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Editorial



MAMADOU KONÉ
MOOC CONSERVATION AMBASSADOR IN
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

MORE THAN A NETWORK

I am KONE Mamadou, from Côte d'Ivoire. I am a Technical Assistant, in charge of relations with the local communities in Comoé National Park.

With an area of over 1 million ha, Comoé National Park is the third largest protected area in West Africa. It is managed by the Ivorian Office of Parks and Reserves (OIPR) through its North-East Zone Directorate.

My role at Comoé National Park is to encourage community support for conservation policies. This commitment is expressed through three major axes of strategy to support the communities in the peripheral zone of the park, which are:

- Communication for behaviour change,
- Support for local development,
- Multi-scale partnership development.

In 2019, I was selected by IUCN PAPACO to participate in the fifteenth edition of the University Diploma in Protected Area Management in Ouagadougou. I thoroughly enjoyed this course, and after two months, I had acquired additional knowledge that, to this day, has allowed me to better carry out my daily management activities (environmental education, ecological monitoring, monitoring of community projects, etc.).



Raising awareness of the populations bordering Comoé National Park on the conservation of the park

A few months after the University Diploma, I was named one of the first MOOC-Conservation ambassadors and was asked to take the lead in Côte d'Ivoire in order to bring together students and professionals interested in PAPACO's MOOCs.

I developed several initiatives, including the creation of a WhatsApp group called *MOOC PAPACO COTE D'IVOIRE* to encourage communication within our community of students. On this platform, we share information on the MOOCs and try to deal with the concerns of students by helping learners who have difficulty accessing the platform and following the courses.

One of our actions to help meet the challenges of conservation has been the creation, in 2021, of the Ivorian Network for the Protection and Valorisation of Protected Areas (Réseau Ivoirien pour la Protection et Valorisation des Aires Protégées - RIPVAP), of which I am the president. Over a hundred members (all of whom are MOOC Conservation students) from across the country and working in various fields related to the environment are part of this network. One of the objectives is to promote Papaco's MOOCs.

In its interventions, RIPVAP mainly supports actions of national and international structures, the latest of which was the training of ten NGOs and traditional authorities on the notions of conservation and sustainable development.

With my commitment and my passion for conservation, I intend to engage in all initiatives related to the protection of nature to meet the associated challenges. ●

PAPACO ONLINE

[facebook/IUCNpapaco](https://www.facebook.com/IUCNpapaco)

[MOOC FB Group \(English\)](https://www.facebook.com/mooconconservation)

[@mooconconservation \(Instagram\)](https://www.instagram.com/mooconconservation)

[@Papaco_IUCN \(Twitter\)](https://twitter.com/Papaco_IUCN)

[Papaco.org](https://www.papaco.org)

[IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas newsletter](#)



MOOC CONSERVATION NEWS

MOOCs

Session ongoing. Join the rest of this sessions's learners. You have one month left to enrol, so it's not too late yet, but time is running out. Each learner follows the course at their own pace.

Ongoing session: 17 January - 12 June 2022 (midnight).

MOOC registrations (close 31 May): mooc-conservation.org

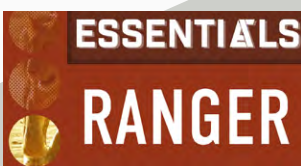


ESSENTIALS

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.

The Essentials are open throughout the year.

Registrations: mooc-conservation.org



RANGER ESSENTIAL

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



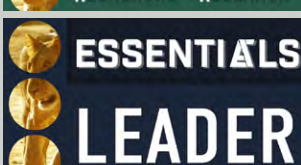
MANAGER ESSENTIAL

For protected area professionals who need to plan, manage and assed 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.

MOOC CONSERVATION AMBASSADORS - II

MOOC CONSERVATION HUBS: ON OUR WAY TO LATIN AMERICA

Last month, we sent out the first NAPA focused on our ambassadors. Because we received so many contributions, we decided to create a PART II covering the rest of the stories. [Read Part I here.](#)

