



Wild Chimpanzee Foundation®

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## Annual Report 2024

**Activities of the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation for improved conservation of chimpanzees and their habitat in West Africa**



January 2025

Peter Lehmann, WCF-President

**Don't lose sight of the ultimate goal – even when faced with new challenges and difficult conditions**

For years, the WCF has been trying to positively influence the survival of the endangered chimpanzees and their natural habitat in West Africa. And yes, the WCF has been successful in some places, which is motivating. The challenge is great because although nature is being used to the point of overuse, the situation of people in these countries continues to deteriorate. It is all the more challenging for an NGO to convince these people that the protection of nature or its long-term sustainable management is also beneficial for them in the long term. This can only be achieved if, in parallel with the protection of nature and the corresponding sensitization of the people concerned, sustainable solutions are also developed to meet their basic needs (housing, nutrition, economic income). That is why the WCF also addresses these aspects in accordance with its strategy.

WCF is fortunate to benefit from significant support for our wide range of activities; primarily, these are and will continue to be projects of the European Union, but large nature conservation organizations such as Rainforest Trust, ARCUS and many others also support our efforts, which we interpret as an appreciation of our work over the past years. This support is a great opportunity for us to meet the immense challenges of climate change, settlement pressure, mining of natural resources and forestry use of the forests. And in view of current political trends, this support is not self-evident, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to our donors!

In Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, WCF is fighting against the loss of the last intact primary rainforests across borders and is simultaneously trying to restore areas that have already been destroyed and return them to nature. The illegal migration of thousands of people from the northern countries is one of the main problems. The survival of these people in their home countries is no longer guaranteed because the climate there promotes desertification.

In Guinea, the biggest challenges are posed by international mining companies, from which the population hopes to live a dignified life. The WCF works with these companies, aware that under the given circumstances, nature will only survive in the long term if the economy learns to manage nature as a resource sustainably and integrates the intact nature with its ecosystem services into its accounting. In the future, we will institutionalize this collaboration with selected partners and focus strictly on the hierarchy: avoidance, protection, restoration and compensation, in such a way that in each case the balance for nature, biodiversity and its services is positive in the end.

The expansion of our monitoring programs to record the population densities of chimpanzees, elephants and other key species in protected areas confronts us with a growing amount of data. To evaluate these efficiently, WCF is at the forefront of developing and improving automated methods for evaluating the many thousands of videos collected. To this end, WCF works with the most renowned institutes and organizations worldwide and will continue to place a strong emphasis on this method development in 2025.

## Short Summaries and Outlooks 2025

In 2024, **WCF Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire** continued a large transboundary multi-year project with West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) from USAID. The aim of the project is to reduce deforestation and biodiversity loss in the **Taï-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo forest landscape** through community ecoguards, community-based ecotourism, biomonitoring, and other targeted actions.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the **Cavally Nature Reserve**, upgraded from a classified forest to a nature reserve in September 2023, faced significant challenges in 2024 due to human infiltration and illegal activities. Despite these pressures, 12 missions of community ecoguard patrols allowed the “*Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves*” to rehabilitate over 3,016 hectares of degraded areas. The Cavally forest, stretching across a vast expanse of 67,500 hectares, occupies a central position within the transboundary Taï-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo forest complex - the largest remaining forest block in West Africa, renowned for its exceptional and endemic wildlife species. WCF also continued conservation activities in **Taï National Park** in collaboration with “*Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves*”, ten community ecoguards patrolled 344 km, documenting direct and indirect evidence of 23 wild animal species.

### WCF-Côte d'Ivoire - Outlook-2025

Enhanced conservation of biodiversity, mainly the critically endangered chimpanzees, are the principal aims of WCF's activities. In 2025, in Côte d'Ivoire, priorities will be to reduce poaching, deforestation, and illegal gold mining while curbing cross-border trafficking between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. To achieve these goals, we will expand the community ecoguard program across the entire Taï landscape, standardizing data collection across all intervention sites. We will also support “*Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves*” in implementing biomonitoring programs within the Taï region, ensuring efficient data collection and analysis. Strengthening transboundary collaboration will be a key focus, particularly by supporting the steering committee and advancing discussions on enhanced surveillance of the Cavally River. Additionally, we will organize training programs to develop green economy initiatives, fostering alternative income sources that promote the protection of forests. All activities will be accompanied by awareness campaigns, field support, and close supervision of teams to ensure the program delivers tangible and lasting impact.

In **Liberia**, we are working with the local and national authorities such as the Liberia Forestry Development Authority to create the **proposed Kwa National Park**, previously known as Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area. In May 2023, the completion of the draft gazettement package for Proposed Kwa National Park, was a major achievement. Sadly in 2024, the gazettement of Proposed Kwa National Park was not pursued by the new Liberian government, WCF was asked to take over the support for the Customary Land Formalization for communities around the proposed park and in collaboration with the Liberia Land Authority, the basis was set to complete the process during the first half of 2025.

The community ecoguard programs were active throughout 2024, involving 194 community members, including 75 women, as well as 38 team leaders (rangers or auxiliaries of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority) at **Grebo-Krahm National Park, proposed Kwa National Park, Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area, Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve, Gola Forest National Park, Foya Proposed Protected Area** and in the **tourism zone of Sapo National Park**.

### WCF-Liberia Outlook - 2025

In Liberia, WCF's priority for 2025 will be to work alongside the Forestry Development Authority, local community members and other key stakeholders in the forestry and conservation sector, to complete the gazettlement of Proposed Kwa National Park and to ensure improved connectivity and management of protected areas and community forests in southeastern Liberia. WCF's aim to reach thereby enhanced conservation of the critically endangered chimpanzees and their habitats. This will be achieved through increased capacity building, the extension of the community ecoguard and auxiliary programs, of biomonitoring and ecotourism activities, and the introduction of co-management and promotion of conservation enterprises, with a focus on empowering local women. Increased awareness, including transboundary initiatives, shall help to address the uncontrolled influx of foreign cocoa farmers and the lack of land-use planning. At the national level, WCF will continue to support the fight against illegal wildlife trade through the Wildlife Crime Task Force, the engagement with female bushmeat sellers who want to change to legal businesses, and environmental education in schools and markets.

**In Guinea and Sierra Leone**, we are working with several partners to create a transboundary forest landscape including the **Outamba-Kilimi National Park** in Sierra Leone, and the forests of **Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah** in Guinea. This biodiversity-rich landscape is inhabited not only by the critically endangered West African chimpanzees, but also by one of the largest West African populations of forest elephants, sadly also critically endangered.

In Guinea, where the largest population of West African chimpanzees is still found, WCF pursued our vision of a large forested corridor from the Niokolo-Koba National Park in Senegal, through the Foutah Djallon region with the Moyen-Bafing National Park to the Outamba National Park in Sierra Leone. With the help of different collaborations, partnerships and generous funding agencies such as EU NaturaGuinée, we plan to expand to new areas within this large corridor. For example, in 2024, we set up a new WCF office in Koundara and began work in the **Badiar Biosphere Reserve**, recognized by the UNESCO MAB (*Man and Biosphere*). Within the Biosphere Reserve is located the current “Badiar National Park”, which has however never been formalized by presidential decree. The WCF is thus currently working throughout the Biosphere Reserve to gather all the current data on the fauna, flora and socio-economy, in order to define the boundaries of the **proposed Badiar National Park** and create it officially by signature of a presidential decree.

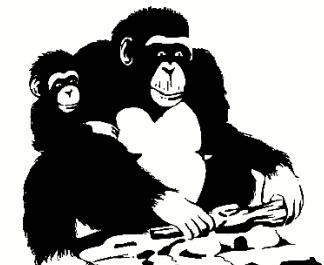
A first biomonitoring study started in May 2024 with the placement of 150 camera traps to have a better idea which wildlife species are present. Data analyses are underway, with 4,645 videos currently being processed for species identification, detected were already West African chimpanzees and African golden cats.

In 2024, WCF continued its monitoring and protection activities with monthly community ecoguard surveillance patrols, law enforcement patrols by the “*Office Guinéen de Parcs Nationaux et Réserves de Faune*” and the National Brigade, wildlife inventories with a particular focus on critically endangered West African chimpanzees and forest elephants, the wildfire management program, which protected 92% of gallery and open forests during the 2023-2024 fire season in the **proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park** with the help of 840 community members, and the natural ecological regeneration program, with 78 hectares under restoration in the **proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park**. As the railway construction plans represent a major threat to the **proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park**, threatening to divide the park in two, blocking all animal movement and increasing fragmentation, WCF has continued to be very active in exchanging with the railway constructors, Winning Consortium Simandou and Rio Tinto, to have them significantly increase investment into mitigating and compensating their negative impacts.

### **WCF-Guinea Outlook – 2025**

To improve surveillance of the proposed Badiar National Park, the construction of an outpost will be launched in 2025. In addition, the construction of the new multi-species sanctuary will be launched and the capacities of the Centre for the Conservation of Chimpanzees will be reinforced. Biomonitoring biodiversity with a focus on chimpanzee and elephants will continue in both Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah and Badiar landscapes to deepen knowledge of the biodiversity of these areas. Analyses on the abundance and spatial distribution of chimpanzee in eight sites on national territory will be finalized and allow updating of national data. Local communities will receive support to ensure that conservation actions are sustainable. The management plans of proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah and Badiar National Parks will be updated and developed in 2025, with a zoning proposal based on objective criteria. To better secure the identified biodiversity sites, trafficking investigations will be intensified with the support of state partners to create a deterrent effect on traffickers and poachers. Planned preventive actions include patrols. Continuous dialogue with all stakeholders will be possible through regular monitoring of the impact of infrastructure on biodiversity. To ensure that our actions are transparent, all activities will be systematically evaluated by state services and donors.

**Please find below the detailed full activity reports 2025.**



Wild Chimpanzee Foundation®

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## **Annual Report 2024 – WCF Côte d'Ivoire**



**Abidjan / Côte d'Ivoire**

**December 2024**

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## Acronyms

AIER	Association Ivoire Eco-Responsable
CNR	Cavally Nature Reserve, Côte d'Ivoire
CTDS	Camera Trap Distance Sampling
DZSO	<i>Direction de Zone Sud-Ouest</i>
GKNP	Grebo-Krahn National Park, Liberia
IDW	Inverse Distance Weighting
IFEF	<i>Institut de formation et d'éducation féminine</i>
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOFNA	<i>Notre forêt Notre Avenir</i>
OIPR	<i>Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves</i>
PKNP	Proposed Kwa National Park, Liberia
PSS NP	Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah Proposed National Park, Guinea
ROICI	Network of Independent Observers of Côte d'Ivoire
SODEFOR	<i>Société de Développement des Forêts</i>
TCP	Taï Chimpanzee Project
TNP	Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation

## 1. Executive summary

In Côte d'Ivoire, the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) undertook significant activities in 2024, including biomonitoring, community ecoguard programs, independent monitoring, awareness raising, and ecotourism development.

The biomonitoring team supported data analysis in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. A portion of the video analyst team also supervised data collection in the Taï National Park in Côte d'Ivoire, producing reference videos for estimating radial distances of key species. The third phase of the Camera Trap Distance Sampling (CTDS) project was successfully implemented in Taï National Park this year. The biomonitoring officer trained field teams in camera trap installation and data collection techniques, resulting in the deployment of 136 camera traps.

The Cavally Nature Reserve (CNR) faced significant challenges in 2024 due to human infiltration and illegal activities. Despite these pressures, 12 missions – totaling 120 days of community ecoguard patrols – allowed the *Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves* (OIPR) to rehabilitate over 3,016 hectares of degraded areas. In Taï National Park, ten community ecoguards patrolled 344.6 kilometers (228.0 kilometers on line transects and 116.6 kilometers on reconnaissance walks), documenting direct and indirect evidence of 23 wild animal species.

Ecotourism in Taï made promising strides, with 232 tourists booking stays in 2024. These visits generated a total of 35,288,500 FCFA (~53,797 €). Meanwhile, ecoguides intensified their efforts to habituate chimpanzees for ecotourism purposes. The wish by the ecoguards to managing the project on their own is strongly supported by WCF and discussions about such a procedure have started.

The WCF has strengthened its collaboration with the Ivorian Civil Society to enhance law enforcement. Independent monitoring and advocacy activities gained recognition among political, administrative, and judicial authorities, fostering more coordinated actions to protect Cavally Nature Reserve.

WCF's major activities in Côte d'Ivoire from January to December 2024 are outlined below:

## 2. Biomonitoring

### 2.1. Biomonitoring unit specializing in video analysis in Abidjan

A biomonitoring unit has been established in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, for the past two years to support data processing for various WCF projects. Six video analysts processed large amounts of data, identifying species captured on camera traps in multiple locations: Cavally Nature Reserve (CNR – 2,200 videos) and Taï National Park (TNP – 11,486 videos) in Côte d'Ivoire, Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP – 27,558 videos) in Liberia, and Proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park (PSS NP – 27,127 videos), as well as eight potential chimpanzee offset sites (18,096 videos) in Guinea. Additionally, the video analysts estimated radial distances for species of interest, such as western chimpanzees, velvet monkeys, bushbucks, warthogs, and Maxwell's duikers for later abundance and density estimations. The biomonitoring analysis committee met on a weekly basis to discuss data, data analysis, and how to ensure better data quality, from field data collection to data processing.



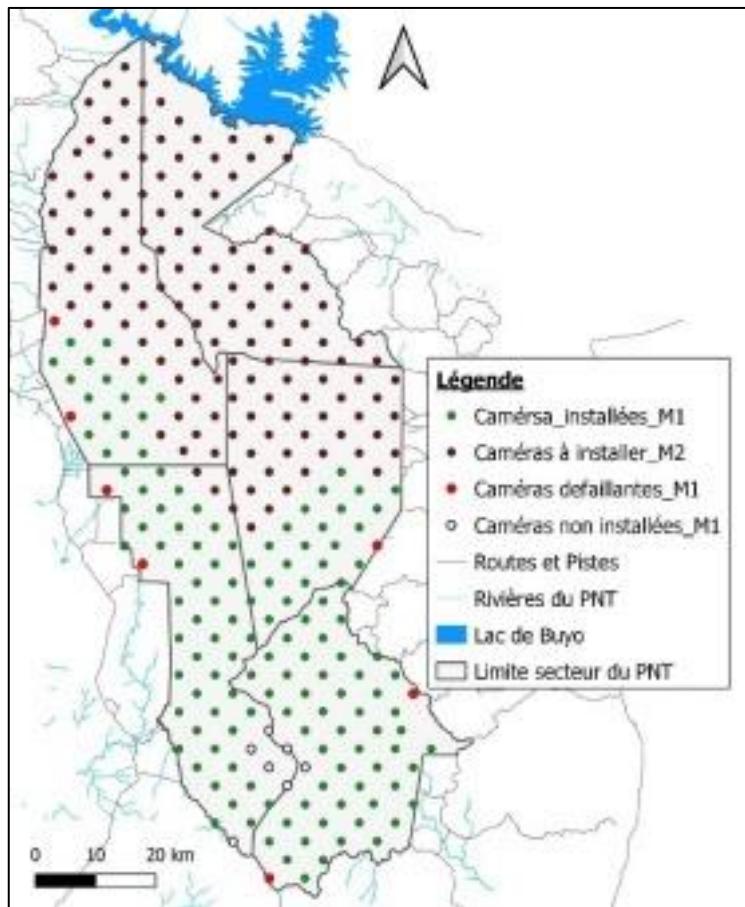
**Photo 1. The biomonitoring team in Côte d'Ivoire: Inès and Elwenn (top left) and Cédric, Koko and Emmanuel (right) supervised data collection in Taï National Park, while Marthe and Annick (bottom left) analyzed “Camera Trap Distance Sampling” videos.**

In August and November 2024, four video analysts – Inès Zan, Emmanuel Kouamé, Cédric Tahé and Jean-Hori Koko – worked alongside the biomonitoring managers to supervise data collection for the third CTDS biomonitoring phase in TNP (Photo 1). This fieldwork was essential in generating high-quality reference videos, which will be used to estimate radial distances for the species of interest.

