



Communities Could be Developed Through the Conservation of Gorillas and Chimpanzees.

ERuDeF in its efforts to protect and conserve gorillas and chimpanzees, is proposing the creation of a Wildlife Sanctuary in the Bechati-Fossimondi-Besali Forest in Lebialem Division, and a wildlife corridor in the Bechati-Mone forest in South West Cameroon. This forest is host to the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) and one of Africa's most endangered chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes vellerosus*) among other threatened species as well as Red Data and Ethno botanical plant species.

By protecting these species, the interest of the local people is also protected since they solely depend on this forest for their livelihood as well as these animals.

The Wildlife Sanctuary being a place where both nationals and internationals can get close to nature and examine how life is unfolding, could bring so much development to forest dependent communities in the area.

A team from ERuDeF spent 6 weeks in the field to explain how these communities' benefits would come with the creation of the proposed wildlife sanctuary and also to obtain their views towards this project. With re-

spect to these activities, a series of community workshops were organized in 12 forest adjacent communities in the Lebialem-Mone Forest Landscape.

Based on this project, the girl child and orphans would be able to go to school with the establishment of the Education Fund, a number of jobs would be made available with the creation of an Ecological Research Center, reconstruction of the palaces for ecotourism, many training opportunities would be made available (e.g. beekeeping, agroforestry and vegetative propagation techniques etc) among others. These were some of the benefits short listed to be enjoyed by these communities.

The willingness of these communities to collaborate and participate in ERuDeF's activities is an indication of success in the near future. ERuDeF is now focusing its efforts towards the integration of the village development plans into those of the conservation management plans in this area.

President/CEO
Louis Nkembu



Photo by Sunderland

Cross River Gorilla

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Launching of the Lebialem Highlands/Western Mt Bamboutos Birds Conservation Project



Bannerman's turaco in the Lebialem-Mone Forest Landscape.

ERuDeF's pioneer research in Lebialem Highlands Landscape (LMFL), began on birds in 2003. The first major survey of birds in this landscape was completed in

2005. At the end of this survey, 355 birds were recorded including 14 globally threatened birds' species, making these highlands to be among the first three most important bird conservation sites in South West Cameroon, coming after the Bakossi Mountains and the Mt Cameroon regions. 14 globally threatened birds were recorded including the Bannerman's Turaco and the Banded Wattle-eye.

ERuDeF planned launching another survey in 2009 and this has been made possible with an award of a small grant by Rufford Foundation in June 2009. The project, to

be funded by the Rufford Foundation is the second from this foundation. The initial surveys were originally funded by Rufford in 2004. This new funding will help established a geo-referenced data base for rare and endangered birds of Lebialem Highlands/western Mt Bamboutos and set the pace for the creation of an Important Birds Area and an ecological reserve in the area as well as the launching of an eco-tourism project. The project that will begin in July is scheduled to for 12 months.

By Efuet Atem

Your Planet Needs You! Unite to Combat Climate Change

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972, to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the issue of Human Environment. It is commemorated every year on June 5th. The World Environment Day is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness on the environment and enhances political attention and action.

The theme for the World Environment Day 2009 was 'Your Planet Needs You! Unite to Combat Climate Change'. It reflects the urgency for nations to 'seal the deal' at the crucial climate convention meeting in Copenhagen some 180 days later in the year. It also raises a call for everyone to get involved, rethink actions and ways that result in wastage and heavy greenhouse gas emissions, and adopt a greener lifestyle. Each year a different city is chosen as the principal venue for the global cele-



Pupils celebrating the World Environment Day 2009 in Buea.

bration of World Environment Day. This year's host was Mexico which affirms the growing role of the country in the fight against climate change, including its growing participation in the carbon markets. It is our duty to make people aware of the worldwide environmental demolition and drag the attention and action of various political sources and human resource, be part of the global action to promote the protection of our planet, the sustainable use of our natural resources, and

the adoption of a lifestyle that is friendly to the environment.

The day aims to stir political attention and action. Activities in Buea organized to celebrate this day ranged from tree-planting, concerts, essay and poster competitions in schools and clean-up campaigns. The day also provided opportunities for seminars, workshops and symposia on issues that top the environment.

We hope we all can help combat climate change.

By Mefor Halle

Scientist Prepares Congo Gorillas for Tourism

ANTANANARIVO (Reuters) - If you have gorillas the tourists will come -- but it may take some time if your apes live in the remote east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, better known for anarchy and conflict than tourism.

"It is my dream (to have tourists come) because with tourism we'll have benefits and money coming in," Pierre Kakule Vwirasihikya told Reuters during a conservation conference in the Malagasy capital, where ecotourism is a key theme.

