

# PAPBio NEWS

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With the support of the European Union



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Launched in 2018, the PAPBio programme, which is funded by the 11th European Development Fund, is taking place over several landscapes, with a total of eight field projects and a project dedicated to regional environmental governance. Since the programme was launched, a number of events have shaken the world in general and the West African region in particular. These include COVID 19 and the growing insecurity in some beneficiary countries. While the former was brought under control after a few months, the security situation is still struggling to stabilise despite the efforts of our governments.

However, these difficulties have not prevented the programme from being implemented, as those in charge of the various implementing bodies have always found alternatives to adapt to the prevailing situations. In spite of everything, the projects have gone ahead and achieved encouraging results for

the protected areas and their surroundings. To publicise the programme's relevant and innovative actions, the fortnightly PAPBio News is produced and distributed to implementing partners and donors. Since then, two issues have been produced and distributed. These first two issues presented the start-up of the various projects with their batches of activities.

This 3rd issue of PAPBIO NEWS is dedicated to the presentation of activities at cruising speed for certain projects, and to capitalisation and experience sharing for others which are at the end of their implementation.

Reading this third issue should enable those responsible for implementation to share experiences, but also enable decision-makers to make an initial assessment of the implementation of the programme. I am confident that each of you is interested in this programme and its various projects, and I hope you enjoy reading it, while awaiting the next issue, which will be devoted solely to the assessment and capitalisation of the programme.

**Enjoy your reading ...**

# **MANGROVE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN SENEGAL AND BENIN** **"PAPBIO C1-MANGROVES" PROJECT**

As part of the European Union's (EU) Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for West Africa 2014-2020 (11th European Development Fund), the support programme for the preservation of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems, environmental governance and climate change in West Africa (PAPBio) was selected in consultation with the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), as Lead Applicant, and Wetlands International Africa and the Collectif 5Delta (represented by Eclosio, Kinomé, United Purpose and GRDR), as Co-Beneficiaries, have received a grant from the European Union (EU) to implement the "Management of Mangrove Forests from Senegal to Benin" project known as "PAPBio C1-Mangroves".

## **Joal-Fadiouth MPA (Senegal) arms Beninese and Togolese in oyster farming and beekeeping**



In collaboration with the national platforms of Benin and Togo, the International Union for Conservation of Nature in its Central and West Africa Programme (IUCN-PACO) organised, from 24 to 28 April 2023, an exchange visit of stakeholders from Mono Volta under the theme: "Cross-border development of mangrove potential in Mono Volta: the case of oyster farming and beekeeping" in Aného (Togo). A total of 17 participants, including 10 from Togo and 7 from Benin, took part in this workshop, the aim of which was to share the experience of stakeholders from the Priority Conservation Landscape (PCL) of Grand Saloum (Senegal) on the development of industries using by-products from mangrove ecosystems, in particular oyster farming using garlands and beekeeping for stakeholders from Mono Volta.

The opening ceremony was led by Me Alexis AQUAREBURU, Mayor of the Commune des Lacs 1 and President of the Aquereburu & Partners Foundation, beneficiary of the PAPBio C1-Mangroves grants. In his speech, the Mayor thanked IUCN-PACO and the EU for their ongoing support, and urged the participants to pay close attention to the training, which could have a major impact on their income levels.

For IUCN-PACO, represented by Mr Bara Top, Communication and Advocacy Officer for PAPBio, this meeting of giving and receiving is part of PAPBio's mission to equip communities to identify and exploit promising sectors for IGAs, while putting in place conservation actions for future generations.



During the five (05) days of this exchange visit, the participants were given tools for designing, transporting and installing garlands for oyster farming, as well as training in the steps involved in monitoring, exploiting and developing the products from these garlands.

The other stage involved designing the beehives. Carpentry workshops were organised with the consultant trainers, enabling the learners to design the hives before installing them on the island of Aného.

What's special about this session is that theory is always followed by practical work in the field, so that learners can make the most of their knowledge. As a result, they will be able to adapt it more easily to their own context.

In addition to this aspect, the andragogical methods used by the trainer facilitated horizontal communication with the beneficiaries, who showed great determination throughout the seminar.



At the end of this exchange visit, a restitution is planned with the support of the Mayor of the town of Aného, Mr Alexis AQUAREBURU, in order to multiply the training. The next stage will involve training in the maintenance of garlands and beehives, as well as the monitoring, collection, processing and marketing of products.

In the long term, it is hoped that the results in terms of production will be very convincing, given the high potential and considerable comparative advantages of these communities.