## 2.2. Biomonitoring in the Taï National Park

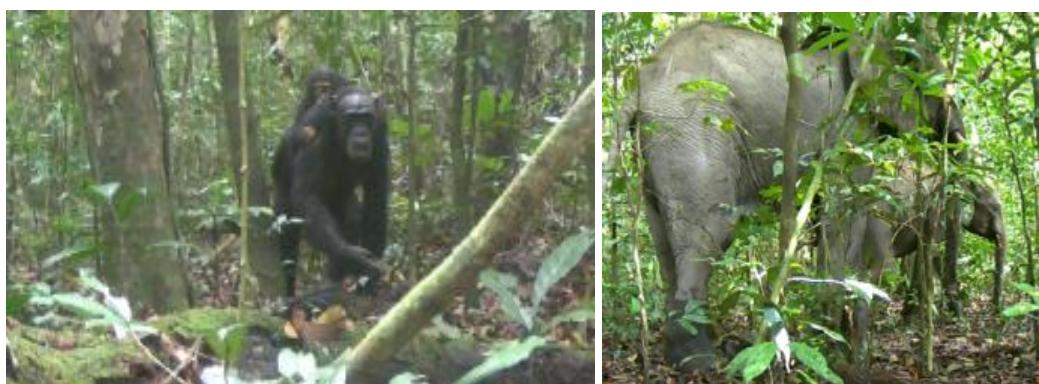
During the first half of 2024, the WCF finalized the biomonitoring report presenting the results of the first two phases of the Camera Trap Distance Sampling (CTDS) in Taï National Park (TNP) and shared it with the *Direction de Zone Sud-Ouest* (DZSO) of the *Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves* (OIPR) during the first half of the year.

The second half of 2024 focused on implementing the third phase of the CTDS in TNP. To prepare for this phase, field teams underwent formal training from the Biomonitoring Manager, Dr. Adiko Houa. This training included the setup of camera traps, the filming of reference videos, and the collection of data along predefined line transects. In August, 20 field teams consisting of OIPR and WCF agents, along with auxiliary villagers, were deployed to install 150 camera traps in the southern part of the park, following the same design used in the first phase. Of these 150 camera traps, 136 were successfully installed, while the remaining 14 could not be deployed due to technical issues or inaccessibility of planned transect points due to flooded rivers (Figure 1). Subsequently, in November, the camera traps were retrieved from the field, after teams have had filmed reference videos at each camera trap point. During the same mission, field agents were able to install seven out of the 14 previously uninstalled camera traps, when water levels permitted.



**Figure 1.** Design of the third phase of the Camera Trap Distance Sampling in the southern part of Taï National Park, with the camera traps successfully installed during the first mission in green, those with technical issues in red, those that could not be installed during the first mission in white, and the camera traps that were planned to be installed during the second mission (which has been completed to date) in brown.

By the end of the year, all data collected from the southern part of Taï National Park during the third phase of CTDS had been archived. A total of 11,486 videos were analyzed for species identification. The next steps will include estimating radial distances for each selected species using the reference videos and planning the data collection in the northern section of the park.



**Photo 2.** Snapshots of western chimpanzees (left) and African forest elephants (right) from camera trap videos taken in 2024 during the third CTDS biomonitoring phase in the southern part of Taï National Park.

### 2.3. Community ecoguards in the Taï National Park

In 2024, the WCF community ecoguard team and the Taï Chimpanzee Project (TCP) anti-poaching team continued to patrol the 500 km<sup>2</sup> research and ecotourism area of TNP. These patrols aimed to evaluate the conservation benefits of having permanent staff in the area and to collect data on illegal activities and wildlife, helping to guide OIPR's actions. During the 17<sup>th</sup> biomonitoring phase (October 2023 - December 2024), the two teams patrolled 114 out of 132 four-km<sup>2</sup>-cells, covering a total distance of 344.6 km: 228.0 km on line transects and 116.6 km on reconnaissance walks (recce). The teams recorded direct and indirect indices of 23 different species, with encounter rates for western chimpanzees, forest elephants, pygmy hippopotamus, monkey species, and illegal activities presented in the table below.

**Table 1.** Encounter rates (signs/km) of a few iconic species or species group and illegal human activities per method during the 17<sup>th</sup> biomonitoring phase (October 2023 – December 2024).

Category	Encounter rates (signs/km)		
	Recce	Line transect	Total
Western chimpanzees	0.20	0.30	<b>0.27</b>
Monkey species	7.39	6.40	<b>6.78</b>
Forest elephants	0.32	0.24	<b>0.27</b>
Pygmy hippopotamus	0.15	0.10	<b>0.11</b>
Illegal activities	0.78	0.61	<b>0.66</b>

The observations during the 17<sup>th</sup> biomonitoring phase show a 69% increase in observed illegal human activities (from 0.39 signs/km to 0.66 signs/km) compared to the 16<sup>th</sup> biomonitoring phase. This could be explained by a more important national bushmeat market demand rather than local consumption reasons, but further analysis is needed.

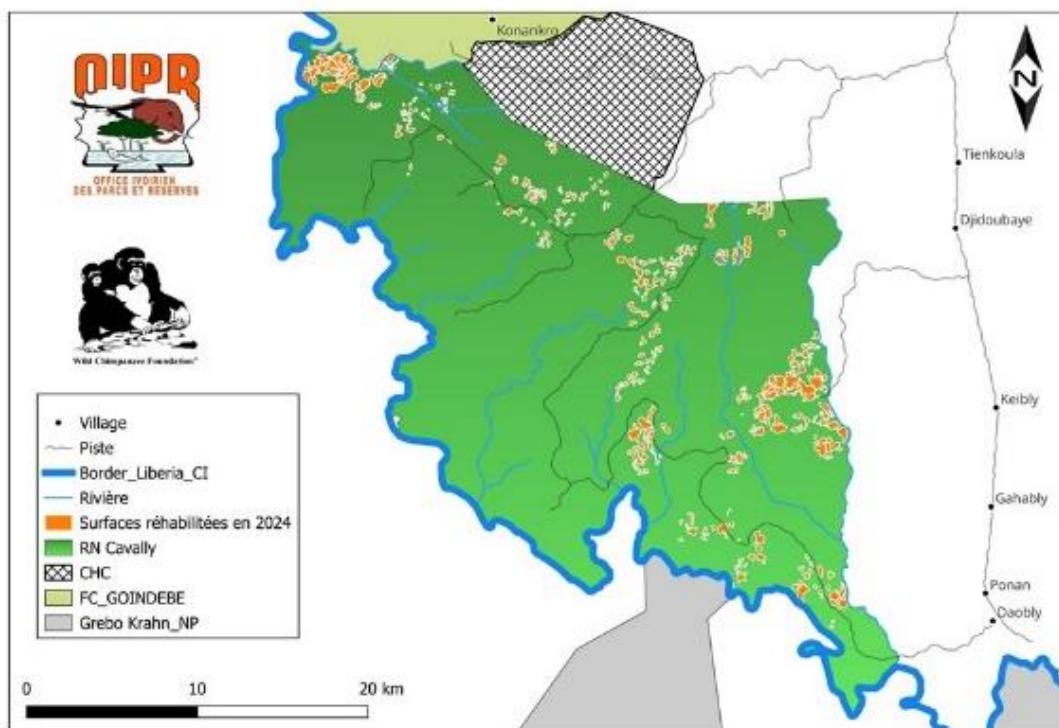
In addition, the community ecoguard team conducted eight night patrols, encompassing 107 listening points with durations ranging from 45 minutes to one hour. During these 5,000 minutes (~ 83 hours) of listening points, ten gunshots were heard, and the main wildlife species detected were the Demidoff's dwarf galagos, the Western tree hyraxes, the African palm civets, and the Western red colobus. These night patrols are designed to provide insights into species that may be observed by tourists, thereby enhancing the ecotourism experience.



*Photo 3. WCF community ecoguard team.*

#### 2.4. Community ecoguards in the Cavally Nature Reserve

The community ecoguards of the Cavally Nature Reserve (CNR), in collaboration with the OIPR, conducted surveillance patrols in the reserve to combat deforestation. During these missions, the community ecoguards recorded the presence of wildlife and signs of illegal human activities. Furthermore, the community ecoguard teams carried out topographical surveys of areas rehabilitated by OIPR to facilitate and monitor the regrowth of degraded forests. In 2024, 12 missions, totaling 120 days of effective presence in the CNR, were conducted and enabled OIPR to rehabilitate over 3,016 hectares (Figure 2).



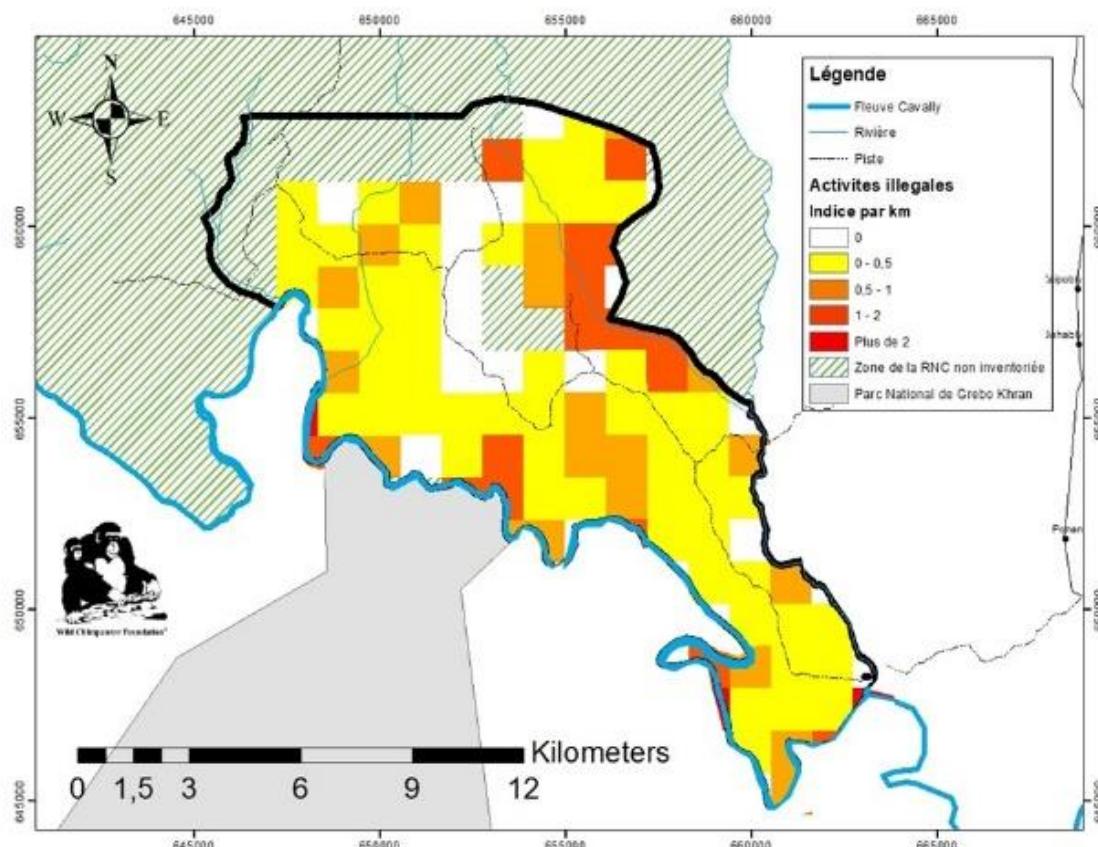
**Figure 2. Areas rehabilitated in 2024 by “Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves” (orange), and recorded by WCF community ecoguards.**

In the southern part of Cavally Nature Reserve, which covers 13,500 hectares and represents the conservation zone where logging is prohibited, a monitoring program was initiated in December 2022 under the management of *Société de Développement des Forêts* (SODEFOR).

The initial phase of data collection took place from December 2022 to June 2023. Following the designation of Cavally Classified Forest as a Nature Reserve in September 2023, community ecoguard activities were expanded to encompass the entire forest, while ongoing data collection in the southern zone aimed to assess changes in forest cover and potential threats to wildlife.

The second phase revealed vegetation conditions that were nearly identical to the first phase, with 56% forest cover (55.74% in Phase 2 compared to 56.08% in Phase 1), as well as similar wildlife presence indices (0.62 signs/km in Phase 2 compared to 0.59 signs/km in Phase 1). However, poaching activity increased drastically between the two phases, from 0.48 signs/km in Phase 1 to 2.01 signs/km in Phase 2 (Figure 3). During monitoring operations in the southern part of the CNR, numerous snares set by poachers to capture animals were dismantled. A total of 128 animal traps were removed in Phase 2, compared to 50 traps in Phase 1. Additionally, 307 empty cartridges were collected in Phase 2, compared to 372 in Phase 1, reflecting the persistent intensity of poaching in the area.

The last camera traps installed in the southern part of CNR were removed in July 2024, and the species identification from the 40 installed cameras was completed this year. And despite the significant anthropogenic pressure on wildlife and forest cover, the analysis revealed the presence of over 24 mammal species in the reserve, including the critically endangered western chimpanzees, the endangered pygmy hippopotamus and Jentink's duikers.



**Figure 3. Distribution of illegal activities (without illegal agricultural activities), mainly poaching in the southern zone of Cavally Nature Reserve.**

## 2.5. Independent monitoring in the Cavally Nature Reserve

The year was marked by an increase in deforestation in the Cavally Nature Reserve, which followed a rise in the price of cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. In response, the initial months of 2024 were dedicated to a comprehensive awareness campaign around the Cavally forest, involving the creation of a theater play in collaboration with Alma Production.

The theater tour successfully reached over 4,000 people, with some of those who attended expressing their intention to cease their illegal activities in the forest. The tour also reached out to local and national authorities, including the highest authorities: **Madame Anne Désirée Ouloto, Minister of State and Minister for the Civil Service and Modernization of Administration**, as well as the **President of the Cavally Regional Council**, who sponsored the theater debate in Abidjan. During her speech, Madame Ouloto emphasized the country's commitment to save the Cavally Nature Reserve, stating that trafficking in natural resources such as cocoa plantations, gold panning, and poaching is strictly prohibited. She also expressed her confidence in the OIPR, the new manager of the reserve.

The theater debate also provided the opportunity to reward Mr. Fidèle Tere, President of the NGO *Notre Forêt Notre Avenir* (NOFNA) and Jean-Marc Lessiehi, one of Cavally's first community ecoguards, in recognition of the independent monitoring activities carried out in and outside the nature reserve.



**Photo 4. Madame Anne Désirée Ouloto, Minister of State and Minister for the Civil Service and Modernization of Administration, rewarding Mr. Fidèle Tere and Mr. Jean-Marc Lessiehi.**

In addition to raising awareness, independent monitoring activities this year focused on facilitating the transition between the SODEFOR (previously managing the Cavally Classified Forest) and the OIPR (new manager of the Cavally Nature Reserve). The objective was to establish a more effective framework for collaboration and communication with the region's administrative and judicial authorities. The presence of this new authority has enabled us to strengthen our joint work and act to reclaim the reserve, including the arrest of "forest sellers" and the identification and drafting of a complaint against the leader of the forest sellers. The authority in charge of the forest has demonstrated greater responsiveness and availability to support NOFNA's independent observers in reporting illegal activities and has expressed confidence in the activities of independent observers to support OIPR's monitoring activities.

All independent monitoring activities are overseen and guided by a coordination group composed of nine organizations from both Ivorian and international civil society, all of which are experienced in the independent monitoring approach. The coordination group has met six times this year to discuss the progress of investigations, identify solutions to challenges encountered, direct future investigations, and analyze various legal decrees related to the new Wildlife Code. One investigation was conducted by the Network of Independent Observers of Côte d'Ivoire (ROICI), to support NOFNA in its investigations and confirm a significant threat of corruption targeting NOFNA's independent observers.

Based on the observations made throughout the year, several legal analysis memos were developed and discussed to assist authorities and independent observers in enhancing forest governance. Ongoing discussions with various organizations aim to strengthen and expand these analyses. The key memos included:

- A memo on the protection of independent observers;
- A memo on publication of judicial decisions;
- A memo on cross-border trafficking between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

The comprehensive report and these memos are scheduled for publication in 2025.

### 3. Alternative livelihoods

#### 3.1. Ecotourism Taï

The main challenges for *Ecotourism Taï* are twofold: first, transitioning the project to a sustainable structure, locally managed by teams from the local communities; and second, increasing the number of tourists on the site to achieve financial autonomy. To that end, monthly meetings were organized in the forest with all the ecotourism team to discuss the plan and the needs of support and training to achieve the results.

In 2024, the Ecotourism Camp welcomed 232 tourists (not including visitors for partnership purposes), resulting in a total of 391 overnight stays. This represents a stabilization compared to 2023, which recorded 400 overnight stays. However, a significant drop in overnight stays was noted in August, traditionally one of the site's peak tourist periods. This decline may be attributed to several external factors including reports of m-pox cases in Abidjan during the same period. This likely deterred some potential visitors from finalizing their plans to visit the park.

As in the previous year, the overall satisfaction rate of tourists who booked a stay with *Ecotourism Taï* remained high at 93%. We observed a 2% increase in the satisfaction rate for accommodations in traditional Daobly huts. Significant progress has been made this year with the inauguration of a fourth hut, the commencement of construction on a fifth hut, the enlargement of the communal shelter within the hut area, the laying of cement on the floor of this area, as well as the installation of electricity. The next objective will be the construction of a second shower area to ensure comfort for larger groups.

