



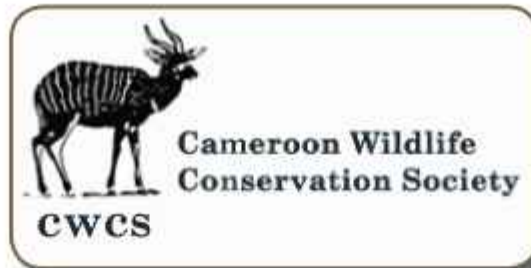
Cameroon Wildlife  
Conservation Society

**CWCS**

# **ANNUAL REPORT** **RAPPORT ANNUEL** **2023**

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## About CWCS

Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) is a leading national conservation NGO with over 20 years of field experience in coastal Atlantic forest, mangrove and wetlands management.

## Our Mission

The mission of CWCS is to work with the Government of Cameroon and other conservation NGOs and partners on environmental issues related to sustainable natural resource utilization and economic development through:

- Advocacy for improved biodiversity and environmental policies;
- Capacity building of stakeholders notably local communities;
- Environmental education and awareness raising;
- Building partnerships to protect mangroves and associated coastal forests in Cameroon
- Specialized research and monitoring studies targeting endangered and flagship species and habitats especially in wetlands;
- Development of strategic partnerships and networks with other NGOs to address various conservation issues at national and sub-regional levels;
- Supporting grassroots conservation work with local communities within threatened ecosystems through participatory management addressing poverty alleviation and sustainable natural resource management.

CWCS is administered by a BOD with overall responsibilities to oversee the administration of the organization. There are field projects in different landscapes and ecosystems supervised by a national program coordinator.

Visit our new website: <https://cameroonwcs.org/>



# Message

## AMIDST THE CHALLENGES WE DELIVERED EXCITING RESULTS

During 2023, CWCS engaged government, NGOs, private sector, communities and donor partners to shape a better future for humanity and nature. This comes at a time the world dithers on bold actions needed to promote green economies through enhancing green production and consumption while minimizing wastes, pollution and greenhouse emissions. These are urgent actions needed to reduce rising global temperature responsible for climate change and to kick start implementation of the Kunming-Montreal agreement on protecting the world's biodiversity.

In this vein, the importance of marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) was shored up in 2023. In tandem with the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), CWCS organized a workshop to develop guidelines to elaborate and implement a management plan for marine protected areas and OECMs. One of the recommendations of the workshop was to extend the geographical scope of the CWCS project "Supporting effective management and community surveillance in the Douala-Edea Marine Protected Area, and advocacy campaigns to end destructive industrial fishing in Cameroon (in Marine Protected Areas, territorial seas and beyond)". The project, financed by Oceans 5, has been extended to other marine ecosystems, in particular the Manyangue na Elombo Marine National Park in Campo and the project to create the Ndongore National Park.

The development of the guidelines marked a major milestone and policy shift by the government of Cameroon to strengthen MPA and OECMs networks with regards to the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) industrial fishing around marine protected areas and OECMs.

With our support, the Mount Manenguba Herpeto-ornithological sanctuary was created in February, 2023. This is the very first protected area for endemic and endangered reptile and amphibian populations in Cameroon and the entire Central Africa region with a conservation status. The Cameroon government also appointed a pioneer conservator for the 4,696ha sanctuary on June 22, 2023.

The effort of our dynamic scientific team enabled us to make inroads into the southeast of

Cameroon where, together with local communities, we conducted multiple resource inventories in Community Hunting Zones (CHZs) around Lobeke National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The objective is to obtain credible scientific data for development of management plans for CHZs.



The CWCS field team is also carrying out great apes (gorilla and chimpanzee) inventories in the 68,739-hectare Deng Deng National Park, in the East Region of Cameroon. Early results indicate relatively healthy population of great apes despite hunting pressures and other anthropogenic threats.

We sustained our traditional support for the protection of mangroves, as more than 330,000 mangrove plants have been planted in Mouanko and Dibombari in the Littoral Region of Cameroon thereby putting some 126 hectares of degraded land under restoration. Mangroves are vital ecosystems that provide numerous benefits, including acting as buffers against coastal erosion, serving as nurseries for fish and other marine life, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

### More reasons to celebrate

As the curtains of 2023 drew to a close, the Academic Council of the Commonwealth University of London Graduate School, in Kigali on November 22, conferred the honorary title of Doctor of Wildlife and Conservation Management (Honoris Causa), to CWCS coordinator, Dr. Gordon Ajonina. The talented and passionate conservationist was recognized for his invaluable contributions and achievements in nature conservation and mangrove ecosystems protection in particular.

The year 2024 is pregnant with challenges. CWCS is however prepared to continue building stronger coalitions, essential to address the problems besetting the planet and humanity. We remain grateful to our donors and partners for their unalloyed support and collaboration.

*By Dr Gordon Ajonina*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gordon Ajonina".



## Message

# AU MILIEU DE CES DÉFIS, NOUS AVONS OBTENU DES RÉSULTATS ENCOURAGEANTS

Au cours de l'année 2023, le CWCS a collaboré avec le gouvernement, d'autres ONG, le secteur privé, les communautés et les partenaires financiers pour façonner un avenir meilleur pour l'humanité et la nature. Cela survient à un moment où le monde hésite sur les mesures audacieuses nécessaires pour promouvoir les économies vertes en améliorant la production et la consommation vertes tout en minimisant les déchets, la pollution et les émissions de gaz à effet de serre. Il s'agit d'actions urgentes pour réduire la hausse de la température mondiale qui cause le changement climatique et pour lancer la mise en œuvre de l'accord de Kunming-Montréal sur la protection de la biodiversité mondiale.

Dans cette optique, l'importance des aires marines protégées et des autres mesures de conservation efficaces par Zone (AMCEZ) a été renforcée en 2023. En collaboration avec le Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune (MINFOF), CWCS a organisé un atelier pour développer des lignes directrices afin d'élaborer et de mettre en œuvre un plan de gestion pour les aires marines protégées et les AMCEZs. L'une des recommandations de l'atelier était d'étendre la portée géographique du projet CWCS "Appui à la gestion efficace et à la surveillance communautaire dans l'aire marine protégée de Douala-Edea, et campagnes de plaidoyer pour mettre fin à la pêche industrielle destructrice au Cameroun à d'autres écosystèmes marins, en particulier le Parc National Marin de Manyangue na Elombo Campo et le projet de création du parc national de Ndongore. L'élaboration des lignes directrices a marqué une étape importante et un changement de politique de la part du gouvernement camerounais en ce qui concerne les aires marines protégées et les AMCEZs.