### **PAPBio C1-MANGROVES results...**

- 49 subsidised projects in 9 countries in West Africa ;
- 70 people trained during exchange visits organised by the project ;
- 109 ha de mangroves déjà restaurés par les projets de subvention.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS...**

- Mangal Festival
- International conference in November 2023 in Toubacouta (Senegal)

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## **SAVANNAH INTEGRATED BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (SIBCI)** **/ Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS)**

### **Strengthening communities: Training in biodiversity monitoring and conservation in Mole National Park**

In April 2023, a five-day training programme brought together Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) and neighbouring communities of Mole National Park (MNP) in Ghana. The initiative, supported by the Savanna Integrated Biodiversity Conservation Initiative (SIBCI), aimed to build the capacity of CREMAs in biodiversity monitoring and threat assessment, while fostering collaboration and understanding between participants.

- **Training for a sustainable future:**

Mole National Park plays a crucial role in preserving Ghana's natural heritage. However, to ensure sustainability, the communities surrounding the park need to be actively involved. This is where CREMAs come in. CREMAs are community-based initiatives that encourage local participation in the management and conservation of natural resources.



- **Promoting collaboration and capacity building :**

As Solomon Kenyenso, coordinator of the SIBCI project, pointed out, the aim of the training was to develop the capacity of the CREMAs in biodiversity monitoring and to encourage collaboration between communities with a view to effective management of the natural resources surrounding them. The training covered topics such as legislation and policies relating to fauna and flora, and the importance of biodiversity monitoring by communities as part of effective park management..



- **The safari experience:**

As part of the training, participants had the opportunity to discover the park with their own eyes. This safari enabled them to observe the diversity of flora and fauna within the park.

This experience motivated the participants to support conservation efforts in their communities.



- **Looking to the future :**

The training programme ended on a positive note, with participants equipped with the knowledge and tools to monitor biodiversity in their respective CREMAs. Ali Mahama, the park's director, said: "Mole Park cannot develop independently of the communities that surround it. This training has brought us all closer to achieving our common goals of conservation and community development";

- **Public perception :**

Participants' sentiments reflect a growing commitment to environmental conservation and community development. One participant said: "We now understand our role in preserving the park and its biodiversity. This knowledge allows us to make a difference in our communities.

- **Renforcer l'autonomie des femmes et des communautés :**

One of the key recommendations of the training was the equitable representation of women in CREMA governance and workshops. Participants stressed the importance of women's involvement and how they can contribute to the growth and sustainability of CREMAs. "Women in our communities need to be empowered to play an active role in conservation," said one participant.

#### **Conclusion :**

Biodiversity monitoring and conservation training around Mole National Park underline the importance of community involvement in safeguarding Ghana's natural heritage. Through collaborative efforts, CREMAs and local communities are becoming fervent advocates of sustainable resource management and wildlife conservation. This initiative empowers individuals and strengthens the bond between communities and their natural environment. The seeds sown during this training programme promise a greener, more sustainable future for all concerned.

## **Linking borders for conservation: A regional dialogue on wildlife corridors**

In the heart of West Africa, an important conversation took place, not within the confines of a meeting room, but under the vast canopy of nature. Stakeholders from Ghana, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire came together to discuss the protection and preservation of vital wildlife corridors that transcend borders. The Nature and Development Foundation, in collaboration with GWS, organised a two-day meeting at the Forest Hotel in Dodowa, Ghana, on 14 and 15 June 2023. The meeting, entitled "Regional Dialogue on the Western and Eastern wildlife corridors of the Mole national park", brought together experts, conservationists and communities to discuss a common commitment: the preservation of vital wildlife corridors that transcend borders.



- **Wildlife without borders**

It is said that wildlife knows no borders. Just as birds soar through the sky unrestricted by political lines, animals need freedom to move around. The corridors in question - the Eastern Wildlife Corridor (EWC) and the Western Wildlife Corridor (WWC) - are lifelines for countless species. These routes stretch from Burkina Faso to Ghana, facilitating the migration of elephants, buffalo, waterbucks, baboons and numerous reptiles, amphibians and birdlife.



- **Preserving ecological connectivity**

These corridors not only serve to protect charismatic megafauna; they are essential for maintaining genetic diversity and the overall health of ecosystems. Professor Emmanuel Danquah, an

ecologist, explained during the meeting that corridors enable gene flow, species migration and resistance to the effects of climate change. In short, they are the arteries that keep nature's heart beating.

