

THE EGI BULLETIN

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From the Executive Director



I am pleased to present you with yet another edition of our quarterly newsletter, the EGI Bulletin. In this edition, we share some highlights from our work, and the successes we have achieved in building new partnerships.

Over the course of 2013, we received support from likeminded partners to implement a number of projects in Manyu division. This enabled us to kick-start our conservation education and community programs in the area. In this edition of our newsletter, and even as phase one of our beekeeping and agro forestry projects draws to an end, we would like to share with you some insights from the field: from beneficiaries of our projects, and staff who helped make it happen.

As we have always maintained, partnerships is a must when one seeks lasting solutions to environmental and conservation challenges. It has therefore our great pleasure to work partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Cameroon Country Programme Office (CCPO) under the Cooperation for the implementation of civil society strengthening program, funded by the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). This partnership builds EGI's capacity to effectively implement policy research and action, which is one of the pillars of our organization.

I would like to conclude by saying that EGI is a learning organization, and welcomes comments and feedback to any of the content contained in our newsletter. Feel free to contact us by email, phone, or by visiting our office in Buea.

Happy reading!

Biodiversity visit to Tombel

Biodiversity involves conservation of wildlife species, sustainable management of both forest and marine ecosystems (mangroves).

EGI prioritizes the empowerment of local communities to enable them to meaningfully participate in co-management activities in and around priority areas.

We build community capacity on wildlife management and our communication initiatives are geared towards providing information campaigns to change knowledge, attitudes and practices of village communities about species, conservation laws, hunting and bush meat trade.

To reduce deforestation, our goal by 2021 is to ensure that the forest cover in the south west region is 90% intact, in conformity with the 2010 forest status.

Concerning Wildlife conservation, our goal by 2020 is to contribute to the stabilization of the population of the great Apes and pangolins in the south west region from 2016 levels and elephant populations from the 2010 levels.

EGI's Executive Director, John Takang and WWF's Conservation Director, Cleto Ndikumangenge visited the TOCODEC Conservation Cooperative in Tombel on 31st May 2017.

The objective of this trip was to take a closer look at the activities of the TOCODEC Conservation Cooperative that combines beekeeping with agroforestry as major income generating activities to reduce pressure on wildlife and forest resources.



A group photograph during the field visit to Tombel. Photo/EGI

Research at the Mawambi Hills - South West Region, Cameroon



A cold breeze sweeps around the hilly topography. An occasional gorilla howl can be heard from a distance. This is the Mawambi hills forest in Cameroon. Located to the Southeast of the Takamanda National park, this forest block is part of the national permanent estate, in one of the lowest altitude sites. It is also home to the Cross River Gorilla. In close proximity to the forest, live four small communities (Takpe, Assam, Awurri and Okpambe) who are dependent on this forest for their livelihoods.

The closeness of these communities and the unprotected status of Mawambi Hills causes the forest to experience high levels of human activity. Threats to this forest include land conversion for agriculture, human disturbance during Non-timber forest products (NTFP) harvesting and poaching.

Rita Ebune (Community Development Officer at EGI) and Messape Derrick (Wildlife Biologist at EGI) conducted a research at the Mawambi Hills Forest from 9th to 23rd of May 2017.

The main objective of this research was to determine the status and the impact of human activity on the Cross River Gorilla at the Mawambi Hills to better inform conservation planning of this subspecies.

The survey revealed that, the Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) and the Nigeria-Cameroon Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes ellioti*) are the most abundant species as compared to other large mammals present in the

Mawambi Hills. Results from the data collected and analysed showed a mean RD of 2.14 ± 0.50 and 1.90 ± 0.42 signs respectively per Km walked (more than one gorilla and chimpanzee sign per kilometre).

The main source of income in communities around the Mawambi Hills is agriculture with 92.8% of the house head cultivating mainly cocoa (*Theobroma cacao*) as cash crops. In the same farmland, 42.0% of the respondents cultivate palm (*Elais guineensis*) which is mainly used for local palm oil consumption. Methods of cultivation for both cash crops and economic crops are shifting cultivation with slash and burn method used for forest clearance. This goes a long way to fragment the habitat of the Cross River Gorillas (which were commonly seen very close to settlements in the past).

The local communities around the Mawambi Hills depend largely on the natural resources for their livelihoods such as the harvesting of NTFPs. Improvement of livelihoods through support of sustainable farming methods together with capacity building on best practices regarding forest resources management are seen as critical tools for the effective conservation of the Cross River Gorilla at the Mawambi Hills.



EGI team on the way to Mawambi Hills. Photo/EGI

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) field trip to Nsong



Clockwise: students at Ecole Publique de Nsong pose with educational sign post; the school compound with conservation methods; EGI Executive Director poses with students and other participants for a group photograph. Photos/EGI

EGI's Executive Director, John Takang, visited Ecole Publique de Nsong, one of EGI Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) pilot schools in the Bakossi Landscape on 1st June 2017.

The aim of the trip was to accompany WWF Conservation Director, Cleto NDIKUMANGENGE, on a monitoring visit of EGI Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) activities. Participants to this trip were EGI, WWF, School Administration, Student Government, President of the Parent-Teacher Association.

