

Newsletter from African protected areas

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Editorial

GEOFFROY MAUVAIS

IUCN-PAPACO COORDINATOR

MEMORIES

Etsha, May 2041

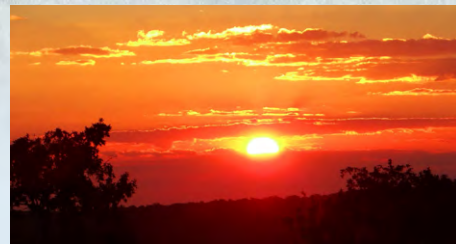
I celebrate my twentieth birthday in a toxic swamp. A mix of dirty mud and stinky tar has filled the space around me with its nauseating smell. This is nothing strange or new; I grew up in this putrid pool, and I really know nothing else. I have often been sick, and will be many more times. Yet we adapt, we manage to survive – what choice do we have?

Today, as he often does, my father won't be able to keep from talking about "the old times". Before the disaster, before the folly of men. My sisters and I will listen to him, as we always do. Slightly amused by his ranting. What he tells us sounds like science-fiction, but we like to hear his stories, they help us dream – a little.

I am especially fond of stories about the elephants. He claims there were some that would come nearly every day in the village. They were huge, noisy, playful. One had to be careful around them because they were a little clumsy when going around the houses, but they meant no harm, at least that's what my father says. My father still laughs when recalling their attacks on the village's cereal pantries, the nights spent watching over the fields – often uselessly. In his memory, these nights spent with his friends listening to the sounds of the bush were priceless. And elephants were, after all, a part of the life of my people. Elephants and men shaped each other's destiny.

When he isn't talking about elephants, he talks about lions, hyenas and all the other predators that one had to fear when roaming away from the village. It was not easy to be a human in these wild surroundings, but what an amazing reward for those who managed to live in it. Every time he tells us about his encounters with big cats, my father seems to grow at once, stretched high by pride, and his

eye shines. For my part, I try to picture what he describes, but it's difficult. Nothing looks like his memories anymore. I have never seen an elephant, never heard a lion. And the myriad birds he describes have no shape for me.



The color of water has changed. Wells were dug, at first to "have a look", they said, and then to produce "a little", without any risk, and then to extract a lot, "without any consequences" they said again. These wells were connected to pipes, each more full of holes than the other, and they set up so-called purification tanks that all overflowed. Underground water was contaminated, petroleum went up everywhere, killing the plants, wiping out the animals, trapping nature in a black, sticky lead coffin.

The running water took this plague across hundreds of kilometers. It didn't last long, a dozen years at most. Until the oil market collapsed, until men abandoned this polluting resource, and until the company disappeared into thin air – leaving behind useless installations and a mutilated nature. People said someone would fix things, but we never found this someone. A few did benefit from these few years, filling their pockets before running away. And others – my father and the likes – stayed behind. I think he never understood how such a gigantic error could have happened. I know he blames himself for not reacting, but how could he have known? He listened to what he was told at the time, and he believed.

I was born in 2021, the year in which everything began. In my earliest memories, there are always leaking pipes, oil spilling out, the stink of something suffocating us. Not a single square meter has escaped death, and yet we still live here. We survive here. It has become Hell on Earth. Except when I hear my father telling us about Heaven, a Heaven once called Okavango. ●

MOOC Conservation

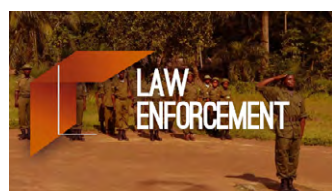
MOOCS

Attestation of success. If your **score is higher than 75%**, you'll be able to download an attestation of success.

Create a new account. If you participated in our MOOCs prior to January 2021 and wish to enrol in other courses, you will need to **create a new account**.

Ongoing session: 18 January to 13 June 2021

MOOC registrations: mooc-conservation.org.



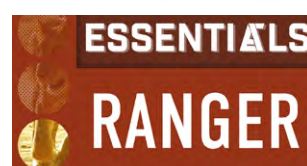
MOOC MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
+2 700 ENROLLED SO FAR

THE ESSENTIALS

What are they? They are short courses geared to a specific profile of protected area conservation actors.

Four options are possible: Rangers, Managers (involved in Research R or in Law enforcement L) and Leaders.

Inscriptions : mooc-conservation.org



RANGER ESSENTIAL
For protected area (PA) professionals who apply decisions and ensure the implementation of activities inside the PA.



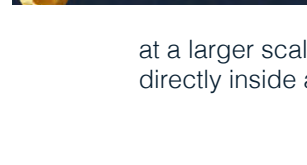
MANAGER ESSENTIAL
For protected area professionals who need to plan, manage and assess the work carried out by field agents.



