don't want to.

Of course, it is ultimately reassuring to focus on an area of several thousand hectares, to devote all our energy to protect it, to concentrate all our creativity and love on the subject... and to act as if the rest of the world was not impacting this place. It is also reassuring to stand weightless, away from the field, to converse on major issues, major challenges that we will deal with later, maybe, with others, elsewhere... and therefore without any real consequence today, here, while we forget what is happening there, far away in the bush.

Well, it is definitely difficult to be between the two scales, or worse, into both scales. To be in a position to measure the overall context, often so unfavorable (the population growth, the expansion of conflicts, persistent poverty, climate change, natural resources depletion...) and at the same time to be listening to local stakeholders who face these conditions, so powerless despite their willingness, despite their commitment... It is stressful to be in this position, neither here nor there, neither close nor far enough, and ultimately nowhere. And yet it is often where we

find IUCN, as both a global organization trying to gather, to unify, to guide... and a local "solutions finder", supportive of small stakeholders in the most remote places.

We should remember that neither scale is better than the other. Only the need for action, wherever necessary, to achieve the best possible results. The urgency is shared by all and everywhere. Do not wait for ideas from here to build solutions for over there. Let's add the ideas together, add up the remedies, learn more thoroughly the lessons gathered from the ground, simplify the verbiage in the conventions, rewrite their purpose, objectives, operations, invent a way that will reconcile all levels, all scales because they are not separate or additional: they are one and indivisible.

This NAPA presents some examples of local actions developed with the support of IUCN (and its financial partners); they should inspire us, at all levels.

WPC – 4 months to go!

## NATURE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BY COMMUNITIES...

*Direction 3 of the Road Map for African PAs*

*Mentioned for several decades as a model to promote, this theoretical concept brought many changes in the way we conceive sustainable natural resources and environment management in almost all African countries. Built on the idea that there is not better manager of a natural resource or an ecosystem than the person who is directly affected by its health and the sustainability of access to environmental goods and services that it provides, the concept has gradually found its place both in rhetoric and literature, but also in national and regional legislation, international cooperation, and obviously in many projects developed on the field by the African civil society.*

*To be fair, on the ground, things may not be so simple and going from ideas or words to action may prove to be challenging...*

*This NAPA presents a few analyses and cross testimonies from stakeholders in West and Central Africa and discusses the reality of this concept...*

*More to come in the September NAPA issue too.*

## CENTRAL AFRICA: COMMUNITY FORESTS IN THE CONGO BASIN: WHERE DO WE STAND?

Paolo Omar Cerutti<sup>1</sup> et Marc Vandenhaute<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre de Recherche Forestière Internationale (CIFOR)

<sup>2</sup>Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO)

For about twenty years now (1994), Cameroon has developed forestry laws and regulations considered at this time as "revolutionary." The concept of "Community Forest" (CF) is now part of the day to day language in the forestry sector of the Congo Basin. However, although mentioned in various forms in almost all forest codes in the region, it is clear that, in practice, only Cameroon since the 1990s and more recently Gabon can prove a real implementation of this concept.



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Initially, the concept was considered as an innovative idea because, for the first time, it offered to local people the legal right to manage "their" own land (with or without forest cover) and to benefit from sustainable management of timber and non-timber



resources allocated by the State. The original idea has gradually given way to a much more restricted meaning, and in most cases, the FC are being directly managed for and by logging stakeholders.

There are exceptions, of course, but today when CF are mentioned, it is mainly a question of forests rich "in sapele" or "in moabi" rather than CF managing all sort of resources for procuring sustainable income for the benefit of people who depend particularly from eco-tourism, farming or the sale of non-timber forest products. But this is not really surprising. In fact, it is actually quite natural that CF managers focus primarily on timber resources, able to bring them large amounts of money in a very short period of time and without the need for large investments.

This is quite logical but may be problematic for several reasons.

First, as mentioned above, the CF is not yet truly managed to evolve from the "exploitation" concept to the "management" one, as intended by law. The reasons are many and they are not specific to CF. Some forest management units (FMUs) have been used entirely (and then abandoned) rather than managed. In the case of a CF, regulation has its share of responsibility in this situation. Indeed, while CF managers are asked to prepare a CF simplified management plan and to sign a "final" management agreement for a period of time covering twenty-five years, renewable, the possibility is not offered to CF to be recorded in the permanent forest domain (PFD), as well as the UFA (forest exploitation units) and/or the protected areas. In other words, it is expected that populations will manage their resources sustainably, but without being given the legal guarantee that this resource will actually be available in the long term for them.

This could probably be interpreted as a purely theoretical problem, as nothing indeed prevents the Ministries in charge of forest exploitation in the region to plan land-use in order to ensure that the non-permanent forest domain (NPF) will be managed in a sustainable manner. But when a CF manager has to invest so much time and money in the design of a document detailing all the activities he will apply in a "sustainable" way, that will cover the initial investment and then participate in community development, it is rather paradoxical that, in turn, the State does not guarantee to this manager that the land on which he intends to develop his activities, from a legal point of view, has a vocation to be indeed managed sustainably.

Secondly, although many efforts have been made to simplify registration procedures, allocation and management of a CF is still a real challenge with significant costs both at the formal and informal levels. Given this fact, and without real "incentives" from the administration (eg. tax incentives, assistance in the preparation of management plans, implementation of reliable inventories, etc.), many communities prefer today dealing with intermediaries in order to exploit "their" forests with the sole objective of a short-term profit. This often comes with very little equitably profit distribution between members of communities...

