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Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Measures in the Consolidated
Management of the Transboundary Wap Complex



MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY PROTECTED AREAS IN AFRICA COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES



FONDATION
POUR LE
TRI-NATIONAL
DE LA
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MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY PROTECTED AREAS IN AFRICA

COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES

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Management of Transboundary Protected Areas in Africa

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Preface

Transboundary efforts often begin as modest initiatives, such as information sharing between individuals or entities from across the borders. However, these collaborations evolve to take on more complex forms and functions, involving multiple levels of actors and responding to growing strategic and political challenges.

Transboundary conservation features inherent complexity, stemming from the multinational and multicultural aspects it encompasses. It requires coordinated natural resource management, appropriate and inclusive institutional organization, innovative financing and economic development strategies, a proactive approach to insecurity management, and strengthened communication between different complexes, creating a dynamic and resilient network for conservation and sustainable development.

This collection of best practices highlights the crucial importance of transboundary conservation, its potential for impact, and the many achievements it has generated across diverse landscapes. It is a guiding and illustrative resource to support these efforts, offering tools and examples to address the specific challenges of transboundary protected area management and conservation on the African continent.



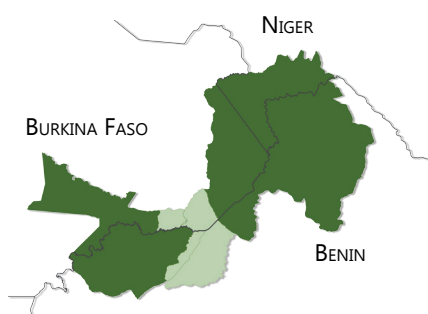
TOWARDS A COORDINATED CONSERVATION

Protected areas are the cornerstones of biodiversity conservation. Faced with increasing human pressure on natural resources, an effective global system of protected areas can be a glimmer of hope for preserving ecosystems, habitats, and species. These areas also contribute to the protection of essential ecosystem services, such as climate regulation, water purification, and crop pollination. Scientific knowledge has shaped the selection, design, and management of these sites, ensuring more effective and sustainable nature protection.

Transboundary protected area complexes are thus an invaluable shared resource that requires coordinated efforts from the countries involved. Harmonized management is essential to preserve biodiversity that crosses national borders. Synchronizing conservation efforts and pooling resources are essential elements for more effectively responding to threats such as illegal activities, the spread of zoonotic diseases, anthropogenic pressures, and environmental hazards. By fostering cooperation between the countries, these complexes strengthen the ecological and socio-economic resilience of the regions in question, while supporting the sustainable development of local communities.

Part of the World Natural Heritage since July 2017, the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) transboundary complex is a vast protected area of approximately 5 million hectares located in the West African region. It encompasses five national parks rich in biological diversity. However, the complex is subject to significant anthropogenic pressures such as resource use conflicts, poaching, overgrazing, deforestation due to agricultural expansion and illegal logging, uncontrolled transhumance, wildfires, surface water pollution, and unsustainable fishing. These threats are compounded by the effects of climate change, which compromise biodiversity, ecological integrity, the survival of animal and plant species, and the living conditions of local populations. The preservation of this site is crucial for biodiversity conservation in the subregion and requires the coordinated implementation of adaptation measures and international cooperation.

In this context, the AdaptWAP project, «Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Measures into the Coordinated Management of the Transboundary WAP Complex,» that aims to strengthen collaboration between WAP complex managers and other stakeholders responsible for protected area management in Africa, planned and organized an exchange and experience-sharing trip to the Sangha Tri-National (TNS) Complex.



W-ARLY-PENDJARI COMPLEX



SANGHA TRI-NATIONAL COMPLEX



This initiative aims to contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources in the WAP and TNS transboundary complexes and brought together the main stakeholders and organizations involved in protected area management. It took place between Yaoundé, Yokadouma, and Lobéké National Park in Cameroon.

This exchange trip had the TNS chosen due to its many similarities with the WAP complex. Indeed, both sites are transboundary complexes shared by three countries and are globally recognized. They are managed regionally, thus reinforcing their relevance for protected area managers. Both complexes are renowned for their exceptional biodiversity and are home to endangered species, particularly the critically endangered western lowland gorillas and forest elephants in the TNS, and the populations of lions, elephants, and other savannah species in the WAP.

The complexes' host countries have implemented coordinated strategies for sustainable natural resource management, whose implementation laid the foundation for discussions between participants in this event, particularly on the management of buffer zones and surrounding natural resources.

This collection brings together best practices in sustainable protected area management that emerged from discussions among managers from two sub-regions - an exemplary event of South-South cooperation. It highlights key measures, best practices, and recommendations drawn from the exchange visit, as well as experiences and results consolidated throughout the AdaptWAP project. Designed as a practical resource, it offers insights that can be adapted by managers to their specific geographical contexts. Beyond documentation, the initiative also seeks to strengthen the capacities of AdaptWAP partners, enhance the project outcomes, identify new opportunities, and open pathways for future collaboration.

Adopting these best practices in the TNS and WAP complexes could ensure ecological integrity, preserve biodiversity, and maintain their outstanding universal values as World Heritage sites.



1. Natural Resource Management

Diversity of natural resources is as vast as fragile in Africa. In transboundary complexes, preserving these resources is ensuring a delicate balance between development and conservation. Sustainable management is an opportunity for us to responsibly benefit from ecological resources (fauna, flora, soil, water, etc.) to ensure their preservation and renewal over the long term. This concept is essential for natural resources that represent not only a unique heritage but also a pillar of the economy, food security, and the well-being of local populations. Sustainable natural resource management is based on an integrated approach that considers the management of species and ecosystems. Through combined efforts, it is possible to anticipate conservation needs and strengthen the protection of sensitive areas and key species.