Vwirasihikya, a Congolese Primatologist, has been working with local guides to habituate two families of rare mountain gorillas on the Congo side of the Virunga National Park, which straddles the border with Uganda and Rwanda.

The process of habituation is a long one and involves getting the gorillas comfortable with humans in their midst.

It also means hair-raising encounters with huge males which sometimes charge.

Mountain gorillas are found nowhere else and ape tourism is a huge money-spinner on the Rwandan and Ugandan sides of the border. But tourists are few and far between on the Congo side, which has about 200 of the apes.

Eastern Congo was the main battleground of a civil war which erupted in 1998 and dragged in other African states, some of whose troops pillaged its rich mineral and timber resources.

The vast former Belgian colony is preparing for its first free elections in over 40 years, but roving bandits and militias still terrorise villages in the east.

A few years ago, amid the chaos of war Vwirasihikya also set up the Tayna Gorilla Reserve about 350 kms (220 miles) west of Virunga.

The 88,000 hectare protected area is the first community-run reserve in the Congo and is home to about 350 eastern lowland gorillas.

"I went to the local chiefs and said we need to protect these gorillas and they agreed. We have been habituating gorillas in Tayna," said Vwirasihikya.

The project is funded by the green NGO Conservation International (CI) and also involves the Dian Fossey Gorilla International Fund (DFGFI).

But Vwirasihikya hopes that eventually tourists will bring in the money needed to run this park too.

"We think that in the future we will have tourism," he said.

By Ed Stoddard (culled from Reuters)

More Baby Gorillas Baptized In Rwanda



Mother and baby gorilla getting acquainted

Eighteen baby mountain gorillas have been "baptized" at an annual event in Rwanda to signify the seriousness of the endangerment of the species.

However, the baby gorillas were not physically at the event, which was held at a National Park where the primates live.

There were 18 masked people who represented the gorillas at the event which was attended by senior government officials like Prime Minister Bernard Makuza. Activities at the event included songs and dances .

Monique Nsanzabaganwa, a Tourism Minister, said that the Park would be expanded by the government 10 percent by the end of this year, in hopes of promoting the conservation of the gorilla species.

"This campaign is to encourage gorilla conservation initiatives and to promote the local tourism industry,"

she said.

"Tourism remains one of Rwanda's key sectors," she added.

According to AFP, this was the fifth ceremony so far in Rwanda and there have been a total of 103 gorillas that have officially received names and have been baptized.

The world's last mountain gorillas are found in a mountain range between the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.

According to the United Nations Environment Program, there are about 700 of the gorillas in total.

Culled from redOrbit

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2 million Trees Earmarked for Planting in the Western Highlands Region of Cameroon

Some 2 million tree seedlings have been raised in parts of the West highlands region of Cameroon. The seedlings are multipurpose fast growing agro-forestry tree species promoted in an effort to restore degraded landscapes and improve agricultural production of impoverished communities in rural areas. This project is wholly supported by



Farmers planting trees in their field

Trees for the Future, USA and implemented by ERuDeF with support of local collaborating NGOs. The Western Highlands region is Trees Cameroon's main area of intervention and the target populations involved are pro-poor farmers who are not able to earn more than \$1 a day.

By Achah Robin



A farmer in Ndop appreciating her farm output

Waste Disposal- A Cause for Concern in Buea



Uncontrolled waste disposal in Cameroon has caused many to go sick

Buea, one of the urban towns of Cameroon is securing a growing population which has made waste management a problem. The management of domestic waste is a cause for concern in the Buea municipality. Heaps of refuse are easily spotted along the roads, streets and by some streams.

In some of the Buea neighbourhoods, like Muea and Bolifamba, people tend to deposit domestic waste in or by the streams turning them into dead streams. These are some of the neighbourhoods that suffer water shortages and could

turn to the streams as alternatives for some domestic chores. But because the streams are polluted by the very inhabitants, they are bound to use dirty water from the streams or go for days without water. This, however, makes them vulnerable to waterborne diseases.

According to some of the inhabitants of these localities, no specific places have been allocated for dumping of refuse. So, they must seek for alternative ways to dispose their waste. Streams and abandoned lands solve the problem. On the other hand, a member of the Bolifamba chiefs'

Council has something contrary. To him, the inhabitants are just being stubborn because in some quarters, places have been allocated for refuse dumping but people keep piling heaps of refuse on streets and streams.

Judging from this, one is tempted to think that the problem is lack of sensitization. Most of the people here are yet to know the effects of their behavior - disposing waste in streams and streets. The ecological niche of these areas is therefore depleting as waste does not go into its bin.

