A Newsletter for all of you

- Villagers who live near a national park
- Anyone who works for the conservation of forests

Forest Wisdom

- Tells the story of special forest inhabitants: chimpanzees
- Shows the problems and threats to the forest
- Supplies information
- Answers questions and invites you to contribute to this newsletter
- Invites you to protect the great forest, a national heritage that is yours as well

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33 years of research and conservation of chimpanzees in Côte d’Ivoire

From October 5 – 12, 2012,
at the Institut français de Côte d’Ivoire (IFCI)

They’re so familiar to us but threatened with extinction.

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Steward Programme
Ambassade de Suisse Abidjan

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Hello everybody,

The start of 2011 was very difficult for the Ivory Coast but now that the conflict is resolved, it is important that we continue to strive for peace. The environment can become an important focus for development, and examples of other African countries’ success stories should give us confidence. Taï National Park, with its chimpanzees that use large stone hammers to crack nuts, its ten monkey species of different colours, and its pygmy hippopotamuses, represents a unique richness in the world! Why, in the future, couldn’t it be a tourist attraction that would be unique in the world too? Similar attractions have been successful in other African countries; for example, tourists visit Botswana to view elephants, Kenya and Tanzania to view lions, Rwanda and Uganda to view gorillas, and Congo to view chimpanzees and monkeys. Many projects have been implemented in these countries recently with the participation of local communities to protect these wild animal populations and attract tourists. The main conditions are security and peace, of course!

If we manage to guarantee security and peace in the region, the conditions for the start of eco-tourism would be met and we could, for the first time in Ivory Coast, initiate a project where the natural heritage of the country would contribute to the development of the villages of an entire region. Besides, chimpanzees also know how to make peace! Some old males even have the capacity to understand the particular interests of some “partisans of power” and this doesn’t prevent them from first and foremost defending the general interest of the group. Read our “story about chimpanzees” on page 9: The situation was tense and yet, thanks to one chimpanzee in particular, peace returned for the security of everybody. We can draw some lessons from this…

The first CD with the songs of Ymako Teatri will be distributed during the WCF tour in your villages!
The knowledge of our ancestors

Gnesio Téré Henri,
Hedwige Boesch

Detarium senegalense

The *Detarium senegalense* tree (Caesalpiniaceae) is widespread throughout tropical Africa; you can find it in Ivory Coast, Senegal, Liberia, Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Congo, Togo, Soudan, Benin, Mozambique, and Ghana, often near water.

In local languages, the tree is called Bodo, Tabakoumba or Tabanikro (in Malinké); Zaman or Zama (in Guéré); Boto (in Guinée); Kalé, Kru-basa or Kpay (in Libéria); Kissi Gboe (in Sierra Leone); Kaguédéga or Gurma bobunakala (in Burkina Faso); Takyi kyiriwa or Kukpuka (in Ghana); Mango or Tschaudio (in Togo); Kukbé (in Benin); Fantu (in Niger); Edo or Oguego (in Nigeria). The tree can reach heights of 20 to 30 m and grows in dense, humid, evergreen forests. Its trunk is straight and covered in a blackish, delicately cracked bark with large, very hard scales. Its leaves are compound, rounded, and 4 cm long. Its flowers are small and white.

Its fruit, in the form of big drupes, have a very fibrous pulp with a flat seed inside that forms the nucleus.

Many animals, including chimpanzees, monkeys, rats, and elephants, consume the fruit and they delight in it. But this tree also has many virtues that are appreciated by people! Its dry leaves distributed on the heaps of earth on yams prevent termites from destroying the crops and are also an effective fertilizer.

**Nutritional use**

The fresh fruit are eaten as they are. The pulp is used for making pancakes, sweet, couscous, and flour. The seed produces edible and marketable oil.

**Domestic use**

The wood can be used to produce furniture, including tables, benches, chairs, drums, mortars, beds, and other traditional tools like kitchen utensils: “talié” soup tureens, and spoons. It is also used as firewood in households. In the Guéré country, its wood is used for making traditional shoes called “talié” in the local language.

**Medical use**

Boiling the leaves produces a tea that, taken three times a day, is used to treat malaria, exhaustion, and rheumatism. From a spiritual point of view, the drink serves to heal corporal burning sensations and to treat bad spells and curses.

This same tea is also used to wash the body, especially in cases of dysentery and eye irrigations like conjunctivitis and to reduce itchiness.