One consequence of this trend is that many non-legal activities are now happening in CF without any respect or norms or rules (eg. subcontracts are given without regular contracts since most operators have no approval to practice their activity, approvals being too expensive and difficult to obtain from the administration) and sometimes lead to traffic of timber transport documents. These irregularities are facilitated, on the one hand, by the lack of mechanisms and effectiveness for monitoring and controlling that should be implemented by the competent authorities or by CF themselves and, on the other hand, by the global weak governance and the scarcity of sanctions.

Despite weaknesses in the application of the ideal model of CF that is prescribed by law, we believe that they can make a positive contribution to the forestry sector in several countries of the Congo Basin. By training communities, by helping them to access to the necessary documentation and by facilitating the development of partnership agreements with professional stakeholders, CF could actually cover a significant part of the domestic production of legal and sustainable timber.

However, it is not reasonable to hope that CF will respond to something that is beyond what they can deliver, the risk being to push them a little bit further into the spiral of illegality. Today, CF are often under the light, especially during negotiations of the Voluntary Partnership Agreements FLEGT-VPA, as a legal "solution" to the local demand for wood.

The speech is as follows: since wood produced by UFAs is almost entirely exported, one should use wood that comes from CF to meet the local market demand. As if we could suddenly "remove" thousands of artisanal miners who timber today in the NPF and provide "informal" wood to the local market, to replace them by a production from CF providing legal and sustainable wood, under the

hypothesis of an operational FLEGT. The idea seems to be logical if not attractive, but this is totally unrealistic, at least in the short and medium term. Indeed, in the Congo Basin countries, we can consider the annual demand for timber for domestic markets around 2 million cubic meters. However, the most optimistic estimations indicate that the production in existing CF is about 30.000 cubic meters. Certainly, the differences vary greatly from one country to another, and the Gabon national demand could probably be covered with a reasonable number of functional CF, before it happens in Cameroon or DRC. But the figures show that for now and probably for a few more years, CF alone do not have a sufficient production capacity to meet all national expectations.



Rather than making them play the (political) role of official provider for a domestic market that requires two hundred times more wood than they can legally produce, it would be more appropriate to focus on the changes needed (regulatory and technical) and already listed in numerous studies to help CF to provide a good deal of products and services for the long term benefit of local populations and the sustainable management of natural resources.

### WEST AFRICA: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY-RUN HUNTING AREAS (ZOVICS) IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALIZATION IN BURKINA FASO

Alexis KABORE (AFAUDEB) and Clémentine Laratte (IUCN PACO-AP) – [clementine.laratte@iucn.org](mailto:clementine.laratte@iucn.org)

One of the major innovations of the wildlife sector reforms in Burkina Faso (reforms that have been developed since 1996), is the opportunity for communities leaving in peripheral areas of national protected areas to establish so-called community-run protected areas. The "ZOVIC" that can be defined as

"part of a local community area, dedicated by this community to the exploitation of wildlife resources" is one interesting model of this "new type of PA" (*not all of them meet the IUCN definition of a PA*).

Local communities through the Village Associations for Wildlife Management (GVGF) are initiating themselves the process of creating a ZOVIC. Doing that, they exercise their sovereignty in decision-making and conservation management, with their partners: the State, the private sector and, more recently, local authorities.

Burkina has got currently one hundred ZOVICs, including 63 in the Eastern part of the country. However, few of them reach a level of formalization and organization for effective and operational nature conservation. The legal, technical and organizational assistance provided by local associations and NGOs is therefore essential to enable them to take ownership of the process and to fully play their role.

This is what the « Association Faune et Développement au Burkina (AFAUDEB) is doing since 2004, supporting the creation of a network of ZOVICs in peripheral zones of protected areas in the East of Burkina Faso.



### Process of development and adoption of the local agreement

The completion of the entire process for the constitution of a ZOVIC is needed before it becomes functional. It is characterized by back and forth exchanges between different levels of decision makers, ensuring the widest possible inclusion of all stakeholders to reach the consensus.

Four main stages can be identified:



### 1) The initiative is led by local communities

Facing a growing demand for agricultural and pastoral land, local communities are today more likely to seek to protect their lands and resources. Internal consultations are carried out in the villages and with external partners (NGOs, technical services, municipalities, hunting concessionaires...) to try building a consensus and mobilize technical and financial resources necessary to conduct the whole registration process.

### 2) Signing of Memoranda of Understanding between the different stakeholders

With support structures, including AFAUDEB, consultation meetings involving all groups, state agencies, local communities, hunting concessionaires... are organized in the participating villages. After a formal general meeting, the synthesis of proposals by and concerns of the different social groups, and the management rules of the ZOVIC, are reported in the minutes of the meeting. Signed by all participants, those minutes are the founding document of the ZOVIC and act as an agreement between the representatives of the population. In particular, it sets the ZOVIC limits, authorizes and/or prohibits activities and defines how the revenues generated by the ZOVIC will be allocated. It sets out how consultation will be undertaken between the main actors. These documents now form the framework for all joint actions and build the ground for the emergence of local environmental governance, economically viable and socially acceptable.

### 3) Legal recognition by the Municipality

These management rules must be approved by the competent administrative authority which is the municipal Council in that case. During a specific meeting of the council and on the basis of the minutes of the meeting previously mentioned + a report of the representative of the Municipality, a draft bylaw is presented to the Council. Following discussions with delegates and villages representatives, a written report of this council session is adopted and a municipal decree is signed that creates officially the ZOVIC and set its management arrangements.