Notre appui à la création de nouvelles aires protégées a donné d'excellents résultats avec la création de la toute première aire protégée pour les populations de reptiles et d'amphibiens endémiques et menacés du Cameroun et de toute la région d'Afrique centrale avec un statut de conservation. Le sanctuaire herpéto-ornithologique du Mont Manenguba a ainsi été créé en février 2023. Le gouvernement a également nommé un conservateur pionnier pour ce sanctuaire de 4.696 ha le 22 juin 2023.

Grâce aux efforts de notre dynamique équipe scientifique, nous avons fait une percée dans le sud-est du Cameroun où, en collaboration avec

les communautés locales, nous avons mené des inventaires multiples ressources dans Les zones d'intérêt cynégétique à gestion communautaire (ZICGC) autour du parc national de Lobeke, un site du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO. L'objectif est d'obtenir des données scientifiques crédibles pour le développement de plans de gestion des ZICGC. L'équipe de terrain de la CWCS réalise également des inventaires de grands singes dans le parc national de Deng Deng, d'une superficie de 68 739 hectares, dans la région de l'Est du Cameroun. Les premiers résultats indiquent une population de grands singes relativement saine malgré les pressions exercées par la chasse et d'autres menaces anthropogéniques.

Grace à notre soutien à la protection des mangroves, plus de 330 000 plants de mangrove ont été plantés à Mouanko et à Dibombari dans la région du Littoral du Cameroun. Ceci nous a permis de mettre quelque 126 hectares de terres dégradées sur la voie de restauration. Les mangroves sont des écosystèmes vitaux qui offrent de nombreux avantages, notamment en agissant comme des tampons contre l'érosion côtière, en servant de nurseries pour les poissons et d'autres formes de vie marine, et en atténuant les effets du changement climatique. D'autres raisons de faire la fête

Alors que le rideau de 2023 tirait à sa fin, le Conseil académique de la Commonwealth University of London Graduate School, à Kigali, a conféré le 22 novembre le titre honorifique de docteur honoris causa en gestion de la faune et de la conservation à la coordonnatrice du CWCS, le Dr Gordon Ajonina. Ce défenseur de l'environnement talentueux et passionné a été reconnu pour ses contributions et ses réalisations inestimables dans le domaine de la conservation de la nature et de la protection des écosystèmes de mangrove en particulier.

L'année 2024 est pleine de défis. La CWCS est cependant prête à continuer à construire des coalitions plus fortes, essentielles pour faire face aux problèmes qui assaillent la planète et l'humanité. Nous demeurons reconnaissants à nos donateurs et partenaires pour leur soutien et leur collaboration sans faille.

*Par Dr. Gordon Ajonina*





# CWCS JOINS COALITIONS TO BETTER INFLUENCE CONSERVATION POLICIES AGENDAS



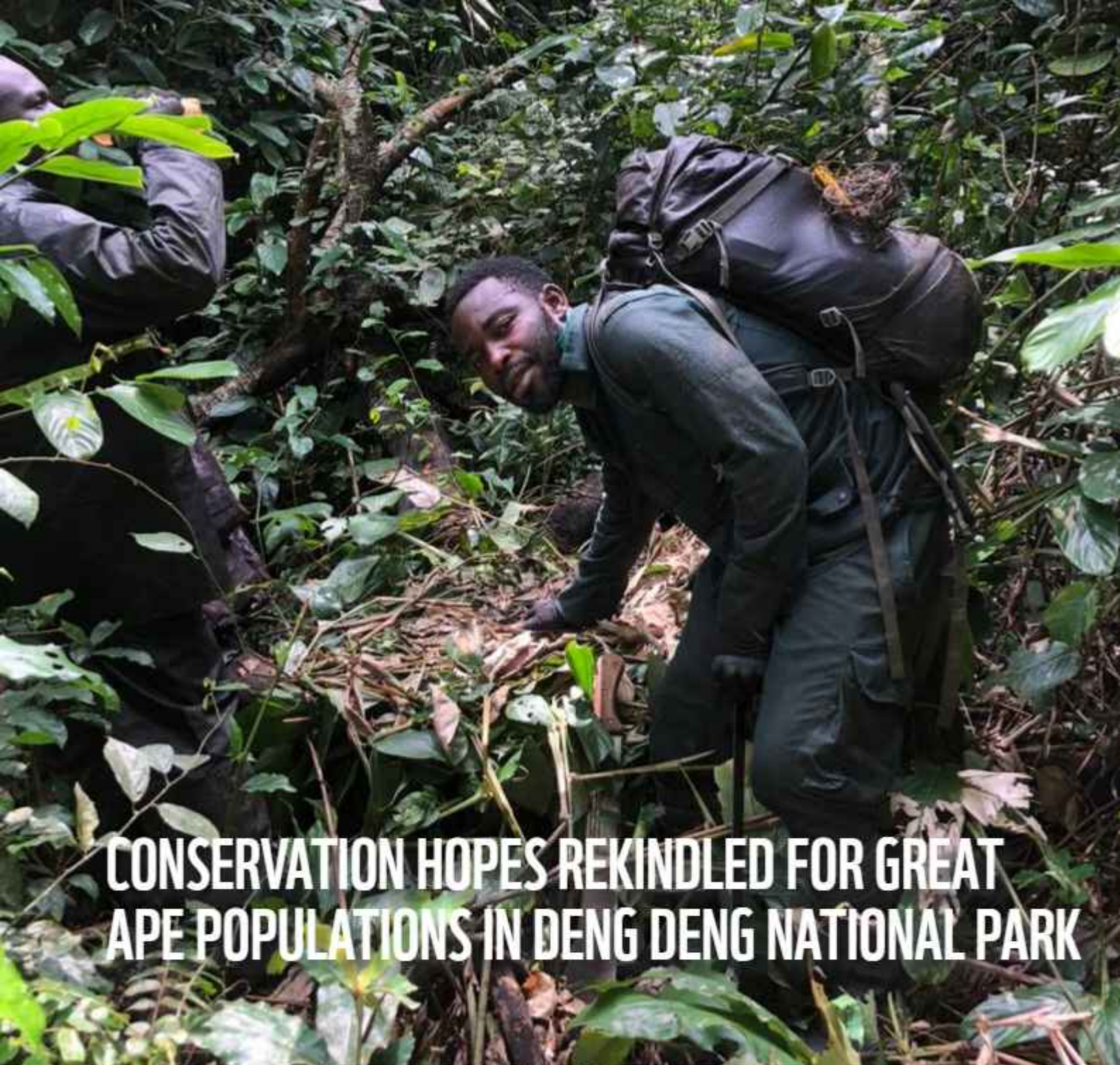
The Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society, (CWCS) recently joined two important conservation networks namely the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency and the African NGOs Alliance for Environmental Sustainability (ANAES) in a bid to better leverage policy agendas on conservation at all levels. In September 2023, CWCS joined the global coalition of more than 30 environmental organizations from the five continents working to combat illegal fisheries, both industrial and small scale, across the globe. The Coalition for Fisheries Transparency is committed to working with national governments and institutions to promote policies and regulatory frameworks in support of transparent fishery management. Through this synergy CWCS wants to ramp up effort to combat illegal practices mostly from industrial stakeholders and ensuring responsible fishing operations that take into consideration environmental concerns and benefit mankind particularly fishery communities and global fish diversity.