**Table 2.** Satisfaction rates of *Ecotourism Taï* by category in 2024

Category	Satisfaction rate in 2024
Hotels in Taï	80%
Camp in the forest	93%
Bed & Breakfast Daobly	88%
Food in the forest	93%
Activities in the forest	91%
Guiding effort	94%

- **Financial benefit**

This year, tourist entries generated a total of 35,288,500 FCFA (~53,797€). This amount, in accordance with the tripartite agreement between OIPR, the Municipality of Taï and WCF, is broken down as follows:

**Table 3.** Breakdown of tourist entries between OIPR, Taï Municipality and WCF.

Partner	Total FCFA	Total Euros
WCF for covering 23 jobs at Ecotourism Taï	24,437,500	37,255
Taï municipality benefits (Town hall & Bed&Breakfast)	5,181,000	7,898
OIPR for park management	5,670,000	8,644

- **Communication**

This year, the 2024-2025 communication strategy was revised to identify issues and targets, and to define the action plan accordingly. In 2024, an average of 15 new articles per month were published on the *Ecotourism Taï* Facebook page and the newly-launched Instagram page, both of which are consistently updated. These two platforms have now 2,247 and 641 followers, respectively. Furthermore, attractive promotions targeting off-peak periods were introduced, including special offers for Mother's Day, the month of June, groups of eight people, the national holiday, and Christmas gift cards.

In 2024, *Ecotourism Taï* strengthened its visibility through a combination of digital and physical promotional initiatives. A partnership with an Instagram influencer (@abidjan\_le\_rempart) contributed to a significant increase in the number of followers, and the online campaigns such as the Wildlife Ranger Challenge and Green Impact Awards, have raised \$1,419 and garnered 1,500 votes, securing a competition final spot to fund a tree canopy platform.

Physical promotions included the distribution of communication materials such as kakemonos, business cards, and flyers, and the participation in trade fairs, reaching a total of 164 people over eight days. Visits to major hotels in Man and partnerships with travel agencies also expanded the network, with one contract signed and others in progress. Additionally, Taï was featured in the *Petit Futé* 2025-2026 guide and the tourism section of BAAB magazine.

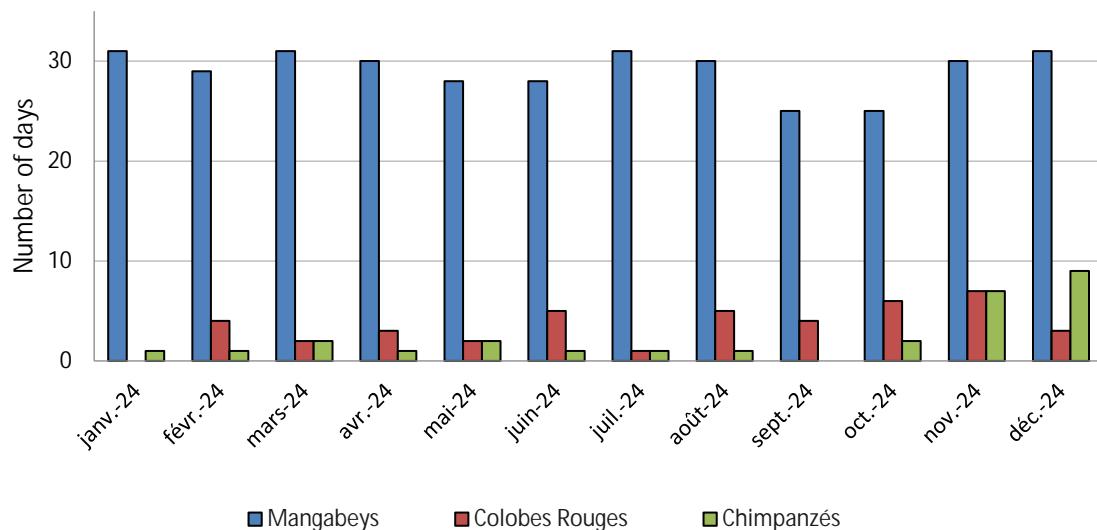


**Photo 5. Stand at the Association Ivoire Eco-responsible (AIER) Ecology Meeting.**

A total of 279 inquiries was received via email, WhatsApp, and Instagram, resulting in 147 quotes requests and a success rate of 67%. Communication efforts have resulted in a 9% increase in overnight stays between January and July compared to 2023, although bookings dropped in August. Several initiatives are currently under development, with the objective of achieving more substantial results in the future.

### 3.2. Primate habituation for ecotourism

Habituation of primates to human presence is a rigorous process. Teams of ecoguides take turns in the forest to monitor weekly the groups of mangabeys, western chimpanzees and red colobus. The habituation teams follow a standardized protocol for primate habituation, a strict health protocol, guidelines and best practices established by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). While chimpanzees are still rarely seen, the encounter rate has shown a slight increase over the course of the year.



**Figure 4. Number of days the different primate groups targeted for habituation to human presence were followed during the year, with mangabeys in blue, red colobus in red, and western chimpanzees in green.**

On average, the mangabeys were monitored for 29 days each month, from the time they left the nest in the morning to the time they re-nest in the evening. The search for red colobus monkeys was conducted for an average of three to four days per month. Finally, three ecoguides were recruited in October 2024 to track the group of chimpanzees, which significantly boosted the tracking efforts. The presence of fruiting *Nauclea* and *Panda* trees, further facilitated the efforts, resulting in seven and nine direct observations in November and December, respectively, for a total of 32 hours spent in proximity to the group to habituate them to human presence.

### 3.3. Community initiatives

The Taï ecomuseum reopened in October 2024 with the addition of a new activity coordinator. The coordinator is responsible to monitor community projects, for welcoming children at the ecomuseum for drawing, reading, and play activities, while raising their awareness of environmental protection. She is also in charge of setting up an animation and awareness program with the schools of Taï for learning and discovery sessions about conservation and our environment.



**Photo 6. A drawing session for children at the Taï ecomuseum.**

At the ecomuseum, a variety of local products are sold, including loincloth bags with the *Institut de Formation et d'Education Féminine* (IFEF) and chocolate products crafted by Rachelle Gehi of Gouleako. The *Ecotourism Taï* project regularly purchases products from the permaculture project with the women from Daobly.

To revitalize and expand the beekeeping initiative, the WCF organized a new training session for 22 participants from seven villages between Port Gentil and Keiby. The training focused on constructing durable concrete bee-hives and their proper maintenance. The initial project encountered limitations due to the need for additional hives, which could not be constructed from wood due to the extensive deforestation occurring outside protected areas.



**Photo 7. Hive ready to receive bees (left) and hive molding at Gouleako.**

#### 4. Acknowledgements

The WCF Côte d'Ivoire team would like to express its gratitude to its partners in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly the *Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves* (OIPR), which works alongside the WCF to implement all the projects. Other partners with whom the projects have been implemented and whom we would like to thank, in no particular order, are as follows: *Notre Forêt Notre Avenir* (NOFNA), Municipality of Taï, *Initiatives pour le Développement Communautaire et la Conservation de la Forêt* (IDEF), *Gouvernement des Amis Yadio et Assangbadji* (GAYA), *Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement* (JVE), *Association des Propriétaires de Forêts Naturelles et Plantations* (APFNP), Green Answers, *Ministère des Affaires étrangères*, *Ministère des Eaux et Forêts*, *Ministère de l'Environnement*, *Ministère de la Justice*, and *Haute Autorité pour la Bonne Gouvernance*.

We would like to express our special thanks go to the Minister of State, the Minister of Modernization of the Administration and the Civil Service, the President of the Cavally Regional Council, and Madame Anne Désirée Ouloto, for her commitment to preserving the Cavally Nature Reserve.

Our special thanks go to all the community members who support chimpanzee protection, especially the community ecoguards and ecoguides.

We would also like to thank our donors, without whom none of our projects would be possible: West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) from USAID, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Côte d'Ivoire, the Arcus Foundation, Côte d'Ivoire Tourisme, the French Embassy in Côte d'Ivoire, and the Tusk Ranger Fund.

# WILD CHIMPANZEE FOUNDATION



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## ACTIVITY REPORT - WCF LIBERIA

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JANUARY – DECEMBER 2024



*Members of the Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise  
and their Sapo Natural Forest Honey*

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**Acronyms**

ABEL	Association of Beekeepers of Liberia
CEP	Community Ecoguard Program
CLF	Customary Land Formalization
ELRECO	Elephant Research and Conservation
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FTI	Forestry Training Institute
FPPA	Foya Proposed Protected Area
GFNP	Gola Forest National Park
GKNP	Grebo-Krahn National Park
HWC	Human-Wildlife Conflict
LPSMUR	Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve
LMA	Liberia Marketing Association
PKNP	Proposed Kwa National Park
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SNP	Sapo National Park
SCNL	Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SWCE	Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise
UOF	Universal Outreach Foundation
WABiLED	West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation

## **1. Executive summary**

From January to December 2024, WCF in Liberia continued to support the community ecoguard programs at Grebo-Krahn National Park (GKNP), Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP), and Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area in southeastern Liberia, as well as at Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve (LPSMUR), Gola Forest National Park and Foya Proposed Protected Area in northwestern Liberia. Furthermore, regular tourism zone patrols were conducted by tourist guides and ecoguards in the tourism zone in Sapo National Park. In total, 194 community members, including 75 women, as well as 38 team leaders (rangers or auxiliaries of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA)), are active in the community ecoguard and tourism zone patrol programs in these areas.

Auxiliary programs to support FDA's regular law enforcement were supported or newly established at GKNP, LPSMUR, and PKNP, with 42 auxiliaries, including ten women. The auxiliary patrols are planned based on the information from the ecoguard surveillance patrols. Through this program, for the first time since GKNP's establishment in 2017, regular law enforcement patrols are occurring in priority areas identified during the community ecoguard surveillance patrols. This initiative has resulted in the arrest of six poachers during in 2024, marking the first successful prosecutions and convictions in the GKNP history.

The biomonitoring for PKNP was completed and the data analysis for the camera trap videos is ongoing. The preliminary results from the line transects suggest a significant decrease in the western chimpanzee and bovid populations when comparing the encounter rates of the same line transects from 2017 and 2024, which underlines the urgent need to proceed with the gazetttement of PKNP, in order to avoid further biodiversity loss.

In partnership with the FDA and the Liberia Marketing Association, the national community volunteer program has successfully trained an additional 73 female bushmeat sellers, bringing the total number of trained women to 300 across Liberia and 84 in Monrovia and Paynesville. They are raising awareness in their local markets and are participating in awareness events while transitioning to legal businesses. To date, already 320 female bushmeat sellers have ceased selling bushmeat through the community volunteer program and are now engaged in legal business activities as a result of this program.

Series of human-wildlife conflict mitigation training sessions were organized for both, trainers (39 participants) and local farmers (385 participants). This initiative focuses on educating and empowering farmers with effective, non-harmful mitigation strategies to protect their livelihoods while conserving local wildlife.

The support for the National Wildlife Crime Task Force was revived in 2024 and with 21 successful convictions for wildlife crime cases across Liberia, the task force has set a new record in combating wildlife crime in Liberia.

While the gazetttement of Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP) was not pursued by the Liberian government in 2024, WCF was asked to take over the support for the Customary Land Formalization for communities around PKNP and in collaboration with the Liberia Land Authority, the basis was set to complete the process during the first half of 2025.

Finally, WCF's support for communities in socio-economic development and education and awareness-raising continued through initiatives such as beekeeping and ecotourism, the establishment of the Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise, the development of local products, and environmental education for children with wildlife clubs at local schools.

WCF's major activities in Liberia from January to December 2024 are outlined below:

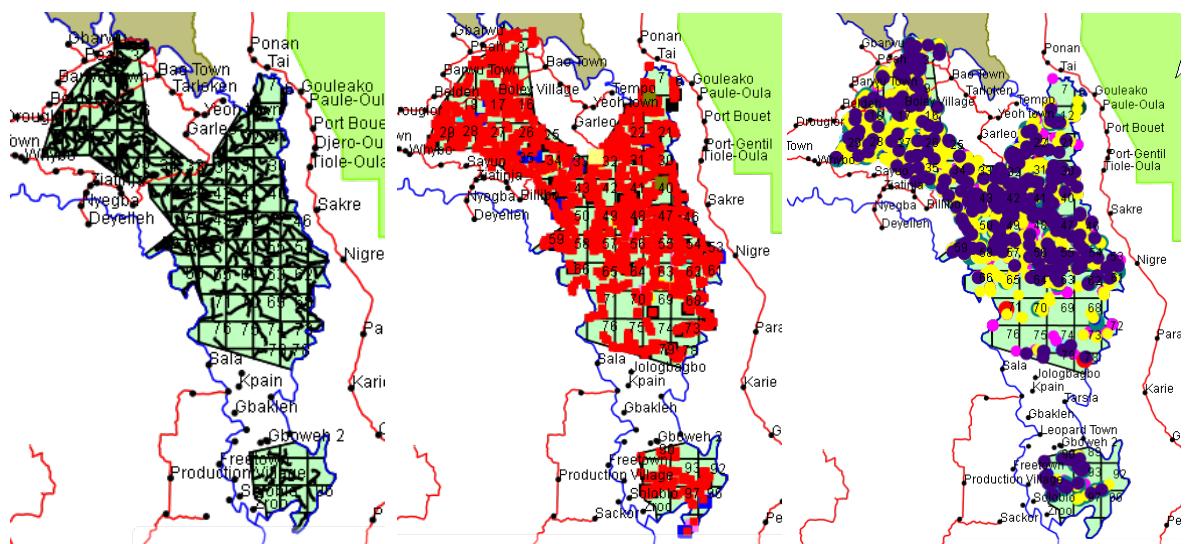
## **2. Community Ecoguard Program in southeastern and northwestern Liberia**

In total, from January to December 2024, 42 community ecoguard teams composed of 194 community ecoguards and 38 team leaders, actively patrolled in seven proposed and established protected areas.

- ***Grebbo-Krahn National Park***

From January to December 2024, the eight community ecoguard teams at Grebo-Krahn National Park (GKNP), composed of 32 community members (including 15 women), conducted 37 forest patrols, covering a total number of 271 grid cells (each grid cell being 4x4 km) and a total distance covered of 1,050.72 km (black lines in left map below). The number of days spent on forest patrol was 263, with a total of 1,156 person days. Note that from April onwards, no forest patrols could be conducted in the southern part of GKNP, due to a conflict linked to the establishment of a community forest (Glaro Community Forest), which FDA was not able to resolve until the end of the year.

During the 37 forest patrols conducted, the teams observed 2,142 signs of human activities (red dots in middle map below), including 2,021 signs of hunting (including trails potentially used by poachers), with an encounter rate of 2.04 signs of human activities per kilometer, and 1.92 signs of hunting per kilometer. By far the greatest threat observed by the teams was poaching (94% of total human activities), with comparatively few felled trees, illegal timber and chewing stick extraction, and very few mining observations. However, the mining situation along the Cavalla River is serious.



*Map of community ecoguard  
patrol coverage in GKNP  
from January to December  
2024*

## *Map of observed human activities in GKNP from January to December 2024, with 94% of all observations being linked to hunting*

*Map showing the distribution of  
key wildlife species observations  
made during patrols in GKNP  
from January to December 2024*

The observations in 2024 show a 35% decrease in observed human activities (from 3.15 signs/km to 2.04 signs/km) and a 37% decrease in hunting signs (from 3.03 signs/km to 1.92 signs/km) compared to 2023. This is a highly encouraging sign, that demonstrates the effectiveness of both the community ecoguard program and the recently launched law enforcement auxiliary program, which was initiated in September 2023 following the complete absence of any form of law enforcement at GKNP, since the park's establishment in 2017.

Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) reports are produced every month and annually, and all reports are shared with the FDA community ecoguard unit, which is also holding the national SMART database (with support from WCF). The SMART reports are also being shared with the local FDA team, in order to allow for the planning of law enforcement missions with the joint security.

With regard to key threatened wildlife, the teams made 2,806 wildlife observations (colored dots in right map above), representing an encounter rate of 2.67 signs/km, including observations of the most endangered species, such as the critically endangered western chimpanzee and forest elephant; the endangered Diana monkey, western red colobus, king colobus, Jentink's duiker, pygmy hippopotamus, and Timneh parrot; and the vulnerable leopard, golden cat, sooty mangabey, olive colobus, dwarf crocodile, Zebra duiker, and Brooke's duiker.

After the forest patrols, the community ecoguard teams raised awareness in 63 communities adjacent to GKNP. During the awareness meetings, a total of 937 community members were sensitized, including 341 women. These awareness meetings allow for a dialogue between community ecoguard teams and local community members to discuss illegal encroachment within the park and strategize approaches to discourage future illegal activities.