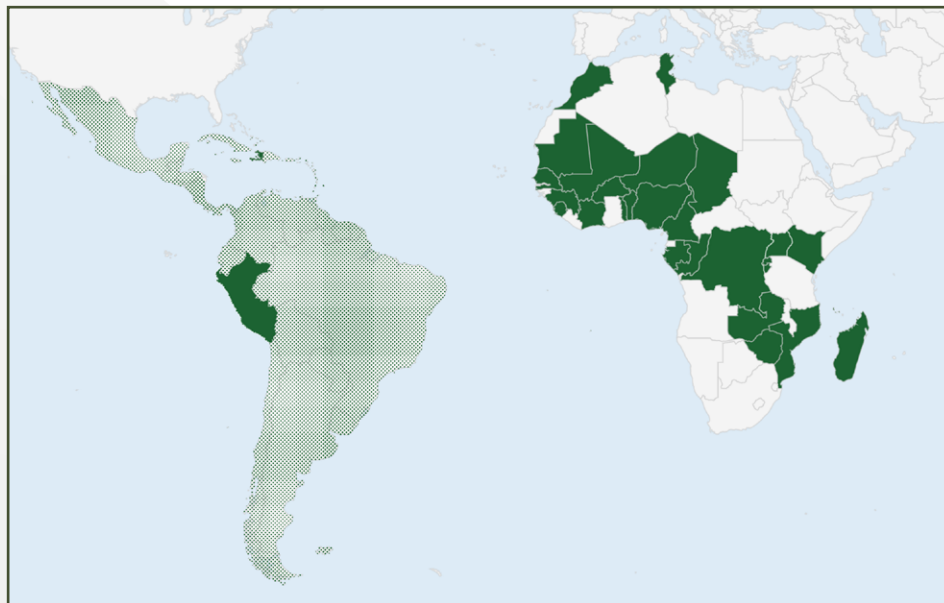
We told you the network was growing. Since last month, we gained two new ambassadors taking the total number up to 45, including one person from Latin America. Karina Acaro from Peru kicks off the development of the MOOC Conservation ambassador network in Latin America. She'll start by covering the whole region, and as it grows, we'll select ambassadors from the different countries. If you're interested to become a volunteer, get in touch with us.

"I wanted to become an ambassador to motivate more people to unite and connect in order to improve and innovate in conservation activities, strengthening our professional skills and exchanging experiences." - Karina Acoro

Since we have a growing number of Spanish-speaking students (mainly from Latin America) and the MOOCs are only available in French and in English, we created a Facebook group specifically for Spanish-speakers. This is the place where you can ask MOOC questions in your own language and share opportunities. Karina is moderating it.

[Click here to join the Spanish-speaking MOOC Conservation Facebook group](#)

If you'd like to create a MOOC Conservation Hub in your city, first make sure that there is not already one (full list [here](#)). If you don't see your city or country, get in touch with us. To be eligible, you need to have completed at least one MOOC. If you meet that criteria, we discuss with ambassadors already in place in your country (if there are any), and look at your general communication skills.



Countries with one or several MOOC Conservation students

BENIN



BURKINA FASO



BURUNDI



CAMEROON



COMOROS



CONGO REPUBLIC



CÔTE D'IVOIRE



GABON



GUINEA



HAÏTI



KENYA



MADAGASCAR



MALI



MOROCCO



MAURITANIA



MOZAMBIQUE



NIGER



NIGERIA



PERU & LATIN AMERICA



DRC



RWANDA



SENEGAL



SIERRA LEONE



CHAD



TOGO



TUNISIA



ZAMBIA



ZIMBABWE



CLICK ON THE NAME OF THE AMBASSADOR YOU'D LIKE TO CONTACT.



HANS MAKOUNDI BOUMBA, GABON (LIBREVILLE)

Volunteer at NGO Keva Initiative

Master's degree in Integrated Management of Coastal and Marine Environments from the Yabassi Institute in Cameroon (first year) and from Masuku in Gabon (second year)

MY OBJECTIVES

My goal is to contribute to environmental studies alongside major institutions such as UNEP and IUCN, in order to protect a green world for present and future generations and to promote sustainable development in Africa.

MY COMMITMENTS

I am a UN volunteer, a member of the WCPA and of the IUCN Group of Experts for the Restoration of Ecosystems, an ambassador for MOOC-Conservation in Gabon and I am currently doing an internship with the NGO Keva Initiative where I am responsible for mangrove and environmental protection projects.

ACHIEVEMENTS

As a consultant for the WCPA, I was part of the evaluation of Ivindo National Park's (Gabon) application as a UNESCO World Heritage site. I also contributed to the drafting of the rangers' guide.

