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NEWS FROM AFRICAN PROTECTED AREAS SEPTEMBER 2023



Mapungubwe National Park, Marion Langrand

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Editorial



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THE IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Since the 1960s, environmental education (EE) has proven to be the most effective means of discovering, understanding and acting for the planet. It is the most suitable way to pass on values for the preservation of our world. EE also introduces means and methods to raise environmental awareness, particularly among the youth. Thus, UNESCO has set a new target: "to make environmental education a core curriculum component in all countries by 2025".

Global warming is one of the greatest current challenges we are facing. It impacts so many aspects of our lives, and seriously deteriorates our living conditions. Since the industrial revolution, the increased production of goods, the unreasonable use of fossil fuels as well as the demographic explosion have all led to enormous emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂). The accumulation of these CO₂ emissions, combined with those of other gases such as methane, remains the main determinant of global warming. In view of this growing phenomenon, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Climate Change (IPCC), created in 1988 by the UN, alerts us not to exceed + 1.5°C by the end of the century. Every half degree counts, so we must act, quickly.

In response to this alert, on November 22, 2022 at the COP 27 (Conferences of the Parties), the international community reached an agreement to create a fund for the "loss and damage" caused by global warming. But nature conservation is not just about international treaties that are usually difficult to negotiate. It is also part of our personal and daily behavior. It is clear today that without personal

initiatives, efficiency in nature conservation simply remains impossible.

Although there are different ways to conserve the environment, EE remains one of the most effective means. It awakens our responsibility towards the earth, it contributes to a better understanding of environmental interdependencies and offers young people the opportunity to be actors in the ecological transition. It also makes it possible to carry out actions and even operations that promote energy transition and the fight against global warming. Finally, this type of education helps us understand the consequences of climate change, today and in the future, for biodiversity and therefore for us.

It is important to note that the implementation of EE faces several difficulties in the field. They include internal organisation of schools, administrative red tape that complicates the implementation of environmental projects and the fact that environmental education is not part of school curricula. The lack of training provided to teachers in the field of the environment is also an issue, as well as the little time devoted to voluntary work, the lack of motivation or even interest of most teachers to invest in a shared programme, and the lack of means all complicate the implementation of EE programmes. Finally, the fact that there is no follow-up and continuity on projects implemented during the previous school years does not help at all.

Despite these difficulties, EE remains a key element for the preservation of the environment because, as Victor Hugo once said, "each child we teach is a man we win". ●

PAPACO ONLINE

facebook/IUCNpapaco

[MOOC FB Group \(English\)](#)

[@mooconconservation \(Instagram\)](#)

[@Papaco_IUCN \(Twitter\)](#)

Papaco.org

[IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas newsletter](#)



MOOC-CONSERVATION.ORG NEWS

SELF-PACED MOOCS

Session : 3 July to 31 October 2023

The new session opened 3 July. You can now enrol in MOOCs and start or resume your learning.

Enrolments: mooc-conservation.org

Some frequently asked questions:

1. Can I register during the session? Yes. Classes are already online, there is no specific schedule or delay to catch up on.
2. Can I take the Certificate exam without having completed the required MOOCs? No, any incomplete application will be refused.
3. Are attestations from previous sessions valid? Yes, all MOOC Conservation attestations obtained since 2015 are accepted.
4. How much do the trainings cost? They are all free, from MOOCs to certificates.
5. I already took the Certificate exam but failed, can I try again? No, but a resit exam is planned for 2024.

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.



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.

ONLINE CERTIFICATE IN PROTECTED AREAS CONSERVATION NOW AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH!

Exam dates: October 18 at 13:00 UTC and November 16 at 08:00 UTC.

Apply: [fill out this form](#) and follow instructions.

What is it about? This certificate is a real certificate issued by Senghor University of Alexandria. To be able to take the exam, you must have validated all 7 MOOCs on mooc-conservation.org: Protected area Management, Ecological Monitoring, Law Enforcement, Species Conservation, Valorisation of PA resources, New technologies AND Marine Protected Areas.

NEWS FROM AMBASSADORS

Since 2019, our MOOC Conservation ambassadors have been working in their cities and regions to raise awareness around our MOOCs and to create and lead local hubs for conservation enthusiasts. They are all volunteers, and often organise physical or virtual meetings to discuss training and conservation from their regional perspective. If you are not yet part of a hub, do not hesitate to contact one of our ambassadors near you.