From the geographical location of Buea-the slope of Mount Cameroon, it has a cold climate which is not a favourable for mosquitoes. But, due to the mismanagement of domestic waste, Buea is not malaria free because of the heaps of refuse which get moist and serve as good breeding places for mosquitoes.

By Limbu Grace

Conservation and Alternative Livelihood Strategies

Marginal areas are distinguished by extreme environmental stresses (e.g. extreme climate, highly dissected terrain and fractured rocks, steep slope, depleted soils, recurrent drought/flood), poor infrastructure and government services, lack of modern technologies and poor access to market. Looking in terms of socio-economic indicators of development, communities inhabiting marginal areas are invariably much less developed as compared to the mainstream communities.

Designing and implementing innovative approaches, which enhance local livelihoods together with conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, is a challenge to scientists as well as development practitioners. It is for this reason

that, ERuDeF thought it wise to establish a synthesis of presentations and discussions on potential approaches to livelihood development in the Bechati-Fossimondi-Besali Forest (B-F-B) areas, including livelihood options, management of biological diversity and forest resources, and up scaling farmer's technology. 40 days were spent in 12 communities during which a socio-economic survey was carried out. This is regarded as a tool in meeting with conservation and sustainable development.

With increasing population in Bechati-Fossimondi-Besali (B-F-B) Forest Block inhabitants find themselves facing a cruel paradox (mixed feelings). On the one hand, the tropical ecosystem on which many of them depend is affected by increasing levels of degradation caused by a range of

human activities (such as unsustainable hunting practices, deforestation, and soil depletion) and environmental trends (such as climate change and natural disasters). These processes are affecting the livelihoods of the rural dwellers who depend on these ecosystems and, particularly for the poor who often have limited alternatives at their disposal, leading to declining living standards and/or forced migration. In some cases, local resource users are themselves at least partially responsible for some of this degradation, but often the causes are beyond their control.

By Asong Gladys

Socio-Economic Survey in Momo Division (Bechati-Mone Forest Corridor)

ERuDeF's socio-economic team this June, visited another part of the Bechati-Mone Forest Corridor (Momo Division). The survey just as in any other carried out earlier had as main objectives; to assess the priority alternative livelihood needs of the local population, estimate the impact and dependence of the rural farming population on the gorilla forest habitat, estimate the hunting population and their impact on the biological resources base, conduct an ethno botanical study, conduct a KAP of gorillas, and assess the constraints and opportunities for forest conservation in the region. Surveys took place in five villages in the corridor and major results recorded include: high encroachment in the forest (supposed ape habitat) through hunting and farming, hunting activities are rampant as hunters move long distances to hunt, no agricul-



Poaching signs in the Bechati-Mone Forest Corridor

tural extension services were present in three of these villages

Communities need to be reminded of the importance of long term forest conservation programs to ensure long term use of these resources.

The total estimated population for the five villages surveyed stands at about 6700 people of which about 3800 are females and 2900 are males

living in approximately 700 households.

Main crops in the area include: palm, plantains, banana, cassava, cocoyam, yam and vegetables. In the area most households have been able to generate income from mostly palm oil production, given that in some villages food crops are mainly for household consumption. Income from farm activities per household ranges between 20.000-2.500.000 FCFA. Part of household incomes are also gotten from sales of non-timber forest products (Achu spices, Cashew, Monkey kola, Red kola, Bitter kola.

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UP COMING EVENT

◆ **International Field Course/Expedition on Great Apes Conservation and Wildlife Tracking; 12th July-8th August 2009**

This Course is a two to four week course aimed at building conservation interest in volunteers, undergraduates and graduate students both nationally and internationally with no background in conservation but who wish to take up careers in the art of biodiversity conservation with focus on great apes.

The objectives of this course are; to train and expose a new generation of future scientists both national and international on great apes research and wildlife tracking methods, to provide practical field experience to participants in the field of wildlife conservation, and to conduct a regular bio-monitoring of gorillas and chimpanzees in their natural habitats.

Enrollment to the course/expedition requires that participants at the course should have at least some level of university education. However enthusiastic pre-university and high school students could equally enroll.

Participants will have the opportunity to meet with wildlife field scientists and experts and will at the end of the course, be awarded a 'certificate of participation'.

Major course highlights include; training workshop on basic techniques of wildlife monitoring, field surveys, community and school education, tracking and identification, workshop on primatological survey methods, a social program including excursions to Limbe and the Limbe Wildlife Center (LWC).

- ◆ **Ethics, Politics and Dynamics of Fundraising in Conservation and Development. August 20th-30th, 2009**
- ◆ **English for Science and Development + Professional Report September, 20th-25th**

For more inquiries contact ERuDeF Head office situated at:

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