

ERuDeF

Conserving wildlife and protecting fragile environments

No. 017 of Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Editorial

Volume 3, Issue 3

The Role of Community Participation in Wildlife and Forestry

Forestry is being redefined to meet a broad range of economic, environmental and social expectations in many countries, including Cameroon. A key feature in this process of redefinition is the increasing importance of involving a variety of individuals, organisations stakeholders and groups, with an interest in the planning and management of forests and its resources. Aspects of Cameroonian forestry have been contentious for several decades, such as harvesting of resources (especially timber and non-timber forest products) from public native forests and establishing large-scale plantations on farmland. In response to such contention with regional forest industries, local communities are increasingly seeking a role in determining the use and management of forest resources at both the local and regional levels.

Most would accept that the broad demand of forest timber and other resources today aims at meeting multiple objectives, including socioeconomic development, ecological sustainability and industrial productivity.

Despite a growing acceptance of the need for community participation, there has been little analysis of the type and extent of participation that is most effective, and the costs and benefits of local participation for Cameroonian forestry and wildlife activities.

It is also often wrongly assumed that rural communities are homogenous groups of people who share a common view of their environment, a common culture and common interests. Instead, the reality is that rural communities are usually very diverse in social status, cultural origins, gender interests and socioeconomic characteristics. The interests of various groups may not necessarily need to be conflicting, but it can be problematic to artificially erase the existence of different needs and expectations.

Involving stakeholder groups, particularly those with apparent competing interests, is viewed by many as an important approach to building complementarity and a shared vision. However, developing an effective approach for stakeholder groups to participate in wildlife and forestry

activities is a complex task and the investment required should not be underestimated. The identification of stakeholder groups in the community is one step forward towards a more accurate understanding of the major players involved, but genuine and equitable representation within those groups cannot be assumed.

By Atem Barry

Inside this Issue

The Role of Community Participation in Wildlife and Forestry	1
Stakeholders Advocate for Restoration of Degraded Environments	2
CNN Travels into habitats of the Cross River Gorilla	3
Birds Conservation in the Nkingwa Landscape.	4
Bird conservation in Nkingwa landscape	5
Slay Poultry Farmers Appreciates ERuDeF Support	5
Trees for more food	6
Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)	7
Trees Cameroon Field Updates	8

Stakeholders Advocate for Restoration of Degraded Environments

Stakeholders in the environment and conservation sector are unanimous on the fact that degraded environment should be restored through tree planting as a key solution to mitigating the impact of climate change.

This was the main outcome of a one day video conference on climate change organized by a UK based organization known as Trees for the Future and its implantation partner, The Environment and Rural Development Foundation, ERuDeF.

The video conference that held recently at the hall of the Fakoship Plaza in Buea brought together University lecturers, students, MINFOF and MINEP officials, agronomists for SOWEDA, local NGOs and the media.

The documentary titled 'Hope in a Changing Climate' was produced by the Environment Education Media Project of the George Mason University in USA.

Meanwhile, the projection that was aimed at bringing to the limelight the living realities elsewhere and what is being done to restore degraded environment, was supported

by African Conservation Foundation, ACF, Trees For the Future (TREES) and ERuDeF.

According the Country Coordinator of TREES Cameroon, Louis Nkembi, the video conference on climate change comes to support the Copenhagen conference on climate change that was held late last year. He added that, the initiative is to continue to raise awareness on global issues most especially the impact of climate change and look for ways that the issue can be targeted through concrete actions on the ground.

The documentary highlighted the situations in China, Ethiopia and Rwanda where land which were previously very vibrant and productive with human, animal and plant life have over the years been reduced to barren desert lands with malnourished populations due to increased effects of climate change.

Nkembi pointed out that the focus of the documentary was not just to show dreary pictures of the past but to raise hopes that these lands can be restored to the original state through reforestation.

"the key to solving African climate change is through restoration", he stressed adding that the key water-

sheds in Cameroon have to be restored to make life better for the rural populations. Hope in a changing climate describes the restoration efforts conducted by practitioners and research in many countries in the world to restore world degraded environments and restore hope to desperate rural populations

The forum, Nkembi stated, was actually to start talking about setting up a consortium with concerted efforts of both the private sector and the government to handle the effects of climate change on the rural poor.

Restoration efforts according to TREES Cameroon country coordinator are already led by his organization in the Mount Bamboutous forest area which he said supplies water to many parts of the country.

Since 2007, Trees for the Future Cameroon has planted over 4 million trees in rural peasants production systems through out the Western highlands of Cameroon.