A tea made from boiling the roots, taken once a day in the morning, is used by women to relieve severe
The knowledge of our ancestors

pain associated with menstruation and pain in the lower abdomen. This tea is also used as antidote for intoxication and against anemia and physical and mental weakness.

The root bark can be mixed with palm wine and drunk to counteract poison and fight mental illness and anemia. This mixture is also given to women who have recently given birth to help them deliver the placenta.

Mixing the tea made from the bark with clay is thought to treat stomach diseases, abdominal pain, and obstructions.

The bark’s paste applied externally could be good for skin care and treating certain injuries.

Finally, the bark’s powder, mixed with tonic or mash, could serve to fight against digestion problems in children.

We should protect this tree that offers so many virtues for men and also for animals.

And here is what the ancestors tell us about this mythical tree and guardian of the monkeys in West Africa.

Misfortune would fall on anyone who would try to kill an animal sitting in the foliage of this tree or eating a fruit while holding up one hand. There was an example in Goulegui Beoue where a young man wanted to kill a white nose monkey sitting in this tree holding one hand up. The man was badly injured when the gun barrel exploded in his hand! Many men who have broken this totem have gone lost in the forest. That’s why the tree is called “Zaman.” It means that the Detarium tree makes men get lost in the forest.

Even today, it is said that when a hunter or poacher tries to shoot a Cercopithecus monkey, a misfortune would soon fall on him in the forest. This tradition is respected and passed on for generations.

The cohabitation and harmony that reigned between men and animals suddenly transformed into conflict because of Detarium. Men and animals enjoyed the products of this tree. The animals savoured its fruit and men used the wood to feed their fires, build their houses, and manufacture their tools. When the number of humans increased, God created totems to maintain the cohesion. He forbade fighting and being nasty. The royal antelope, the supreme chief of the animals, did the same and prohibited quarrelling in the groups.

But sooner or later, the heavy use of the tree was leading to shortage. The men gathered all the fruit they could carry and left nothing for the animals. One night, when the men were asleep, groups of “Goué”, the chimpanzee, and “Guy”, the panther, silently stole all the bags of fruit and fled into the forest. When the men woke up, they discovered the theft. They saw the animals’ tracks and decided, for the first time … to track down the animals!

The division and confrontations became permanent quickly. Unfortunately this conflict between animals and men continues to exist even today. It is too bad that God and the Royal Antelope’s decrees went unheeded.
Hodge-Podge

**WHOSE HAND IS IT?**
Match each animal’s name to the picture of the hands shown in the photos.

- A
- B
- C
- D

**FIND THE HOME OF EACH ANIMAL**
It's late and soon night will fall.
Help each of the animals find a place to sleep through the night.

- Chimpanze
- Orang outan
- Homme
- Gorille

**FIND THE WAY**
Help the chimpanzee mother find her baby.
Watch out for leopards and snakes!

**SHADOW GAMES**
The shadows of the chimpanzees are all mixed up!
Join each chimpanzee to their shadow.
The WCF and its Projects …

How can we convince the miners to take into consideration the protection of chimpanzees in Liberia?

N’Goran K. Paul

Since 2010, the WCF has been working in a concession of Arcelor Mittal Liberia Limited (AML) in collaboration with Conservation International (an NGO for conserving nature) and the Liberian authority of forest management (Forestry Development Authority – FDA) in Nimba County, Liberia. AML is an iron mining company that has been working in this region since 2007. As mining activities lead to soil erosion, biodiversity loss in general, and chimpanzee loss in particular, the WCF and its partners lead a program of biomonitoring (1) in this region in connection with the various stakeholders.

We will soon present our results about the state of nature in this site. At present, we are aware of two communities in the region comprising up to 70 chimpanzees. The area of their distribution in the concession is also known.

With this project we are hoping to convince the mining company to protect nature in the exploited area. We aim to propose compensation sites to them (2) to enable them to carry on their activities while also conserving nature. Currently we are proposing to do a large-scale census in certain regions of Liberia in order to propose quality offset sites. We hope that our efforts to protect the future of the chimpanzee communities of the Nimba Mountains in Liberia will not be in vain.

The WCF knows that the exploitation of resources like iron is essential for a country’s economy. Nonetheless, it is also essential that the present and future human populations live in harmony with nature in their country. This nature is a guarantee for the future too. The rain that is essential for the forest is by the same just as essential for the survival of men.

1 – biomonitoring means: collecting information in a region about fauna, flora, and human activities to ensure the regular monitoring of certain activities.