NEWS FROM HAITI - BY ANTOINE SHNEIDER LAURENT RICARD



MOOC Conservation is moving forward in Haiti. We are registering new members in our local Hub. I also just finished a series of episodes (more than 20) on protected areas for Radio Anviwònman (a local radio channel on the environment).

Here is also some news from La Visite National Park in Haiti.

La Visite National Park located in the southeast of Haiti in the Chaîne de la Selle. It covers an area of 30 km². Its landscape is hilly, with gullies and waterfalls all over. The park is home to

many endemic species including *Pinus occidentalis* (Haiti Pine or Bwa Pen lokal).

This park was created by a decree from the government of Jean Claude DUVALIER in 1983, in order to protect the flora from deforestation. It has also been a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve since 2012.

Despite the legal recognition of this park, deforestation and the transformation of forests into agricultural land continues. Organisations like NOEAE, FADECOV, EcoVert Haiti and Radio Anviwònman and Radio Durable Voice (RVoix Durable) are trying to limit the damage by raising awareness and promoting Environmental Education, but the situation is still chaotic, due to poor governance of the park.

Photo credits: ANTOINE Shneider Laurent Ricard and SAINT-JEAN Wilter

NEWS FROM LUBUMBASHI, DRC- BY ALBERT ANKWANDA

The MOOC Conservation hub in Lubumbashi, DRC organised an information and coaching workshop on biodiversity conservation in the meeting room of the Lubumbashi Zoological Garden. A total of 25 young people took part in this meeting.

In his presentation, the Lubumbashi's MOOC Conservation ambassador informed young people about the role they can play in the protection of biodiversity, including the benefits of following following IUCN Papaco's MOOCs on the conservation of protected areas in Africa. The network of former MOOC Conservation learners called: New Generation network for the conservation of Congo basin Biodiversity (NGCB) is a support network for IUCN Papaco to put into practice the knowledge acquired during the MOOCs.

The ambassador congratulated the team for giving visibility to IUCN Papaco in Lubumbashi and promises to turn this into an international network for the benefit of biodiversity conservation.





ONG Burkina Djigui (Burkina Faso)

YOUTH CONSERVATION: THE TOOL RAISING CONSERVATION AWARENESS AMONG YOUNGER GENERATIONS AND ENCOURAGING THEM TO TAKE ACTION!

By H       Magdelain, in charge of the promotion and development of Youth Conservation.

INTRODUCTION

To preserve the planet and ensure its survival, we must know it and understand how it works. Environmental conservation education for children and young people is key to encourage them to act positively on the world around them. It is also essential that those who support them and are involved in their upbringing are properly trained, a point raised by many institutional and civil society actors during COP26 in Glasgow in 2021.

However, today we see 1/ a lack of resources adapted to children and 2/ a lack of knowledge and training of trainers (parents, teacher, nature club manager, etc.).

While there are many resources online or on paper dealing with issues related to climate, biodiversity loss, climate change, etc., none of them deal with the preservation of nature as a whole, both theoretically and practically. In addition, some resources are very technical and are not suitable for a younger audience. If environmental education is a form of behavioral education (it is indeed the behaviors that must change), it is all the more important that the people involved in the upbringing of children set the example in the way they act, but that they are also trained themselves and able to train in return. Why, when we are all confronted with and therefore aware of the crisis affecting nature,

are adults not more informed on these topics and able to pass them on to the next generation?

Faced with these shortcomings, in November 2022, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) created online educational resources to discover, understand and act for the survival of the planet. The youth-conservation.org platform thus provides young people aged 10 to 17 as well as their trainers, with free resources allowing them to simply understand:

1. The concept of nature
2. Why it is important
3. How to conserve it and what to do practically.

The themes covered at the moment are: terrestrial biodiversity, marine biodiversity, climate change, threats to nature, the relationship between nature and our health and finally the future of nature conservation. Other topics will be developed to complete this list.

The topics are treated in several stages and in an interactive way: at the beginning of each module, a video introduces the theme and serves as an introduction. Then, the user follows a logical progression to discover what we are talking about, understand what is happening and finally reflect on how to act. Designed primarily for smartphones, the site is fun and easy to use for young people.

IUCN has not forgotten about the trainers. The youth-conservation.org platform also offers additional resources for trainers (teachers, parents, nature club managers, NGOs, etc.) to help them facilitate discussions with young people. Thus, for each module, there is a poster summarising the key lessons (it can be downloaded and printed), as well as a detailed guide with useful resources to dive deeper into the content and facilitate learning an interactive learning experience. The guides also clearly outline ideas for actions in favor of the preservation of the environment that the trainer can put in place with the young people he/she supervises on the topic in question.