By Roland Mbonteh

Culled from Eden Newspaper

CNN Travels into habitats of the Cross River Gorilla



Cross River Gorilla (CRG)

The Cross River Gorillas, the rarest gorillas in the world, live along the border of Nigeria and Cameroon.

CNN travels into the remote jungle to try to get a glimpse of the critically endangered primate and see what is being done to protect the few remaining.

They searched one of west Africa's last rainforest for its last remaining gorillas. Eco-guard Joseph Njama says it's a rare sign that there are actually any gorillas left here. He's an ex-poacher, now turned guardians for the gorillas.

They only see them maybe twice a year. The difficult terrain of these mountains has helped keep the gorillas out of sight and hidden from poachers.

The Cross River gorilla is the rarest in the world and also the most endangered. They think there's maybe 300 in Nigeria and Cameroon and just

35 in the Mbe Mountains.

The local communities of the Mbe Mountains have come together to try and protect the gorillas, but disagreement over exactly 'how' is proving divisive.

One hunter was jailed for only six months after he killed three gorillas in 2006-- a tenth of the local gorilla population killed in one day.

The CNN team continued to search and found a gorilla nest only two to three weeks old. It's very important to find these nests because the gorillas are rarely seen and the only way to get information on the population is by finding nests to give an idea of the population size and ranging behaviour. And by looking at food remains, you can see what plants the gorillas are eating."

One guide told us that

seeing the gorillas is "exciting " because "they're so rare and very few people have the privilege of seeing them. Plus they're huge animals, very charismatic, a beauty to behold. The way they charge at you, roar, open their fangs - it's exciting. Fearful but very exciting."

This CNN crew didn't see any gorillas, but for conservationists that is a hopeful sign. The more these gorillas fear humans and stay hidden, the better their chances of survival.

By Carl Azuz, CNN Student News Anchor

Culled from cnn.com

Birds Conservation in the Nkingkwa Landscape.



African Paradise Fly Catcher

Bird surveys in the Nkingkwa landscape of Nguti subdivision (Kupe-Muanenguba division) were carried out from the 23th of February to the 16th of March by researchers from The Environment and Rural Development Foundation (ERuDeF).

The surveys were aimed at compiling a comprehensive check list of the birds of the region and also to identify the threats to these birds and their ecosystem. Two survey methods were used, that is mist netting and the standard bird count. These were done along existing trails and logged roads to obtain relevant Ecological data. Birds' Count were



carried out at all the sites visited both in the morning and in the evening periods, between 6;30am-10;00am and 4;00pm-6;30pm. Once point counts were completed in the morning, the rest of the time for the day were spent following tracks within each site, and observed species encountered were noted and the GPS Coordinates points of the important species were taken.

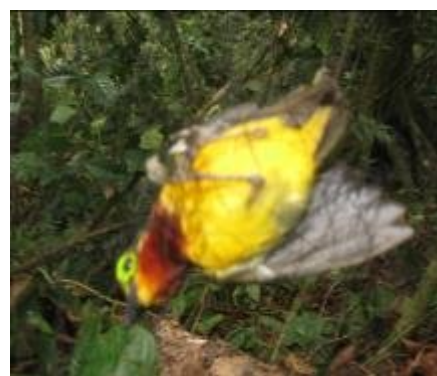
Mist netting were employed irregularly and only at some of the sites. The data for the mist netting were not intended to be quantitative, and were only used as a means of detecting shy species, that is species that were not been recorded by sight or sound. Mist nets were set up, open and closed every one hour and trapped birds were identified and released immediately.

The key outcomes of these surveys, was a record of 201 bird species 4 of which are threatened species, 16 restricted range species, 45 Afro-montane (montane endemic birds species, 4 birds species of the savannah and a large number of 157 bird species of the Guineo-Congolian forest species.

Some important bird species of the region recorded included Pithacartes areas, Cameroon montane greenbul, Crossley;s ground thrush, Bangwa forest



Cameroon blue headed sunbird



Yellow bellied wattle eye

warbler, Cameroon blue headed sun bird etc.

Communities that were targeted during the surveys were 7 and they include Fonki, Nzeleted, Lebe, Njungo, Mbemfeh, Ngentuand, Lebock.

With the presence of these endangered species, restricted range species and a vast array of Biome-Restricted Species of the region can qualified the region as an Important Bird Area (IBA)..