2 – compensation site or “offset” means: the miners are aware of the destruction of nature and, to compensate this loss, they will make a financial contribution to protect another region of intact forest for the survival of the chimpanzees that live there.
The WCF and its Projects …

The state of the Ivorian Forest
Emma Normand

In the years following independence, West Africa was covered with huge forests. The Ivory Coast in particular had over 16 million hectares of forest! This abundant forest was rich in species and was not much endangered. The needs of the populations which were living next to it were satisfied. Men could live on their crops and feed without disturbing the balance of nature.

Today the forest is so poorly managed that it is in distress. Illegal forest exploitations, felling of trees, illegal clearing, poaching, and bushfires are killing the forest at an exponential rate. Even protected parks and reserves are not spared and disappear. Nature is imbalanced and becomes dryer from day to day. The disappearance of fauna and flora leads without mercy to poverty and lack of drinking water for the populations that can no longer live with the forest as they had done in the past.

Only long-term management of our forests and protected areas can guarantee a better life thanks to the survival of our plants and animals. The protection of a dense forest corridor connecting the Ivory Coast to Liberia is therefore essential. This corridor will enable animals to circulate freely and to survive. The conservation of our protected areas (like, for example, Taï National Park) would at the same time protect all living species. This shows that conservation is vital for us all!

This is why we should all become involved personally in protecting our forests to avoid the loss of this incredible biodiversity that is of such unique importance in the whole of West Africa!

No to deforestation!

Let us protect our forests!
Hedwige Boesch tells of an interaction that was observed by Roman Wittig, researcher at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig.

The atmosphere between Macho, the dominant male, and Marius, a young, ambitious chimpanzee who wants to take his place, really is heated. The two chimpanzees beat each other up and bite each other … Old Brutus, the former alpha male, watches this confrontation and power struggle from a distance. He knows it far too well …

*Information: make peace*

Alone, a chimpanzee is dead! He needs his group to survive. The social life is structured so that after each conflict, the opponents will soon come together to calm each other down by sharing food and grooming each other. This is how chimpanzees make peace after a dispute and by doing so, they ensure that the group’s social life continues normally. Better yet, if the opponents are too angry to make peace themselves, their friends make peace instead of them.

If the chimpanzees squabble often, they make peace often too! Aggression, reconciliation, and consolation are all very important for the social life of the group. The chimpanzees know it perfectly!
Marius loses the fight once again. He seems very frustrated and has difficulty accepting defeat. He focuses on Macho, approaches him and even tries to groom him! Macho remains indifferent. He doesn’t even look at him and grooms Brutus in the middle of all the others. Nevertheless he’s still a bit nervous and occasionally looks towards Marius.

Listen, there’s nothing to be proud of. Among friends you respect the combat rules and the winner has to be gracious.
Mach and Marius: Reconciliation among the chimpanzees of the T'ai Forest!

Marius is now sitting all alone and sulking, far away from the other two chimpanzees. Brutus, lying on the back, feels that he has to intervene and starts to play with Macho. He pulls his arm hair and teases him by patting him on the head with his index finger. Macho begins to relax.

I'm feeling very humbled, he really got me.

Macho, it's time to make peace with Marius, you should reconcile.

Ok, I feel that Marius doesn't accept his defeat, he's sulking …

Amused, Macho begins to answer! When Brutus gets on all fours, Macho takes his ankles and then starts to walk while holding his legs! They're walking one behind the other by playing “train” with happy expressions on their faces. Brutus is the “train driver” and for several minutes the two surround a tree while “laughing”.

Oh, so it's me who has to reconcile these two hot heads.

Macho, follow me, we'll play train!
Suddenly Brutus changes direction and approaches the tree where Marius is sitting, grimly observing them. It seems that Brutus wants the war between the two males to stop. That’s certainly the reason he’s now doing figure-eights around the two trees. In this way, he approaches Macho and “the train” to Marius who is still sulking.

Hey, Brutus, where do we go?

Just follow me.

To top it all off, this Macho is noisy.
Suddenly, Brutus takes Marius’ ankles and pushes him into the play.