### 4) Obtaining receipt vouchers from the Public Treasury

Due to non-transfer of natural resources management to the municipalities, the State approval is still required for activities that relate to forest policy and financial transactions in case of commercial exploitation of natural resources. The last step is therefore to obtain the visa of the Financial Control

Service of the Treasury, and to make sure that the Treasury makes the receipt vouchers available that will be used for all transactions.

Note that the adoption of specific decrees under the Forest Code would open new possibilities to fully gazette ZOVIC for local populations, but this issue remains unanswered because of the lack of regulatory framework for now.



### The support provided by AFAUDEB

AFAUDEB plays a key role as a mediator in the dialogue between stakeholders and facilitates the mobilization of financial resources, both for the follow-up of the classification process and for the implementation of management actions, participatory bio-monitoring and economic enhancement.

A project supported by the FFEM-PPI (SSIP, 2010-2011) has enabled people from 17 villages to implement conservation actions and crucial development activities in three ZOVICs, namely the ZOVIC of Boumoana (2,366 ha), the one of Boungou-Siétougou-Sadpenga (450 ha) and the one of Sapenga (226 ha). The project supported the delineation of the ZOVICs and some development infrastructures (water point, roads...) alongside the ZOVIC. These are intended to domesticate cattle in order to truly devote ZOVIC to the development of wildlife. The consultation process to register the communal pluri-villages ZOVIC of Boungou-Siétougou-Sadpenga was conducted successfully. A small water dam for wildlife was also built in the ZOVIC of Sadpenga.

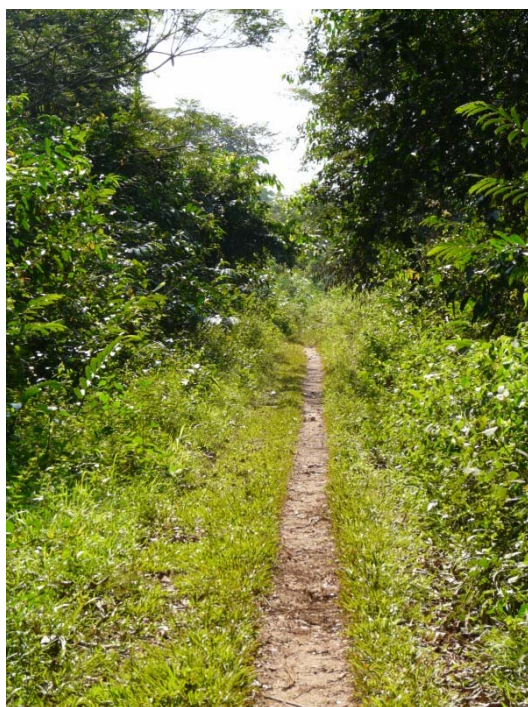
In this continuity, AFAUDEB is also involved in the "TC" project (also funded by FFEM) in the context of the decentralization process in Burkina Faso. The AFAUDEB supports and strengthens the skills of Fada, Diapangou, Maticocoali and Pama local authorities through training, regular monitoring of field activities and exchange visits (they visited the

periphery of the Mole National Park in Ghana, Pendjari National Park in Benin...)

On a total of 17 ZOVICs supported by AFAUDEB within these two projects (PPI and TC), 11 of them are in the process of development or implementation of formalized local agreements. Five have begun the implementation of the decree formalizing the local municipal convention: Kompiengbiga (2,944 ha), Boumoana, Boungou-Siétougou-Sadpenga, Sadpenga and Kodjonti (200 ha).

Among these ZOVICs which have completed their applications, some have already obtained the receipt vouchers, completing the whole process. The income that will be generated will help to implement the activities identified in the Memorandum of Understanding and will support the functioning of village management structures with a view to self-financing. This achievement is the result of the continued involvement of all stakeholders in the objective of reconciling local development and natural resource conservation.

Of course, the model faces its own limitations: its financial cost, the risk that expectation that the activities implemented in the framework of the agreements will generate income may not be met, as well as the long process and its requirement in technical and legal expertise. But the great strength of the process comes from its bottom-up approach and inclusiveness: local communities are central to the process and the rules adopted are shared by all concerned parties.



## CAMEROON: PARTICIPATORY CONSERVATION.

Aristide KAMLA,  
[kamlaaristide@yahoo.fr](mailto:kamlaaristide@yahoo.fr)

## MARINE MONITORING

AMMCO

## MAMMALS, AND

president,

Since February 2013, the Cameroon association AMMCO has engaged with 13 fishermen in ten villages situated along the coastal area of Cameroun with the objective to record data on opportunistic marine mammal sightings.

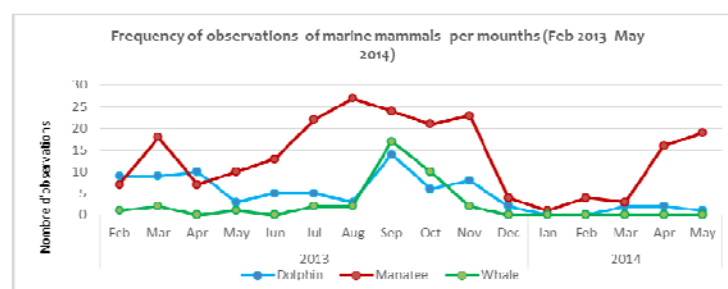
The fishermen record on a daily basis, using a datasheet, information (date, time, species, number of individuals, approximate location, etc...) over sightings of marine mammals or carcasses they encounter during their normal fishing activities.