Protected areas are home to crucial habitats for a wide variety of wildlife, including several species threatened by pressures such as poaching, habitat loss, and human-wildlife conflict. In response to these threats, countries implement protection and prevention measures for these species to be preserved.

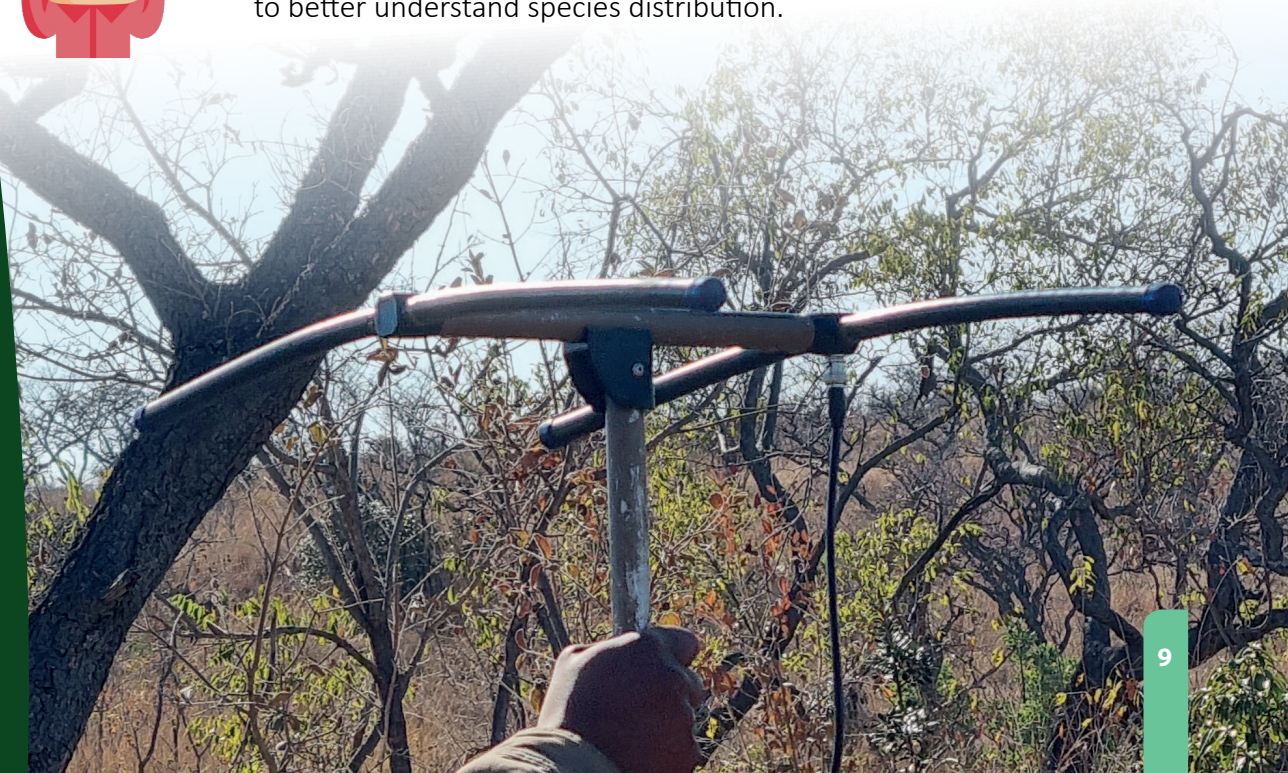
Ecological Research & Monitoring

From tracking population dynamics and animal health to evaluating ecosystem conditions and ongoing changes, ecological monitoring is a cornerstone of effective protected area management. This process combines direct and indirect observations, advanced technologies, and standardized wildlife inventories, supported by adequate infrastructure and robust data analysis. Research data on flora and fauna are systematically collected, analyzed, and interpreted by ecologists to guide management decisions. The ultimate goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of ecosystem dynamics and ensure the sustainable functioning of the protected area.

Direct Observations

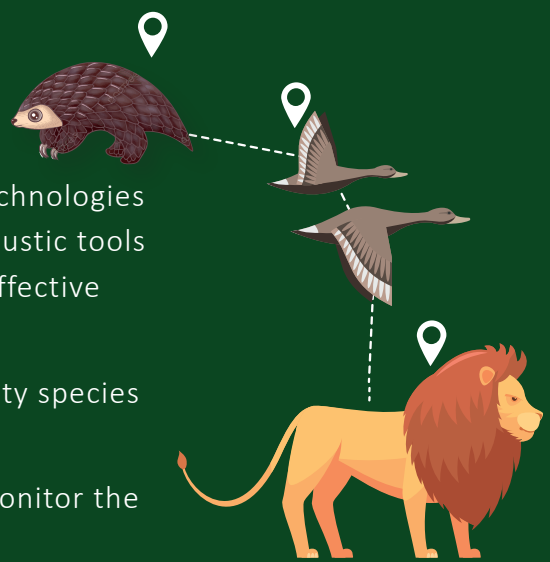


- Conduct regular observations in forest clearings or plains to monitor key species and their behaviors.
- Use wildlife monitoring and inventory methods such as line transects to better understand species distribution.