Now the three chimpanzees, with Marius as leader and Brutus and Macho behind him, play "train" together and make figure-eights around two trees. They’re laughing like kids!!
Some minutes later Brutus discreetly drops out of the play. Macho automatically takes Marius' ankles and the two friends continue to play “train”. Marius is the “locomotive” and Macho the “carriage” that follows. They’re having fun together and are relieved that the conflict is resolved!
Brutus, the masterful initiator of this reconciliation, is sitting close to the play area. He watches the two chimpanzees who have visibly made peace and are now able to play and have fun together thanks to him!
The Ivory Coast and Liberia share the largest forest block in West Africa, an area called Taï-Sapo complex. This forest block has one of the highest levels of biodiversity in tropical Africa. It is a shelter for several endemic species, which means that they don’t exist anywhere else in the world.

This zone contains six protected areas: Taï National Park, the classified forests of Goin-Débé, Cavally, and Haute-Dodo in Ivory Coast, and Sapo National Park and Grebo National Forest in Liberia. This amazing region is constantly threatened by deforestation! Human activities strongly split it up and threaten the fauna’s survival. These natural areas must be protected!

For this reason, the WCF and its partners initiated a project called “Transborder corridor Taï-Sapo.” Its aim is to connect the isolated forests with ecological corridors (1) to ensure the safe circulation of animals throughout the forests. This will enable males and females to meet and will help to protect endangered species such as elephants, chimpanzees, and many others.

In 2010-2011, the WCF did a census to see how many animals were present in certain regions that could become suitable corridors connecting Taï National Park with Grebo Forest in the zone of Djouroutou and Taï. Three-hundred km of transects (2) have been analysed around and along the Hana river in Djouroutou, and along the N’Zê, Saro, and Cavally in Taï. Field assistants noted when they encountered animals, human tracks, and the type of land use.

Analysing these data showed that monkeys, pygmy hippopotamuses, buffalos, and even leopards, which are very difficult to find, still use these damaged forest corridors.

Subsequent to these results, the WCF and its partners held meetings in the villages about the protection of the Taï-Sapo corridor. Everyone was overwhelmingly in favour of this and the idea of better environmental protection in the sub-region has spread widely. Everyone is now looking forward to seeing which projects will be implemented to bring direct benefits to the people living in and around these corridors. The programs could include agroforestry, certification of cultivated cocoa, and reforestation.

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1 – ecological corridor = a band of forest enabling the animals to move freely in a region that is otherwise occupied by human activities like camps, plantations, roads, …

2 – transect = straight line marked with the aid of a white rope through the forest (see photo on page 7). The researchers following this mark take systematic notes of the tracks of animals, plants, and human activities that they encounter in a given area on either side of the rope.
Who says that the forest is the paradise on earth where food falls directly from the tree into your mouth? The chimpanzees of the Tai Forest in Ivory Coast are world famous for the way they crack different species of nuts using tools. These nuts are delicious, nutritious, and abundant. It would be a shame not to enjoy them, but beware, nothing is given without effort!

The fruit of *Detarium senegalense* is particularly special. The large flat kernel of about 3–5 cm seems to be inaccessible at first sight. Indeed, it is enclosed within a fine brown shell which is not very hard, but this shell is surrounded by a kind of a fibrous net that is extremely tough (see pictures of the plant on pages 4 and 5).
Cracking Detarium nuts – Goma and her son Gargantua have their hands full ... !

Detarium trees are very visible and imposing with their large roots. They serve as perfect “work tables” to crack nuts on. Goma uses a large wooden hammer to powerfully hit the fibrous shell that cushions the nut from shock. She regularly checks her work to make sure that the shell is cracking.
Cracking Detarium nuts – Goma and her son Gargantua have their hands full ... !

The fibres are so tough that the chimpanzees only eat these nuts at the end of the season, in April and May, when the external pulp of the fruit is decayed and it is easier to tear the fibres and get at the nut.

Now Goma uses her teeth to crack the shells. She puts her canine under the fibres, in the place where a point of germination has started coming through, then she pulls with all her might.
Finally, Goma uses a stick to remove the kernel from the fibrous shell. So, there is a lot of work to be invested before a well-earned meal can be savoured: the use of a hammer, the hands, the teeth, and even a stick are needed to finally reach the kernel. Bon appétit!
Cracking Detarium nuts – Goma and her son Gargantua have their hands full ...!

Information:

It seems that Gargantua understood the lesson: he doesn’t yet have the necessary strength to use a hammer on ungerminated nuts. For him, the secret of success is to find the right fruit! He examines the nuts to find one that is starting to germinate, which he can tell because of the whitish sprout that appears from the kernel through the shell. Without hesitation he puts his canine in this small opening and holding the fruit in both hands, he manages to remove the kernel.