Some fishers with built-in camera phones also take pictures of their sightings. Weekly telephone calls by AMMCO staff with fishermen provide information on their sightings of the week. Data are then entered in an Excel database and that allows mapping sightings and identifying sites and seasons of abundance.

From February 2013 to May 2014, AMMCO has received reports of 198 manatee sightings (n=483 individuals), 73 dolphin sightings (n=707) and 37 whale sightings (n=85). Reported groups sizes varied, from 1- 20 for manatees (with high proportion of single individuals), 1-25 for dolphins (with a high proportion of groups with more than 3 individuals) and 1-3 for whales (mostly in couples).

Groups size	African manatees	Dolphins	Whales
1	52.02% (n=103)	16.4% (n=12)	35.1% (n=13)
2	19.7% (n=39)	2.7% (n=2)	45.9% (n=17)
3	9.09% (n=18)	10.9% (n=8)	8.1% (n=3)
+ of 3	19.2% (n=38)	69.9% (n=51)	10.8% (n=4)
Total	N=198	N=73	N=37

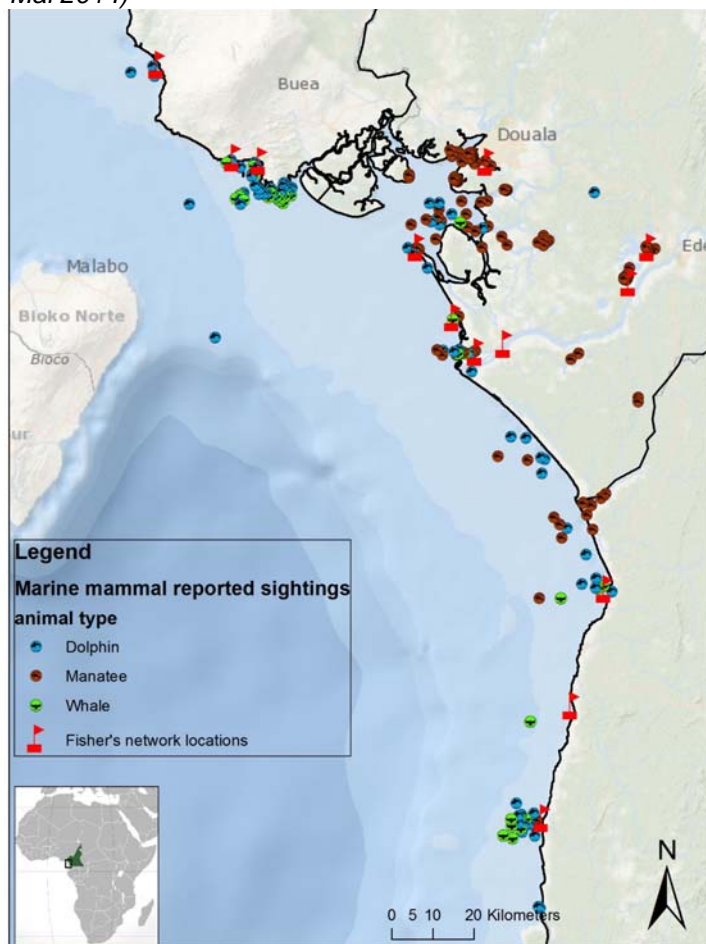
In 2013, dolphins and whales were mostly recorded between August and November (rainy season), and African manatees between June and November.





Highest sighting areas include sea shores around Limbe and Kribi for dolphins (18% and 22% of dolphin sightings) and, rivers around Youpwe (in Douala) and Lake Ossa for manatees (54.1% and 21.3% of manatee sightings). Nineteen dead manatees and 4 dead dolphins have also been reported.

*Reported marine mammal sighting distribution (Fev 2013 –Mai 2014)*



AMMCO is looking forward to the next step and is planning to conduct boat surveys in the areas with high reported marine mammal abundance in order to confirm data provided by fishermen and to identify the various species of dolphins and whales that are present.

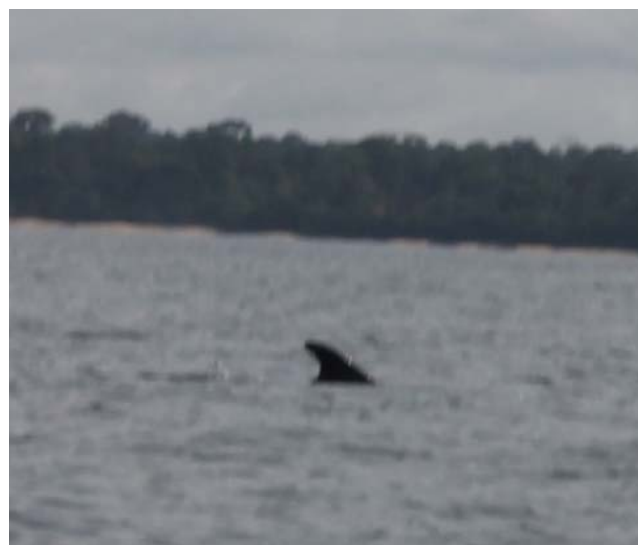
A group of 15 bottlenose dolphins has been recorded so far during a boat-based survey conducted along the sea shore of Ebodje, near Kribi. Five boat surveys in Lake Ossa yielded 4 sightings of manatee.

The reporting method currently used by the fishermen network is still quite technically limited because the reported sighting location and effort data are approximate and the travel cost to the remote and scattered sighting network sites to collect

datasheets and pictures from the fishermen is very expensive.