Meanwhile, CWCS membership of ANAES in October 2023, is an

opportunity to share experience and knowledge with more than 30 other NGOs on protected areas management and collaborate at different levels with national governments and other stakeholders to safeguard Africa's rich biodiversity. The maiden charter of ANAES was adopted during its regional conference held in Kigali Rwanda. CWCS was represented at the conference by one of its scientific advisors' Dr Roger Banoho.

This quest for synergies with other actors in the sector is part of CWCS avowed approach intended to use the results and lessons learnt from the field in different thematic areas to influence national, regional and global conservation agendas. CWCS, it should be recalled, is also a member of the Cameroon Mangroves Network, comprising over 40 local NGOs working in the domain of mangroves and wetlands conservation.





## CONSERVATION HOPES REKINDLED FOR GREAT APE POPULATIONS IN DENG DENG NATIONAL PARK

It seems gorillas stayed the night here

Ongoing inventories in the 68.739-hectare Deng Deng National Park, in the East Region of Cameroon, indicate relatively healthy population of great apes and other wildlife species despite hunting pressures and other human threats.

Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) is carrying out the inventories in the park and its multiple used zones including a 57.076-ha logging concession and the 9,444 ha Belabo-Diang Forest Reserve in the northern part of the national park.

The survey, led by CWCS renowned scientist, Dr Atanga Ekobo, specifically targets great apes. It is being conducted after a signed technical agreement in July 2023 between the Electricity Development Corporation (EDC) of Cameroon and the CWCS, under the technical supervision of the Ministry of Forest and Wildlife (MINFOF). The French Development Agency (AFD) is funding the survey.

During the first in-forest expedition, CWCS recorded in less than two weeks 180 nests made up of 55 chimpanzee nests and 125



gorilla nests. Nest counts are used in calculating densities of great apes through results generated by scientific analysis of nest decay rates. “We least expected such resounding success in nest encounters,” says Abdel Matinou, the young CWCS biologist leading the nest inventory team. The intensive great ape surveys will go on for another two months with CWCS inventory teams sweeping across all nooks and crannies of the national park including immediate multiple used zones.

Deng Deng National Park was created in 2012 as compensation for the construction of the Lom-Pangar dam and other negative socio ecological impacts related to the hydroelectric project. In 2013, this protected area was expanded, particularly in its southern part, to which was added the creation of a wildlife migration corridor, these two additional elements being justified by the desire to conserve and facilitate the movements of great apes, the two flagship species of the national park. Threats to great ape populations and biodiversity in the area are poaching and illegal logging. Exacerbating these threats is the ongoing construction of the 60,000ha Lom Pangar dam, as this will attract many people to the region in search of opportunities and who will likely engage in natural resource extraction and further degradation of natural habitats



Chimpanzee nest: Over 55 of them counted so far

**// During the first in-forest expedition, CWCS recorded in less than two weeks 55 chimpanzee nests and 125 gorilla nests.**

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# 330000 MANGROVE TREES PLANTED IN TWO YEARS



Flickers of home for mangroves restoration

In just two years, more than 330000 mangroves plants have been planted in Mouanko and Dibombari in the Littoral Region of Cameroon thereby putting 126 hectares of degraded land under restoration.

Restoration is carried out within the framework of the “Cameroon Mangrove Ecosystem Restoration and Resilience” (CAMERR) project, implemented by Planète Urgence and the Cameroon Network for the Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems and Wetlands

(RCM), of which CWCS is a member. The project aims to help restore the environment of this very sensitive areas by planting mangrove trees to regenerate the mangrove ecosystem.

In the first year of the project (2022), CWCS planted 100,250 trees on 40.1 hectares of land in Dibombari in the Moungo Division. Meanwhile, 215,000 plants are being planted over a surface area of 86 hectares in Mouanko, on the outskirts of the Douala Edea National Park, this second year of implementation



of the project. Mangroves play an important role in mitigating climate change. They support the emergence or strengthening of biodiversity-based value chains, promoting the local development of communities and building their capacity to adapt to the effects of climate change.

To support and perpetuate this action, awareness raising on the importance of mangroves and the need to manage them sustainably have been carried out. There is ongoing designation of certain areas as community forests and the participative identification and support for the implementation of income-generating activities (IGA) as alternatives to the exploitation of mangrove resources.



More nurseries being set up

The coastal areas of Cameroon are witnessing high population growth, leading to human pressure on resources due to the quest to satisfy the basic needs of local populations and urbanization. This threatens the forest ecosystems of the

Atlantic coast in general and the mangrove ecosystem of the Cameroon estuary in particular, with considerable impact on wildlife habitats, biodiversity and natural resources in general, hence the livelihoods of coastal communities.



**Mangroves supports the emergence or strengthening of biodiversity-based value chains, promotes the local development of communities and builds their capacity to adapt to the effects of climate change**





## LE CWCS RÉALISE UN INVENTAIRE DES GRANDS SINGES DANS LE PARC NATIONAL DE DENG DENG

Les inventaires en cours dans le Parc National de Deng Deng, indiquent une population relativement saine de grands singes et d'autres espèces sauvages malgré les pressions exercées par la chasse et d'autres menaces anthropogéniques. Le Parc est situé dans la région de l'Est du Cameroun avec une superficie de 68 739 hectares.

La Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) réalise les inventaires dans le parc et ses zones périphériques, y compris une concession forestière de 57 076 ha et la réserve forestière de Belabo-Diang de 9 444 ha dans la partie nord du parc national.

L'étude, dirigée par le Dr Atanga Ekobo,

scientifique renommé du CWCS, cible spécifiquement les grands singes. Elle est menée après la signature d'un accord technique en juillet 2023 entre la Société de développement de l'électricité (EDC) du Cameroun et le CWCS Sous la supervision technique du Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune (MINFOF). Cette étude est financée par L'Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

Lors de la première expédition en forêt, le CWCS a enregistré en moins de deux semaines 180 nids, dont 55 nids de chimpanzés et 125 nids de gorilles. Le comptage des nids est utilisé pour calculer les densités de grands singes grâce



aux résultats générés par l'analyse scientifique des taux de décomposition des nids.

“Nous ne nous attendions pas à un succès aussi retentissant dans les rencontres de nids”, déclare Abdel Matinou, le jeune biologiste du CWCS qui dirige l'équipe chargée de l'inventaire des nids.