➔ **MANAGER LAW:** focuses on law enforcement and the valorisation of the PA and its natural resources.



➔ **MANAGER RESEARCH:** focuses on research activities, monitoring-evaluation and ecological monitoring.



LEADER ESSENTIAL
For actors who are influencing the protected area context at a larger scale, without necessarily working directly inside a protected area.



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Papaco.org

Ambassadors etc.

UNIVERSITY DIPLOMA - NEW PROMOTION

19 students from 6 Western African countries are participating. The course takes place from 19 April to 30 May 2021 in Ouagadougou. This year, the course also includes a preparatory phase based on the realisation of 2 MOOCs (GAP and ecological monitoring) that students need to complete before starting the UD, in order for the onsite classes to be more effective and to leave more room for practice. A second UD will be organised in 2021 (October - November) which will focus on "environmental crime". The UD is funded by the PapBIO project with the support of the European Union.



GLOBAL YOUTH SUMMIT



IUCN's Global Youth Summit took place from 5 to 16 April 2021. The goal was to gather youth and young professionals around the topic of nature conservation. In this context, some MOOC ambassadors organised and ran a workshop on "Youth and conservation: the role and impact of IUCN-Papaco's ambassadors in promoting training on protected area conservation", Wednesday 14 April 2021 from 15:00 to 17:00 UTC.

This workshop was the opportunity to put the spotlight on capacity building, but also to understand how the youth position themselves when it comes to conservation matters.

They did not hesitate to show their determination while stressing the urgent need for training in nature conservation and in the management of for the structures working in the field.

Several solutions were shared, and the courses offered by online teaching platforms seem to be an effective and affordable way to build capacities for youth. Several links were shared, and the contact information of IUCN Papaco ambassadors made available for participants who wanted to learn more.

HEAR FROM OUR AMBASSADORS: BY HUMBLLOT NASSUF, COMOROS

"An information session and coaching on marine protected areas took place 29 March and 22 April for Ngazidja protected area staff."



AMBASSADOR ? An ambassador is a designated Papaco MOOC student who volunteered to help students in his city or region.

List of ambassadors (click on the name to send them an email):

- ➔ [Benin, Kévin](#)
- ➔ [Bouaké, Bernadette](#)
- ➔ [Burkina Faso, Valéry](#)
- ➔ [Burundi, Léonidas](#)
- ➔ [Comoros, Humblot](#)
- ➔ [Côte d'Ivoire, Mamadou](#)
- ➔ [Douala \(Cameroon\), Mathias](#)
- ➔ [Gabon, Brice](#)
- ➔ [Guinea \(Conakry\), Moussa](#)
- ➔ [Haïti, Talot](#)
- ➔ [Kara \(Togo\), Jean](#)
- ➔ [Kenya, James](#)
- ➔ [Kindu \(DRC\), Ohm](#)
- ➔ [Kinshasa \(DRC\), Emmanuel](#)
- ➔ [Kisangani \(DRC\), Richard](#)

- ➔ [Mali, Seydou](#)
- ➔ [Lomé \(Togo\), Samuel](#)
- ➔ [Lubumbashi \(DRC\), Albert](#)
- ➔ [Madagascar \(Tana\), Raymond](#)
- ➔ [Morocco, Rachid](#)
- ➔ [Mauritania, Fall](#)
- ➔ [Niger, Oumarou](#)
- ➔ [Nigeria, Michael](#)
- ➔ [Pointe Noire, Charmand](#)
- ➔ [Rwanda, Leonard](#)
- ➔ [Senegal, Thiam](#)
- ➔ [Chad, Seid](#)
- ➔ [Tunisia, Moadh](#)
- ➔ [Yaoundé \(Cameroon\), Pascale](#)
- ➔ [Zambia, Chewe](#)
- ➔ [Zimbabwe/South Africa, Fanuel](#)

PAPBio - training



TRAINING OF FIELD ACTORS - PAPBIO

In order to strengthen shared learning systems and experiences, the “Support programme for the preservation of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems, regional governance and climate change in West Africa” - PAPBio (ROC/FED/039-269) trained thirty field actors on how to capitalise and share stories from their own protected area and biodiversity management experiences and practices. This was done through the second component of the PAPBio - Regional governance of protected areas and security -, implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). As a reminder, the PAPBio Programme is funded by the European Union (EU) in cooperation with ECOWAS and WAEMU.

The contribution of neighbouring communities to the development of W National Park, Burkina Faso.



As part of the participatory management approach of the W National Park in Burkina Faso, the park’s management team worked on the development of tracks, salt pans and ponds in collaboration with neighbouring communities.