FAST AND ENCOURAGING DISSEMINATION

The platform has been live for 9 months, with very encouraging results and feedback from the field!

More than 8,000 people have visited the website and followed our modules. They are parents, teachers and trainers mainly from the following countries: Democratic Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Benin, Senegal, Congo-Brazzaville, Madagascar, Ivory Coast, France and Togo.

There is also a real enthusiasm on social networks. The following on the FB page and the IG account keeps on growing: respectively 600 and 300 people follow our news daily and show their interest through growing commitment. LinkedIn is the most successful platform with almost 3,000 followers and a high engagement rate. The highlighting of awareness activities carried out by our partners in the field is highly appreciated as well as the sharing of additional resources to build skills.

POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE FIELD

Youth Conservation is not just "an online platform" it is also a network of committed volunteer partners who use the resources of Youth Conservation in the field to carry out their mission of education for the preservation of nature. Our greatest reward (which thereby justifies our mission!) is the visual feedback from the awareness-raising and nature preservation activities implemented in villages and towns with and by children. The concentration on their faces when looking at the posters, their smile when they discover the richness of the biodiversity that surrounds them, their pride in having succeeded in growing a plant are all proof that we are not taking the wrong path and that we must continue. All these (small) actions today are so many seeds sown to ensure a better future for the planet and therefore for humanity.

Unfortunately, we cannot name them all, but thank you to our partners on the field who work alongside us to educate about the preservation of the environment. To name a few:


Gorilla Ambassadors, Burkina Djigui, Let's Do It Madagascar, TEERRA AFRICA, ONG Mama Afrika (Benin), GYBN Africa, Association tiipaalga, GYBN Senegal, NEBEDAY, African Wildlife Foundation, ONG Nature Plurielle (Benin), ONG 0 déchets Sénégal, Jeunes Voix du Sahel/Tchad, ONG Education


Environnement et Développement Durable (Guinea), ONG Luciole, Réseau Africain pour la Promotion de l'Education à l'Environnement (RAPEE), ONG Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement, ONG LYREC, INADES NGO, ONG AFRICAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK in Cameroon.


Do you also want to participate in the dissemination and promotion of youth-conservation.org and benefit in return from the network and visibility of IUCN-Papaco? Contact us at info@youth-conservation.org with a short presentation of your project (school, club, association, etc.). We are looking for partners in many countries and in particular in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Togo and Madagascar.


GOOD PRACTICES IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION


Here are some tips from UNICEF for talking positively and constructively about the environment with children:


 Educate yourself first! There are plenty of free resources available to you.

 Get the kids talking: ask them questions and listen to them, you'll be surprised how much they already know!

 Use the right resources (Youth Conservation for example!) and take examples from daily life.

 Go outside and observe nature with them: nothing beats an outdoor walk to raise awareness.

 Focus on solutions: every problem has its solution. Take concrete examples that are easy to implement at home and in their daily lives.

 Finally, get them to act: have them join a Nature club during the school year or Nature camps during the holidays!

Our partners are our best ambassadors and here are some of the top activities they believe work best for talking about the environment with children:

- **Stories and poetry** are a great way to encourage children's creativity while making sure they understood main messages. So why not organize a poetry and storytelling competition around a

specific theme (for example the safeguarding of terrestrial biodiversity)? The best texts could be selected and published in a collection. Thanks to the NGO Nature Plurielle in Benin for this great idea!

- What is more pleasant and entertaining than a **play** to illustrate the key messages around nature preservation? You can either call on a troupe of amateur actors or have the children play with caricatural roles (the one who throws all his waste on the ground, the one who cuts down the trees, etc.). Children can write the text themselves and make the costumes from recycled items. At the end of the play, plan a time for discussions with the children make sure they understood the message!
- After school or on weekends, you can facilitate **family chats**: for example, Education in Environment and Sustainable Development NGO (Guinea) invites itself over the weekend for a few hours with a family and brings together children and parents for a time of listening and sharing on the theme 'threats to nature'. A friendly moment that strengthens the bonds between parents and children and allows everyone to become aware of the need to change their daily behavior.