In order to improve the quality and quantity of data collected, AMMCO plans to develop a mobile application that will enable fishermen and other users equipped with smartphones to collect offline, more quickly and in a more accurate way, data on opportunistic sightings including GPS location, pictures, date, time and type of sighting (incidents, live marine mammal detection or carcasses).

The data will be stored in the phone memory and once the user will be in an internet zone, upload from the smartphone to the online server will automatically take place.



*Bottlenose dolphin sighted at the sea shore of d'Ebodje, near Kribi (AMMCO)*

The participative marine mammal sighting will mitigate the financial and logistical limitations existing in developing countries and that act as a barrier for the data collection on these species. In the medium term, this approach will help improving the knowledge on the distribution, the diversity and the threats on marine mammals in Cameroon in order to better design conservation strategies. The localization of abundance areas could be used to promote marine mammal based ecotourism, which still not exist in Cameroon. The implication of fishermen in this approach will equally change their perception over marine mammals by making them active stakeholders in their conservation.

*AMMCO sincerely acknowledges fishermen of the Cameroon marine mammal sighting network (Jean-Claude Mbongo, Emerand, Alfred, Joseph Tonye, Justin Babohe, Nyamsi, Eric, Isaka, Denis Gnamaloba, Fadai Moutchena, Felix Mpimde, Guid Zavai), as well as partners from the MINFOF (Conservation du Lac Ossa), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Sea to Shore Alliance (S2S), SCGIS et ESRI.*

## IUCN-CENTRAL WESTERN AFRICA PROGRAM SUPPORT LOCAL INITIATIVES IN CONSERVATION AREA THROUGH SSIP AND TC (PROJECTS)



French Small Scale Initiatives Program (SSIP or PPI in French) and the Management of Conservation Territories (TC) program are implemented by IUCN-PACO with financial support of the FFEM. They are two programs dedicated to

support African civil society active in environmental conservation.

Whilst SSIP is focused to directly assist concrete field-based actions to preserve a rare and threatened biodiversity or to fight against climate changes through financial support (the calls for proposal are managed by the French IUCN committee), but also through personalized technical assistance to seven priority countries, TC project, launched in 2012, aims to support and valorize seven pilot management experiences concerning remarkable natural spaces and their peripheries carried out par two complementary actors: local NGOs acting in conservation areas and local authorities.

Some results on these two different but complementary approaches of assistance to the African civil society active in environmental protection area are presented here after:

### • SSIP

Prior to the selection of projects by NGOs, a support is delivered for the definition of the project and the drafting of the funding proposal to be presented to a selection committee. This support takes place through ...

### ... Training workshops ...

110 NGO managers (51 in WA and 59 in CA) from 64 ONG (31 in WA and 33 in CA) originated from 9 countries have been trained on aspects relative to elaboration and management of conservation projects and to drafting of funding proposals during 8 training workshops prior to the selection committee sessions.

### ... Field visits to projects ...

36 NGOs (13 in WA and 23 in CA) from 7 countries have received assistance on the field and/or in their office prior to the selection committee sessions (representing 78.3% of the 46 preselected projects in priority countries)

### ... Remote assistance ...

45 ONGs (15 in WA and 30 in CA) from 7 countries have received remote support for the elaboration and drafting of their funding proposals, i.e., 98% of the 46 preselected projects in priority countries.

At the end of the 3 selection committee sessions of the third phase of the SSIP and of one session of the fourth phase of the program, 46 projects (15 in WA and 31 in CA) originated from the 7 countries have been presented and analyzed by the members of the selection committee. 38 have been definitely selected and funded (14 in WA and 24 in CA), reaching a selection rate of 82.6%.

After this phase of elaboration and drafting of projects, assistance is also provided to selected NGOs through ...

### ... Personalized assistance to NGOs ...

16 assistance visits (6 in WA and 10 in CA) on sites where NGOs are intervening have been undertaken to the benefit of 28 projects funded in the frame of the third phase of SSIP. Assistance is also provided to certain NGOs in the definition and drafting of proposals to be submitted to other donors such as the European Commission, or to carry out activities specifically planed in other projects (assistance for the organization of a pilot ecotourism trip in Cameroon for example).

### ... Assistance to NGOs through provision of external expertise ...

Right now, almost twenty individualized assistances, built on the basis of diagnosis and discussions at the beginning of projects, have been undertaken to the profit of funded NGOs in priority countries. Assistance concerns both technical aspects related to projects implemented by NGOs (beekeeping, agro-ecology, ecotourism, breeding of cocoa trees, tree planting, ecological monitoring, and protected area management issues) or more transversal issues related to associative life (monitoring and evaluation, accounting and financial management, time and priorities management, leadership).

The methodology used during these supports activities are multiform and context-depends: distance training, E-learning, registration and participation to training sessions organized by specialized training organizations, exchange trips, joint training workshops on thematic interesting several different NGOs, coaching, provision of external expertise on the site of intervention, discussions workshop to define priority assistance needs.



Globally, seven expert or training centers have been hired to facilitate eight theoretical training workshops prior to the selection committees sessions on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> phases of SSIP, and 13 experts have been hired to deliver assistances to SSIP-funded NGOs.

#### • TC

Drafted as a continuation of the SSIP program, TC supports the reinforcement and development of local NGOs while favoring the constitution of joint partnership with decentralized or community-run local authorities.