With the NGO Keva Initiative, I carried out missions of reforestation and mangrove monitoring, I supported organisations to promote eco-friendly actions and the preservation of coastal ecosystems, I led environmental awareness and education campaigns with communities and schools, collected inventory and monitoring data on mangroves, participated in the drafting of technical reports and of the annual activity plan..



Protecting mangroves is one of the nature-based solutions to global challenges. These ecosystems, when they are healthy and functional, provide services to society and to biodiversity.

With IUCN-Papaco, in addition to my missions as an ambassador promoting the MOOCs, I took part in various professional training courses to learn more and to develop my skills in the field of conservation, team management, communication, networking, personal development, environmental governance, etc.



PERSPECTIVES

All these contributions were made possible thanks to MOOC-Conservation training courses, those of the OIF (Objective 2030), my academic background and my various professional experiences. My enthusiasm and my values also have a lot to do with it.

I will therefore continue to commit to these trainings by participating to the certificate in Protected areas conservation and by encouraging by peers in Gabon to participate massively to the MOOCs. At the same time, I will keep looking for new opportunities to continue improving my skills as I wish to do a thesis in environmental management and governance.

[Send Hans an email](#)



RACHID DAHMANI, MAROC (FES)

Forester and consultant in ecotourism

Marketing and ecotourism development in Ifrane National Park (Morocco)

For the past ten years, I've been involved professionally in Ifrane National Park (INP). I carried out several projects in the park, including my Master's internship in Ecotourism and Marketing development.

IUCN Category: II
Country: Morocco
Region : Middle Atlas
Province: Ifrane
Nearby towns: Azrou, Ifrane
Coordinates: 33°33'22"N; 5°14'15"O
Surface area: 125 000 Ha

INP covers a surface area of 125000 hectares, and is situated between 1300 and 2440 metres of altitude. It is recognised for its strategic geographical situation at the heart of the Moroccan Middle Atlas, for its rich biodiversity but also its biological, ecological, socioeconomic and cultural values. It is also home to the world's largest cedar grove. In 2016, UNESCO recognised INP as a Biosphere Reserve which in turn led to it being considered a World Heritage Site.

However, INP has far fewer visitors than other Moroccan regions. Most tourists prefer short outings, and ecotourism is lacking recognition, visibility and marketing.



Barbary macaque, an emblematic animal in INP

Nonetheless, ecotourism in INP can be a lever for the sustainable development of rural territories. Its development depends on general mobilisation and on properly structuring the offering.

A marketing strategy must highlight ecotourism development initiatives inside INP, in collaboration with the different actors and local, national and international actors to ensure the sustainable development of INP and its neighbouring communities.

Marketing and tourism in INP aims at creating job opportunities by strengthening competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory, and on the basis of the interaction between the tourism sector and the cultural, natural and economic heritage. A territorial

marketing approach is most fitting here. It consists in promoting the "territory" as a product (its geography, biodiversity, history, culture etc.), particularly actions promoting sustainable tourism favouring exchanges between regional actors who are looking into a tourism that creates jobs locally, nationally and regionally.



Wood sculpture and rug making are important activities for INP populations

The cohesive marketing strategy is based on several promotional tools. Their goal is to attract tourists, improve visitations and encourage longer stays in and around INP. It must include three axes linked to sustainable tourism (protecting the environment, conservation of cultural heritage and fair redistribution of economic benefits to the community while promoting participatory governance). It will be structured around:

- Updating the ecotouristic product by creating a Product Club gathering all professionals of an activity who aim to create a concerted strategy
- Making the "Middle Atlas" known as a destination among specialised tour operators of target markets
- Launching a "Ecotourism in INP" website
- Building an INP image as an authentic destination presenting amazing nature and different ways of life
- Elaborating promotional materials
- Organising educ-tours among foreign tour operators and specialised press
- Organising meetings between interested agencies and invited tour operators
- Launching a national portal for ecotourism
- Participating in trade fairs of target markets.

In conclusion, the territorial marketing approach of this park and sustainable tourism would enable to elaborate a tourism marketing strategy for INP which success is influenced by several factors:

- Engaging with tourism actors in the public and private sector
- Motivation of tourists themselves
- Financial means of INP
- Attitudes from tourism companies and local populations towards sustainable tourism and existing natural and cultural resources.