This kind of collaboration consists in involving neighbouring communities in the management of Burkina Faso’s W National Park and its surrounding environment against remuneration. This involvement is an opportunity for these populations to contribute to the conservation of forest and wildlife resources, as well as to raise awareness on the negative impacts of anthropic pressures on W National Park’s ecosystems.

The participatory management experience has allowed:

- Result optimisation through community involvement in park management;
- Socio-economic development of populations.

This collaboration with the communities is a win-win

partnership and contributes to a peaceful coexistence between park managers and the populations, which is essential for the sustainability of the resources.

SAWADOGO Emmanuel
Water and Forests Inspector,
Curator of W Burkina Faso Transboundary Biosphere Reserve
Capitalisation trainee of the PAPBio programme
Reviewed and corrected by:
Bara TOP
Communications and Advocacy Officer - PAPBio

Mammal monitoring using camera traps in Fazao-Malfakassa National Park and Abdoulaye Wildlife Reserve

From 1 to 10 March 2021, a team from the AGBO-ZEGUE NGO in Fazao-Malfakassa National Park (FMNP) and the Wildlife Reserve of Abdoulaye ran a camera-trap deployment and installation mission with the support of curators and ecoguards.

In May 2020, the NGO AGBO-ZEGUE received a grant for the «Contribution to the improvement of the conservation status of carnivores in the protected areas of Togo» project, funded by IUCN, Save Our Species and the European Union (EU) to establish the scientific evidence for the presence of large carnivores: the lion (*Panthera Leo*) and the leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in Togo. The Executive Director of the NGO AGBO-ZEGUE, John Kokou Toviho GAGLO and the two technical assistants of the project, Ms Jeanne Kafui DEKAWOLE and Mr Délagnon ASSOU, took part in this



Discussion with ecoguards



Installation of camera traps

large carnivore data-gathering mission.

In total, 90 camera traps were installed, 70 in FMNP and 20 in Abdoulaye Wildlife Reserve. In each protected area, camera sites were selected based on evidence on the presence of animals, especially along trails and near water points. Based on compiled imagery (>140,000 photos and videos) for mammal monitoring and on habitat use and species activity during dry and wet seasons, we identified 32 mammal species, which, combined with results from previous publications, brings the total number of mammal species historically reported for FMNP to 57, excluding bats. This monitoring has established the very likely presence of these carnivore species in FMNP through the images taken by the traps cameras. Continued monitoring is strongly recommended.

Amenissou Komlan Edem
 Agroeconomist
 Facilitator and Rapporteur of AGBOZEGUE NGO
 Capitalisation trainee of the PAPBio programme
 Reviewed and corrected by:
 Bara TOP
 Communications and Advocacy Officer - PAPBio

Programme to combat silting in the Niger basin

The Programme to combat silting is funded by the African Development Bank (ADB) and the West African



Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) executed by NBA through management and coordination units and national coordination cells. The main objective of the programme is to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the local populations by slowing down or stopping the silting process that threatens the Niger River. The first phase was carried out from 2005 to 2010.

Dune stabilisation was achieved by combining mechanical and biological methods. The mechanical method consisted in erecting palisades made out of plant material (stems, herbs, branches, etc.). The biological method consisted in adding vegetation to the quadrats.

Simplified management plans have also been developed for more consensual management of these sites which are usually collective. Good organisation and the mobilisation of populations made it possible to fix a total dune surface of 15,921 ha, thereby supporting the fodder increase, pasture enrichment and the protection of agricultural lands located along the river. Populations have also been made aware of the silting phenomenon. We must also mention the involvement of populations in all the stages of programme implementation.

From this experience, we learned that the participatory approach plays a key role in the sustainability and reproduction of activities. The surrounding populations made aware of environmental challenges. They have changed their behaviour when it comes to natural resources management and take it upon themselves to protect the sites.



Issoufou Ibrahim
 Water and Forests engineer
 Elephant Conservation Project Coordinator at W Niger Park
 Focal point of the Mike programme and the Egyptian vulture project.
 Wildlife, hunting, parks and reserves Management
 Reviewed and corrected by:
 Bara TOP
 Communications and Advocacy Officer - PAPBio

Capacity building project for the control of land degradation and the promotion of land valorisation in degraded areas (CODEVAL)



The CODEVAL Project's main objective is to carry out activities related to the control of land degradation and the promotion of land valorisation in targeted villages. As part of its implementation, municipality were asked to provide spaces of community-owner rights, namely to set parcels apart and create area restrictions for rational and sustainable management of natural resources. This practice consists in protecting a degraded space by fencing it off or by setting consensual rules for its regeneration. In other words, this technique consists in allowing degraded surfaces to

rest through periodic rotations, in order to promote the regeneration of vegetation and soil cover.