Les études sur les grands singes se poursuivront pendant encore deux mois, les équipes d'inventaire du CWCS parcourant l'ensemble du parc, y compris ses zones périphériques.

Le Parc National de Deng Deng a été créé en 2012 en guise de compensation pour la construction du barrage de Lom-Pangar et d'autres impacts socio-écologiques négatifs liés au projet hydroélectrique. En 2013, cette aire protégée a été agrandie, notamment dans sa partie sud, à laquelle s'est ajoutée la création d'un corridor de migration de la faune, ces deux éléments supplémentaires étant justifiés par la volonté de conserver et de faciliter les déplacements des grands singes, les deux espèces phares du parc national.

Les menaces qui pèsent sur les populations de grands singes et la biodiversité de la zone sont le



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braconnage et l'exploitation forestière illégale. Ces menaces sont exacerbées par la construction en cours du barrage de Lom Pangar, d'une superficie de 60 000 hectares, qui attirera dans la région de nombreuses personnes à la recherche d'opportunités et qui se livreront probablement à l'extraction de ressources naturelles et à une dégradation accrue des habitats naturels.



# COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY CONFERS HONORARY DOCTORATE TO CWCS COORDINATOR



The Academic Council of the Commonwealth University in Kigali on November 22, conferred the honorary title of Doctor of Wildlife and Conservation Management (Honoris Causa) on Dr. Gordon Ajonina, Coordinator of the Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS). By receiving this award, Dr. Ajonina goes down as the first Cameroonian and conservation biologist from the Congo Basin to earn such a prestigious distinction from the distinguished British university.

The University said it was in recognition of Dr Ajonina's invaluable contributions and achievements in nature conservation and mangrove ecosystems protection in particular. For the past 23 years, Dr. Ajonina has carried out extensive field research in mangroves forest and wetlands management across Africa. He is the author and peer reviewer of several scientific articles, and has

contributed to and co-authored several books on the subject matter.

A vibrant advocate for nature protection, Dr. Ajonina heads the Cameroon Mangroves Network, a consortium of over 40 CBOs campaigning and advocating for protection of mangroves and wetland ecosystems in Cameroon.

A talented university lecturer, the laureate has groomed more than 1000 students. He is an associate senior professional and trainer since 2009.

Reacting to the recognition, Dr. Ajonina said: "I was pleasantly surprised by this very exceptional distinction. This is a testimony of the hard work we have accomplished for almost three decades. CWCS is more than committed to conserve nature, especially mangroves and wetlands in Cameroon for the wellbeing of the people," he said.

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The reward of good work is more work. Dr. Ajonina is back in the field tending young mangrove plants



# CAMEROON DEFINES GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



*The guidelines will serve as tools to help check unsustainable fishing*

The first set of elements to be taken into account in the elaboration of guidelines for drawing up and implementing management plans for marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures (OECMs) in Cameroon have been defined during a 3-day workshop held in Kolafamba, Centre Region of Cameroon, from March 9 to 11, 2023.

Organized by the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) and the Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) the workshop laid the foundations for guiding government actions in all protected areas and OECMs for the conservation of aquatic fauna in Cameroon.

The meeting was attended by experts and specialists from MINFOF, Cameroonian universities, civil society organizations, researchers and several sectorial ministries involved in the management of fisheries resources and environmental protection in Cameroon.

It followed the launch of the project “supporting effective management and community surveillance in the Douala Edéa Marine Protected area and advocacy campaigns to end destructive industrial fishing in Cameroon” on 13 December 2022, in Mouanko.

Held at a time Cameroon just created its first





marine national park, Manyange na Elombo-Campo, in 2022, and the Douala Edéa semi-terrestrial and marine protected area in 2018, experts emphasized the urgency for these protected areas to have management plans.

The Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas at MINFOF, Joseph Lekealem, said, “a management plan is the first element that enables the administration in charge of wildlife and protected areas to lay the foundations for its actions in these areas.”

One of the experts, Professor Tomedi Eyango épse Tabi, Director of the Institut des Sciences Halieutiques, said: “We need to be present to ensure that the guidelines drawn up are realistic”.

According to Dr. Gordon Ajonina, Coordinator of CWCS, the workshop helped to define the bases to be used as criteria to ensure that marine protected areas in Cameroon play their role fully and effectively as contributors to the maintenance of biological diversity and ecological processes essential to life.

“We are at 20% of terrestrial protected areas and it seems that we have no more space to create other traditional protected areas. We need to move towards other conservation measures,” Dr. Gordon said.



# CWCS COORDINATES COASTAL WATER BIRD MONITORING IN CAMEROON

Water birds have been recognised globally as high priority research indicators for wetland health. They also serve as biological indicators for assessment of wetlands services and are highly noticeable to the public. Given their importance and the threat to their habitats, there is need for monitoring data crucial for characterisation and determination of their migratory status and trends at local scale on which to base sustainable use options, especially for local population.

Data collection is equally important for the flyway perspective of water bird conservation notably the East Atlantic Flyway. This is a migration route used by about 90 million birds annually, passing from their breeding areas in the United States, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Siberia and northern Europe to western Europe and on to southern Africa.

CWCS is coordinating Cameroon's participation to the International Water Bird Census (IWC), through a network of national volunteers from the government, NGOs, private sector and local communities. The system and periodicity of counts in Cameroon has been limited by accessibility and cost factors. Certain sites have been regularly counted, with some counted annually.

Periodically counted sites are located within the inland areas especially around the Lake Chad, Logone and Shari basins, the north of Cameroon and the Noun basins and Dschang artificial lake in western Cameroon, according to a resume of a January 2020 count.

The IWC with its accumulated data base since its inception in 1999, has contributed to many policy changes including, the gazettelement of the Douala-Edea National Park and the accession of Cameroon to AEWA (Africa-Eurasia Water Bird Agreement) in June 2019. CWCS has recently been designated by the Minister of Forestry & Wildlife to assume technical coordination of AEWA. The results of regular counts of birds in 30 count sub-sites between 1999 and 2023 in coastal areas (Lower and Upper Sanaga Estuary, Wouri Estuary, Moungo Estuary (bridge), Mount Cameroon Coast, Ndian Basin) using standard water bird techniques and protocols; oscillate between 30 000 to 50 000 birds. This widely indicates the ornithological importance of Cameroon's coast. Environmental data shows the perturbation of counts sites by mainly human factors especially infrastructural development and settlement.