[Send Rachid an email](#)



RAHARINIAINA RAYMOND PAUL (ANTANANARIVO)

Ambassadeur MOOC Conservation à Madagascar

A biologist specialised in ornithology and ambassador of MOOC-PAPACO in Madagascar, Rahariniaina completed his university studies in biology, ecology and wildlife conservation at the University of Antananarivo, in Madagascar. He also collaborated with Harvard University for a scientific research project on the relationship between natural resources and the public health of the population around the Makira protected area in north-eastern Madagascar. He received his Diploma of Advanced Study in 2014; his subject was the ecological preferences of birds in this region.



1. Setting up camera traps in the Makira protected area
2. Meeting with the population around the protected area of Makira

He is currently working for a large mining company in Madagascar, on the conservation of birds as the open mining site is surrounded by a biodiversity-rich conservation area. In order to comply with national and international environmental standards, the company has established its own biodiversity management system which includes the conservation of birds on the site. These programs are based on an adaptive management approach, the main objective of which is to achieve no net loss, and even to obtain a net gain of local biodiversity.



1. *Lophotibis cristata* (Madagascar Crested Ibis) captured by camera trap in the protected area of Makira in 2013. This endemic species is classified as near threatened by the IUCN red list.
2. *Ardeola idae* (Madagascar pond heron). This migratory species is classified as endangered according to the IUCN Red List. It breeds in Madagascar between October and March.
3. *Geobiastes squamiger* (Scaly Ground Roller) captured by camera trap in Makira Protected Area in 2013. A terrestrial species of the Brachypteraciidae family, one of the endemic families of the Madagascar. This species is classified as vulnerable according to the IUCN Red List.

His mission is therefore to monitor the avian community of the mining site to adapt the mitigation measures. This includes bird inventory, ecological monitoring, waterbird counts and the preservation of nesting sites.

It should be noted that the Malagasy avifauna is characterized by its high rates of endemism (44% of native species) but also by a relatively low specific richness compared to other large tropical islands or countries of similar size. It has 307 species including 115 endemic, and four endemic families. 16% of native species are globally threatened according to the IUCN Red List.



- 1 et 2: Information session on MOOC-Conservation in Antananarivo
- 3: Presentation of a scientific poster during the Annual Meeting of Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation in Antananarivo

To expand his expertise in biodiversity management, in addition to his job, Rahariniaina has decided to follow MOOC-conservation courses in 2017. He has passed almost all the MOOCs on the platform and has become a volunteer ambassador for PAPACO in Madagascar in 2019. He has organised many workshops, onsite or online, on these MOOCs in order to help other students enrol and successfully pass

the courses. He is also working to convince the various institutions involved in conservation in Madagascar of the importance of this new training, and how they can help them reach their objectives. In 2020, he was part of the first promotion to obtain the online certificate on the Conservation of Protected Areas organised by IUCN-PAPACO and Senghor University.

He also participates in national and international conferences on biodiversity conservation. His passions, his work, this training and this volunteer experience have allowed him to open his world to the conservation of biodiversity more generally, always with the spirit of sharing and of maintaining a relationship with various public and private conservation institutions in Madagascar.

[Send Raymond an email](#)



OMAR MAHAMADOU ALPHA (DIFFA)

MOOC CONSERVATION: AN OPPORTUNITY TO FACE CONSERVATION CHALLENGES IN THE SAHEL (CASE OF NIGER)



CONTEXT

Niger, in West Africa, is known for its large continental territory. It covers a surface area of 1 267 000 km², among which 75% is found in arid or semi-arid zones. Because of this, Niger is potentially rich in biodiversity. The Sudano-sahelian climate defines the southern part of the country, where the conservation of wild species can be considered. It covers 200 000 to 300 000 km² and is home to 90% the country's population. 84% of this population lives in rural areas (more or less modified) and get most of their livelihoods from the exploitation of natural resources, some of which are protected.

PA conservation is widely practiced in our different ecosystems. Adaptation to risks and risk management are taken into consideration where zones are under some form of protection. Locally, the challenge of conservation can be summarised as the evolution of several contexts that modify the areas. In this article, I am looking at programmes developed by IUCN-Papaco since 2015, namely their MOOCs (mooc-conservation.org) which goal is to bridge the gap in terms of capacity building and conservation tools. The development of new environmental education activities intends to mitigate risks and adapt to new conservation challenges. This is supported by the networks of ambassadors spread out across almost the entire African continent (and beyond), through the Online Certificate, the Essentials and Youth Conservation (environmental education for children). Since 2019, five ambassadors have been part of the Nigerien network, two in Niamey, one in Diffa, one in Dosso and one in Tillabery. These volunteers organise meetings (virtual or in person), non-profit activities etc. to enrich the student network.