By Egbe Confidence

Slay Poultry Farmers Appreciates

Empowering local groups' initiatives with micro credit has proven to help remove vulnerable communities from the shocks of the vicious cycle of poverty. This holds true for the Slay Poultry farmers at Small Soppo, a group affiliated to the propoor community based savings and loan scheme propagated by ERuDeF. A close interview with the group in March 2010 reveals that, there has been a significant improvement of the socio-economic wellbeing of their families and communities.

Members of the group can now boast of being able to send their children to school, feed their families, pay for healthcare services as well as meet up with other needs.



They attributed these changes in lifestyle to the magic work the ERuDeF is promoting by spurring up the income generating activities of communities through the provision of credit.

In December, the group realized a sale of over FCFA850,000 with accompanying proceeds of FCFA350,000. Each fowl sold, generated a profit of FCFA1,500. When sales become very poor, the group can realize a profit of FCFA 800 which to him is still very encouraging since he rears over 7,500 chicks. Much is equally generated from the sales fowl dropping as they confirmed realizing a sum of FCFA72,000 from the sale of 36bags.

By Asong Gladys

The Miraculous Work of Trees to our Lives

Some people think that planting trees means creating forests. This is not true, we plant trees for many reasons. Trees can settle problems you could never have imagined, just cultivate a habit of planting beneficial trees around your immediate environment then you will discover that:

TREES beautify our environment
 TREES provide us with income thus solving the problem of poverty
 TREES protect water catchments and purify water
 TREES improve and maintain soil fertility as long as they are around your farmland
 TREES provide food for both man

and animals
 TREES contribute to the steady flow of streams
 TREES can improve on our health thus increase our lifespan
 TREES are a very important measure in mitigating climate change
 There is every thing that man needs in tree. If you need food, medicine, manure, pure and portable water, income, trees will provide them for you depending on the way one manages the trees. If you manage them well, they will give you excellent results.

So dear students, parents, government, NGOs, companies, individual business men can we stand up together and take action? If we put all hands on deck, we will sure have excellent outcomes. If we take an example of soil fertility as one of the wonders of tree, we can see for ourselves how the biomass from the trees provides nutrients to the soil. Soil infertility is one of the problems faced by most rural people today and we need to do something to redress the situation.

By Payong Marquise

Trees For More Food

Agriculture is a major activity in the western highlands of Cameroon. Over the years, continuous and intensive agriculture has left the soil infertile causing low crop productivity, landslides and deforestation.

In the past traditional agriculture had been compatible with the level of population and the ecological environment when long bush fallow periods in traditional agriculture were effective in restoring soil fertility for the level of crop yields and intensity of cropping. But today, the regular and frequent occurrence of natural catastrophes (e.g. landslides, floods, etc), failure of green revolution (eg lack of fertilizers, chemicals) due to poverty, increasing population pressure on marginal lands and continual soil degradation have led to a drastic drop in crop productivity. This has contributed greatly to the present poverty levels of the peasants.

TREES Cameroon strives to improve on the lives of these farmers and restore the ecological productivity of these degraded lands through beneficial tree planting. It is for this reason that throughout the month of March, trainings have been organized throughout the 16 divisions of western Cameroon to raise awareness and train farmers on the use of multipurpose fast growing agro-forestry tree species as a perfect substitute for inorganic fertilizers.

These trees will greatly increase the nitrogen content of the soils through the biomass produced as well as provide economic returns to the farmers through the production and sales of fuel wood, seeds, timber, medicine etc. They will equally provide fodder for fattening of their animals and forage for more honey production.



Nursery establishment with groups in Benakuma



Awareness raising on importance of Agro-forestry species

After these trainings, demonstration nurseries were created and seeds of *Acacia angutissima*, *Prunus africana* and *Leucaena leucocephala* were distributed to the farmers throughout the 16 divisions of western Cameroon .

By Neba Kingsly

Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)

Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), also known as Payments for Environmental Services, is the practice of offering incentives to farmers or landowners in exchange for managing their land to provide some sort of ecological service. This could also be the multiple benefits that people receive from nature, such as water purification and flood control by wetlands. PES schemes reward those whose lands provide these services, with subsidies or market payments from those who benefit.

These programs promote the conservation of natural resources in the marketplace. Ecosystem services have no standardized definition, but might broadly be called "the benefits of nature to households, communities, and economies, or more simply, "the good things nature does. Twenty-four specific ecosystem services were identified and assessed by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, a 2005 UN-sponsored report designed to assess the state of the world's ecosystems.