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**CWCS** coordinates Cameroon's participation to the International Water Bird Census (IWC), through a network of national volunteers from the government, NGOs, private sector and local communities

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**Water bird: Monitor me if you can**



# CWCS COORDONNE LA SURVEILLANCE DES OISEAUX AQUATIQUES CÔTIERS AU CAMEROUN



Oiseaux d'eau, nous savons maintenant où les trouver

Les oiseaux d'eau ont été reconnus au niveau mondial comme des indicateurs de recherche hautement prioritaires pour la santé des zones humides. Ils servent également de bio-accumulateurs et sont très visibles pour le public. Compte tenu de leur importance et de la menace qui pèse sur leurs habitats, il

est nécessaire de disposer des données de surveillance nécessaires à la détermination et à la caractérisation de leur statut, y compris leur statut migratoire et leurs tendances à l'échelle locale, afin d'établir des options d'utilisation durable, en particulier pour la population locale.



La collecte d'informations est également importante pour la conservation des oiseaux d'eau dans la perspective de la voie de migration, notamment la voie de migration de l'Atlantique Est : une voie de migration empruntée par environ 90 millions d'oiseaux chaque année, passant de leurs zones de reproduction aux États-Unis, au Canada, au Groenland, en Islande, en Sibérie et en Europe du Nord à l'Europe occidentale, puis à l'Afrique australe.

Le CWCS coordonne la participation du Cameroun au recensement international des oiseaux d'eau (IWC), par le biais d'un réseau de volontaires nationaux issus du gouvernement, des ONG, du secteur privé et des communautés locales. Le système et la périodicité des comptages au Cameroun ont été limités par des facteurs d'accessibilité et de coût. Certains sites ont été comptés régulièrement, d'autres annuellement, tandis que d'autres encore sont comptés irrégulièrement. Les sites comptés périodiquement ou irrégulièrement sont situés dans les zones intérieures, en particulier autour des bassins du lac Tchad, de la lagune et du Shari, dans le nord du Cameroun et dans les bassins du Noun et du lac artificiel de Dschang, dans l'ouest du Cameroun, d'après un résumé du comptage de janvier 2020.

La IWC, avec sa base de données accumulée depuis sa création en 1999, a contribué à de nombreux changements politiques y compris, le classement du Parc national de Douala-Edea sur l'ancienne réserve de faune de Douala-Edea et l'adhésion du Cameroun à l'AEWA (Accord sur la conservation des oiseaux d'eau d'Afrique et d'Eurasie) en juin 2019. Le CWCS a récemment été désigné par le Ministre des Forêts et de la Faune pour assurer la coordination technique de l'AEWA.

Les résultats des comptages réguliers des oiseaux dans trente (30) sous-sites de comptage entre 1999 et 2023 dans les zones côtières (estuaire inférieur et

supérieur de la Sanaga, estuaire du Wouri, estuaire du Moungo (pont), côte du Mont Cameroun, bassin du N'dian) oscillent entre 30 000 et 50 000 oiseaux. Ceci indique largement l'importance ornithologique de la côte camerounaise. Les données environnementales montrent la perturbation des sites de comptage par des facteurs principalement humains, en particulier le développement d'infrastructures et la colonisation.



La collecte d'informations est également importante pour la conservation des oiseaux d'eau dans la perspective de la voie de migration, notamment la voie de migration de l'Atlantique Est

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## STATUT DES STAGIAIRES ET VOLONTAIRES À LA **CWCS** EN 2023

Au cours de l'année 2023, le Centre d'excellence pour la formation professionnelle et recherche sur les mangroves et les zones humides de CWCS (CEFPREM-CWCS) a encadré et supervisé 17 étudiants venus de trois grandes Universités (Buea, Douala, Dschang et Yaoundé 1). Ces étudiants étaient répartis dans quatre écoles à savoir l'Institut des Sciences Halieutiques de l'Université de Douala à Yabassi, le Centre Régional d'Enseignement Spécialisé en Agriculture (CRESA de la Faculté d'Agronomie et des Sciences Agricoles (FASA) de l'Université de Dschang), le Master en Gestion Intégrée des Ecosystèmes Littoraux et Marins de l'Université de Yaoundé I, la faculté d'Agriculture et de la Médecine vétérinaire de l'Université de Buea.

Dominique Karol Nkatche Tientcheu est étudiante en Master II en audit et évaluation des environnements littoraux et marins à l'Université de Yaoundé I. Elle a effectué son stage de fin d'étude à la CWCS entre juillet et novembre 2023, sur le thème



**La CWCS est ce cocktail exquis d'épanouissement personnel et professionnel, où règne un travail en synergie, d'équipe, telle une famille unie et soudée »**



: « Mise en place d'un système d'évaluation de l'état de référence des zones de mangroves à restaurer dans le Parc National Douala-Edéa : Cas des sites d'Elog-Otot, Mouanko ». L'étude n'ayant pas encore fait objet de présentation face à un jury, les différents résultats obtenus ne pourraient être évoqués pour le moment. Mais l'étudiante a un mot pour tout jeune qui souhaite se former dans le métier prometteur du domaine de l'environnement : « Je les encourage en leur disant : la référence en terme d'expertise locale et d'apprentissage continu est la CWCS.

« La CWCS est ce cocktail exquis d'épanouissement personnel et professionnel, où règne un travail en synergie, d'équipe, une famille unie et soudée », a-t-elle déclaré.

Le CEFPREM-CWCS est l'un des plus sollicité par les institutions académiques et professionnelles. Connecter à la conservation de la biodiversité et le développement durable local, la CWCS promeut la recherche, l'action et le développement. Créée en 1994 par décret No 00085/RDA/JO6/BAPP du 19 Février 1997. Elle est leader en matière de recherches sur les zones humides et les mangroves depuis environ deux décennies avec cinq sites abritant les divers projets et programmes dont un à Mouanko sur la conservation des forêts côtières et mangroves.



**Les étudiants en stage au CWCS consacrent la majeure partie de leur temps à des travaux pratiques sur le terrain**



Dominique Karol: C'est l'heure de la collecte des données







# DOUALA - EDEA LANDSCAPE

## A TOURISTIC JEWEL UNDER THREATS

The threats are many: Illegal industrial and unsustainable artisanal fishing, illicit logging, wanton cutting down of mangroves for firewood, drilling for petrol, sedimentation engulfing coastal settlements and looming industrial agricultural expansion.

In the face of these burgeoning menaces, the very first marine-terrestrial protected areas in Cameroon, Douala-Edea National Park stands out as a jewel for nature and humanity. Created in 2018, the

Park is found in the Littoral Region of Cameroon. It covers 262,935 ha with 300,000 ha of surrounding multiple use zones comprising community forest areas, farmlands and agro-industries.

CWCS and partners are supporting the government of Cameroon in effort to stem the threats and promote ecotourism in the landscape. An inventory of the ecotourism potential of the Douala-Edéa National Park was conducted by Kemjio Tsabou Léna a student of the Department of Fisheries





**|| CWCS and other partners are supporting the government of Cameroon in effort to stem the threats and promote ecotourism in the landscape.**

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and Aquatic Ecosystem Management of the University of Douala, in 2021 under the supervision of CWCS.