- **A call for collaboration**

During the dialogue, participants stressed the importance of cross-border collaboration. Reverend David Kpelle of the Ghana Wildlife Society underlined the organisation's commitment to wildlife conservation across national borders. Mr Bernard Asamoah Boateng, of the Ghana Wildlife Division, called for a holistic approach to conservation, to ensure that protected areas fulfil their mission effectively.

- **The community at the heart of conservation**

The discussion also focused on community involvement. Mathias Edetor, from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), stressed the importance of involving local communities in conservation efforts. Conservation is not just about protecting flora and fauna, but also about promoting sustainable land-use practices that benefit both people and nature..

- **Research: The key to conservation**

Sanon Arsene, from the IUCN, emphasised the role of research and data collection in preserving these vital corridors. The more we know about the movements and needs of wild species, the better equipped we are to protect them. Research not only informs conservation strategies, it also provides a scientific basis for policy advocacy.



### **Future prospects**

At the end of the regional dialogue on wildlife migration corridors, a consensus emerged that safeguarding these vital corridors requires a collaborative effort. Recommendations include strengthening collaboration between nations, community engagement, ongoing research, policy advocacy and sustainable funding mechanisms.

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## **SUSTAINABLE, PARTICIPATORY AND INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE COMOE NATIONAL PARK - NITIDAE**

### *Drawing up and implementing Local Development Plans*

Support for the implementation of Local Development Plans (LDPs) continued. This latest phase involved finalising the construction and refurbishment of teacher accommodation and the final handover of classroom buildings.

#### **✚ Teacher accommodation**

The construction and refurbishment work has all been completed. The refurbishment of the semi-detached villas has been completed. Provisional acceptance has been given. The keys to the building have been handed over to the village's management committee, which, under the terms of the contract with the service provider, will be required to report any imperfections. This must be done within 03 months. During this warranty period, repairs will be at the service provider's expense.



3-room teaching flat in Quanderama Bambarasso



Renovated semi-detached villas in Tedia

#### **✚ Classrooms**

The three schools planned by the LDPs in the villages of Dombadougou, Lato and Kanguérasso have all been completed.

(03) in the villages of Dombadougou, Lato and Kanguérasso, have all been 100% completed.

As no anomalies were found, final acceptance was pronounced without reservation.



Lato et Dombadougou / 02 classes + 01 bureau

### **Summary**

- 03 schools completed out of 03 planned
- 03 housing units completed out of 03 planned
- 01 semi-detached villa with 03 rooms rehabilitated
- 07 human-powered pumps completed out of 07 planned

## Shea sector

The second organic shea campaign, which began on 22 May 2023, went well. More kernels were produced than in the previous campaign, with almost 40 tonnes of nuts collected, yielding 16 tonnes of kernels after processing (compared with 8.5 tonnes last year). Processing into butter will begin in October.



Weighing walnuts collected in Quanderama Dioulasso

## Beekeeping

Producers received refresher training on how to make beehives, trap bees and harvest honey. Two training sessions involved 20 participants in the villages of Tédiala and Lato. Harvesting training will be given in mid-September prior to the harvesting stage.



Participants trained to make Kenyan beehives

## 2023 cashew campaign

The 2023 cashew nut season was assessed by the project teams with the end of transactions in August. This year, the project supported 15 cashew nut producer groups in marketing their product (the same 12 as last year, plus 03 new groups).

Despite a difficult season (slowdown in world demand and fall in on-farm prices), the project encouraged the groups to sell as early as possible in order to take advantage of the high prices at the start of the season and ensure a better quality product. This has paid off, with a total of almost 570 tonnes of raw cashew nuts sold by the groups. Around a hundred tonnes were also sold individually as the season progressed, as well as unsold stock of 110 tonnes, which unfortunately will probably be sold at a reduced price at the start of the next season. That said, growers have had a successful season despite the unfavourable international climate, with most selling above 300 FCFA/kg at the start of the season, before prices fell drastically from May onwards (100 to 150 FCFA/kg).

The project is therefore wrapping up its support for cashew nut marketing in style for this latest season!



Weighing in a group sale

## Summary

- 680 tonnes of raw cashew nuts marketed in 2023 by 15 groups supported by the project, including 570 tonnes in group sales
- A functioning organic shea cooperative with 207 members (women)
- 20 people trained in beekeeping techniques

## **REGIONAL GOVERNANCE OF PROTECTED AREAS**

### **PAPBio C2-GOVERNANCE**

As part of the European Union's (EU) Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for West Africa 2014-2020 (11th European Development Fund), and in consultation with the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, the support programme for the preservation of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems, environmental governance and climate change in West Africa (PAPBio) has been selected. Component 2 of PAPBio is implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN PACO).