PRESENTATION

I am a Water and Forestry agent and have always wanted to serve in the field of conservation. The opportunity to understand and master the reasons behind environmental challenges has always been a passion of mine. For this reason, one of my goals will be to contribute to a better understanding of social, economic, cultural and ethical environmental relations. Through Papaco and by being an ambassador, I was able to develop my skillset, and I still have so much to learn.

The field of conservation is facing many hardships, which jeopardise its development and limit its participation to the local and regional economy. These problems are related to matters of property, organisations, trade, technique and finances. IUCN-Papaco's MOOCs provide some keys to solve these problems.



FORUMS

In response to all this, I've created different forums (Facebook group and page, a WhatsApp group...) to guide students and professionals as they navigate mooc-conservation.org, but also in terms of job or other learning opportunities. Thereby, students are better informed of the skills and tools available to better face current conservation challenges.

[Send Alpha an email](#)

AMBASSADORS - MEETING AND ACTIVITIES

HAMA INSA ABDOULAYE AT DOSSO UNIVERSITY (NIGER)

On Wednesday 20 April 2022, Dosso's MOOC Conservation ambassador organised a coaching session at Dosso University and around 20 students enrolled in the university's Environment Master's degree took part.



VALÉRY THIOMBIANO IN OUAGADOUGOU (BURKINA FASO)



On Thursday 7 April 2022, I was invited by the director of Bangreweeogo Urban Park. He is a specialist of protected area management and was part of the 6th group of Senghor university's Protected Area Management University Diploma. A park guard also participated in the

meeting.

While the main topic of conversation was IUCN-Papaco's MOOC Conservation programme, I was also able to receive some information on how the park will evolve in the future. After the discussion, I showed the park director how to use the MOOC Conservation platform. I've also learnt so much about the park guard's daily activities, especially how he carries out the ecological monitoring of bats, his field of expertise.

Generally speaking, as a protected area management specialist, the urban park Director has high hopes for the Bangreweeogo. Given his professional profile, the setting seem to be favourable to spreading knowledge about conservation.

CHEICK DIARRA IN TENKODOGO (BURKINA FASO)



As part of its fight against bush fires, deforestation, poaching and illegal trafficking of wildlife species, the Central-Eastern regional Environmental management centre informs and raises awareness among provincial leadership, key

stakeholders and populations living near conservation areas. They focus on law and the methodology behind the creation of conservation spaces.

In order to reach the "Zero bushfire, zero deforestation, zero poaching" target, the Regional Environmental Management with the technical and financial support of the Belgian Development Agency has organised two workshops in Pouytenga and Koupela. The workshops were the opportunity for the MOOC Conservation ambassador in Tenkodogo to talk about the online courses.



PODCAST: INVESTING FOR OCEAN IMPACT



INVESTING FOR OCEAN IMPACT – A PODCAST ON INNOVATIVE WAYS TO FINANCE OCEAN CONSERVATION

Investing for Ocean Impact is a brand-new podcast from IUCN’s Blue Natural Capital Financing Facility presenting the business case for investing in our ocean.

When it comes to tackling climate change and the biodiversity crisis, the ocean and the world’s coastlines offer many solutions. Yet these solutions don’t receive anywhere near enough money to realize them. We need private investments in Nature-based Solutions if we are to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement, the new biodiversity

targets as well as sustainable development. .

In Investing for Ocean Impact, we are exploring how ocean restoration and protection can be integrated into sustainable businesses and projects and how investors of all sizes can invest in our ocean.

Across multiple episodes, we’re talking to leading experts, global policymakers, and investment movers and shakers. We’re also diving into real life examples of Nature-based Solutions, from seaweed farms to large-scale infrastructure projects, to show how these projects are creating a profit, for people and planet.

Listen now on your preferred podcast platform or on www.bluenaturalcapital.org/podcast

CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE FIRST EPISODE:

Investing For Ocean Impact

1. A new future for ocean financing

00:00 / 22:51

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