A CALL FOR IMPROVED CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the explanatory guides that accompany each of the 6 modules and the posters, we have set up two tools in 2023 to meet the training needs of trainers:

- A **private FB group** dedicated to trainers has been created and has more than 250 members to date. It is an effective platform for sharing with active members who wish to improve their knowledge of the environment and environmental education. We have already organised 3 webinars (May 16, June 13 and July 18) which brought together over 120 trainers from all over Africa. During the first session, the NGO Gorillas Ambassador Program talked about their experience in the field and shared good practices in raising awareness among children and young people. Geoffroy Mauvais of IUCN hosted the June webinar on the theme "Pedagogy and safeguarding biodiversity". Finally Firmin Tape,

Youth Conservation tutor in 2022 and expert-consultant in Protected Areas Management, was the guest of the July webinar and focused on the practical tips to have in mind to carry out awareness-raising activities in the field. Given the success of these webinars, we will continue them for the rest of the year. The calendar for the last quarter of 2023 will be communicated very soon. Do you want to contribute and share your own experience? Email us at: info@youth-conservation.org.

- After the training comes the assessment! We launched an Environmental Education Attestation in order to assess 1/ the good mastery of the platform and the content present in the 6 modules and the additional resources 2/ the ability to train and the pedagogical skills expected of all trainers engaged in environmental education. 3 exam sessions took place between June and July bringing together a total of 187 candidates. 26 certificates were issued. We are planning 2 exams by the end of the year: the next one will take place on Tuesday, September 19 and the following one in November. Want more information? Contact us: info@youth-conservation.org for the number of places remaining.

2023/2024 PROJECTS

The coming months will be busy for Youth Conservation with many plans for further development as we want to meet the needs of children and trainers. Stay informed on our social networks and via newsletters!

- **Podcasts:** to improve access to resources and improve learning, we will transcribe all of our 6 modules into audio episodes. It will also be easier to consider translation into English but also eventually into other local languages too. *Planned for November 2023*
- **Activity guides for children and communities in rural areas:** in order to facilitate the implementation of our modules, we will publish activity guides to do with children that are adapted to the dominant ecosystem (savannah, coastal zone, etc.). *Expected launch: November 2023*

- **MOOCs:** like the online training courses present on the mooc-conservation.org site, we have the ambition to put a specific MOOC online on the subject of Environmental Pedagogy to meet the training needs of trainers and thus work to capacity building. It will also be easier for us to assess teaching skills and issue certificates of aptitude for environmental education. *Planned for first semester of 2024*
- **Translation of all of our 6 modules into English:** half of the African continent is English-speaking, it is a no-brainer, we need an English version of our modules! *Planned for early 2024*
- Recruitment of a network of committed volunteering tutors to promote and facilitate the use of resources with schools and associations involved in environmental education. A call for applications will soon be officially launched. *Planned for early 2024*

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

The Youth Conservation team is available for any question, suggestion or comment:

- By email: info@youth-conservation.org
- On the [private FB group](#)
- By H       Magdelain

FEEDBACK ON THE USE OF YOUTH CONSERVATION RESOURCES

By the NGO Education in Environment and Sustainable Development (Éducation en Environnement et Développement Durable, EEDDG) in Guinea, on the use of Youth Conservation resources in raising awareness among children and the youth.

EEDDG was created on June 05, 2022 in N'Zérékoré which is located in the south of Guinea. Our current head office is located in Conakry/Ratoma/Koloma solo primo. With more than 40 volunteers, the EEDDG, since its creation, has carried out several actions in the field, going in the direction of environmental education, reforestation, awareness and digital campaigns for civic and environmental education.

During our environmental education activities, we have reached more than 500 natural and legal persons, that is to say natural persons and social organizations. Although our means are limited, we manage to make more efforts to achieve our goals.

Our reach over the past few months was as follows:

- 150 children between the ages of 10 and 17 have benefited from training in environmental education thanks to the support provided by Youth Conservation. Most of this training takes place at home.
- 300 other people have benefited from the same training thanks to the support of Youth conservation.
- 50 social organizations have benefited from training modules in environmental education and facilitation.

In terms of reforestation, we planted more than 200

trees in the forest region in 2021 and reached more than 25,000 people through our digital eco-citizenship campaigns.

Today we can say that thanks to the accompaniment of Youth Conservation through the guides and advice received, we have been able to impact more children because the resources allow us to effectively pass on key messages.

Our vision remains the same for the end of the year: to reach more people and especially children and young people.



- By Amadou Bailo BALDE, president of Éducation en Environnement et Développement Durable, Guinea

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