*Bay duiker dung recorded by community ecoguards during forest patrols (left) and community environmental awareness (right) in Grebo-Krahn National Park in April 2024*

In 2024, the community ecoguard program at Grebo-Krahn National Park has been funded by Rainforest Rescue, WABiLED/USAID, the European Union, the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund/UKAID, and John-Ball Zoo.

- ***Proposed Kwa National Park***

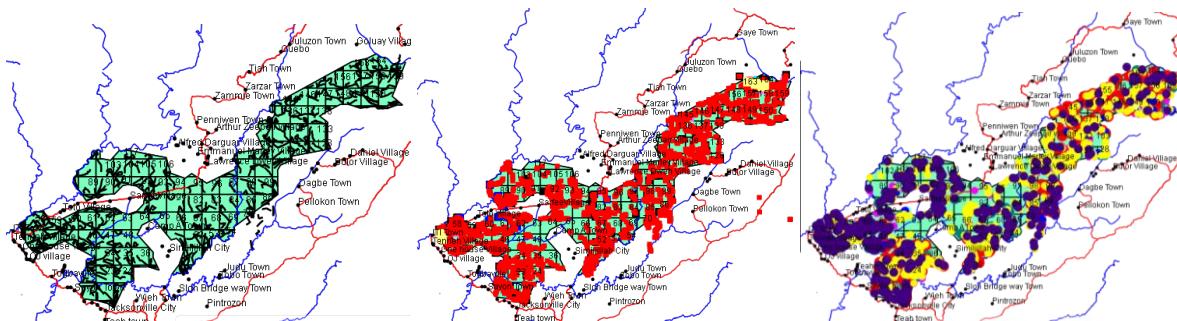
From January to December 2024, the 10 community ecoguard teams at Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP), composed of 40 community members (including 15 women), conducted 60 forest patrols, covering a total number of 408 grid cells and a total distance covered of 1,604.04 km (black lines in left map below). The number of days spent on forest patrol was 396, with a total of 2,028 person days. This is a great achievement, as all teams conducted bi-monthly patrols as planned and the maximum possible number of patrols was completed.

During the 60 forest patrols conducted, the teams observed 3,512 signs of human activities (red dots in middle map below), including 3,333 signs of hunting (including trails potentially used by poachers), with an encounter rate of 2.19 signs of human activities per kilometer, and 2.08 signs of hunting per kilometer. By far the greatest threats observed by the teams was poaching (95% of total human activities), with comparatively few felled trees and illegal timber, and very few observations of settlements, farming, and mining.



**Female community ecoguard regarding data (left) and FDA ranger and community ecoguard recording monkeys during forest patrols in Proposed Kwa National Park in 2024 (right)**

However, in the northwestern area of PKNP, continuous encroachment by foreigners to clear forest for cocoa farming was observed, which has a high potential to lead to a significant loss of the area and biodiversity of the future national park, if the situation is not addressed jointly by the FDA with other key government institutions and local authorities.



**Map of community ecoguard patrol coverage in PKNP from January to December 2024**

**Map of observed human activities in PKNP from January to December 2024, with 95% of all observations being linked to hunting**

**Map showing the distribution of key wildlife species observations made during patrols in PKNP from January to December 2024**

The observations in 2024 show a 35% decrease in observed human activities (from 3.35 signs/km to 2.19 signs/km) and a 36% decrease in hunting signs (from 3.24 signs/km to 2.08 signs/km) compared to 2023. In 2023, only 12 forest patrols were conducted, as field teams were focused on pre-gazetttement activities around PKNP. In contrast, 60 forest patrols were conducted in 2024, which demonstrates the CEP's effectiveness and is a highly encouraging outcome.

With regard to key threatened wildlife, the teams made 3,967 wildlife observations (colored dots in right map above), representing an encounter rate of 2.47 signs/km, including observations of the most threatened species, such as the critically endangered western chimpanzee and forest elephant; the endangered Diana monkey, western red colobus, king colobus, Jentink's duiker, giant pangolin, pygmy hippopotamus, and Timneh parrot; and the vulnerable leopard, golden cat, sooty mangabey, olive colobus, Brooke's duiker, and Zebra duiker.



*Community ecoguard team at Proposed Kwa National Park (left) and Great blue turaco feather found in Proposed Kwa National Park in April 2024 (right)*

After the forest patrols, the community ecoguard teams raised awareness in 60 communities adjacent to PKNP, where 1,833 community members were sensitized, including 580 women.

In 2024, the community ecoguard program at Proposed Kwa National Park has been funded by the Great Ape Conservation Fund/USFWS, Rainforest Trust, the European Union, and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund/UKAID.

- ***Community ecoguard program in Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area and in northwestern Liberia***

On the national level, WCF, in close collaboration with FDA, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), the Nature Compact (TNC) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) continued to support community ecoguard programs at Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve (LPSMUR, five teams, 20 ecoguards, including 13 women), Gola Forest National Park (GFNP, 10 teams, 40 ecoguards, including 10 women), Foya Proposed Protected Area (FPPA, five teams, 20 ecoguards, including 10 women) and Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area (CSPPA, five teams, 20 ecoguards, including 4 women).

In total, 106 patrols were conducted in these four areas in 2024:

- 39 in Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve,
- 36 in Gola Forest National Park,
- 21 in Foya Proposed Protected Area,
- 10 in Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area.

In 2024, the national community ecoguard program from WCF side has been funded by the European Union and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund/UKAID.

### **3. Auxiliary program and law enforcement in Grebo-Krahn National Park, Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve and Proposed Kwa National Park**

From January to December 2024, the 12 auxiliaries and six FDA rangers and zone wardens at Grebo-Kahn National Park (GKNP), conducted six law enforcement patrols. In addition, two ten-day joint security patrols were conducted in January 2024. These involved FDA, police, and immigration officers patrolling under the direction of the FDA Forest Law Enforcement Division, including members of the Wildlife Crime Task Force. The aforementioned operations resulted in the arrest, prosecution, and conviction of six poachers, marking the first successful prosecutions and convictions in GKNP's history.

Following the model of GKNP, auxiliary law enforcement programs were also established at Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve (LPSMUR) and Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP), in November and December 2024, respectively. In both areas, FDA only has a small number of rangers (3 and 4, respectively), who are unable to effectively protect the forest without additional support. At LPSMUR, ten former community ecoguards, including six women, were promoted to auxiliaries to support FDA's law enforcement efforts, while at PKNP, 20 existing community ecoguards, including three women were promoted. The auxiliaries in these two areas are expected to become fully operational in 2025.

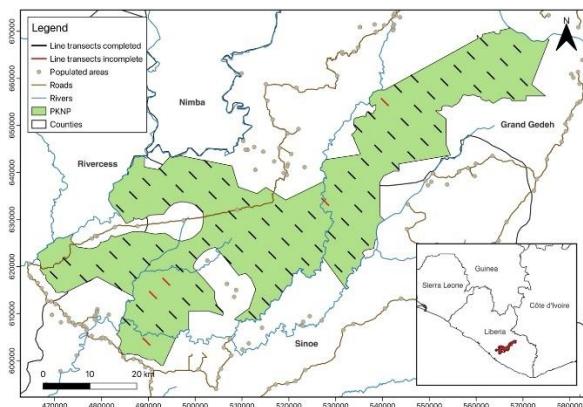


*Auxiliary recruitment training at Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve (top left) in November and at Proposed Kwa National Park in December 2024 (top right and bottom)*

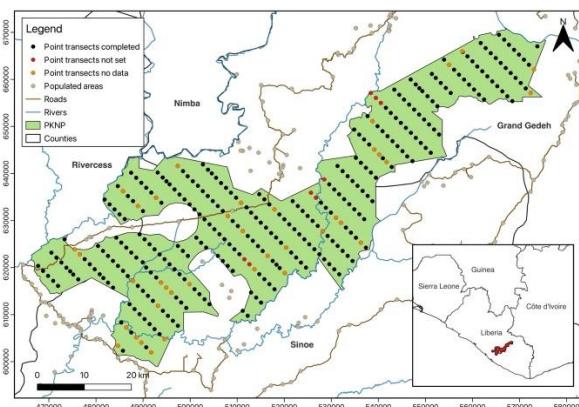
The auxiliary program has been supported by the European Union and Rainforest Trust in 2024.

### **4. Biomonitoring in Proposed Kwa National Park**

The 10-month biomonitoring survey in Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP) started in 2023 and was completed in September 2024. It was implemented by eight teams, including 32 local community members, six long-term interns, four FDA rangers and additional team leaders from WCF. In total, 88 line transects were surveyed, and 339 camera trap deployment points were completed, with a total distance covered of 348.6 km. Initially, 347 cameras were planned in the design, but only 339 data points were reached. Eight cameras could not be installed and did not collect any data.



**Distribution of 88 line transects within Proposed Kwa National Park showing both complete (grey) and incomplete (red) transects. Inset: location of Proposed Kwa National Park within Liberia**



**Distribution of 347 point transects within Proposed Kwa National Park showing points which were completed (grey) or not completed (orange).**



**Snapshots from camera trap videos of western chimpanzees (top left), Zebra duiker (top right), forest elephant (bottom left), and pygmy hippopotamus (bottom right) present in Proposed Kwa National Park**

While the analyses of the camera trap videos are still ongoing, preliminary results from the line transects suggest a significant decrease in the western chimpanzee and bovid populations when comparing the encounter rates of the same line transects surveyed in 2017 and 2024. Preliminary results indicate a decrease of the numbers of chimpanzees by 43%, which is also reflected in other species: This worrying result is certainly due to the fact that the area of Proposed Kwa National Park was significantly reduced by FDA after the consent forms for the creation of the park had been signed and the gazettement package was drafted, and that two of the most important High Conservation Value Areas were excluded. These areas were in the past observed to contain high densities of chimpanzees and other threatened key species. Another negative conservation impact is caused by the high level of poaching still ongoing as long as the park is not yet gazetted and thus the possibilities for law enforcement are limited.

The biomonitoring program for Proposed Kwa National Park is funded by Rainforest Trust and John-Ball Zoo.

## **5. National Wildlife Crime Task Force**

In January 2024, WCF was able to restart the support for Liberia's national Wildlife Crime Task Force hosted by the FDA and including other members of the joint security and sanctuaries. Increased awareness, training and collaboration with the judiciary have led to an unprecedented success in combating wildlife crime in Liberia's history with confiscations of wildlife and wildlife products automatically accompanied by arrests, followed by prosecution and potential conviction. In total, 21 wildlife crime cases ranging from commercial bushmeat trade to keeping live wild animals as pets, led to convictions of arrested suspects, with fines up to US\$ 900 and 6 months in prison. The Wildlife Crime Task Force is effectively collaborating with the Special Wildlife Investigation Unit and additional law enforcement related government institutions are expected to join the Wildlife Crime Task Force in 2025.



*Members of the national Wildlife Crime Task Force led by FDA on patrol in northwestern Liberia (left) and large quantity of bushmeat confiscated around Gola Forest National Park*

## **6. Community volunteer program**

The nationwide community volunteer program led by FDA in collaboration with the Liberia Marketing Association targeting 300 female bushmeat sellers in ten major bushmeat hubs across Liberia was completed in 2024. Out of the 300 women, 270 successfully conducted awareness and changed from selling bushmeat to legal, sustainable businesses. They were honored in certification ceremonies held at all 10 locations. In October and December 2024, 50 additional female bushmeat sellers from 15 markets in Monrovia and Paynesville were trained, of which 23 already changed to legal businesses. Thus, since 2019, 384 female bushmeat sellers were trained in the wildlife law, protected species, zoonotic diseases, general conservation principles and communication methods. The women are helping to raise awareness in their own markets and are educating other bushmeat traders, restaurant owners and costumers, while changing to legal businesses. Up to the end of 2024, already 320 women had transformed to legal businesses and are no longer selling bushmeat.



*Former female bushmeat sellers/community volunteers who successfully transitioned into legal businesses and received certificates in a Buchanan (top), former bushmeat seller with her new legal business (bottom left) and newly trained community volunteers in Monrovia in December 2024 (bottom right)*

In 2024, the community volunteer program was funded by the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund/ UKAID and the European Union.

## **7. Human-wildlife conflict mitigation**

Human-wildlife conflict mitigation training of trainers was organized in Monrovia and Zwedru in February 2024, for the trainers in the northwestern Liberia landscape (19 participants), as well as for the trainers of the southeastern landscape (20 participants).



*Participants in the training of trainers in Monrovia (left) and Zwedru (right)*

Following the training of trainers, FDA and WCF held 13 human-wildlife conflict mitigation training sessions in 2024, for 385 local farmers in the northwestern and southeastern forest landscapes, including 98 women. The initiative has focused on educating and empowering farmers with effective, non-harmful mitigation strategies to protect their crops while conserving local wildlife, following methodologies and using toolkits developed and tested by Elephant Research and Conservation (ELRECO), FDA, and local farmers over the past five years.

During the various training sessions participants were equipped with skills in creating deterrents like pepper bricks (a method that utilizes the natural aversion of animals to spicy substances), scarecrows, and noise-making devices, and were educated on sustainable farming practices. The training not only has empowered farmers to protect their livelihoods independently, but also promoted the conservation of local wildlife, laying a foundation for ongoing community-driven conservation efforts. This successful model demonstrates a significant stride towards sustainable wildlife management and agricultural coexistence in Liberia.



*Human-wildlife conflict mitigation trainings organized for local farmers in Clotetee Town (left); Making of pepper bricks during training in Pellokon (right) in April 2024*

After the trainings, eight human-wildlife conflict field coordinators have regularly visited the communities to monitor and mentor the trained local farmers, and evaluate the application of the techniques and materials provided. Overall, the monitoring indicates a successful application of human-wildlife conflict mitigation techniques, high engagement of farmers, and a decrease in wildlife crop raids, resulting in improved yield and food security this season.

The human-wildlife conflict mitigation activities are funded by the European Union.

## **8. Ecotourism**

- Sapo Ecolodge***

In 2024, 30 tourists stayed at the Sapo Ecolodge. The bad road conditions continue the key challenge for tourists to reach the ecolodge with a more difficult situation since the direct connection between Monrovia and Sapo has been cut off due to a collapsed bridge since November. Most of the visitors staying at the Sapo Ecolodge also went on hiking tours inside Sapo National Park (SNP) and on boat tours on the Sinoe River. The ecolodge continues to provide livelihood support for six security guards and five cooks/cleaners, including seven women. One long-term intern from the Forestry Training Institute stayed permanently on site to work alongside the community members and the FDA to receive tourists.

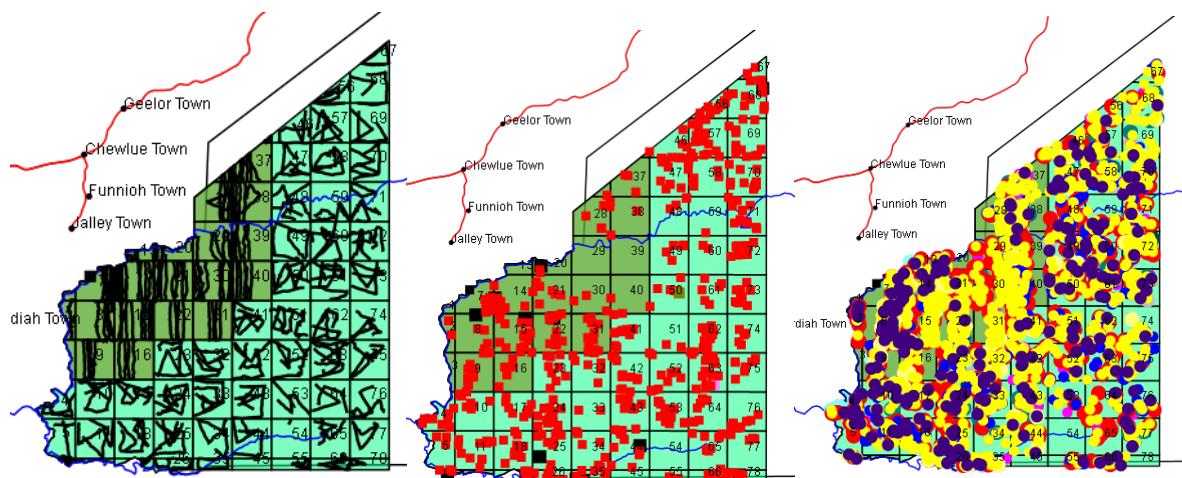
- Tourism zone patrols***

From January to December 2024, the three tourist ecoguard teams and one tourist guide team carried out 24 patrols in the SNP tourism zone, covering 169 grid cells. The teams thus completed the maximum number of planned patrols, which is a great achievement providing increased protection to the SNP tourism zone.