The first component of the program is dedicated to capacity building of the seven partner NGOs in five countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Niger). Since 2012, the project contributed to strengthen institutional, technical and financial capacities of 64 NGOs representatives, through the following activities:

#### ...Technical support on the ground...

This technical support, delivered by recognized local experts aims to meet specific needs of the partner NGOs. An operational support on GIS applications, mapping and monitoring for planning and management of landscapes and natural resources has been organized for the benefit of 6 NGOs. 35 people participated, including technical services representatives.

#### ... Personalized assistance...

11 assistance visits on the ground, to the 7 NGOs, have been realized so far by the project coordination. Those visits aim at appreciating the execution of the projects and support their implementation, especially through an evaluation and monitoring process.

#### ... Training workshops ...

41 NGO representatives have been trained through collective training workshops delivered by specialists on decentralized management of natural resources, evaluation and monitoring, land use planning and accounting and financial management.

#### ...Exchange field visits...

One of the innovative aspects of the project is to help mutual learning among NGOs through organization of comparable sites field trips. 22 NGO representative, both technical staff and members of management boards participated to different exchange visits.

Capitalization and valorization of these pilot experiences continues through the launching of a participatory capitalization process, participation to

national and regional meetings and organization of a regional forum.

In the meantime, both SSI and TC projects put together resources and share their results through...

#### ...Organization of forums dedicated to experiences sharing between environmental civil society stakeholders ....

The first national forum of experiences sharing between environmental civil society was held in Burkina Faso on September 2013 in partnership with the TCM project, the National Office of IUCN in BF, the national SGP/GEF program, and other actors collaborating with Burkinabe civil society.

Thirty participants have attended the event including actors from NGOs, contact persons from Government institutions working on environmental issues. Four plenary sessions, seven case study presentations, and two debates have been organized focusing on three main themes during three days.

The second national forum was organized on the same format and held in Cameroon in December 2013 in partnership with the national SGP/FEM program and a local NGO in charge of the logistic organization of the event (OPED).

Fifty civil society organizations beneficiaries of a fund from SGP/GEF or SSIP, along with other actors in environmental and sustainable development area in Cameroon took part to the forum which was organized in the form of permanent expositions of knowledge and best practices, conferences related to four themes associated to field experiences of NGOs.

Two additional forums will be held during 2014 in DRC (in partnership with the national SGP/GEF program, IUCN-NL, Well Grounded and IUCN DRC) and in Togo (in collaboration with the SGP/GEF, TC project and INADES-Formation Togo). About forty partner organizations will take part to these two events and other thematic forums should be organized in CA also by the end of 2014.

#### ...Information sharing and communication on partner NGOs and their projects ....

Twelve interviews of local NGOs managers have been published on IUCN website ([interviews](#)) and news from projects are regularly published on the same website. Information related to the third phase of SSIP, to submission conditions and to projects implemented with support of SSIP has been published in eleven issues of the NAPA newsletter.

## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN THE CONGO BASIN: ANALYSIS AND POINT OF VIEW FROM A PARTNER

Cath LONG, Well Grounded ([www.well-grounded.org](http://www.well-grounded.org))

As an organisation, Well Grounded has been working with civil society organisations in the Congo Basin for four years, supporting their organisation development. As individuals, some of us in Well Grounded have known many of the region's civil society activists and organisations for well over ten years. What always strikes each of us is the dedication and passion that people all over the region bring, often in the face of terrible odds, to the long term and challenging task of building policy and practice in natural resource management that puts people at the center. We can all tell stories of that commitment: the many people who spend days, weeks and months in the field, really getting to understand the forest and the people who live there; people who drop everything to mobilise when they hear about community members being arrested for contesting illegal logging; people who pluck up courage to stand up and speak for their communities for the first time in the face of powerful decision makers; the woman who took only one day off when she gave birth and was back in her office the next morning to help her organisation get a crucial publication out in time for an important national meeting that was going to have a lasting influence on how forests were managed. The commitment of national civil society organisations, for us, has been a real inspiration.

Having said that, the same national organisations face real challenges. Their stories are extraordinary, but all too often the impact remains limited – only at a local level, or only short term. Putting ideas for change into practice runs organisations up against challenges: how to open up a space where they can make their voice heard by decision-makers; how to get access to the information they need; how to get the resources and training they need to be able to start something new; how to apply for and account for funding and, not least, how to stay on top of all their work and how to ensure that their staff and members don't become burnt out and manage to keep a balance between work and other parts of their lives. In the context of countries such as those in the Congo Basin, which have a long history of corruption and mismanagement from colonial times and up to the present day and have very little political space, national organisations face real difficulties in tackling these challenges. Internally, organisations can often depend heavily on one or two individuals with relevant skills and experience and find themselves

trapped in a cycle of depending on short term funding from projects that doesn't allow them to develop a longer term vision or strategies.



© Thomas Bacha

In response to that, Well Grounded works with national CSOs to support their organisation development, so that they become more strategic, well-led, value-driven and effective, as well as supporting them to make links and build connections with each other and with other organisations that share their values and their visions. We support organisations through a process of reflection and action to improve how they work and the impact that they have. We have found that this works best when we work with organisations that approach us – organisations who have identified that they want to make some kind of change in how they are working or their structures, so that they can better meet their objectives. And we try to be guided by what the organisations themselves want to achieve. We have found that prescribing solutions doesn't work that well – the best choice is to support an organisation to identify its own solutions and to help it achieve those. These have included many different things, including: helping organisations develop strategies and better



define their visions; working on financing strategies and offering advice and input on fundraising proposals; helping organisations look at their own internal communications so that they are more effective in delivering their work; providing support to organisations that want to be more accountable to the communities they work with; and developing a series of workshops on leadership for civil society organisations.