2. LE GOINDEBE ET LE CAVALLY

CHORUS
The forests of Goin-Débé and Cavally Are all classified forests that must be protected Protect all our forests, all our reserves Protect all these forests that must be preserved Tai National Park, all of our reserves Are all forests that we need to protect Protect all animals, all chimpanzees Protect all animals in all our forests

First verse
All of our forests, all our parks and reserves, Are all forests that we need to preserve The forests of Goin-Débé and Cavally for example Are all forests that we need to protect Several animal species Several plant species Are in the process of disappearing If we don’t do the right thing The situation will become irreversible For these species on the brink of extinction Don’t think this is a rare problem React quickly, sound the highest alert So that at the final count Life of the animal world And life of the plant world Will find a thriving equilibrium

SOS FORETS IVORIENNES

The first CD with the songs of Ymklo Teatri will be distributed during the WCF tours in your villages! – (see also page 3)

Nesséré Djif JP. (Translation: Mimi Arandjelovic)
Smiling!
The WCF and its projects ...

The WCF is again on the way to Liberia!
Dervla Dowd

In February and March 2011, the WCF is again touring Liberia to make the forest zone inhabitants aware of the importance of protecting chimpanzees and natural forests.

Our team was warmly welcomed by the local communities in 10 villages surrounding Sapo National Park and Grebo National Forest of which a part is projected to become a national park soon. We really hope that this very important project will be met with positive attitudes.

Our team consisted of 19 people, including members of the Liberian Forest Development Agency (FDA), Dr. Zoro Bertin Goné Bi and Thomas Gelsi of the WCF, and 13 performers of Eddie Theater Productions.

This year, 5000 people watched our performances and films. The WCF and FDA agents answered all kinds of questions by the local communities about forestry law, chimpanzee behaviour, and forest conservation.

The tour was a great success and the WCF is now eager to return to this area and visit other villages to interact further with the Liberian population. Such contacts are very important because who else, if not the local population, is confronted daily with the destruction of nature? Only with the help of the inhabitants will it be possible to protect nature. We’re happy to see that they seem to be more and more aware of these problems.

Fish farming and chickens get on very well!
N’Guessan Antoine et Emma Normand

Thanks to the help of the Swiss Embassy in Ivory Coast and the support of the Paul Schiller Foundation, the WCF was able to re-launch its fish farming activities in 4 of the 10 villages where these activities had been interrupted by the post-election crisis in 2010/2011.

To increase the productivity of these farms, a henhouse was built directly on the pond in each farm. This is very useful because the dung and food scraps deposited by the chickens, leads to the fertilization of the pond, and the production of plankton, a natural food source for Tilapia, is enhanced. In this way, the benefits are shared!
Respect the laws of the Ivory Coast!

It never hurts to learn about laws that regulate life in a country! The laws cited below ensure the survival of the fauna and flora in protected areas in Ivory Coast. The WCF can only applaud such wisdom and foresight. With these laws, leaders protect nature for all citizens and their children. Today we present the law articles of the Ivory Coast. In future newsletters, we will present those concerning the protection of nature in neighbouring countries.

LAW ARTICLES CONCERNING FAUNA AND FLORA IN IVORY COAST

1. ARTICLE 89 OF THE LAW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CODE
   – Anyone who fells trees or slaughters animals in the classified forests, the protected areas and the national parks will be punished by a period of imprisonment of 2 months to 2 years and of a fine of 5.000.000 FCFA.

2. ARTICLE 5 OF THE DECREE No 72-544 OF THE 28th AUGUST 1972; CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE TAI NATIONAL PARK
   – Harvesting of honey, wax, medicinal plants or food plants
   – any fishing activity, regardless of the nature, in rivers and ponds located within the park is forbidden.

   – anyone who cuts, pulls up, removes, or damages the flora (the forest) in a national park or natural reserve in any way, and
   – anyone who kills, injures, fishes, or captures the animals in a national park or natural reserve will be punished by a fine of 100.000 to 1.000.000 FCFA and a period of imprisonment of 8 days to 2 years or one of these two punishments.

4. ARTICLE 23 OF THE LAW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CODE
   – Felling, uprooting, and mutilating the protected forest species is forbidden in the forest domain of the state.

   – Capturing and hunting completely protected animals, including their young or their eggs, is forbidden.

The taboos of the protected areas

Integral nature reserves

It is forbidden to:

penetrate, circulate, camp or reside in, or fly over at low altitude, without the special written permission of the competent authority, and to realise scientific research without the permission of this authority.

Respect the law!