This zone is separated into a core zone (dark green area in the maps below) where tourist guides are carefully looking for all attractive tourist sites, besides recording wildlife and human activities, and a larger area surrounding the core zone (light green area in the maps below), where the tourist ecoguards are focusing on recording wildlife and human activities.

During the 24 patrols conducted in 2024, the teams covered a total distance of 707.25 km (black lines in right map below), over 193 patrol days, or 1,247 person days. The teams observed 658 signs of human activities (red dots in middle map below), including 654 signs of hunting (including trails potentially used by poachers), with an encounter rate of 0.93 signs of human activities per kilometer, and 0.92 signs of hunting per kilometer. Poaching represented the greatest threat observed by the teams in SNP (99% of total human activities), with only four observations of mining, logging, and settlement. The observations in 2024 show a 51% decrease in observed human activities (from 1.89 signs/km to 0.93 signs/km) and a 48% decrease in hunting signs (from 1.76 signs/km to 0.92 signs/km) compared to 2023.

As with GKNP and PKNP, this demonstrates the efficacy of the community ecoguard program and the value of having supplementary field teams patrolling the park (from two teams in 2023 to four in 2024 at SNP). The data also show that the tourism zone is the only area in SNP that is effectively protected, while all other areas are targeted by thousands of illegal miners.



**Map of tourism zone patrol coverage in Sapo National Park from January to December 2024**

**Map of observed human activities in the SNP tourism zone from January to December 2024, with 99% of all observations being linked to hunting**

**Map showing the distribution of key wildlife species observations made during patrols in the SNP tourism zone from January to December 2024**



**Sapo National Park tourist ecoguard team in April 2024**

With regard to key threatened wildlife (colored dots in right map above), the teams made 4,806 wildlife observations (representing an encounter rate of 6.80 signs/km), including observations of the most threatened species, such as the critically endangered western chimpanzee and forest elephant; the endangered Diana monkey, western red colobus, king colobus, Jentink's duiker, giant pangolin, and pygmy hippopotamus; and the vulnerable sooty mangabey, olive colobus, Brooke's duiker, and Zebra duiker.

In 2024, the tourism zone patrols in Sapo National Park were funded by WABiLED/USAID and Rainforest Rescue.

## 9. Sustainable livelihoods

In 2024, in addition to the regular income for local community members through the various green job schemes, i.e. the community ecoguards, ecotourism, biomonitoring, stipends for wildlife club facilitators, and community volunteers, WCF continued to work in collaboration with Universal Outreach Foundation (UOF) towards continuous improved beekeeping activities with 196 beekeepers around Proposed Kwa National Park and improved business skills of newly established the Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise (SWCE) with ten local women. This provided the ten women with support they needed to establish their first beehives and vegetable gardens in their respective communities. Two of the ten women were also trained by the Association of Beekeepers of Liberia (ABEL) on how to use other products from beekeeping, such as bee wax, for soap and cosmetics production. The Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise developed the Sapo Natural Forest Honey value chain, comprising two value-added products: a 400-gram and a 1,000-gram jar of honey. These are sold at the local markets in Jalay Town, Greenville and occasionally Monrovia, for US\$ 10 and US\$ 25, respectively.



*Sapo women proudly showing their new value-added honey product:  
a 1,000-gram jar of Sapo Natural Forest Honey*

From March to December, Universal Outreach Foundation (UOF) extension officers visited trained beekeepers in 21 local communities around Proposed Kwa National Park to install new beehives, relocate un-colonized beehives to increase the chances of colonization, train new beekeepers on how to manage the beehives that were colonized, bait the beehives to attract bees, and harvest honey.

As part of this program, 196 new beekeepers, including 86 women, were trained and supported in the provision of 529 beehives, of which 272 have already been colonized by bees. A growing interest was witnessed among new beekeepers who could benefit from earning their first income from honey sales, motivating them to care for and manage their hives even more while preserving the natural resources of the future park. The analyses of the income from honey sales is ongoing.



*Local beekeepers at Proposed Kwa National Park performing honey harvest (left) and beehive management (right)*

## **10. Gazzettement of Proposed Kwa National Park**

Due to the political transition in Liberia in 2024, the gazetttement process of Proposed Kwa National Park (PKNP) was put on hold from the side of FDA, even though many communities expressed concern about the continuous delay of the gazetttement. Furthermore, an increased interest from mining companies, as well as the fact that the Ministry of Mines and Energy has handed out exploration licenses within PKPN, even though they also signed the consent forms for the creation of the national park and were fully part of the pre-gazetttement activities, has exposed PKNP and the natural environment of the local communities to unprecedented threats. By mid-2024, the Customary Land Formalization (CLF) which partly should have been completed prior to gazetttement only showed slow progress. Finally, WCF was asked to step in to support the completion of the CLF process, and since September 2024, WCF has worked with the Liberia Land Authority to correct some technical mistakes that were made by other partners and to lay the basis for the completion of the CLF, which is expected for the first half of 2025.

## **11. Awareness raising and environmental education**

In 2024, WCF continued to support and implement awareness events and activities. The community volunteers (female ex-bushmeat sellers) in selected bushmeat market hotspots across Liberia have taken a key role in awareness raising activities, besides the efforts made by the FDA, the local representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, community ecoguards, and other WCF team members.

For example, the World Wildlife Day was celebrated in March 2024, World Environment Day in combination with International Day of Biodiversity was celebrated in June 2024, and World Chimpanzee Day was celebrated in July 2024.

In April and May, WCF, in collaboration with Eddie Theater Production and FDA, conducted a theater tour in 19 communities around Proposed Kwa National Park with the objective to raise awareness among community members about wildlife conservation, forest protection, and the park gazetttement process. A total of 3,476 individuals were reached, including 1,437 women, 1,288 men, and 751 children. The theater performance also functioned as a forum for dialogues between local community members and the FDA.



*Theater performance conducted by Eddie Theater Production in local communities around Proposed Kwa National Park in May 2024 (left) followed by discussion rounds (right)*

Around Proposed Kwa National Park, WCF, in collaboration with FDA, is currently supporting 20 Wildlife Clubs in local schools. In collaboration with The Nature Compact, local facilitators were trained in a newly developed curriculum and received the necessary tools to lead the wildlife clubs.

The wildlife clubs around Proposed Kwa National Park are funded by Rainforest Trust and the European Union.



*Members of the wildlife clubs in schools around the Proposed Kwa National Park*

In collaboration with local radio stations, series of radio programs were produced and broadcasted across southeastern Liberia, providing education about the benefits of conservation and technical topics, such as the human-wildlife mitigation measures, the gazetttement of proposed protected areas, and the customary land formalization.

## **12. Acknowledgements**

The WCF Liberia team is grateful to its partners in Liberia, in particular the Forestry Development Authority, who has been by WCF's side for the implementation of all projects. Other partners in Liberia with whom projects have been implemented and whom we wish to thank, in no particular order, are: Forestry Training Institute, Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Internal Affairs, especially represented through the Superintendents in Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Sinoe, and Rivercess Counties, Liberia Land Authority, Ministry for Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, Ministry of Justice, Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, The Nature Compact, Liberia Marketing Association, ELRECO (Elephant Research and Conservation), Eddie Theater Production, Sapo Women Conservation Enterprise, Association of Beekeepers of Liberia and Universal Outreach Foundation.

We wish to thank our donors for our activities in 2024, without whom none of our projects would be possible: European Union, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund/ UKAID, the Great Ape Conservation Fund of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Irish Embassy in Liberia, Rainforest Rescue, Rainforest Trust, West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED)/USAID, GIZ, and John-Ball Zoo.



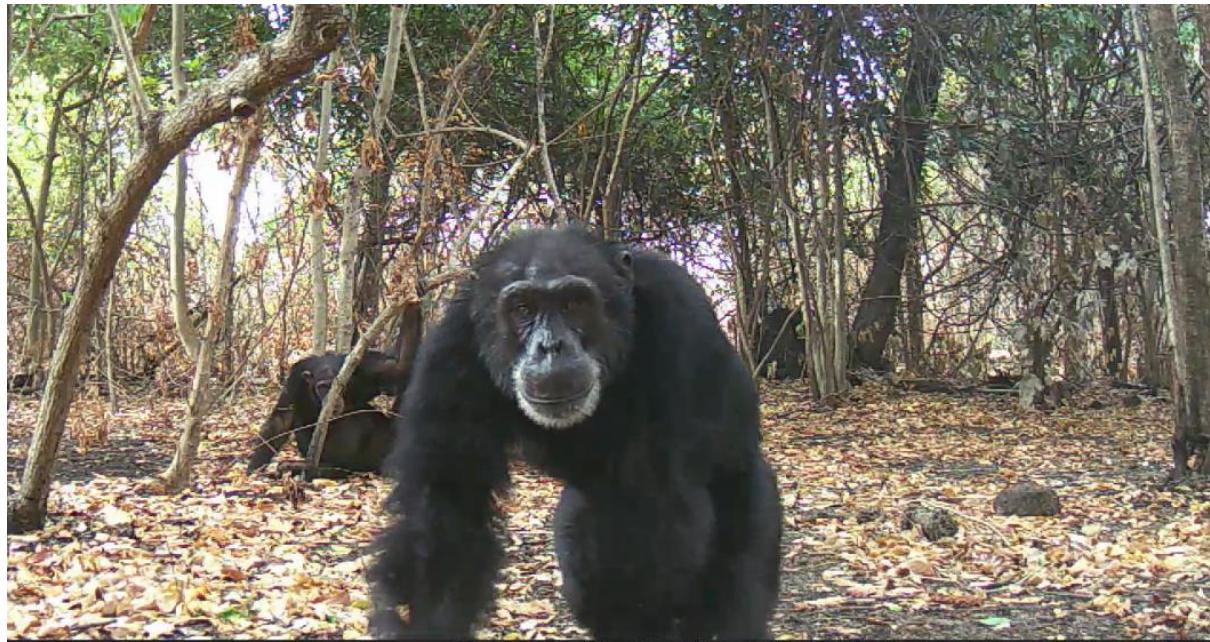
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## Annual Report 2024 – WCF Guinea



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*Critically endangered western chimpanzees recorded using camera traps  
in the proposed Badiar National Park in May 2024.*

Conakry / Guinea

December 2024

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## **Acronyms**

AGEE	Guinean Agency for Environmental Assessment
ANAFIC	<i>Agence Nationale de Financement des Collectivités Locales</i>
AVCD	Village Associations for Conservation and Development
CTDS	Camera Trap Distance Sampling
DGCL	<i>Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales</i>
DSEL	Local Socio-Economic Diagnostic
FMNR	Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
IMET	Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LTCD	Line Transect Distance Sampling
MEDD	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
NER	Natural Ecological Regeneration
NPAA	National Protected Area Authority
OGPNRF	Guinean Office of National Parks and Fauna Reserves
PDL	Local Development Plan
PSS NP	proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park
SECR	Spatially Explicit Capture-Recapture
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation
WCS	Winning Consortium Simandou

## **1. Executive summary**

In Guinea, after six years of management, the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) exited the Moyen-Bafing National Park. The WCF continues however to implement its extensive management and protection initiatives in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park (PSS NP) and is now active in new areas under the recently-launched EU-funded NaturaGuinée project, including the proposed Badiar National Park, which is a key area for the proposed large chimpanzee survival corridor between Senegal, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. Furthermore, WCF conducted a chimpanzee inventory in eight key areas of Guinea with funding from Rio Tinto. This inventory was intended to identify potential offset sites for chimpanzees impacted by the railway construction in the proposed PSS NP.

On the environmental side, WCF continued its monitoring and protection activities with monthly community ecoguard surveillance, law enforcement patrols by the Guinean Office of National Parks and Fauna Reserves (“*Office Guinéen des Parcs Nationaux et Réserves de Faune*” - OGPNR) and the National Brigade (“*Brigade nationale de lutte contre la criminalité sur la faune & flore*”), wildlife inventories with a particular focus on critically endangered western chimpanzees and forest elephants, the wildfire management program, which protected 92% of gallery and open forests during the 2023-2024 fire season in the proposed PSS NP with the help of 840 community members, and the natural ecological regeneration program, with 78 hectares under restoration in the proposed PSS NP. It is worthwhile noting that this year resulted in the arrest of 78 individuals and the seizure of 71,519 units of timber, 32 trucks, 15 chainsaws, 105 wild animals, and five animal remains (bushmeat). Six training courses have been held in 2024 on patrol techniques, wildlife crime and investigation techniques, biomonitoring techniques, cartography, and protected area management. These have been attended by 209 state officers from the OGPNR, Brigade, Magistracy, Customs, Police, Interpol, the national agency for the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance, as well as WCF team members. The gazettlement process of PSS NP is currently underway, with the official validation of its boundary by community representatives at a national workshop held in Conakry in January 2024. This was conducted in accordance with the principles of free, prior, and informed consent. Finally, following a feasibility study, Pinselli Classified Forest has been selected as the location for a new rehabilitation center for wild animals confiscated from the illegal trade (with the exception of chimpanzees).

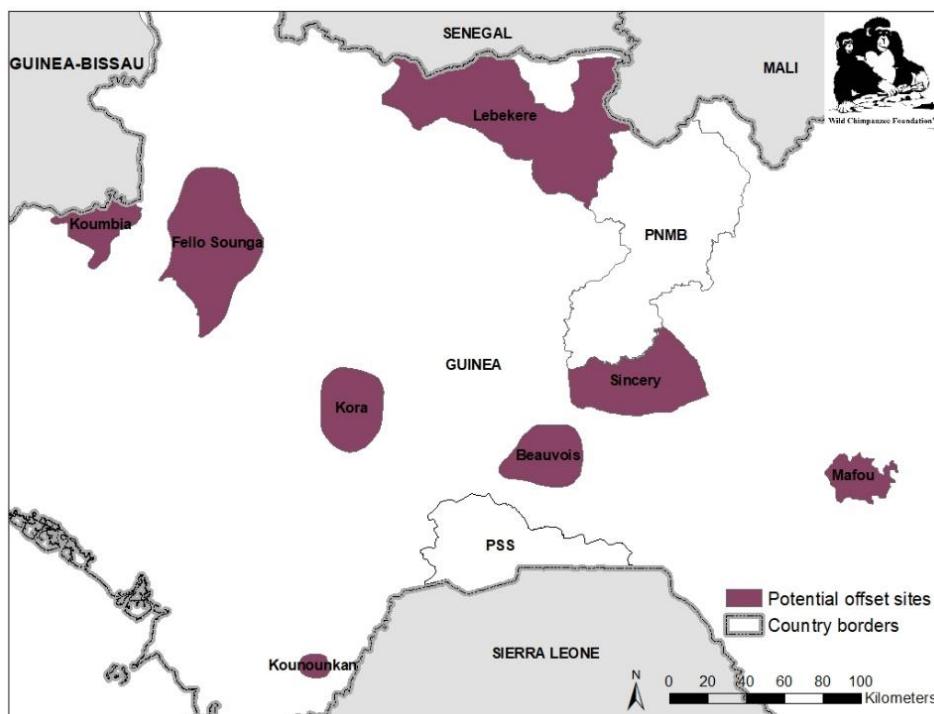
In terms of livelihood support for local communities, WCF continued to assist local farmers in various sectors, including market gardening, farmer-managed natural regeneration (i.e., agroforestry), beekeeping, shea butter production, fish farming, pastoralism, and the production of improved cookstoves. The harvest this year has yielded 9.28 tons of corn, 1.65 ton of eggplants, 980 kg of peanuts, 563 kg of onions, 537 kg of chili pepper, 414 kg of gombo, and 38 kg of tomatoes. In addition, 7,817 liters of honey and 1.70 ton of shea butter oil were produced. Total grouped sales reached 10,369,000 GNF (~ \$1,200) for market gardening products and 176,500,000 GNF (~ \$20,500) for honey. WCF facilitated awareness-raising and educational activities through the use of “*cercles d'écoute*” (i.e., focus groups), mobile cinema sessions, theatre performances, and the Club P.A.N. education program, which have reached 13,064 people and 300 school children. Furthermore, WCF initiated the development of territory natural resource management plans in the proposed PSS NP, with 100 communities that underwent a demographic survey, six participatory maps established, and one community agreement signed for the protection of conservation priority zones. Finally, WCF is currently preparing the local development plans for the six communes within the proposed PSS NP.

WCF's major activities in Guinea from January to December 2024 are outlined below:

## 2. Wildlife biomonitoring

- *Identification of potential chimpanzee offset sites in Guinea*

To compensate for the negative impacts of the railway construction on the chimpanzee population within the proposed PSS NP, Rio Tinto is funding WCF to conduct biomonitoring surveys in eight potential offset sites. Data collection has been completed for the eight sites and video processing for three sites (Beauvois: 6,587 videos, including 37 of chimpanzees; Fello Sounga: 8,823 videos, including 101 of chimpanzees; and Sincery: 11,509 videos, including 52 of chimpanzees). Evaluation of the best potential offset site(s) will now be conducted and will include chimpanzee abundance and density, as well as other factors such as human threats and climate change among others.