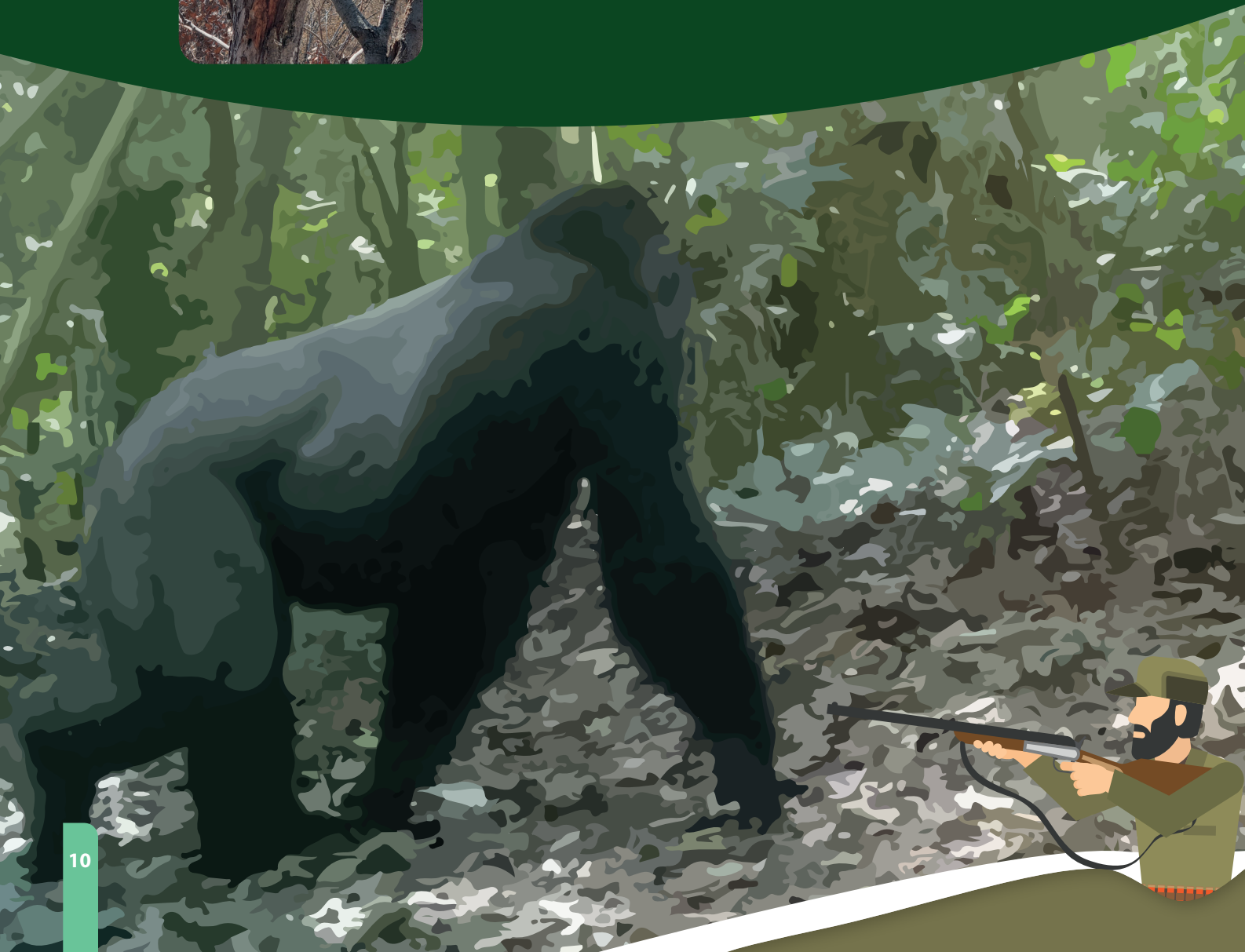
Technological monitoring tools

- Use camera traps, acoustic units, and other innovative technologies in key areas to ensure ongoing ecological monitoring; acoustic tools help identify ecologically sensitive areas and plan more effective patrols.
- Use GPS and VHF collars to track the movements of priority species and adapt conservation interventions.
- Use drones for optimized counting in the clearings and monitor the habitat's floristic dynamics.



Infrastructure

- Establish base camps, reception facilities, and access roads for easier interventions and follow-up of the conservation activities, ensure continuous presence on the ground, and facilitate rapid access to remote areas.
- Develop trails and bridges to access strategic areas.



Data Analysis

Have appropriate tools and qualified personnel for data analysis, giving enough time for information check and processing, including audio and visual data, in order to monitor species trends.



Habituation Program

The TNS is implementing a habituation program to familiarize certain species, such as gorillas, with human activities while preserving their natural behavior. This time-consuming process aims to allow researchers and visitors to approach the gorillas with the minimum risk of escape or aggression, to observe them, study them closely, protect them and not disturb them. This allows phenological monitoring to better understand their behavior and the interactions between plant cycles and the needs of animal species.

“Much of the information on western lowland gorillas, their health, and behavior comes from active, long-term monitoring of habituated groups (African Parks).”

Anti-poaching measures

There are significant impacts of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. Overexploitation is the second greatest threat to vertebrates. For this phenomenon to be addressed, anti-poaching strategies should rely on strong transboundary cooperation, targeted interventions, strategic use of surveillance technologies, and active engagement with local communities.

Transnational Intelligence

Integrate transnational intelligence strategies to combat wildlife crimes, as these illegal activities are often carried out by sophisticated, well-resourced, and internationally organized gangs. This involves collecting, analyzing, and sharing information between the countries to monitor and disrupt the activities of these criminal networks. Identifying the routes used, modus operandi, actors involved, and illegal markets is also essential to dismantling these networks.