Before the CODEVAL Project in 2012, we observed excessive and abusive exploitation of natural resources. This included excessive cutting of herbaceous and woody species, bush fires, poor pasture management, deforestation, carbonisation, hunting, drought, water and wind turbine erosion, clearing and overexploitation of firewood weakening soils and increasing their susceptibility to runoff and erosion, etc.

Controlling these phenomena requires actions to preserve and restore ecosystem services that promote the regeneration of natural resources. The actions undertaken have really led to village general assemblies, capacity building for the control and development of degraded soils in order to pay special attention to the management of natural resources. However, customary rules were made to provide clear and strategic guidance through an inclusive and federative planning approach for intelligent management of the restriction areas.

Species adapted to the hazards of climate change planted massively, namely eucalypti, ziziphuses, cashew trees, Faidherbe albida, Leucaena leucocephala and Balanites aegyptiaca. The state of the vegetation before the end of the project was positively assessed by the populations who carry out a rotary, rational and responsible use of natural resources that enables them to meet their vital environmental needs without compromising natural resources.

The factors that have contributed to the change are village assemblies on the importance of implementing restricted areas, on the implication of populations and participatory planning during action implementation, on developing the

capacities of populations around control and valorisation of degraded land and the creation of customary rules for transparent and strict management of restricted areas.

AMATH SAKHO
 Facilitator CODEVAL Project
 Capitalisation trainee of the PAPBio programme
 Reviewed and corrected by:
 Bara TOP
 Communications and Advocacy Officer - PAPBio

Installation of a modern oyster farm for Niafrang village's women



This transboundary area with the Republic of Gambia has great biodiversity, including several species of wild animals (manatees, dolphins, sea turtles and jackals), water birds, marine invertebrates (shrimp, crabs, cymbiums, cuttlefish, murex, oyster etc.) and rich flora. An important network of mangrove is also found, with two main genera: *Avicennia* and *Rhizophora*.

Abéné MPA is a continuum of terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems. It includes a marine part that extends over 11,900 ha from Gambia in the North to the Karone hotel in the South, consisting of the maritime “outbuildings” of the Kafountine municipality, and of a continental part occupied by a close network of mudflats, mangroves, estuaries and

belongs. Potential restoration sites are located in the villages of Diannah, Albadar and Niafrang. In the past, women oyster-harvesting activity has led to heavy and unregulated shellfish and mangroves exploitation.

In order to address this situation, and in the context of the Mangrove restoration and monitoring Project, Abéné MPA worked with the women from Niafrang village to create a modern oyster farm: 5km of longlines at points X: 16°44,313'W and Y: 13°03,217 N.

From the start of the 2021 oyster exploitation campaign, we noticed a general realisation amongst local populations on the importance of preserving the mangrove, a reduction of pressures and a biological improvement of the mangrove itself.

Local populations from Niafrang village and Abéné MPA taking ownership of the project is what led to the success of this oyster farm. Thus, we noted the old oyster harvesting practice by cutting mangrove roots was abandoned.

SAGNA Abdoulaye
 Curaor of Abéné Marine protected area
 Capitalisation trainee of the PAPBio programme
 Reviewed and corrected by:
 Bara TOP
 Communications and Advocacy Officer - PAPBio

● PAPBio

Announcements

PANORAMA

SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

From Waste to Products: Maximising impacts of community-based plastic enterprise in Watamu, Kenya

Watamu Marine Association (WMA) is a unique initiative at the Kenyan coast bringing together members from the community, tourism and environment sectors. WMA promotes community development and empowerment, and advocates for the protection and preservation of Watamu Marine Park and Reserves. WMA is exploring participatory and co-management potential with the managing authorities and agencies. WMA promotes member groups, business ventures and partner projects in Watamu and the surrounding areas.

The project has created a dynamic plastic waste value chain between the local community and tourism industry. This created jobs for recyclers and part-time income for the community beach-cleaning teams, and provides an environmental service to hotels. The project now plans to expand its operations to the larger neighbouring coastal towns of Malindi and Kilifi, targeting a population of more than 400,000 people along a 70 km stretch of coastline. All hard plastic waste is machine crushed at Eco-World Recycling in Watamu.



Waste pickers sorting the waste
© Marine Watamu Associations

Full article: [here](#).
More info on Panorama: [here](#).

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Conservation strategy specialist @ Rainforest trust

Where? Several regions including West and Central Africa.

>> [Click here for full job description](#) <<

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

 **Topic: Research on Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Economic Sectors**

Goal: Funding one or two research projects which will start in the fourth quarter of 2021. The call is open until May 28, 2021.

More info and application form: [cliquez ici pour en savoir plus](#).

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