**Figure 1. Location of the eight potential chimpanzee offset sites in Guinea.**

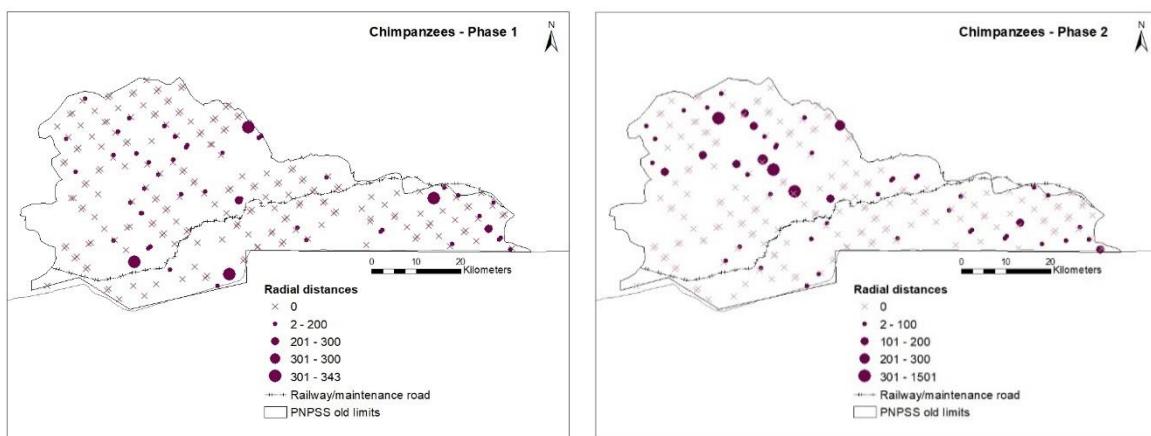
**Table 1.** Survey summary for the eight potential chimpanzee offset sites completed, with calculated chimpanzee nest encounter rate from line transects.

Site	Survey area	# planned transects	# realized transects	Total effort – real (km)	# planned camera traps	# deployed camera traps	# observed chimp nests	Nest encounter rate (nest/km)
Beauvois	1,077.9	36	36	69.68	93	75	169	2.43
Mafou	1,054.2	113	108	104.38	143	100	143	1.37
Sincery	2,034.1	65	62	60.99	107	90	346	5.67
Koumbia	816.5	65	65	64.08	93	78	58	0.91
Kora	1,753.0	67	64	59.99	87	66	42	0.70
Fello-Sounga	2,806.0	46	46	90.22	80	72	257	2.85
Kounounkan	594.0	92	81	70.09	165	89	31	0.44
Lébékéré	5,059.5	231	216	207.06	253	219	272	1.31

- ***Line transect and camera trap distance sampling in the proposed PSS NP***

To conduct a comprehensive wildlife survey across the entire proposed PSS NP, a biomonitoring program using line transects (*Line Transect Distance Sampling*, LTDS) and camera traps (*Camera Trap Distance Sampling*, CTDS) was launched in 2022. The third phase began in February 2024 and is currently ongoing. To date, 159 out of 185 transects have been completed and camera traps have been deployed at 204 out of 284 points. Video processing is in progress with species identification completed for 27,127 videos from 76 camera trap locations.

The chimpanzee density has been estimated from CTDS as 0.53 [0.341-0.812] ind./km<sup>2</sup> in phase 1 and 0.47 [0.219-0.912] ind./km<sup>2</sup> in phase 2, with the estimates falling in the confidence intervals of both phases. It seems however that the spatial distribution of chimpanzees changed between both phases, with chimpanzees observed more north of the railway. Full analyses will be presented in a detailed biomonitoring report available in the coming months.



**Figure 2. Number of chimpanzee radial distances per camera trap in phases 1 (left) & 2 (right) in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.**

- ***Six-km-long line transects in the proposed PSS NP***

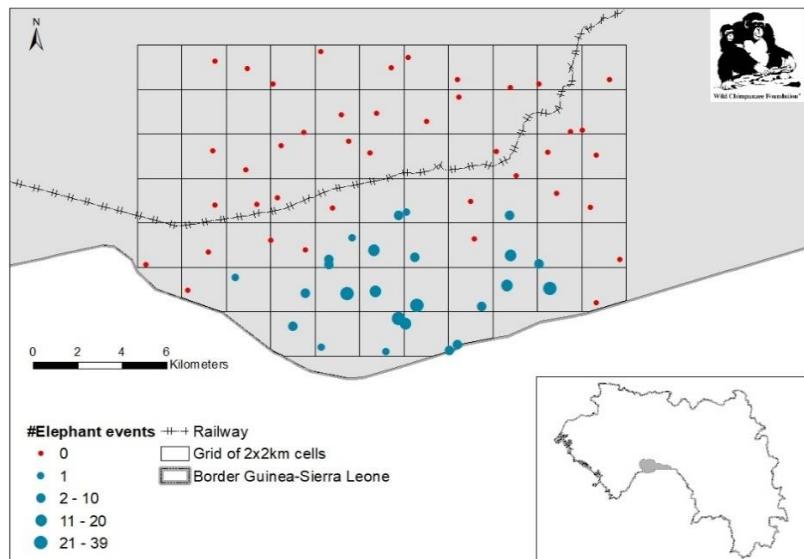
To evaluate the impact of the railway construction on the chimpanzee distribution, WCF conducted in April and December 2024 the third and the fourth missions of 26 six-km-long line transects perpendicular to the railway. Results from the first three missions show a significant, but very small, negative effect on the nest distribution the further we go away from the railway. We hypothesize that the train track might be constructed in the most favorable habitat, and that chimpanzees cannot escape from their home ranges because of habitat saturation. Results of the four missions will be presented in the 2025 semi-annual report.

- ***Elephant capture-recapture design in the proposed PSS NP***

In February 2023, WCF initiated a survey focused on forest elephants using the spatial-explicit capture recapture method with camera traps. The placement of these camera traps targeting areas of elephant presence will facilitate the individual identification of forest elephants. The primary objective is to better understand the abundance, their group composition and to provide long term insights into the population dynamics and movements within the transboundary Sabouyah-Kuru Hills-Outamba corridor.

This year, in addition to maintain the 62 camera traps which were set up in 2023 in the Sabouyah forest in Guinea, WCF deployed 72 camera traps in the Kuru Hills-Outamba landscape in Sierra Leone.

With the 663 elephant videos analyzed to date, 78 individuals have been identified in the Sabouyah forest in Guinea. On top of the 11 social matriarch groups constituted of 18 adult females, 21 subadults, 16 juveniles and five infants, 18 adult males have been identified as solitary or in bachelor groups.



**Figure 3.** Number of elephant events captured per location from February 2023 to July 2024 in Sabouyah forest / Guinea. The size of the blue circle represents the number of forest elephant videos recorded at that location.



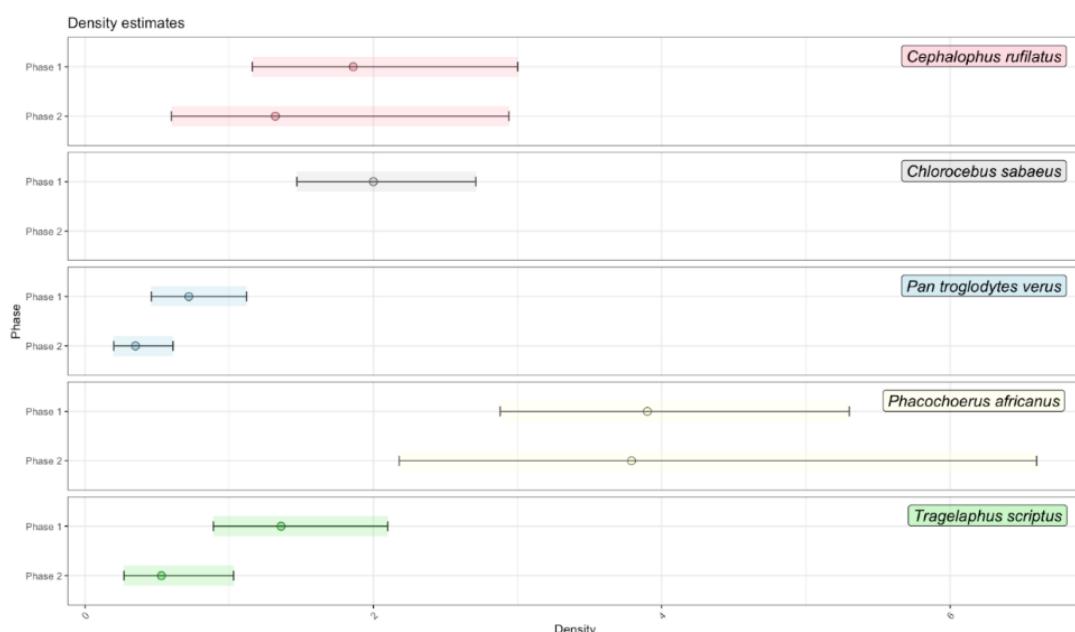
**Photo 1.** Snapshots from camera trap videos of forest elephants in the Sabouyah forest.

- **Camera trap distance sampling in the proposed Badiar National Park**

As part of the EU-funded NaturaGuinée project, the boundaries of the proposed Badiar National Park will be defined. Patrolling teams started to deploy camera traps at 150 locations in May 2024 in an opportunistic way (near indices of wildlife presence, such as chimpanzee nests, wildlife paths, duiker dungs, etc.) to have a better idea on which species are present in the area. Data analyses is underway, with 4,645 videos currently being processed for species identification. This preliminary study will allow us to elaborate a more complete design.

- *Camera trap distance sampling in the Moyen-Bafing National Park*

Two phases of biomonitoring using camera traps were conducted in the Moyen-Bafing National Park: 2019-2021 (phase 1) and 2022-2023 (phase 2). Analyses and comparisons of the two phases were finalized this year. The Moyen-Bafing National Park hosts 44 large mammal species with density and abundance estimated for five species. Western chimpanzee density was estimated at 0.46-1.12 ind./km<sup>2</sup> for phase 1 and 0.20-0.61 ind./km<sup>2</sup> for phase 2. Most animals showed a lower relative abundance index in phase 2, including the domestic cows, though overlapping of estimated densities and abundances suggests uncertain trends. Potential hypotheses explaining this difference include reduced detection by older cameras used in phase 2, stochastic sampling variations or effective population declines due to human activities or diseases. Full analyses and results can be found in a detailed report, available on the WCF website in the section “Reports” (“2024 Biomonitoring Report Moyen-Bafing National Park, Guinea”).



**Figure 4. Density estimates with 95% confidence intervals of the five species of interest in phases 1 & 2 in the Moyen-Bafing National Park: red-flanked duiker (in red), green monkey (in grey), western chimpanzee (in blue), warthog (in yellow), and bushbuck (in green). Note that there are no estimates for the green monkeys in phase 2, as the distance data were irregular and did not follow the assumption of the distance sampling method.**

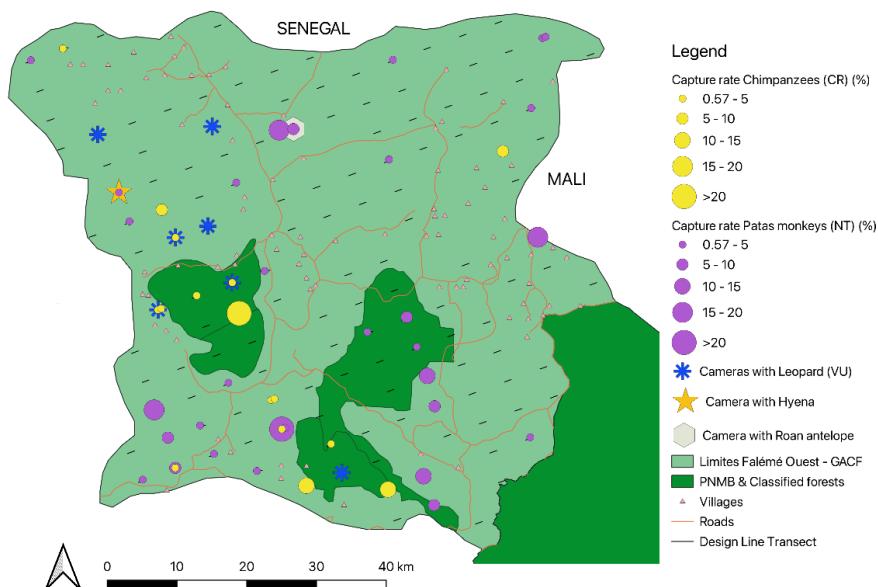
- *Biomonitoring in the corridor between Moyen-Bafing National Park and proposed Badiar National Park*

With the aim of restoring the corridor between the Moyen-Bafing National Park and the proposed Badiar National Park, a biomonitoring survey with line transects (LTDS) and camera traps (CTDS) has been conducted between May 2023 and July 2024.

The estimated chimpanzee population is 673 [370-1,935] with a density of 0.140 [0.074-0.423] ind./km<sup>2</sup> and a coefficient of variation of 46%. Chimpanzee abundances and densities are of the same order of magnitude, and the estimates fall within the confidence intervals of both methods (LTDS and CTDS). Camera traps captured footages of patas monkeys, leopards, a hyena, a roan antelope among other species.



**Photo 2. Snapshot of a western chimpanzee captured on camera trap in the corridor between Moyen-Bafing National Park and proposed Badiar National Park.**



**Figure 5. Camera locations with detections of western chimpanzees (yellow circle), patas monkeys (purple), leopard (blue), hyena (yellow star), and roan antelope (grey) from camera trap detections.**

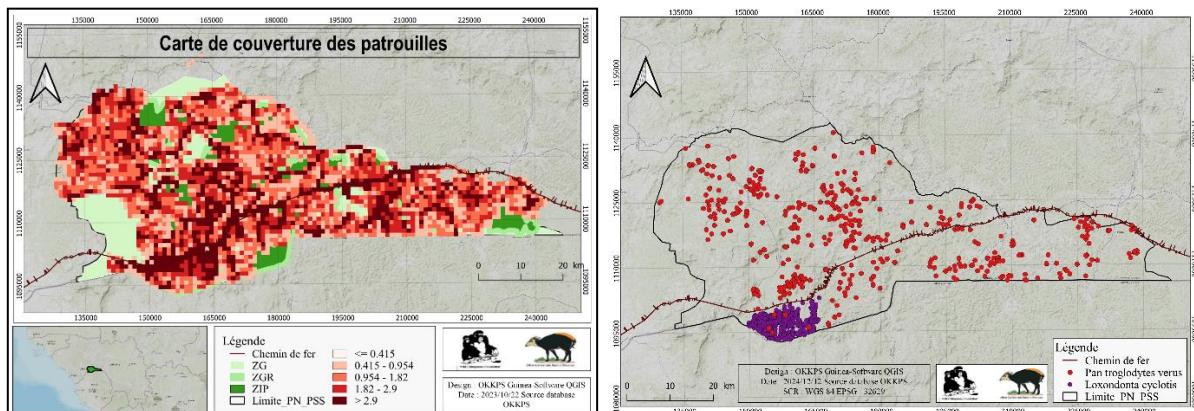
### 3. Surveillance patrols

- **proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park**

From January to October 2024, the community ecoguard teams at the proposed PSS NP, comprising 67 community members, 23 interns, and 12 OGPNRF agents, conducted 75 surveillance patrols, covering a total distance of 10,708.44 kilometers and corresponding to a surface area of 84% of the future park.

During the patrols, the teams observed 22,827 observations of 31 different mammal species, from which 1,270 were direct observations.

The common warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus*) was the species with the highest encounter rate (0.53 signs/km) followed by red river hog (*Potamochoerus porcus*, 0.43 signs/km), bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*, 0.32 signs/km), Maxwell's duiker (*Philantomba maxwellii*, 0.22 signs/km), yellow-backed duiker (*Cephalophus silvicultor*, 0.09 signs/km), red-flanked duiker (*Cephalophus rufilatus*, 0.09 signs/km), crested porcupine (*Hystrix cristata*, 0.08 signs/km), and western chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*, 0.05 signs/km).