The study proposed the creation of an ecotourism centre in Mouanko, to promote economic development by making the most of the locality's ecotourism potential.

The national park is rich in biodiversity including forest elephants, primates (chimpanzees, black Colobus), forest antelopes, West African manatees, sea turtles etc. It harbours picturesque sand beaches in Mbiako and Yoyo, its mermaid and clam sites, chimpanzee islands, Lake

Ossa and its emblematic manatees and the languid rivers that empty into the Atlantic Ocean.

The landscape is also blessed with many historical and cultural heritage too, some of them religious and colonial relics. They include the colonial prison, the first ever catholic church in Cameroon constructed in 1890 in Dizangué. There is also the Lobéthal Evangelical Church that marked the entry of settlers into Cameroon. It dates back to 1887. The name Lobéthal refers to the Valley of Praise.



# AND NOW... OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES



Sliding through the Mangroves of Douala Edea National Park

Cameroon has embraced the concept of “Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures” (OECMs). OECMs refer to a geographically delimited area, other than a protected area, that is regulated and managed so as to achieve long-term positive and sustainable outcomes

for conservation of biodiversity in their natural habitats. OECMs include associated ecosystem functions and services and, where appropriate, locally relevant cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other values.



The International Union for the Conservation of Nature, (IUCN) and the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) defined the term OECM during a CBD meeting in Bonn in 2011. These areas include surfaces that are not protected areas as defined by the IUCN (areas fully dedicated to nature conservation), but which contribute to the conservation of habitats and species.

OECMs are a key element of the international biodiversity conservation strategy, the ultimate aim of which is to contribute to the protection of at least 30% of the land and 30% of the water on the Earth's surface by 2030.

Cameroon's Forest, Wildlife and Fisheries laws set target dedicating 30% of its total surface area to the protection and conservation of its biological diversity. Today, this percentage has almost been reached, with almost 20% of Cameroon's surface area under protection. However, many ecological values, although in a critical situation, are still unprotected and cannot be fully protected with the remaining 10%. Marine biodiversity, for example, cannot be completely protected with the remaining 10%.

"We now need to move towards other area-

based conservation measures to encourage people and other stakeholders to conserve biodiversity," says Dr. Gordon Ajonina, Coordinator of CWCS.

In March 2023, Cameroon's Ministry of Forest and Wildlife, with support from CWCS, organized a workshop to develop guidelines for gazettelement of marine protected areas and OECMs. Cameroon has thus decided to reach out to other solutions that can help it to protect and sustainably manage its ecological potential beyond the 30% target.

Through the OECMs, a new way of valuating conservation objectives is emerging in Cameroon. Through their fundamentally participatory vision, they can heal the frustrations that have sometimes accompanied the creation of traditional biodiversity conservation measures in Cameroon.

MINFOF is still working on the regulatory framework of OECMs. CWCS and partners are supporting awareness-raising campaigns among local people, who have always been in favour of flexible measures that can guarantee biodiversity conservation, human well-being and economic development.

**// Cameroon's Forest, Wildlife and Fisheries laws set target dedicating 30% of its total surface area to the protection and conservation of its biological diversity**

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# LES AMCEZS OU LE FUTUR ESPOIR DE LA CONSERVATION AU CAMEROUN



En 2023, le Cameroun à travers le Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune (MINFOF), a adopté le concept d'AMCEZ (d'Autres Mesures de Conservation Efficace par Zone). L'AMCEZ fait référence à une zone géographiquement délimitée, autre qu'une aire protégée, qui est réglementée et gérée de manière à obtenir des résultats positifs et durables à long terme pour la conservation de la biodiversité dans leurs habitats naturels.

L'AMCEZ comprend les fonctions et services écosystémiques associés et, le cas échéant, les valeurs culturelles, spirituelles, socio-économiques et autres pertinentes au niveau local.

L'Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature (UICN) et la Conférence des parties à la Convention sur la diversité biologique (CDB) ont défini le terme AMCEZ lors d'une réunion de

la CDB à Bonn en 2011. Ces zones comprennent des surfaces qui ne sont pas des aires protégées au sens de l'UICN (zones entièrement dédiées à la conservation de la nature), mais qui contribuent à la conservation des habitats et des espèces.

Les AMCEZs sont un élément clé de la stratégie internationale de conservation de la biodiversité, dont l'objectif ultime est de contribuer à la protection d'au moins 30 % des terres et 30 % des eaux à la surface de la Terre d'ici à 2030.

Les lois camerounaises sur les forêts, la faune et la pêche ont fixé comme objectif de consacrer 30 % de la superficie totale du pays à la protection et à la conservation de sa diversité biologique. Aujourd'hui, ce pourcentage est presque atteint, avec près de 20 % de la superficie du Cameroun sous protection. Cependant, de nombreuses valeurs écologiques, bien qu'en



situation critique, ne sont toujours pas protégées et ne peuvent l'être totalement avec les 10 % restants. La biodiversité marine, par exemple, ne peut être entièrement protégée avec les 10 % restants.

“Nous devons maintenant passer à d'autres mesures de conservation par zone afin d'encourager les communautés locales et les autres parties prenantes à conserver la biodiversité”, déclare Gordon Ajonina, coordinateur de la CWCS.

En mars 2023, le MINFOF, avec l'appui de la CWCS, a organisé un atelier pour définir les lignes directrices à prendre en compte dans l'élaboration des plans de gestion des aires marines protégées et de l'AMCEZ. Le Cameroun a ainsi décidé de s'orienter vers d'autres solutions pouvant l'aider à protéger et à gérer durablement son potentiel écologique au-delà de l'objectif de 30%.

Grâce à l'AMCEZ, une nouvelle façon de penser et de mettre en œuvre les objectifs de conservation est en train d'émerger au Cameroun. Par leur vision fondamentalement participative, elles peuvent apaiser les frustrations qui ont parfois accompagné la mise en place des mesures traditionnelles de conservation de la biodiversité au Cameroun.

Le MINFOF travaille toujours sur le cadre réglementaire de l'AMCEZ. CWCS et ses partenaires soutiennent des campagnes de sensibilisation auprès des populations locales, qui ont toujours été favorables à des mesures flexibles pouvant garantir la conservation de la biodiversité, le bien-être humain et le développement économique.

## ILLEGAL FISHING: SEEKING TO CHANGE THE “RED CARD”

In January 2023, the European Union Commission imposed a ban on imports of fishery products caught in Cameroon's waters or by ships registered there, due to the country's non-cooperation in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. This move came a month after the launch of the project entitled “Supporting effective management and community surveillance in the Douala-Edea MPA, and advocacy campaigns to end destructive industrial fishing in Cameroon. Since then, the project supported by Oceans 5 has been working with other NGO partners, especially the Cameroon Mangrove network to fight illegal fishing. The campaign actions envisaged by the Oceans 5 project is expected to help curb illegal industrial and unsustainable artisanal fishing.