Transboundary cooperation agreements

Encourage the conclusion of cooperation agreements between the countries to combat poaching, including the establishment of ad hoc detachments and border posts.

Transboundary brigades

Promote the creation and harmonize the operation of permanent transboundary anti-poaching brigades made up of eco-guards from different countries.

Joint patrols

Strengthen transboundary collaboration through joint and coordinated patrols, with teams distributed across different areas for comprehensive coverage (progressing from the boundaries, with the greatest threat, to the heart of the park).

Capacity Building

Build the capacity of eco-guards in anti-poaching and human rights enforcement during their operations.



Checkpoints

Establish checkpoints on highways and train sniffer dog teams to keep an eye on protected species traffic.

Legislation

Adopt an aligned legislation between the countries so that penalties for conservation-related offenses, particularly poaching, are uniform and applied with the same severity.

States must adopt common measures to avoid any point of contention and/or benefiting environmental offenders.



Community Mobilization

Mobilize local communities as the first line of defense against illegal activities by creating effective collaborative frameworks and actively having them involved in anti-poaching efforts, particularly through collaborative intelligence systems (connected with community information and a rapid response team) and incentive programs. Well-informed local communities become key ambassadors in wildlife protection.

- Encourage the reporting of poaching to the relevant authorities by rewarding community efforts with financial or material incentives, such as bonuses awarded to the most involved villages.
- Use alert systems, such as a toll-free number, to facilitate reporting of suspicious activities and signs of poaching.

Surveillance Technologies

- Install acoustic units and camera traps in poaching hotspots. These technologies make it possible to collect ecological clues and report, in real time, the presence of animals or poachers.
- Equip brigades with advanced surveillance systems, such as satellites and drones specialized and adapted to the ecosystem.



Infrastructure

Establish advanced observation posts near critical areas to enhance the responsiveness and effectiveness of protection and monitoring operations.

Data Management and Analysis

Use historical data to identify poaching hotspots and strengthen monitoring and communication between various stakeholders with innovative technological tools such as InReach, Earth Ranger, SMART, etc.



Several technological tools are used to strengthen and optimize the effectiveness of natural resource monitoring and management operations:

InReach: A satellite communication device that allows field teams to stay in touch in remote areas where mobile networks are unavailable. Eco-guards use InReach to send real-time messages, report incidents, and coordinate operations with conservation teams. This enables a rapid response to poaching threats and improved communication during patrols.

Earth Ranger: An environmental data management platform that centralizes, visualizes, and analyzes information related to wildlife, patrol monitoring, and poaching incidents. Connected to smartphones, Earth Ranger allows field agents to record real-time data related to their observations, track animal movements, and access interactive maps. This visualization facilitates strategic decision-making.

SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool): A spatial monitoring management system that helps conservation teams collect, analyze, and report data on wildlife and patrols. Officers use SMART to record patrol activities, wildlife encounters, and poaching incidents. The data is then analyzed to identify poaching trends and hotspots, thereby optimizing patrols and strengthening the protection of critical areas.

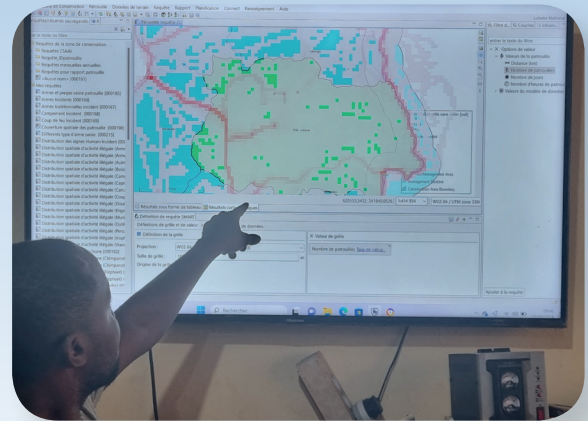
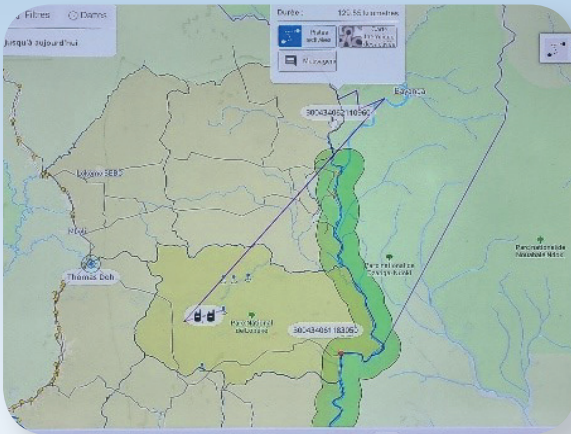
ArcGIS Explorer: A geospatial data collection tool that maps areas of interest and analyzes environmental data. By connecting to InReach and other devices, ArcGIS Explorer allows field officers to integrate geospatial data into their operations. This helps them better understand the environment and identify areas at risk.

IMETT (Integrated Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool): A tool that assesses the overall effectiveness of park management, identifies areas for improvement, and monitors long-term progress. It helps managers identify pros and cons in resource management, biodiversity conservation, and governance.

These interconnected tools create an integrated management ecosystem for anti-poaching. Eco-guards can use InReach to communicate information in real time, which is then recorded in Earth Ranger. Data collected via Earth Ranger and SMART allows for in-depth analysis of poaching activities, which informs operational decisions.