This is one of the strategies identified in Agenda 21 to help achieve a balance between environmental conservation, socio-cultural values and the sustainable use of natural resources. Against the background, our ESD Program is vital in our Efforts to engage pupils and young adults in activities that will empower them to take a decisive position in shaping a sustainable world.

Here EGI, among other things, is promoting the whole school Approach to ESD: conducting green business at school level, engaging parent-teacher associations and

local councils in teaching and learning, and in building the school estate. Even more critically: how to teach sustainable development in different school subjects.

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EGI Reorganises VFMCs around FMU 11-005. Photo/EGI

Promoting Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

The participatory or collaborative management approach has been widely recognised as one of the most successful approaches in natural resource management.

In Cameroon, Law No. 94/01 of 20 January 1994 on forestry and wildlife prescribes the involvement of local communities in the sustainable management of the national forest estate. More specifically, Ministerial Decision No. 135/D/MINEF/CAB of 26 November 1999, establishing the procedures for the classification of forests in the permanent forest areas of the Republic of Cameroon, provides for the establishment of Village Forest Management Committees (VFMC) as a local institution charged with representing local populations in all issues concerning the management of forests.

In the context of forest exploitation by commercial logging companies, VFMCs act as a community intermediary with the logging company as well as the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, and other stakeholders.

In Eyumojock Sub-division of the Southwest Region, the Forest Management Unit (FMU) 11005 is managed by CAFECO SA., an affiliate of the WIJMA Group. Some 26 village communities are located in and around the CAFECO concession, which the company has pledged to manage in a sustainable manner.

With support from the WWF/Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN), EGI was called upon to facilitate the re-organization process in all 26 villages.

The overall objective of the activity was to re-organise and install the VFMCs of 26 villages in and around FMU 11-005, in Eyumojock Sub-division of Manyu Division, which CAFECO SA./WIJMA manages.

The following actions were undertaken:

- Facilitation of a stakeholder consultation (local communities, out-going VFMC members, local administration, and concession holder) to initiate the process of re-organisation of the 26 VFMCs in Eyumojock Sub-division.
- Facilitation and supervision of elections of VFMC members in the 26 riparian villages of FMU-11005 while respecting legal norms and procedures in force.
- Facilitation of the installation of the newly elected VFMC members while recalling the core mission of the VFMC.

Open Standards (OS) in order to improve conservation delivery



EGI staff get trained on Open Standards. Photo/EGI

The Open Standards (OS) is an important tool in the improvement of conservation delivery. The standards present a set of tools and guidance to help teams manage their projects right from proposal development to implementation.

In a recent workshop attended by EGI's executive director, and sponsored by US fish program (USFWS), participants drawn from NGO's, park managers (conservators) and

other public authorities were trained on project and program management standards (PPMS)/open standards. The training which targeted public authorities involved in teaching of conservation and management of natural resources was organised by WWF, Cameroon.

The workshop took place in Ebolowa from 7 to 11 August 2017 and had as principal objectives:

- Enable increased understanding on the key elements of the Open Standards
- Introduce participants to how to mainstream policy, gender, livelihoods and climate change adaptation issues into conservation projects
- Provide participants with an opportunity to use the knowledge and skills to design projects and strategic plans using real examples.

Are you a recent graduate or in your final years of studies?

The EGI Capacity Building Programme provides young professionals with the opportunity to catch a glimpse into the exciting world of environmental governance.

Qualified candidates can apply for internship or the resident scholars program

For more information and application forms, visit our website:

<http://www.engov-institute.org/join-us/resident-scholars/>
<http://www.engov-institute.org/join-us/internship/>

Presentation of findings on wildlife riches and threats to the Mawambi Hills Forests in a statutory meeting for the proposed Mawambi Community Forest



Left to right: EGI's Executive Director makes a presentation; participants pose for a group photograph

The Mawambi Hills Forests is richly endowed with biodiversity. This is currently under threat due to different anthropogenic activities carried out by community members in the four adjacent communities: Tapke, Assam, Awuri and Okpambe.

Despite its wealth, the Mawambi hills forest has no formal government protection.

Community members are free to exploit natural resources here. But, in the absence of any agency or organization to direct the people on how to harness the resources, they do so at the expense of sustainability of the same resources whose custody is in their hands.

According to the land use plan of the Southwest region, this forest is a proposed community property whose gazette process is on course.

In accordance with the manual of procedures for the establishment of a community forest in Cameroon, the process is at the stage of a concertation meeting where one forest officer from the 4 communities needs to be appointed and activities for the inventory of the different biodiversity in the area initiated.

The Director of Environmental Governance Institute (EGI), John Takang, with some of his staff Members (Rita

Ebune, Community development Officer and Messape Derrick wildlife Biologist) recently carried out a rapid survey of large mammals and socio-economic work in the area. A process of information dissemination to different stakeholders was developed and aims to use this forum to directly present the findings. The stakeholders present will include, the Government of Cameroon through MINFOF, MINATD, WCS and the local communities for an appraisal.

The main objective of this mission is the presentation of findings in the Mawambi Hills forest to the different stakeholders, a form of information dissemination and sharing.

At the end of the meeting, inputs have been made from the different stakeholders particularly the community members and WCS who are present in the area. This has helped improve on the content of the Report.

A formal platform for collaboration has been established with other institutions working in the area.

The mission has spanned for 3 days (27th to 29th of August, 2017.)

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