Canoes belonging to fishermen at Yoyo I village in Mouanko



## BIOPAMA SUPPORTED PROJECT: INVENTORIES SHOW COMMUNITY HUNTING ZONE RICH IN WILDLIFE, NON TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS



The Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) field team has conducted multiple resource inventories in Community Hunting Zones (CHZs) around Lobeke National Park in the Southeast of Cameroon. The objective is to obtain credible scientific data for development of management plans for the CHZs.

Members of the community based wildlife resource management committees, (COVAREFs) are participating in the inventories including two local civil society organizations. At the start of the inventories, CWCS trained 15 resource persons from COVAREFs in inventory techniques. The training was also part of building local capacities in monitoring of wildlife hunting zones.

Early results revealed good indices on presence of elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, bongo antelopes, duikers and other wildlife species in the hunting zones.

The preliminary results also indicate the hunting territories are rich in none timber forests products (NTFP) such as wild mango (*Irvingia gabonensis*), wild yams (*Dioscorea villosa*), bitter cola and Ezizan (*Ricinodendron heudelotii*) amongst other species.

Nonetheless, the hunting zones are threatened by hunting as inventory teams came across several wire snares widely used in trapping forest antelopes and other wildlife.

The inventory data will provide useful information on economically valued NTFPs harvested by indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) for household needs and income generation.

The project is financed through European Union-funded program "Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management" (BIOPAMA) administered by IUCN.



# CWCS ACHIEVEMENTS AND INTERVENTIONS IN 6 LANDSCAPES

CWCS has been contributing to Terrestrial, Coastal and Marine habitat and landscape conservation in Cameroon. Examples include, the Douala-Edea Project, Mount Muanenguba Project, Tchabal Mbabo savanna project, CAMERR Project, Gallery Forests & Wetlands Research Projects and the MPA & Industrial Trawailing Project (New).

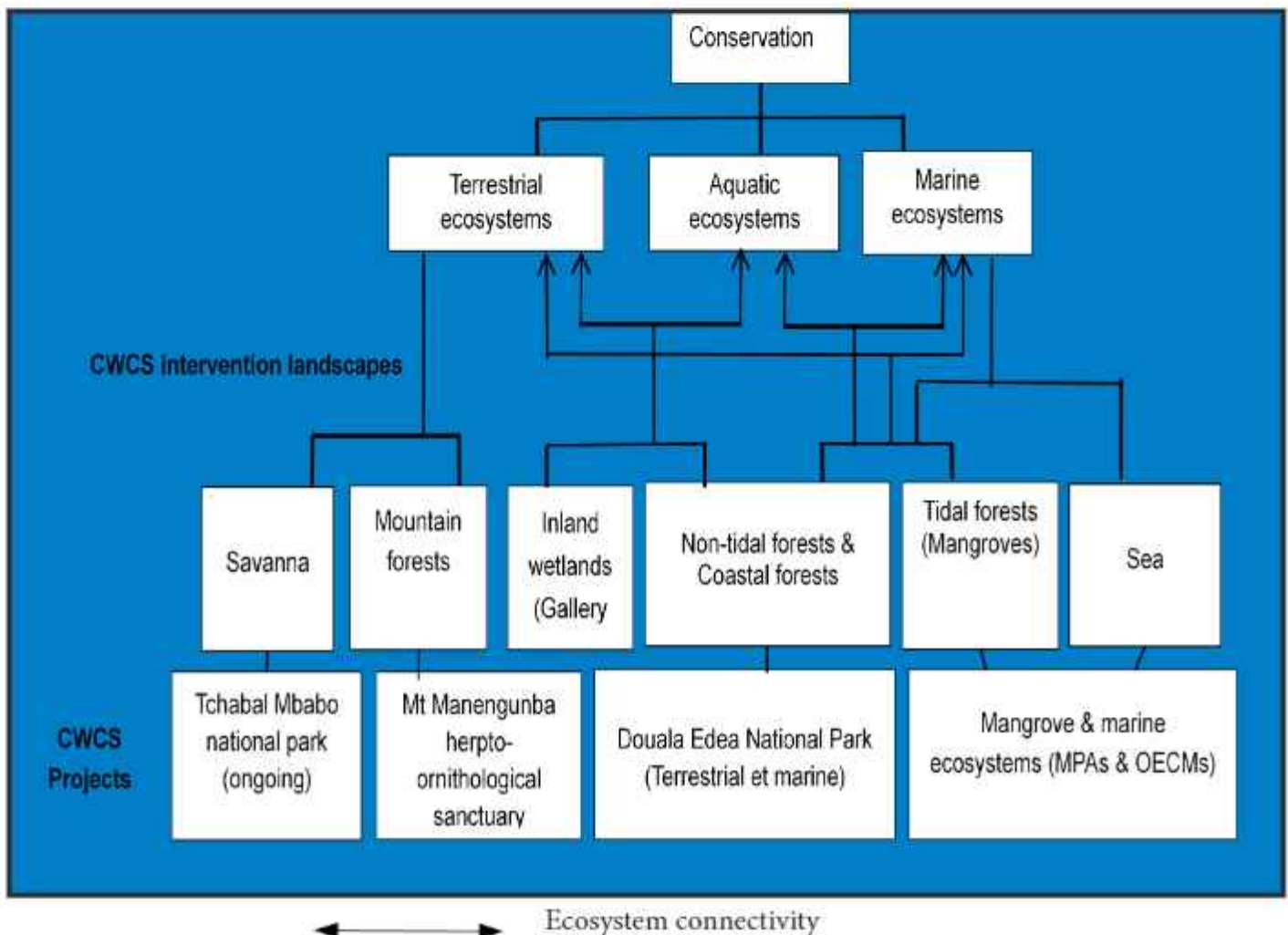
Some major achievements include:

- i) Creation of the first marine & terrestrial protected area of Douala-Edea in October 2018 and the marine community reserves in Littoral Cameroon;
- ii) Creation of the Mount Muanenguba Herpeto-ornithological sanctuary ;
- iii) The ongoing creation of Ramsar site in Cameroon's largest inland flood plain (Upper Nyong basin wetlands);
- iv) Carrying out surveys and studies leading to the future gazettement of Tchabal Mbabo National Park, in the Savana critical highland sites with amphibians & reptiles in Northern Cameroon;

v) Cross cutting gallery forests research.