The methodology for using these tools involves staff training to ensure proficiency, as well as regular monitoring to ensure effectiveness. By integrating these technologies, conservation teams can improve their responsiveness, ensure ecological monitoring, and strengthen security and ecosystem protection. It also allows for accurate tracking and tracing of patrol routes in real time to ensure maximum spatial coverage of the protected area.

NB : The standard set by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) indicates that minimum monitoring coverage in protected areas requires approximately 1 eco-guard for every 5,000 hectares in forest and 10,000 hectares in savannah (CIFOR, 2023).



Information session at the Lobéké National Park command room, dedicated to the fight against poaching and ecological monitoring

Classifying the species according to their conservation status in a given ecosystem is used to adopt strategies adapted to their level of threat. This classification helps determine protective measures and applicable penalties, and raises public awareness about biodiversity preservation.

In the TNS, several species are classified according to a system that allows for differentiated wildlife management based on the degree of vulnerability of each species, namely:

- **Class A animals: fully protected**

These species can go extinct and must be protected in their natural habitat. Hunting, capturing, and trading these species are strictly prohibited. Offenders are subject to fines and/or imprisonment.

- **Class B animals: partially protected**

These species are vulnerable and require appropriate management measures. Hunting is regulated and, in some cases, permitted under strict conditions, such as quota hunting. Hunting, capturing and keeping these species may be authorized after obtaining a wildlife exploitation permit, in accordance with current regulations.





Human-Wildlife Conflict Management

In the vicinity of protected areas, conflicts between humans and wildlife are often triggered by increased competition for natural resources. For example, due to hunting pressure and a decline in natural prey, large predators sometimes turn to transhumant herds or attack livestock in villages. Furthermore, elephants can cause significant damage to crops. Land degradation, human expansion, and the movement of animals in search of food or migratory routes amplify these tensions. These conflicts have serious consequences for local populations, who suffer economic losses and security risks. To mitigate these tensions and promote sustainable coexistence, various measures are recommended.

Deterrent Measures

- Identify and map risk areas;
- Implement preventive and deterrent measures such as installing beehives (buzzing bees scare away elephants), growing fields of repellent chili peppers, or using bricks made from elephant droppings;
- Encourage and train local populations in these practices.

Protecting Ecological Corridors

Identify and protect species migration corridors to limit conflicts.

Prevention Technologies

Use drones, GPS collars, and acoustic units to identify risk areas for each species (e.g., elephant, leopard, lion, gorilla, etc.) and to prevent and respond quickly to conflicts.



Electric Fences

Install electric fences around the fields to protect crops from wild animals, particularly in densely populated areas; these fences must be maintained by local communities.

Legislative Measures

Develop laws and regulations to govern human-wildlife conflict management, including compensation mechanisms for legitimate losses:

- Implement decrees that define compensation measures and response mechanisms.
- Identify and address legislative gaps in countries where no specific laws or decrees for human-wildlife conflict management exist.

Grievance management mechanism:

Establish a clear grievance and compensation mechanism in community action plans, specific to human-wildlife conflicts.

Electric fences are more effective in areas with dense populations:

Smaller area to protect: When human communities congregate (e.g., clustered villages), it is easier to install and maintain electric fences over a smaller area, reducing costs and material requirements.

Fewer entry points for wildlife: A dispersed population, with spread-out homes and fields, provides more opportunities for wildlife to enter human areas.

Facilitated community effort: Concentrated communities can collaborate more easily to maintain electric fences, share responsibilities and costs, and monitor intrusions.

Increased resource protection: If the population is concentrated, crops or infrastructure to be protected are also clustered together, allowing prevention efforts to be focused on a defined area.



2 Habitat Management

Wildlife conservation must go hand-in-hand with the conservation of its natural habitat, ecosystems. The latter play a vital role as reservoirs of biodiversity and ensure the balance of natural interactions. Transboundary complexes are home to a wide variety of essential but frail ecosystems, facing increasing pressures of anthropogenic and climate origins such as deforestation, intensive agriculture, urbanization, overexploitation of natural resources, climate change, etc. Coordinated actions are necessary to protect these environments, restore their ecological functions, and ensure their sustainability.

Risk Management

Map threats and hazards to anticipate risks and strengthen ecological resilience.

Ecological Monitoring

Ongoing ecological monitoring to assess the status of ecosystems, including habitat mapping and quality assessment.

Early Warning Systems

Develop multi-risk early warning systems capable of detecting and preventing threats from extreme climate events, including floods, droughts, and wildfires, to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and communities.

Reforestation

Promote the creation of local, community-managed nurseries as part of reforestation and ecosystem restoration programs. These initiatives strengthen the link between conservation and livelihoods.

Monitoring deforestation, primarily caused by agriculture and gold mining, aims to reduce the evolution of anthropogenic pressure around parks.

The Global Forest Watch (GFW) tool, with its multi-stakeholder platform, makes it possible to monitor deforestation alerts at the landscape level.

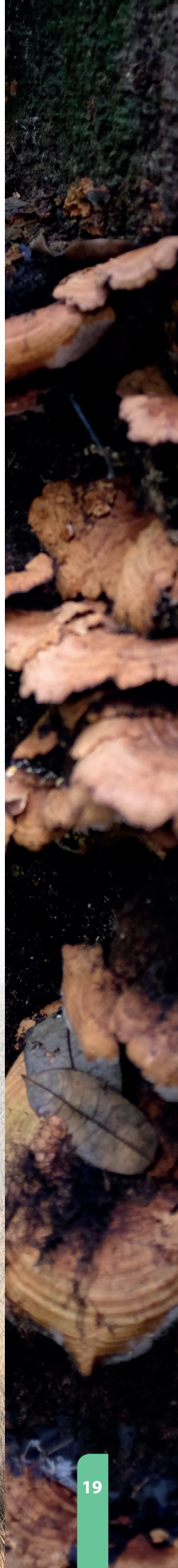
This includes stakeholder training, alert verification missions, and online reporting via the GFW platform.