To date, we've worked in Cameroon, Congo, DRC, CAR, Gabon and Liberia, with most of our work concentrated in Congo and DRC. As an organisation, we are relatively young, so we are learning all the time from the organisations with whom we work and from each other in our own team. It's been a rich experience and we hope that we've been able to have an impact – we find that organisations with whom we have worked for a while do keep inviting us back to support them as they define their next steps, which strikes us as significant. And we hope that in the longer term, we will have made a contribution to an African civil society that is confident, vocal and clear about how it protects and promotes sustainable management of natural resources and the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples.



### Call for proposals by the African World Heritage Fund

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) was set up to provide support to African State Parties signatory to the Convention concerning the protection of world cultural and natural heritage properties. AWHF aims at ensuring sites inscribed on the World Heritage List are well managed and protected. For further information about the activities of AWHF visit: <http://www.awhf.net>

The AWHF is providing conservation grants to African State Parties to implement projects and activities which focus on improving the State of Conservation of World Heritage properties in Africa.

- Eligibility:
1. Countries/Region – Africa
  2. Projects activities are restricted to heritage sites declared by UNESCO as World Heritage properties as of June 2014.
  3. Project proposals MUST address challenges affecting the selected World heritage properties.
  4. Who can apply? Government institutions involved in the management and protection of World Heritage Sites.
  5. International and local non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and community groups

supporting the management and protection of World Heritage properties are also encouraged to apply. However, application from such institutions MUST be endorsed by the State Party or by the Head/Director of heritage institution/organization in specific countries. The application should be accompanied by a cover letter endorsing the project. Projects that will involve working with partners should include letters of support from the key partners that are mentioned in the project proposal.

The projects should be implemented within **12 months**. All projects must be completed by **31st March 2016**. AWHF grant will only cover direct costs related to the project activities. Applicants should provide detailed budget in US\$ for every activity to be implemented. Applicants should indicate the State Parties' contribution to the project.

Application form (English and French versions) can be downloaded from the AWHF website [www.awhf.net](http://www.awhf.net). Completed applications should be submitted via email (as attachment) to [jacobn@dbsa.org](mailto:jacobn@dbsa.org) with copies to [info@awhf.net](mailto:info@awhf.net) before the deadline. The deadline for submission of all applications is by **12.00 pm (CAT) on 31st July 2014**.

All applications will be reviewed by a team of heritage experts. The assessment will be based on but not limited to the following:

- a) Relevance and contribution of the project to addressing the challenges at a particular World Heritage property;
- b) Quality and to what extent is the project proposal innovative;
- c) Accurate and realistic budget.

For further information please contact: Jacob Nyangila, email: [jacobn@dbsa.org](mailto:jacobn@dbsa.org) or [info@awhf.net](mailto:info@awhf.net)



### Must read

#### Urban Protected Areas - Profiles and best practice guidelines - Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 22

*Ted Trzyna, in collaboration with Joseph T. Edmiston, Glen Hyman, Jeffrey A. McNeely, Pedro da Cunha e Menezes, Brett Myrdal, Adrian Phillips and other members of the IUCN*

*WCPA Urban Specialist Group Craig Groves, Series Editor; Adrian Phillips, Volume Editor.*

This book is divided in three parts:

- **Part 1, Urban protected areas** – context and concept, provides a brief context to the growing interest in urban protected areas and then explains what urban protected areas are, why they matter and how they are distinctive.
- **Part 2, Profiles of urban protected areas**, describes protected areas in 15 metropolitan areas around the world.
- **Part 3, Best practice guidelines**, is organized into four sections: protected areas and people; protected areas and places; protected areas and institutions; and the creation, promotion and improvement of urban protected areas. The guidelines are illustrated by references to examples taken from the 15 profiles, as well as from other locations. As far as possible, a global perspective has been taken but inevitably some countries figure more in the range of examples than others.

It is designed primarily for managers of urban protected areas and those responsible for protected area systems, but it has been written in non-technical language with a broader readership in mind.

Little has yet been published about the subject of urban protected areas, so this text will introduce a number of ideas that may be new to protected area managers. However, many of the methods used to manage protected areas in urban environments are the same as those required elsewhere. This volume emphasizes management approaches that are especially relevant to urban protected areas. Since these areas, and the political and social contexts in which they reside, vary greatly, it does not provide detailed recommendations, but instead it: sets out general guidelines; offers examples of problems, opportunities and solutions; and lists sources of further information and assistance.

To download the book: [www.iucn-urban.org](http://www.iucn-urban.org)



**News from the Seychelles  
islands Foundation**

*from the SIF newsletter dated 19,  
May 2014*

### **Aldabra Atoll: satellite tags attached to two of Aldabra's Green Turtles**

After several months of intensively monitoring the nesting turtles in Aldabra, the research team attached satellite tags to two female Green Turtles in May. To identify suitable candidates for the tags, intensive monitoring using the atoll-wide flipper tagging program was conducted to find turtles that

were towards the end of their breeding season. This reduces the chance of the tag being knocked off during mating and ensures that the female would be leaving Aldabra waters soon. Both of the turtles fitted with satellite tags this month had been present on Aldabra since early March.