### **3rd Regional Coordination Meeting: Stakeholders seek synergy of action to safeguard protected areas in West Africa**

The aim of the 3rd meeting of the regional coordination of protected areas in West Africa, held from 18 to 20 July 2023 in Cotonou, Benin, was to enable conservation professionals from the West African protected areas region to discuss the current challenges impacting biodiversity conservation and the adaptation measures to be promoted in order to ensure the continuity of protected area management operations.



Organised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through the Regional Governance of Protected Areas-PAPBio C2-Governance project, this 72-hour meeting provided an opportunity to assess the situation of protected areas in order to find common, effective and sustainable solutions that can be applied by all member countries for the sustainable management of protected areas in West Africa. The opening ceremony was held on 18 July 2023.

During the opening ceremony on 18 July 2023, Dr Arsène Sanon, Coordinator of PAPBio and representative of the Regional Director of IUCN-PACO, said that "our protected areas in West Africa are under considerable threat. Worse still, the current context, characterised by an interweaving of security, humanitarian, economic and community crises, is further compromising our conservation efforts, and even undermining the very existence of these conservation areas and the biodiversity they contain". Colonel Justin Dossou Azakpan, representing Benin's Director General of Water, Forests and Hunting, echoed this view, pointing out that protected areas risk being further affected if nothing is done. According to him, "in a context of widespread insecurity in the Sahel countries, protected areas are likely to be even more affected by attacks from unidentified armed groups. These attacks will exacerbate the current causes of the loss of wildlife diversity, which are the discontinuity of interventions, the lack of sustainable funding, and the inadequate technical and operational capacities of conservation players", he added.



The meeting was attended by more than forty people, including General/National Directors of the administrations responsible for protected areas in ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania, West African protected area managers, members of the regional coordination and monitoring mechanism for protected areas in West Africa, PAPBio project operators and members of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of the PAPBioC2 Governance project. For the latter, innovation and working in synergy using modern methods and tools are essential to overcome the problems undermining protected areas in West Africa. To this end, it is necessary to share experiences in order to take appropriate measures for an effective fight. "The regional coordination, management and monitoring system for protected areas in West Africa is intended to be a network of professionals committed to the conservation of protected areas in the region. To achieve this, the network will need to promote the pooling of experience and knowledge on protected areas, to make a substantial contribution to improving regional and sectoral policies, and to lobby in favour of protected areas and biodiversity conservation", explained Dr Arsène Sanon.



At the end of the three days of discussions, concrete recommendations will be formulated to safeguard protected and/or conserved areas in West Africa.

## **Reflection on safeguarding endangered species in West Africa**

One million is the number of species threatened with extinction out of the 8 million animal and plant species in existence, according to the alert launched by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in 2019. What's more, around 75% of the earth's surface has been altered, 66% of the ocean's surface has been impacted and more than 85% of wetlands have disappeared. For the United Nations, the phenomena responsible for this bleak picture are: invasive species, pollution, climate change, over-exploitation of resources and the destruction of habitats.

In order to put a stop to this ecological drain, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and its Central and West Africa Programme (IUCN-PACO) organised a regional workshop on sharing experiences on ex-situ conservation and the translocation of threatened species in West Africa on 8 and 9 May 2023 in Cotonou (Benin), through the PAPBio C2-Governance project.



The Convention on Biological Diversity defines ex-situ conservation as "the conservation of components of biological diversity outside their natural environment". It has several objectives, including conservation breeding, population reinforcement or reintegration, gene banks or research applied to conservation," said Dr Arsène Sanon, representing the Regional Director of IUCN-PACO at the opening ceremony. He added that the aim is not to promote ex-situ conservation to the detriment of life in the wild, but to explore how conservation can support wildlife conservation efforts.

The two-day workshop enabled participants to share experiences in order to find a sub-regional and regional solution for the survival of endangered species. According to Lieutenant-Colonel Séko N'Goye Enock, representing the Director General of the EFC at the opening ceremony, the aim of the workshop was to strengthen the learning systems of the partners in the PAPBio programme, and to share the experience acquired in order to support our States in their conservation efforts.

Bringing together some twenty participants from 9 ECOWAS countries, the workshop provided an opportunity to formulate recommendations that will be submitted to technical and financial partners for action and taken into account in the design of future projects.





## USEFUL LINKS

Website : <https://www.papbio.org>

Virtual Hub: <https://conservationhub-wa.net/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/papbio>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/papbio>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/87111828/admin/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3YA4tYT128Rpb5ky36Xlfw>



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