Restoration Plans

Implement habitat restoration plans and fire management plans.

Forest Management Units

Establish Forest Management Units (FMUs) in the permanent forest sector, which involve the long-term management of forest resources for sustainable timber harvesting while preserving biodiversity and ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits to local communities.





II • Institutional Organization

Sustainable management of transboundary complexes requires a strong and inclusive institutional organization. This approach relies on close collaboration between local, national, and international actors to harmonize policies, strengthen governance, and mobilize communities. This section draws on clear institutional frameworks and collaborative management tools and explores the essential mechanisms for ensuring effective coordination, the involvement of local communities, and addressing conservation and sustainable development challenges.



Collaborative park management and transboundary surveillance

Transboundary complexes represent ecosystems shared by several nations, where the diversity of legislation, management practices, and socioeconomic challenges requires coordinated governance. In order to contend with the cross-cutting threats, it is essential to implement common strategies and appropriate tools.

Institutional Structures

Establish effective institutional structures for the collaborative management of transboundary protected areas, such as an Executive Secretariat that oversees and harmonizes legislation, monitoring protocols, and the threat management, and coordinates management strategies.

Multi-annual Action Plan

Develop a long-term action plan, incorporating clearly defined governance bodies and regular transboundary patrols.

Consultation Framework

Create a framework for consultation between park managers and local authorities bordering the protected areas.

Meetings

Hold periodic meetings between curators and local authorities to coordinate efforts at different levels, as well as ministerial meetings (arbitration council).

Monitoring Method

Align ecological monitoring and research methods through a single, synchronized methodology to ensure a coordinated approach among the different countries involved in managing the complex: for example, conduct specific and regular wildlife inventories at the regional level (a joint inventory for the entire complex), including aerial surveys. In addition, eco-guards and biologists must collaborate with local communities to ensure regular species monitoring and prevent threats.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Create a network that includes several self-reliant CSOs operating in the area surrounding the national parks. This network is responsible for identifying and supervising the role of each organization and collecting data.

The network also conducts monitoring activities by tracking on-the-ground progress in compliance with conventions and national legislation. For example, in cases of excessive poaching, it convenes a local forum and mobilizes local stakeholders for awareness raising purposes.

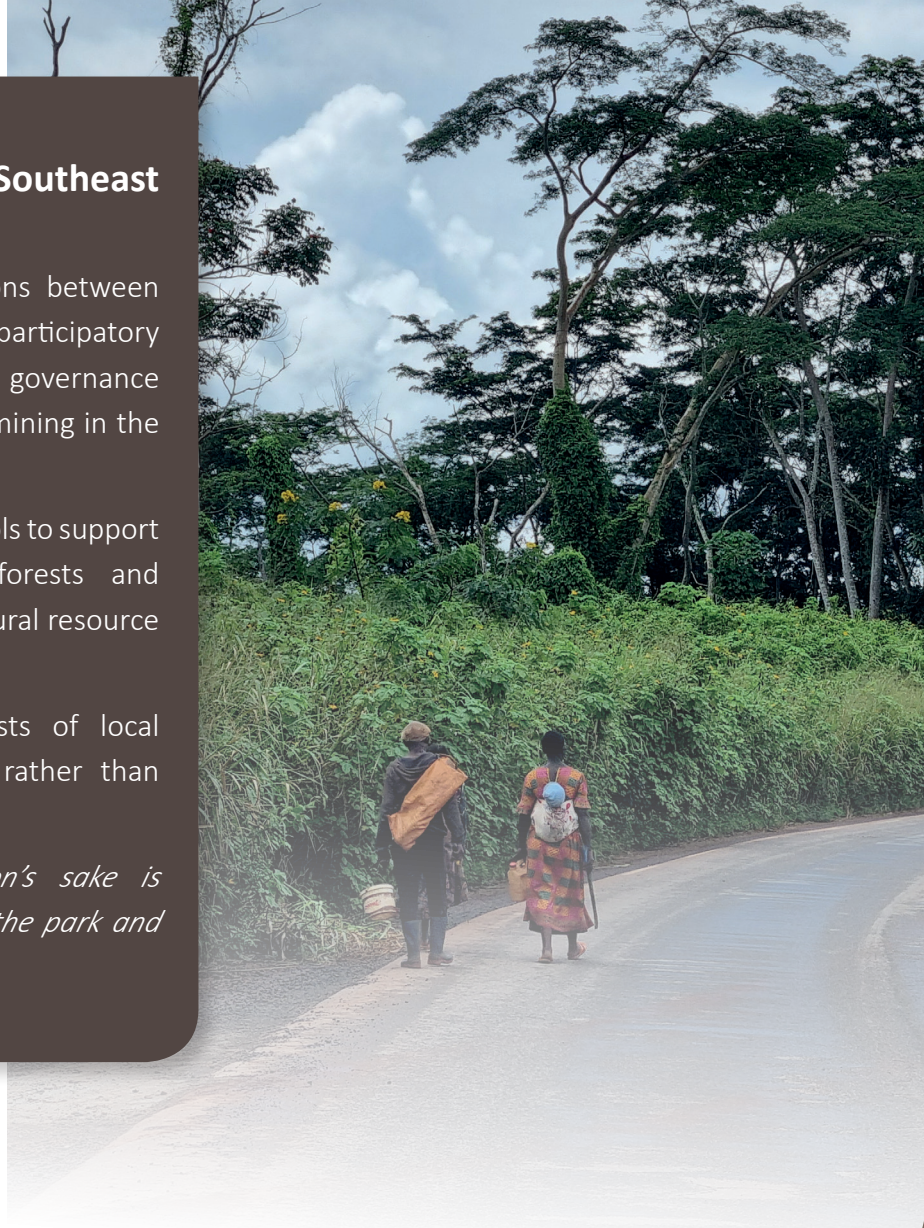
Network of Local NGOs in Southeast Cameroon (ROSE)