PES programs are voluntary and mutually beneficial contracts between consumers of ecosystem services and the suppliers of these services. The party supplying the environmental services holds the property rights over an en-



vironmental good that provides a flow of benefits to the demanding party in return for compensation. The beneficiaries of the ecosystem services are willing to pay a price that is lower than their welfare gain due to the services. The providers of the ecosystem services are willing to accept a payment that is greater than the cost of providing the services.

For example, the world's largest and longest running PES program is the United States' Conservation Reserve Program, which currently pays about \$1.8 billion a year under 766,000 individual contracts with farmers and landowners to "rent" a total 34.7 million acres of what it considers "environmentally-sensitive land. These farmers agree to plant "long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve water quality, control soil erosion and enhance habitats for waterfowl and wildlife.

In 2000, the Chinese central government announced an even more expensive project under its \$43 billion Grains for Green program, by which it offers farmers grain in

exchange for not clearing forested slopes for farming, thereby reducing erosion and saving the streams and rivers.

PES schemes require three steps

First, an assessment of the range of ecosystem services that flow from a particular area, and who they benefit.

Second, an estimate of the economic value of these benefits to the different groups of people.

And third, a policy, subsidy, or market to capture this value and reward landowners for conserving the source of the ecosystem services.

In addition to benefiting biodiversity, such schemes also have a potential to benefit poor landowners who manage these environmental services.

PES schemes bring great hope for sustaining the protection and management of many forests for the benefit of people and for nature. In particular, PES schemes help mobilize sustainable financing for conservation, including the management of protected areas.

By Mefor Halle

TREES Cameroon Undergoes Complete Metamorphosis

Trees for the Future (TTF) is an American (Maryland) based organization which builds the capacity of local farmer on the importance of planting self beneficial trees. These trees are said to be multipurpose and fast growing and have a lot of beneficial effects not only to farmers but for the whole human race. Some of these benefits are: Improve soil fertility, restore degraded land, restore water catchments and also act as a great sink for green house gases

TREES Cameroon has in the previous years been living no stone unturned to realize its prime objective which is to restore soil fertility in the Western Highlands of Cameroon through the use of green fertilizer (species like *Acacia sp*, *Calleandra sp*, *Leuceana sp* etc) which are all indigenous

trees. Practically the effect of these tree species has been felt not only on the soil but also on animals which has drastically led to an increase in the demand for seeds all over the globe.

This is the reason why TREES Cameroon under the leadership of its coordinator Louis Nkempi on the 3rd of March completed plans to set up a Regional Center for Agro-forestry Training and Seed Production (RCATSP) in Lebialem Division of the South West Region. This center is consisting of four different components: A demonstration ground in which the trees planted shall be well managed to demonstrate to farmers around the site the importance of green cultivation. Secondly, there shall be a seed reserve area from where seeds shall be

allowed to grow and produce seeds that can be harvested and exported. Thirdly, the medicinal values of these trees shall not be neglected. The ethno botanical values of these trees shall be considered in which medicinal trees shall be planted and highly monitored. Lastly the research part of this area will integrate agricultural and medical researchers, students on internship who want to increase their skills in both areas of research

This project is expected at its start, to employ about 150 natives of the Upper Lewoh community and might employ more in the nearest future.

By Tamabang Didacus

TREES Cameroon FIELD UPDATES March 2010

For the year 2010, TREES Cameroon continues to focus its efforts in the western highland region of Cameroon. As usual, 3 planning meetings were organized on the 2nd of February, 4th and 5th of March in Kumba for the south West, Dschang for the West and Bamenda for the North West Regions respectively. During these meetings NGOs were designated as lead NGOs to coordinate programs in each of the 16 Divisions where TREES Cameroon currently intervenes. DAG, CAFDEC, RECODEV, ASWEEDEV/ERuDeF, Ekondo-Titi Agro-forestry Farmers Network will coordinate activities for the south west region, RAGAF, COPEBA and Reseau Agroforesterie de Menoua will coordinate the west while NDEF, SIBADEF, SIRDEP, CIRDAF, will coordinate

activities for the North West. Also during these meetings the new reporting format for 2010 activities was presented and adopted, and Memorandums of understandings between TREES Cameroon and the coordinating NGOS was signed.

After deliberations, TREES Cameroon and the Lead NGOs arrived at the following resolutions;

Each Lead NGO will receive a transport support up to the tune 22000Fcfa to enable them effectively follow up field activities. This has witness an increase as of 2009.