**Figure 6. Coverage and intensity of patrols conducted in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park from January to October 2024, with darker red color representing grid cells with higher patrol efforts (left); Distribution of signs of chimpanzees (red) and forest elephants (purple) recorded during surveillance patrols (right).**



**Photo 3. Forest elephant's footprints (left) and chimpanzee's ground nest (right) recorded in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park during surveillance patrols in 2024.**

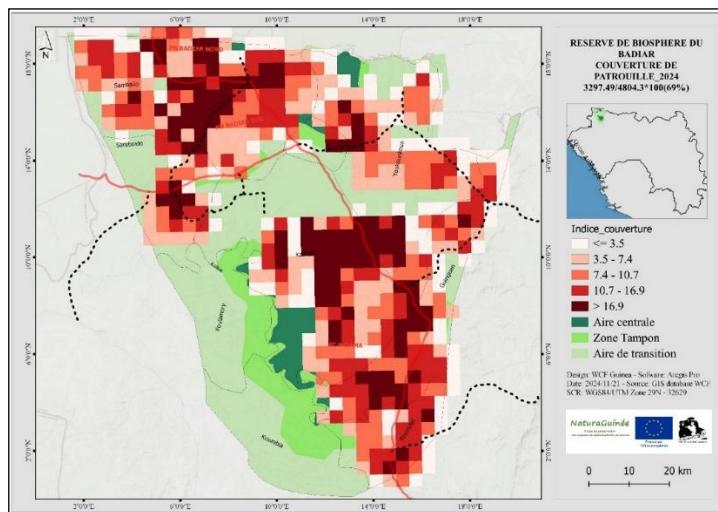
With regards to human disturbances, the teams recorded 9,852 signs, corresponding to an overall encounter rate of 0.92 signs/km. Among these human activities, agriculture was the main threat (0.28 signs/km), followed by roads and paths (0.23 signs/km), traditional livestock farming (0.19 signs/km), logging (0.14 signs/km), and wildfires (0.04 signs/km).

The results show that in addition to the construction of the railroad, the proposed PSS NP faces significant threats from the opening of new clearings for slash-and-burn agriculture and the large number of cattle roaming freely in the high conservation value forests. To mitigate these pressures, WCF will continue to patrol the park and raise awareness among community members about environmental protection and the negative impacts of deforestation and slash-and-burn agriculture. Local communities will also benefit from increased support for sustainable agricultural practices and the pastoralism and livestock program, which assists livestock farmers in reducing cattle straying.

Furthermore, two cross-border law enforcement patrols were conducted at the border between Guinea and Sierra Leone by the OGPNRF and the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA). The first patrol was conducted from July 19 to 23 and the second from October 14 to 16. The later resulted in the arrest of three individuals and the seizure of two chainsaws and 567 units of timber.

- ***proposed Badiar National Park***

From February to November 2024, the 40 OGPNRF agents assigned at the proposed Badiar National Park conducted 29 surveillance patrols, covering a total distance of 6,289.20 kilometers and corresponding to a surface area of 69% of the future park.

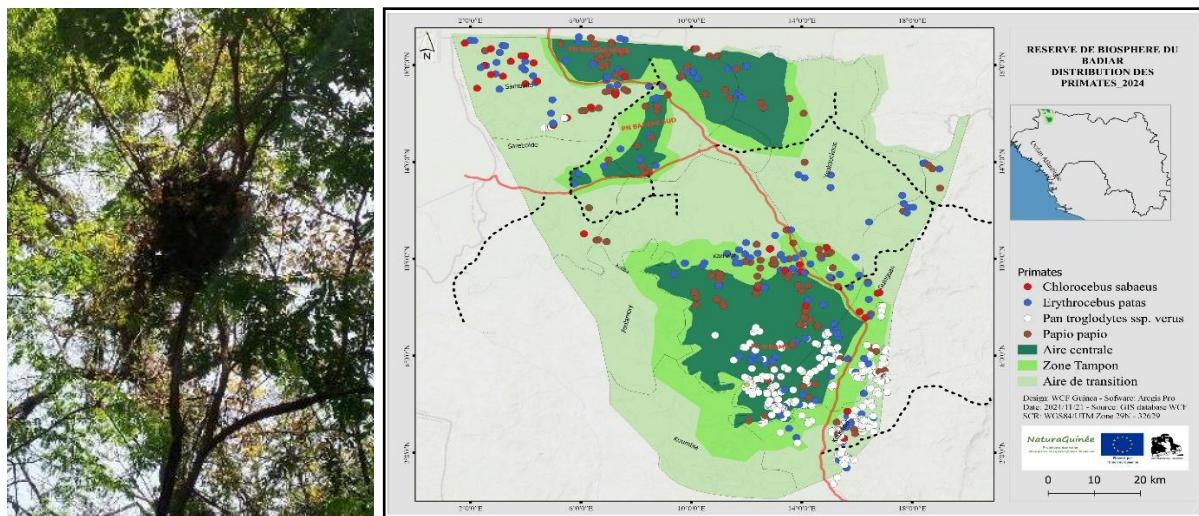


**Photo 4.** OGPNRF agents recording observations of wild animals during their patrols;

**Figure 7.** Coverage and intensity of patrols conducted in Badiar from February to November 2024, with darker red color representing grid cells with higher patrol efforts.

During the patrols, the teams observed 3,137 observations of 33 different mammal species, from which 212 were direct observations. The common warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus*) was the species with the highest encounter rate (0.23 signs/km) followed by western chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*, 0.06 signs/km), bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*, 0.03 signs/km), red-flanked duiker (*Cephalophus rufilatus*, 0.03 signs/km), Guinea baboon (*Papio papio*, 0.02 signs/km), patas monkey (*Erythrocebus patas*, 0.02 signs/km), and side-striped jackal (*Canis adustus*, 0.02 signs/km).

With regards to human disturbances, the teams recorded 1,744 signs, corresponding to an overall encounter rate of 0.28 signs/km. Among these human activities, agriculture was the main threat (0.16 signs/km), followed by traditional livestock farming (0.05 signs/km), logging (0.03 signs/km), and non-timber forest product harvest (0.02 signs/km).



**Photo 5.** A chimpanzee nest recorded by OGPNRF agents during their patrols;  
**Figure 8.** Distribution of chimpanzee signs (white), Guinea baboon (brown), patas monkey (blue), and green monkey (red) recorded during patrols in Badiar from February to November 2024 (right).

#### 4. Law enforcement

From April to November 2024, WCF provided logistical and operational support to the National Brigade (“*Brigade nationale de lutte contre la criminalité sur la faune & flore*”) for six law enforcement patrols and four special operations. Law enforcement patrols are conducted for a minimum of 10 days in WCF's priority areas (Badiar and PSS) and in areas with heavy timber traffic (Kindia, Kankan, N'zérékoré). In contrast, operations are one-off actions conducted on the basis of intelligence gathered through investigation or tip-off.

The aforementioned patrols and operations, which were conducted by 86 officers from the National Brigade, have resulted in the arrest of 78 individuals and the seizure of 32 trucks, 71,519 units of timber, 15 chainsaws, 105 wild animals, and five animal remains (bushmeat). These results are particularly noteworthy given that they were achieved in only eight months.

**Table 2.** Monthly law enforcement patrols and operations conducted by the National Brigade officers with the support of WCF from April to November 2024. Note that no patrols/operations were conducted in September and November 2024.

Month	Patrols Operations	Area	Total people arrested	Total timber units	Total wild animals	Total animal remains
April	1 patrol	Kindia – Madina Oula	6	894	-	5
May	1 patrol	PSS	2	8,722	-	-
May	2 operations	Faranah – Badiar	3	502	100	-
June	1 patrol	N'Zérékoré	9	740	-	-
July	1 patrol	PSS	12	2,434	-	-
August	1 patrol	PSS	4	4,028	-	-
August	2 operations	Conakry - Forécariah	37	53,315	2	-
October	1 patrol	Forécariah	5	884	3	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>71,519</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>5</b>



**Photo 6. Bushmeat (left) and logs (right) seized by the Brigade in Madina-Oula in April and in Mamou in May 2024.**

## 5. Capacity building

In 2024, WCF has conducted six capacity-building workshops for various state actors and WCF team members:

- 1) From February 6 to 8, a training on patrolling techniques was organized in Koundara for 40 OGPNR agents assigned to the proposed Badiar National Park. The training focused on patrolling tools, including the use of SMART (*Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool*) Mobile and GPS with the goal to render the agents operational and proficient in the surveillance and management of natural resources.



**Photo 7. Training on patrol techniques organized in Koundara in February 2024.**

- 2) On April 16, a training course on cartography and the QFIELD application was provided to 14 Brigade officers and five WCF staff in the Camayenne botanical garden in Conakry to ensure that officers leaving on their first patrol are able to locate offense locations, types of offense, take photos, and centralize data.
- 3) From May 7 to 10, a biomonitoring training course was organized in Koundara for 35 OGPNR agents and 17 WCF agents, with the goal to render the latter operational and proficient before the start of the biomonitoring survey. During the course, participants learned how to operate a camera trap, from understanding the set up menu, battery and memory card placement, to practicing how to find a suitable tree to fix it to, and how best to position it. Following the training, the team installed 48 camera traps opportunistically in the proposed Badiar National Park from May to June, and then 102 additional camera traps in November that will stay for two to three months.



**Photo 8. Biomonitoring training organized in Koundara in May 2024.**

4) From June 11 to 14, a law enforcement and wildlife criminality capacity-building workshop was organized in Kindia for 58 participants from the technical services of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (“*Ministère de l’Environnement et du Développement Durable*” - MEDD), the Magistracy, Customs, the Police, Interpol, the national agency for the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance, and the OGPNR. The objective was to increase knowledge and understanding of the fauna and flora codes, and hunting and logging regulations and train state agents in the techniques and procedures of arrests operations, confiscations, prosecutions, and legal follow-up.



**Photo 9. Law enforcement workshop organized in Kindia in June 2024.**

5) The management efficiency of proposed Badiar National Park was evaluated for the first time using IMET (*Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool*) from August 12 to 17 in Mamou (participation of 27 individuals). The objective was to assess the future park’s management efficiency prior to the implementation of the EU-funded NaturaGuinée project. The future park obtained an efficiency score of 22.62%, indicating the challenges that will need to be addressed over the next four years.



**Photo 10. IMET workshop organized in August 2024 for proposed Badiar National Park.**

- 6) Finally, two training sessions were held from October 20 to 30 and from November 4 to 14 for 12 agents from the Guinean Agency for Environmental Assessment (AGEE). The sessions focused on georeferenced data acquisition techniques and cartographic analysis.

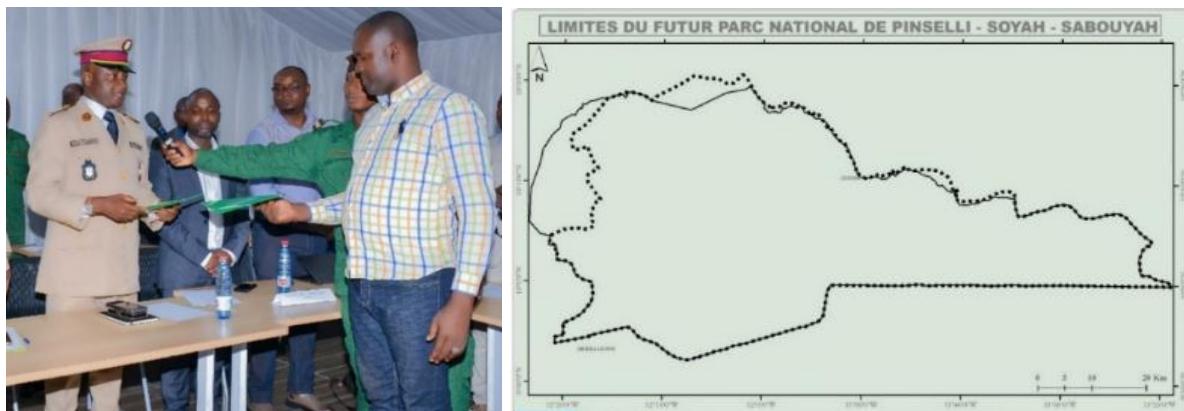
## **6. Implementation of a mitigation strategy in the proposed PSS NP**

As the railway construction plans represent a major threat to the proposed PSS NP, threatening to divide the future park in two, blocking all animal movement and increasing fragmentation, WCF has continued to be extremely active in exchanging with the railway constructors, Winning Consortium Simandou (WCS) and Rio Tinto, to have them significantly increase investment into mitigating and compensating their negative impacts.

In 2024, WCF, in collaboration with the AGEE, has pursued the field visits at the railway construction sites to monitor and assess the implementation of the mitigation hierarchy, as well as identify discrepancies between the planned land clearing and the actual land clearing carried out on site by the various WCS's subcontractors. Five missions were conducted in March, April, May, October and December 2024 at the construction sites and key areas. In addition, the AGEE carried out a noise and water pollution assessments. Results of the missions revealed significant discrepancies between the planned land clearing and the actual land clearing activities conducted. Key environmental impacts recorded included (but were not limited to) illegal settlements, gallery forest destruction, dust generation, sediment deposits, water pollution, and un-rehabilitated borrow pits.

## **7. Gazettement process of Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park**

Late last year, and following the organization of the third consultation meetings in the communes of the proposed PSS NP, the boundary of the future park was revised in line with community requests. Following this, on January 17, 2024, the MEDD and the OGPNR organized, with the support of WCF, a national workshop in Conakry to officially validate the boundary of PSS NP with local communities through the signature of agreements. A total of 70 people participated, including the prefects of Kindia, Mamou, and Faranah, the mayors, vice-mayors, and sub-prefects of the six communes of the future park, and local, regional, and national authorities from the MEDD. Results of the negotiations on the modification of the park's boundary in the communes of Ouré Kaba, Soyah, and Linsan were presented. At the conclusion of the workshop, the ministerial decree establishing the gazettement process of PSS NP and the minutes of the validation of the park's boundary in the six communes were presented to the mayors of the communes. The future park now officially includes six communes: Madina Oula, Soyah, Ouré Kaba, Maréla, Linsan, and Konkouré, and a total provisional size of 3,156 km<sup>2</sup> (compared to 3,029 km<sup>2</sup> previously).



**Photo 11.** Presentation of the minutes of the validation of the Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park's boundary by the Prefect of Kindia to the Secretary General of Madina Oula (left);

**Figure 9.** Old (dotted) and updated (continuous) limits of the Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park's boundary (right).

Furthermore, as part of the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process and the involvement of all stakeholders in the gazetttement and management of the proposed PSS NP, WCF organized a meeting with the regional hunters' fraternity in Mamou on September 17. The aim was to strengthen their involvement in awareness-raising activities and in mobilizing local communities for the protection of biodiversity. Following this meeting, three main recommendations were made: (i) Increase the participation of the hunter's fraternity in awareness-raising activities; (ii) Provide legal documents to increase knowledge of wildlife legislation, and (iii) Support members of the hunter's fraternity in alternative economic activities, such as farming and beekeeping, to compensate for the loss of income associated with hunting.



**Photo 12.** Meeting held in Mamou in September with members of the hunters' fraternity

## 8. Forest regeneration and wildfire management

- *proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park*

With regards to forest protection, conservation, and restoration, WCF has for the second time in the proposed PSS NP launched its annual wildfire management campaign, with the active involvement of local communities. These communities have received financial compensation for their efforts, which has helped to reduce poverty in communities living within the proposed PSS NP.

The WCF established 98.22 km of fire belts around high conservation value forests (+36% compared to last fire season) with the involvement of 840 community members (+28%), including 156 women, and resulting in the protection of 92% of gallery and open forests.



**Figure 10. Location of the 98 kilometers of fire belts (in red) to protect high conservation value forests (in green) during the 2023-2024 fire season in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park (left);**

**Photo 13.** A 20m-wide fire belt established in the future park (right).

In preparation for the 2024-2025 wildfire management campaign, a series of awareness-raising sessions were conducted in 89 villages on wildfire management in the proposed PSS NP in October. A total of 1,034 individuals, including 295 women, participated in the sessions, which were organized in collaboration with the hunters' fraternity of the Mamou region.



**Photo 14. Awareness-raising session on wildfire management in the community of Sebeko in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park, with the participation of the hunters' fraternity of Mamou.**

Furthermore, natural ecological regeneration (NER) activities have been initiated in the landscape. First, WCF provided a capacity-building training to 60 community members in January. Subsequently, 609.90 hectares of land have been identified for restoration across 11 NER sites, with 78 hectares already benefiting from NER efforts. A total of 422 community members, including 84 women, participated in the establishment of 18 growth-monitoring plots, which resulted in the inventory of 1,144 plants from 48 species.