ROSE aims to develop synergy of actions between local NGOs and to develop strategies for participatory natural resource management and good governance in managing the impacts of logging and mining in the TNS-TRIDOM sub-region.

The network implements conservation tools to support communities, leveraging community forests and promoting recognition of community natural resource management.

It also works to promote the interests of local communities, emphasizing their rights rather than their responsibilities.

“Making conservation for conservation’s sake is nonsense; we must think of developing the park and fighting against poverty.”



“One Health” Approach

Implement an integrated approach to health risk management by establishing a management plan and collaborative protocols between animal, human, and environmental health services. This includes monitoring zoonotic diseases, vaccinating livestock in local communities, and developing analytical laboratories to monitor and rapidly detect health threats.



The TNS collaborates with international organizations that have connections with international laboratories. These laboratories provide ad hoc technical expertise for the implementation of disease management programs. This partnership allows the TNS to benefit from advanced technical support and a well-defined scientific approach, both nationally and internationally.

2

Community Involvement

Protected area management requires differentiated approaches that recognize and protect the rights and practices of indigenous peoples, while seeking inclusive solutions to integrate local populations into the management and benefits associated with conservation.

It is therefore important to understand the difference between local populations and indigenous populations, which primarily resides in their historical and cultural connection to a territory. The distinction between local populations and indigenous populations in protected area management has important implications, particularly with regard to resource access rights, participation in governance, and the protection of traditional knowledge.

Local populations: This term refers to all inhabitants living in a given region, regardless of their origin or history in the territory. It encompasses both long-term residents and those who have arrived more recently, without any reference to a particular tie or specific cultural identity.

Indigenous populations: This term specifically refers to groups with a long history and deep cultural connection to a particular territory, often long before the arrival of outside populations or the establishment of the modern State.

Indigenous populations generally have customs, languages, social systems, and ways of life that are in harmony with their ancestral lands. They often claim specific rights related to the management of natural resources and the protection of their traditions.

Thus, all indigenous populations are local, but not all local populations are indigenous.



Education Programs

Implement environmental education and conservation awareness programs and explain the importance of ecosystem services to local communities (schoolchildren, students, etc.).

This may include supporting the transportation of community students through the parks during exam periods and other community solidarity actions by the complex administration.

Co-management

Promote partnerships with communities to co-manage the parks and guarantee their access rights to resources. This involves prioritizing the local community in recruitment (anti-poaching, labor-intensive work, etc.).

Wildlife Monitoring

Ensure active collaboration with communities in biomonitoring, collecting data and using simple technologies such as camera traps and using phones to report poaching activities.

Memorandum of Understanding

Establish memoranda of understanding between the protected area administration and indigenous/local communities, as well as consultation frameworks with representatives of local and customary authorities.

Community Forest Management

Support the communities in obtaining legally recognized community forests, by developing documents such as authority-approved harvest inventories.

This process must include support in the development of non-timber forest products and other local resources.

Land Use and Zoning Plan

Implement a land use plan jointly adopted with the communities.

Sustainable Development Projects

Promote sustainable development initiatives (agriculture, beekeeping, collection and development of non-timber forest products) to provide economic alternatives to local communities.



Grievance Mechanism

Develop a community grievance mechanism led by community members such as local leaders and eco-guards and managed by civil society organizations. This allows for complaints to be handled transparently, in collaboration with conservation services, while promoting local engagement. Clear procedure manuals and adequate financial and human resources (lawyers, sociologists, etc.) are required for its proper functioning.

Community forests are areas where local communities are granted legal rights to sustainably manage and harvest forest resources. These initiatives enable communities to directly benefit from the income generated by harvesting forest products, strengthening their commitment to the conservation and management of local ecosystems.

In Cameroon's Lobéké National Park, indigenous populations such as the Baka have the right to access the park, through an established MoU, to practice harvesting activities, traditional hunting, or local rituals and traditions, within the framework of their user rights and in compliance with park laws and regulations. This is part of conservation and community rights reconciliation efforts.

Regulated Hunting

Encourage sustainable subsistence hunting in community-managed hunting areas, with clear prohibitions on the use of unauthorized equipment (such as steel cables and firearms) and the reintroduction of traditional hunting methods (spears, vine traps, etc.);

For this to happen, new generations need to have specific training on these techniques.





Strategies for financing and economic development of the resources

The effective management of protected areas and transboundary complexes requires a sustainable approach to financing and economic development. To ensure the sustainability of conservation initiatives, it is crucial to diversify public, private, or multilateral funding sources, and to implement development strategies that integrate local economic sectors. The sustainable use of natural resources, particularly through ecotourism and public-private partnerships, represents a promising avenue for supporting conservation efforts while generating socioeconomic benefits for local communities.



Funding mobilization and logistical support

Diversification of funding sources

Diversify funding sources for sustainable conservation financing, with a focus on:

- Trust funds;
- Ecotaxes and;
- Multilateral international contributions (funds from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) tools, etc.).