They will have to report latest 20th of each month. To facilitate reporting, 2 cameras and 2 GPSes will be sent to the North

West as well as the south west, and 1 camera and GPS for the west. Each Lead NGO will have to use this equipment for a maximum period of one week and hand it down to the next.

They will provide field technicians who will follow up the activities of the farmers very closely, Each farmer should be able to plant at least 2000 trees in his/her farm with the use of compost from the nursery level. With respect to this, simplified MOUs will be signed between TREES and the farmers. These meeting set the pace for work to begin through out the 3 regions of Western Cameroon for 2010.

By Neba Kingsly

The Wonders of the Moringa

Have you ever imagined a plant at your backyard that offers you just everything you need? Food, medication, fuel, you name it. This is true and it is possible to grow a tree that can give you all these things at little or no cost. The uses of the *Moringa oleifera* as it is scientifically known are many and varied. From the roots to the leaves you can put it to good use. Maybe you just did not know it but get it now.

The immature pods are the most valued and widely used of all the tree parts. The pods are extremely nutritious, containing all the essential amino acids along with many vitamins and other nutrients. The immature pod can be eaten raw or prepared like green peas or green beans, while the mature pods are usually fried and possess a peanut-like flavor. You know longer need to go to the

pharmacy to buy drugs containing amino acids and all that, just go to backyard and harvest the pods of the Moringa and bingo!

The leaves are eaten as greens, in salads, in vegetable curries, as pickles and for seasoning. They can be pounded up and used for scrubbing utensils and for cleaning walls. It helps you even further, you don't have to buy iron sponge and all those things to get your pots shiny. Livestock relish the young leaves of this tree so if you don't plant as many as possible, you may have to compete very seriously with your cattle for roots, leaves and all.

In developing countries, the Moringa can also be used to prevent malnutrition in children and nursing mothers. There ex-

ist overwhelming evidence that the Moringa could be used to back up significantly nutritional and medicinal needs. This is especially important to developing countries where there is always a deficiency in meals. The Moringa is one of the tree species promoted by Trees for the Future. Other trees include the Neem, Acacia, Calliandria and a host of others. The best time to plant the Moringa was a long time ago, the second best time to plant it is now. So plant a tree today and why not the Moringa

By Ita Nawom

The Farming Season, Conservationists' View

Some people may be imagining how nature lovers may look at the farming season. When the farming season is about to begin, especially in the forest adjacent communities, conservationists start wondering if only the old farms will be re-farmed

or if new farms will be cleared. The thought that follows this is; will the new farmlands remain fertile for many years? If new farms are to be cleared, where will this be? Most often this is done in the adjacent primary forest as it is still very fertile? Of course not an interesting one as this will mean destroying vast areas of biodiversity.

So what do you do to reduce the conversion of forest to farmlands? This is a question that is never addressed to the farmers as they

will expect conservationists to do the impossible. A question with many answers, yet requiring much funds, a question most conservation organizations around the African rain forest have been attempting to answer. A question that requires a joint force and effort to be answered! ERuDeF, a Cameroon local conservation organization working to conserve wildlife, especially the Cross River gorillas in the Lebialem Highlands of Western Cameroon has put a step ahead to answer this question.

Answering this question means providing solutions to conservation problems encountered by most conservationists. ERuDeF will be answering part of the questions by extending its agro-

forestry program to the rural forest adjacent communities. They will be introducing the planting of trees which will increase soil fertility. Much land will not be required to farm, as yield will increase.

This is just a step as they are further soliciting funds to introduce new sustainable livelihood activities to divert farmers interest from forests by involving them in new activities.

Lets keep our fingers crossed as ERuDeF seeks more solutions to our thoughts and as they attempt to 'leave a green Cameroon'.

By Muh Bernice

Press release

WaterSmart Innovations Conference & Expo

October 6-8, 2010 Las Vegas, Nevada

Water-efficiency professionals from across the United States and around the world combined to submit 267 papers for consideration as presentations and panel discussions at the WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Exposition. The number is a record for the conference, now heading into its third year.

SAFARICOM MARATHON 2010

The 11th Safaricom Marathon and Half Marathon will take place at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, 140 miles north of Nairobi on **Saturday 26th June 2010**. Organised by Tusk and supported by Safaricom this fundraising event will host 1,000 runners from 20 different countries. The Safaricom Marathon is regarded as one of the toughest marathons in the world. However, runners of all abilities take part, from fun runners, walkers and amateurs, to professionals like Paul Tergat the Kenyan international and former world record holder. .

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