*Photo 15. Community members cleaning a NER site (left) and installing a growth-monitoring plot (right) in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.*

- *proposed Badiar National Park*

The cartographic data analysis revealed that the proposed Badiar National Park encompasses 6,470 hectares with broken ecological connectivity. A field verification mission was then conducted in collaboration with the OGNR agents to verify the data and identify degraded sites. The mission also provided an opportunity to discuss future actions with local communities. This mission resulted in the identification and polygonization of five degraded sites, totaling 190.52 hectares. The selection of NER sites will be made according to a number of criteria, including the site's geographical position, the outcome of negotiations with local communities, the presence of key flora species stumps, and the availability of funds.

## 9. Establishment of a rehabilitation center for confiscated animals

As part of the EU-funded NaturaGuinée project, WCF will establish a rehabilitation center/sanctuary for the wild animals (excluding chimpanzees) confiscated from the illegal trade by the National Brigade during their law enforcement patrols or special operations.

The first step consisted in the conduct of a feasibility study for the establishment of the new sanctuary by an international consultant from September 16 to October 24. Several sites were visited and evaluated with the advices of national authorities and WCF experts. A restitution meeting was then organized at the MEDD on October 24 to share the results of the consultations and visits to potential sites, with the participation of 20 individuals. The consultant visited and evaluated eleven potential sites, with a particular recommendation for the Pinselli site in the proposed PSS NP. Discussion of the results was followed by a question-and-answer session, which allowed participants to clarify certain technical and strategic aspects of the site selection for the future sanctuary. In the end, the Pinselli site was favorably selected by all participants as the site for future sanctuary work.



**Photo 16.** Field visit conducted in Pinselli with national authorities (left); Restitution meeting held at the MEDD in Conakry in October (right).

## 10. Community-based management framework

### *Community consultations (Badiar)*

On May 14, the OGPNRF, with support from WCF, held a workshop to present the planned project activities in Badiar to local elected officials and local communities of the Koundara prefecture. The workshop brought together 99 participants, including the Prefect of Koundara, mayors of urban and rural communes, sub-prefects, and representatives from various government departments, such as the environment, timber, agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and water. Subsequently, from May 27 to June 3, a community consultation was held in five rural communes, bringing together 23 district presidents, 74 sector chiefs, 59 women's representatives, and 64 youth representatives with the objective of: 1) Provide local communities with advance notice of project activities; 2) Collect data on the communities' socioeconomic and environmental challenges, as well as potential solutions; and 3) Obtain communities' consent or agreement to deploy teams in various villages or sectors.



**Photo 17.** Community consultation held in May 2024 to present the planned project activities of the Badiar component to local communities.

### *Land use planning (proposed PSS NP)*

Since 2021, 460 communities have been identified and authenticated in the proposed PSS NP through baseline surveys. The development of territory natural resource management plans (*Village Land Management Plans*, VLMP) has commenced with demographic studies, tracing of village histories, demarcation of village territories, participatory mapping of village territories, communal consultations to present the VLMP process, and negotiation of community agreements for restoration and preservation of conservation priority areas. This will result in the sustainable management of the landscape at the community level.

From January to May, 100 communities underwent a demographic survey and tracing of community histories. Subsequently, six participatory maps were established for seven communities (one of which was an inter-village participatory map), with the participation of 203 community members. Finally, one agreement with the Konkouré community was signed in October, which outlines the terms for the protection and restoration of conservation priority zones.



**Photo 18. Demographic survey conducted in the community of Balmemboum (left); Participatory map of Sogoreya (right).**

### **Local Development Plans (proposed PSS NP & Badiar National Park)**

In July, the quadripartite agreement between the *Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales* (DGCL), the *Agence Nationale de Financement des Collectivités Locales* (ANAFIC), the OGPNRF, and WCF was signed. This agreement aims to strengthen the cooperation framework between the four entities, in order to facilitate the process of revising and updating the local development plans (PDL) of the communes located in the protected areas supported by WCF: the proposed PSS NP and the proposed Badiar National Park.

Following the signature, a workshop was held in Mamou to initiate the process of updating the Local Socio-Economic Diagnostic (DSEL) data and revising the PDL in the six communes of the proposed PSS NP. The workshop was attended by 51 individuals. Subsequently, a field mission was conducted to collect the DSEL data in the six communes, which were then validated by commune representative members during extraordinary assemblies and community forums (participation of 511 individuals). WCF is currently drafting the DSEL reports and the PDLs. Upon completion, these documents will be submitted for validation at the communal, prefectural, and regional levels.

With regard to the proposed Badiar National Park, an overview of the DSEL and PDL situation was conducted for the six communes of the Koundara prefecture. Two PDL whose validity period have expired will require updating. Three PDL, which will expire in the next two to four years, will require revision. Finally, one commune has yet to develop a PDL, which will be a priority for the next year.

### ***Complaint and grievance management mechanism (proposed PSS NP)***

The community-based management framework for natural resources that WCF is developing includes a complaints and grievance management mechanism that adheres to the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). To date, 19 district council offices, comprising 444 members, were established to ensure community involvement in all park activities and to manage conflicts, complaints, and grievances. This year, 27 complaint boxes were installed in the districts of the proposed PSS NP to facilitate the submission of community complaints and concerns. A total of 90 complaints and grievances have been registered to date. Of these, 70 were related to human-wildlife conflicts and 20 to social conflicts. Fifty-eight complaints were resolved amicably with the involvement of the district council offices to date.



***Photo 19. Collection of complaints from a complaint and grievance box installed in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.***

## **11. Socioeconomic development of communities**

In the proposed PSS NP, the WCF has provided support to 803 community members (including 396 women), organized into 25 Village Associations for Conservation and Development (AVCD), to improve their livelihoods in various sectors such as vegetable gardening, rain-fed agriculture, and apiculture production. While in the Badiar proposed National Park, WCF has established 21 AVCD in 10 communities to provide support during the next year in agriculture, apiculture, and shea butter production.

### ***Vegetable gardening (proposed PSS NP & Badiar National Park)***

In the proposed PSS NP, WCF has provided support to 391 local farmers, including 204 women, from 10 communities in the development and maintenance of nine collective vegetable gardens, for a total surface of 11.59 hectares. The WCF provided the securing and fencing equipment for three new collective plains (the others having been fenced last year), as well as basic farming equipment such as watering cans, rakes, sprays, and seeds. To enhance the field productivity, 8.85 tons of compost and 63 liters of biopesticide were produced.

The agricultural plains were utilized on two occasions throughout the year: once during the dry season and again during the rainy season. Harvest during the dry season consisted in 1.65 ton of eggplants, 563 kg of onions, 537 kg of chili pepper, 87 kg of gombo, and 38 kg of tomatoes.

During the rainy season, harvest consisted at the time of writing the report in 9.28 tons of corn, 980 kg of peanuts, and 327 kg of gombo. To date, 1.10 ton of eggplants, 543 kg of onions, and 300 kg of gombo were sold at the price of 10,369,000 GNF (~ \$1,200).

Furthermore, WCF has identified 99 volunteer local farmers, including 13 women, from 20 communities in the proposed Badiar National Park to receive support during the next year. The total area of the 99 agricultural fields was 149.06 hectares, which were all polygonised.



**Photo 20. Preparation of biopesticide by local women (left) and harvest of eggplants (right).**

### ***Agroforestry (proposed PSS NP)***

Complementing natural ecological regeneration (NER) efforts taking place on uncultivated land, the farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) approach prescribes that a certain density of trees is maintained and/or regenerated in cultivated fields. Hence, based on specific criteria (depth of soil, level of slope, age of the field, availability of tree species, etc.), eight FMNR fields totaling 7.60 hectares were selected to receive agricultural support in 2024. Four of the eight FMNR fields were established in 2023, with the remaining four established in 2024. The four new FMNR fields were fenced this year to prevent cattle intrusion and conflicts between agricultural and livestock farmers. Additionally, 180 trees were preserved during their establishment, bringing the total number of preserved trees across the 7.60 hectares to 610. WCF provided 205 kg of rice seeds, 140 kg of fonio seeds, 100 kg of peanut seeds, and 52 kg of sesame seeds. The results of the 2024 harvest will be presented in the next reporting period.

### ***Apiculture (proposed PSS NP)***

Last year, six communities received 120 eco-responsible Kenyan beehives, and additional equipment and material such as capture beehives, smokers, barrels, protective clothes, gloves, boots, knives, frame lifts, harvest buckets, and sieve fabrics. This year, WCF provided 240 additional Kenyan beehives and the same small equipment and material to 11 newly-supported communities.

From the 120 Kenyan beehives installed in 2023, 63 are inhabited by bees, corresponding to a bee inhabitation rate of 53%. Out of those 63 inhabited Kenyan beehives, 34 were harvested resulting in 422 liters of honey. In parallel, the WCF is supporting community members in the monitoring and maintenance of 3,042 improved traditional beehives. These improved traditional beehives are made of bamboo, cow dung, and straw instead of cutting trees.

This year, the project helped the community members to harvest, press, filter, and condition 7,395 liters of improved traditional honey from 1,073 beehives, and then supported them in the marketing of their honey. So far, WCF helped 104 local honey productors sell 7,060 liters of honey at the price of 176,500,000 GNF (~ \$20,500). Finally, to guarantee the quality of the honey produced, a control analysis of the quality and physicochemical composition was conducted by the national office in charge of quality control – “*Office National de Contrôle de Qualité*” - before it was released to the market.



**Photo 21. Harvest (left) and marketing (right) of honey in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.**

#### ***Shea butter (proposed Badiar National Park)***

In order to enhance the financial stability of local communities within the proposed Badiar National Park, a shea butter production initiative was launched and implemented this year. To this end, 163 female shea butter producers from 16 villages were provided with the following resources: 500 empty sacks for collecting 14,130 kg of shea nuts, 20 tarpaulins for drying the nuts, and 200 jute sacks for storing 5,872 kg of shea kernels obtained from shelling the nuts. Similarly, a processing unit was installed and made available to women producers in the village of Sambaldé. As a result, 154 female producers from 15 villages were able to transform their shea kernels into 1,700 kg of shea butter oil.



**Photo 22. Women from Badiar producing shea butter oil.**

### ***Improved cookstoves (proposed PSS NP)***

A training on the use of improved cookstoves was held for 62 community members, including 37 women, from 13 pilot communities and 25 WCF agents in Soyah from May 16 to 19, 2024. The objective is to optimize energy use for cooking and reduce wood exploitation in the area of the proposed PSS NP. During the training, participants were instructed on how to fabricate eight models of improved cookstoves. These traditional improved cookstoves are constructed from locally sourced materials (dung, clay, straw, and water) and reduce the use of wood by 80%. A program for 215 women in 25 villages was established immediately following the training, with 284 improved cookstoves fabricated and installed. To facilitate the work, material kits (shovels, machetes, and buckets) were distributed to 40 community participants.



***Photo 23. Improved cookstoves fabricated by community members in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.***

### ***Pastoralism and livestock program (proposed PSS NP & Badiar National Park)***

This year, WCF launched a pastoralism and livestock program in the proposed PSS NP to reduce the environmental degradation caused by over-grazing livestock as well as human-wildlife conflicts (i.e., cattle being preyed by wildlife). A preliminary survey was conducted among 222 livestock farmers in 27 target villages in February 2024.

Then, training sessions were conducted from March 16 to April 1, for 418 farmers of livestock farmers' associations from seven villages out of the 27 targeted ones. During the trainings, participants prepared multi-nutritional salt licks, which will reduce cattle straying and allow animal monitoring. The trained villagers were provided with material to produce nutritional salt licks and produced 289 nutritional blocks weighing 1,445 kg.

A second training course was subsequently conducted from October 10 to 16 for members of livestock farmers' associations and government officials in Konkouré, Soyah, and Ouré Kaba. A total of 190 participants from 31 villages took part in the training, which focused on four key areas: the adoption of a livestock breeding model that is resilient to the effects of climate change; the transmission of a "surveillance-control" livestock management method; the production of nutritional salt licks; and the recognition of certain zoonotic diseases.

Finally, following a consultation meeting with 39 presidents of livestock farmers' associations, a grazing area was identified as a pilot project for the rotating use of space by livestock and crops.



**Photo 24. Training on sustainable livestock techniques organized in March 2024.**

Similarly, the pastoralism and livestock program was launched this year in the proposed Badiar National Park. In June, 48 villages were surveyed resulting in the identification of 3,910 cattle breeders, 4,160 sheep breeders, 4,070 goat breeders, 475 donkey breeders, 5,225 poultry breeders, and seven pig breeders. WCF then conducted a training session for 567 livestock farmers from 13 communities, resulting in the production of 332 nutritional salt licks weighing 1,660 kg. Finally, from July to August, WCF identified and polygonised 32 grazing areas with a total surface area of 1,142.5 hectares, which span 16 villages.

### ***Fish farming (proposed PSS NP)***

This year, the WCF initiated the fish farming (in a region with secured water reserves) support program in response to numerous complaints from community members. Indeed, community members have expressed concern about being deprived of their means of protein supply by the ban on hunting in their local forests. On the other hand, the lack of water reserves for livestock and community members during long periods of drought has forced community members to move kilometers away from their villages in search of water, where their livestock are attacked by wildlife. Thus, this new program aims to: 1) Significantly reduce the hunting and harvesting of wildlife species; 2) Promote the protection and restoration of gallery forests and river ecosystems; 3) Introduce farmers to fish farming and guarantee sustainable fish production; 4) Strengthen green livelihoods and contribute to improving the incomes of local communities; and 5) Provide water reserves for livestock and communities during shortages due to the long dry season.

Based on specific criteria, six potential sites were identified in Karimouya, Soyah, Yali, and Konkouré by a fish farming expert. Subsequently, two rice-fish ponds, covering an area of 0.8 hectares in total, have been established in Konkouré with the participation of local community members. The area is divided into 0.3 hectares for seeding (i.e., breeding pond) and 0.5 hectares for production (i.e., production pond). In July, WCF procured nearly 2,000 fries from various species for seeding purposes. The first fishing is scheduled to take place in January 2025. A weekly program for monitoring, maintaining, and tracking the evolution of the fish pond is in place and overseen by a member of the management committee. In parallel, WCF conducted a training program for 53 community members, including 12 women, on fish farming, water resource management, and pond maintenance techniques. The objective was to equip them with the skills necessary for monitoring, maintenance, production, and fishing.



*Photo 25. The rice-fish pond established in Konkouré (left); Fries acquired for seeding purposes in July 2024 (right).*

## 12. Awareness raising and education

In 2024, the WCF has implemented the following outreach activities:

- **Awareness sessions:** Through the organization of “cercles d’écoute” and cinema mobile, 7,720 community members (including 3,882 women) were sensitized in the proposed PSS NP and 3,468 community members (including 1,379 women) in the proposed Badiar National Park;
- **Club P.A.N. - environmental education program** was implemented in six schools of the proposed PSS NP and benefitted 300 children, including 97 girls, during the 2023-2024 school year. The 2024-2025 school year was initiated in November and will benefit 300 children in PSS and 304 children in Badiar regions;



*Photo 26. Children participating in the Club P.A.N. program during the 2023-2024 school year.*

- **Theatre tour:** From June 26 to July 20, the second theatre tour was organized in 19 communities of the proposed PSS NP. The theatre tour reached 1,376 people, including 710 women;



**Photo 27. Second theatre tour organized in the proposed Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park.**

- **International Women's Day** was celebrated in Mamou on March 8, through a march, a play, and speeches by authorities. The event gathered more than 500 participants;
- **World Chimpanzee Day** was celebrated in Mamou, Koundara, and Conakry on July 14, through a march to raise awareness on the importance to protect chimpanzees.

In addition, the WCF communications team developed other outreach activities using different communication channels as follows: four TV broadcasts were released on national televisions, 106 radio programs were broadcast on two local radios in Poulhar, Malinke and Sousou languages, and 25 articles were published online (WCF website and social media pages). Additionally, communication and visibility materials including kakemonos, signboards, banners, posters, stickers, picture boxes, t-shirts, etc. were widely produced. Finally, results of the law enforcement patrols and operations conducted by the Brigade were published in various media and newspapers (n = 13) in order to raise public awareness of the fact that the law is being actively enforced.

### **13. Acknowledgements**

The WCF Guinea team is grateful to their long-term partner, the Guinean Office of National Parks and Fauna Reserves (OGPNRF, *Office Guinéen des Parcs Nationaux et Réserves de Faune*), and all the agents of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD, *Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable*) who contributed to the gazettlement of the Moyen-Bafing National Park in 2021 and are now working towards the gazettlement of the Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah and Badiar National Parks. We would also like to thank the local communities for their commitment and for achieving key visible results. Finally, we are very thankful to our donors, without whom none of our projects would be possible: European Union, Rainforest Trust, West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) from USAID, Arcus Foundation, Zürcher Tierschutz, Great Ape Conservation Fund of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Rio Tinto, Winning Consortium Simandou, Zoo am Meer Bremerhaven, Serengeti Park Stiftung, and Monde Sauvage Safari Park.