*The research team affixing the satellite tag © H Richards*

Once both females had completed covering their nests, they were contained within a box to allow attachment of the satellite tag. The female turtles were then released, bid good luck and farewell and with lots of crossed fingers the team waited to see if they received messages from the satellite tags, which happened soon. Since turtles are highly migratory species, it is vital to understand the linkages between breeding and foraging sites in order to apply an appropriate conservation management strategy for the species. In 2011 SIF started to use satellite telemetry to find out where Aldabra's nesting Green Turtles migrate to once they leave the protection of the atoll. Having a better understanding of the areas used by the Green Turtles is critical in fully understanding the threats facing the Aldabra green turtle population.

The first six satellite tags were deployed in 2011/2012, but disappointingly the tags did not transmit for as long as had been hoped. However, even this short-term data showed that Aldabra's turtles migrate away from the atoll using several different routes, including the Amirantes (Seychelles), northern Madagascar via the Comores, the Somali coastline and the Tanzanian / Kenyan coastline. These initial tagging efforts showed that Aldabra's turtles use the waters of at least six different countries. The two final tags that have just been attached have been deployed using a revised protocol and they will provide additional information on the journeys of these turtles.





Green Turtle © C Mason-Parker

### Vallée de Mai : tracking the Trachy... Research on Giant Bronze Gecko movements in the Vallée de Mai



The Giant Bronze Gecko (*Ailuronyx trachygaster*) or 'Trachy' in its usual hangout on a Coco de Mer catkin © C. Kaiser-Bunbury

While Giant Tortoises are being tracked on Aldabra, the Vallée de Mai has its own giant reptiles being tracked in a very different environment. Reptile experts are currently working with SIF in the Vallée de Mai to study movement ecology of the elusive Giant Bronze Gecko. The Giant Bronze Gecko is one of the largest gecko species in the world and is endemic to the native palm forest of Praslin. It is almost exclusively a canopy dweller and is most often seen high in the palm canopy feeding determinedly on male Coco de Mer flowers. Indeed, the species only occurs in mature Coco de Mer forest where the male Coco de Mer flowers form its main food source. There has been so little research on the geckos, however, that there is no information on their territory size or movements and it is unknown whether individual geckos move frequently between Coco de Mer adult trees – an essential prerequisite for effective pollination! It is also not known how abundant the geckos are or whether the population can be considered 'healthy'. With the primary aim of determining the Giant Geckos' territory size and movement patterns a mission has been launched in order to catch Giant Geckos to be in a position to track them.



Released Giant Bronze Gecko number 3 with radio-transmitter backpack © N Bunbury

All geckos caught are implanted with a small PIT tag which can be read by an electronic device when the animal is re-caught and identifies it for life (like a barcode). The geckos are marked with a temporary but highly visible UV-florescent number, lasting only until the animal next sloughs its skin. A few lucky animals are also fitted with a tiny 1.5g radio-transmitter in a custom-designed back-pack which happens to be red and resembles a mini superman-style cape (see photo). The transmitters are ideal because they allow the animal to be tracked directly and not depend on opportunistic re-sightings or recaptures to obtain information on their movements.



'Trachy' number 2 by night under UV light © C Kaiser-Bunbury

Finally, all of the geckos are then released where they were caught.

With 18 geckos already tagged and marked, the team is now continuously tracking and re-sighting these animals by day and night, using radio-tracking, sightings and UV torches after dark, to build up a picture of their movements, territory size and abundance. More geckos are being caught whenever there is an opportunity...

More on [www.sif.sc](http://www.sif.sc)



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### Twenty-two stories to know a little bit more about conservation in Africa... On the road to the World Park Congress!

The preparation of the congress is still going on for the 22 champions we selected to be "the voice of Africa" at the upcoming World Parks Congress in Sydney (see previous NAPA and in particular NAPA 74). The first preparatory meeting took place end of April in Kenya where all the stories and experiences have been shared by the participants. And we have started preparing the messages that will be delivered on streams 1 (conservation efficiency), 5 (conservation and development) and 6 (conservation and governance). Next meeting is planned in South Africa in October.

See [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org) for more info and have a look on the videos of our champions...



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#### NAPA – CONTACTS

[www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org) and [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

[geoffroy.mauvais@iucn.org](mailto:geoffroy.mauvais@iucn.org)

Program on African Protected Areas & Conservation – PAPACO

[leo.niskanen@iucn.org](mailto:leo.niskanen@iucn.org)

#### *IUCN-ESARO (East/South Africa)*

[christine.mentzel@iucn.org](mailto:christine.mentzel@iucn.org)

Coordination - Program on Conservation Areas and Species Diversity – CASD

[houssein.rayaleh@iucn.org](mailto:houssein.rayaleh@iucn.org)

Program Officer – BIOPAMA – World Heritage

IUCN project technical advisor – IGAD Biodiversity management program

#### *IUCN-PACO (West/Central Africa)*

[bora.masumbuko@iucn.org](mailto:bora.masumbuko@iucn.org)

Program Officer – Climate Change

[youssouph.diedhiou@iucn.org](mailto:youssouph.diedhiou@iucn.org)

Program Officer - World Heritage

[lacina.kone@iucn.org](mailto:lacina.kone@iucn.org)

Program Officer – Support to local NGOs and collectivities

[thomas.bacha@iucn.org](mailto:thomas.bacha@iucn.org)

Capacity building program coordinator (PPI) – Support to local NGOs Central Africa

[arsene.sanon@iucn.org](mailto:arsene.sanon@iucn.org)

Program Officer - Small Grants for Conservation (PPI) – Support to local NGOs West Africa

*The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of IUCN*