Private Sector

Mobilizing the private sector to support conservation efforts through public-private partnerships.

Climate Finance

Capacity building in climate finance to acquire the necessary knowledge, create opportunities and ensure access to climate finance in accordance with the established procedures.

Advocacy

Implementing advocacy campaigns with governments, international organizations, and the private sector so that stakeholders understand why they should allocate resources for conservation.

Partnerships

Developing and diversifying regional and international partnerships (institutions such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Wide Fund for Nature- WWF).

World Heritage Fund

The World Heritage Fund plays an important role in the sustainable financing of conservation activities at UNESCO World Heritage sites. The World Heritage Committee allocates international assistance funds, prioritizing the most threatened sites.

2

Socioeconomic Development

Promoting ecotourism

- Focus on ecotourism and wildlife tourism to generate revenue while raising visitor awareness about conservation (safaris, guided hikes, volunteering, etc.).
- Promote parks as sustainable tourist destinations through partnerships with private sector operators: travel agencies.
- Diversify ecotourism activities to offer a wide range of options to visitors (certified socio-cultural tours).
- Train guides in local biodiversity and ecosystem knowledge, communication, human relations, safety, and risk management.
- Implement transboundary tourist badges to facilitate visitor travel from one country to another within the parks (visa exemption).



Tourism Infrastructure

- Develop quality tourist facilities and hospitality infrastructure (ecolodges, camps, campgrounds) to enhance the tourist experience and strengthen the sustainability of tourism activities.
- Improve road infrastructure leading to the parks and ensure the maintenance of trails within the parks to facilitate access and ensure a more comfortable experience for visitors, while minimizing environmental impact, particularly related to erosion.





Local savings banks can be created to support initiatives promoting local products, with a percentage of funding reinvested to ensure the sustainability of the projects.

Income-Generating Activities

- Diversify income-generating activities (IGAs) in communities throughout the year, with initiatives such as snail farming, forest product processing (shea, honey, baobab, wild mango, medicinal plants, etc.), cocoa cultivation, and fishing.
- Establish an MoU with the communities to define regulations for these activities.
- The process is based on product selection, awareness-raising, community monitoring and support, and the search for potential buyers. By-products from the exploitation can then be purchased and sold on the market.
- Develop value chains by optimizing the processing and marketing stages of local products to optimize their economic value, through the improvement of production techniques, the establishment of local processing structures, training communities, and the access to national and international markets.

IV

● Insecurity Management

Managing insecurity in transboundary complexes requires a proactive and inclusive approach, integrating the various stakeholders involved and adapting to the specificities of local contexts. This allows for better coverage, real-time information sharing, and faster responses to threats such as poaching, illegal exploitation of natural resources, conflicts, and armed incursions. Moreover, the populations living around the parks are the first to feel these threats and can therefore become essential partners in the fight against insecurity.

Joint Patrols

Boost joint patrols and strengthen collaboration between defense forces and local authorities. This requires the implementation of modern communication systems, regular capacity-building sessions, and sound logistics management (vehicles, fuel, surveillance equipment).

Security Measures

Implement additional security measures, such as joint patrols (military, eco-guards, police, etc.) in high-risk areas, to ensure the safety of park personnel and infrastructure. Military units can deter armed groups and ensure a safer environment for conservation activities.

Awareness-Raising

Raise awareness among surrounding communities on the importance of participating in securing their environment and combating insecurity, particularly the benefits in terms of employment, income, and local development.



V

• Regional Communication

Communication between the continent's transboundary complexes is an important aspect for promoting environmental monitoring, the exchange of know-how, the harmonization of conservation strategies, and the expansion of regional partnerships. It encourages the establishment of joint initiatives that contribute to South-South cooperation and increase the impact of conservation at the regional level.

Communication Network

Create a communication network among curators to exchange best practices and new conservation trends. This network can help centralize successful experiences in conservation and restoration, implement regional projects, facilitate the preparation of international negotiation meetings (UNESCO, Conference of the Parties (COP), etc.), and strengthen South-South cooperation, particularly through the development of common positions, thus strengthening the voice of southern countries. Such a network requires clear points of contact and a regular framework for exchange, such as online workshops or annual meetings.

Exchange Platforms

Use digital platforms such as WhatsApp to shape the network and facilitate daily exchanges. These digital exchanges strengthen collaboration between park managers and improve access to shared resources (documents, guides, videos).

Mobility and Research Internships

Exchange university interns for scientific research. By establishing partnerships with universities and welcoming students and researchers from other regions or countries, parks can benefit from new perspectives and research projects focused on local issues.



Appendix

AdaptWAP Project: Integrating Climate Change Adaptation Measures into the Coordinated Management of the WAP Transboundary Complex

The main objective of the AdaptWAP project is to strengthen ecosystem resilience and improve the livelihoods of populations within the WAP Complex through the establishment of a Multi-Risk Early Warning System (MR-EWS) and the implementation of concrete adaptation measures.

Countries concerned

- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Niger

Beneficiaries

- Technical services of the ministerial environment departments in the three countries
- Local authorities and decentralized administrations
- Civil society organizations: NGOs, socio-professional organizations, women's groups
- Local residents of the W, Arly, and Pendjari parks

National partners

- National Office for Protected Areas- OFINAP- Burkina Faso
- General Directorate of Water and Forests- DGEF- Niger
- National Center for Wildlife Reserve Management- CENAGREF- Benin

Funding

- Adaptation Fund



For more information





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