CWCS programmes are organized into six major landscapes: savanna, mountain, gallery forests, coastal forests, mangrove forests, and marine. Practical issues of analyses and thematic areas contributing towards the conservation, sustainable management and restoration of biodiversity in these landscapes are research initiatives where the following analysis are made:

- a. Degradation analysis; factors and stakeholders analysis
- b. Inventories (vegetation analysis, carbon stock analysis, fauna inventory, etc.)
- c. Soil sampling parameter analysis
- d. Hydrological parameter analysis
- e. Climate change analysis
- f. Conservation actions: Biodiversity conservation (Classic Protected areas systems, Ramsar sites, Other Effective area based Conservation Measures (OECMs), Sustainable Forest management (SFM) (Afforestation and reforestations, forest management, etc.)
- g. Connectivity analysis





# CWCS EXPERIENCE IN CARBON PROJECTS AND PERSPECTIVE

Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) is involved in participative biodiversity conservation and sustainable development across landscapes in Cameroon and beyond. Created in February 1997, CWCS has over 20 years of experience in carbon and capacity building projects especially in mangrove wetlands at local, national and international levels. These projects include “Protection of Cameroon estuary mangroves through improved smoke houses”.

The table below summarizes carbon projects developed by CWCS

No	Title of Project	Project	Donor (s)	Project documents Developed	Project duration		Implementation status of projects	Perspectives
					Start date	End date		
1	Protection of Cameroon estuary mangroves through improved smoke houses	CWCS, S2		PIN, PDD			Due evaluation stage	Being transformed to REDD+ project
2	Tiko-Limbe III council REDD+ projects	CWCS	PNDP, AFD	PIN, PDD			Pilot afforestation stage implemented	To be continued
3	Mangrove carbon stocks and multiple ecosystem services in Central Africa (Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, DRC)	CWCS	UNEP	Technical Report	2011	2013	Report being used by Countries involved to develop mangrove REDD+ projects	Continuous use of report to develop REDD+ Projects in the Region and beyond
4	Cameroon, Mangrove Restoration and Resilience Project (CAMERR)	CWCS (lead) and consortium of 5 NGOs of Cameroon Mangrove Network (CAMECO, OPED, ACBM, WTG)	Orange + France through Planete Urgence	PIN, PDD	2020	continued	Being implemented with mangrove replanting planned for 5 years	PIN used to develop full Cameroon Mangrove REDD+ (CAMERR)



No	Title of Project	Project	Donor (s)	Project documents Developed	Project duration		Implementation status of projects	Perspectives
					Start date	End date		
5	Conservation of Douala-Edea Mangrove forests through REDD+ programme	CWCS, S2	ECO ACTS France	Technical document and PDD	2021	2022	Feasibility studies realized	To be implemented
6	Permanent Sample mangrove carbon and ecosystem monitoring plots (PSPs)	CWCS	CWCS Reserves, as part of above Carbon project feasibility	Technical Reports		continued	Established in Central Africa (Cameroon, Gabon, Congo and RDC)	Being implemented by some countries of Western Africa
7	Contribution to National REDD+ policy Development documents (Especially mangroves)	MINEPDED	Various	Policy documents	2014	continued		Assist the government in the implementation of mangrove REDD+ projects
8	Reducing Deforestation and Degradation to Enhance Community Resilience and Management of Douala Edea National Park, Cameroon	CWCS	Climate Partner	PIN, Project document	2023	25 years	Due diligence conducted from 22-26 August, 2023	Project to commence in 2024

\*Project Abbreviations: MINEPDED (Ministry of Environment Protection & Sustainable Development) PIN (Project Identification Document), PDD (Project Descriptive Document), AFD (French Development Agency), S2-Sustainable Development Enterprise, PNDP (National Participatory Development Programme of Cameroon Ministry of Economy Development & Planning).



# LIST OF PUBLICATIONS IN 2023 WITH CWCS STAFF (IN BOLD)

## INCLUDING WEB-LINKS

1. **Gordon N. Ajonina**, C. Mumbang, J.T. Ngo Oum, F.M. Dogmo, M. T.Eyango1 & F.Tchoumboungnan (2023). Comparing smoked fish quality of traditional and improved modern ovens using dendro-energy from mangrove and tropical forest woods and implications for conservation in central african atlantic coast, Cameroon. *Energy and Earth Science* Vol. 6, No. 1, 2023
2. Hyacinthe, ANGONI, Manga, TIKY Ruth, NNANGA Mebenga Laure and **AJONINA, Gordon** (2023), Ecosystem Services and Their Degradation Factors in the Douala-Edea Wildlife Reserve. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4222194> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4222194> (in press)
3. Dikoume Mbongo Adolphe, **Ajonina Nwutih Gordon**, Kojom Foko Loick Pradel, Tomedi Eyan 1. **Gordon N. Ajonina**, C. Mumbang, J.T. Ngo Oum, F.M. Dogmo, M. T.Eyango1 & F.Tchoumboungnan (2023). Comparing smoked fish quality of traditional and improved modern ovens using dendro-energy from mangrove and tropical forest woods and implications for conservation in central african atlantic coast, Cameroon. *Energy and Earth Science* Vol. 6, No. 1, 2023
2. Hyacinthe, ANGONI, Manga, TIKY Ruth, NNANGA Mebenga Laure and **AJONINA, Gordon** (2023), Ecosystem Services and Their Degradation Factors in the Douala-Edea Wildlife Reserve. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4222194> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4222194> (in press)
3. Dikoume Mbongo Adolphe, **Ajonina Nwutih Gordon**, Kojom Foko Loick Pradel, Tomedi Eyang Minette (2023). Parasitism of *Egeria radiata* (Lamarck, 1804) in Lower Sanaga Delta, Cameroon: Prevalence, Diversity, Intensity and its impact on this Edible Clam Species. *Journal of Food Science and Nutrition Research*. 6 (2023): 139-146
4. Théophile Collins Yelengwe Ndjamo, Gabel Essome Bang, Jaime Anibal, Loick Pradel Kojom Foko, **Gordon Nwutih Ajonina**, Minette Tomedi Eyango, and François Tchoumboungnan (2023), "Proximate and Heavy Metals Composition of Clam *Galatea Schwabi* (Clench, 1929) From the Lower Sanaga, Cameroon." *Journal of Food Security*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2023): 35-42. doi: 10.12691/jfs-11-2-1.
5. Laurant Nyamsi-Moussian, **Gordon N. Ajonina**, Guillaume L. Essomè-Koum, Ernest F. Kottè-Mapoko, Boubakary, Alphonse Konango-Samè, Vanessa M. Ngo-Massou, Jean M. Emanè, Ndongo Din (2023). Mangrove restoration in Cameroon: Assessment of Standing Biomass and Litterfall Production in Reforested stands within Douala-Edea National Park. *Journal of Marine Science* (In press).
6. Yelengwe Ndjamo Théophile Collins, Tchabong Sammuell Raymond, Djopnang Djiembie Justin, Etchutakang Nchong Yvonne, Essome Bang Gabel, **Ajonina Gordon Nwutih**, Epoch NDI Martinien and Tchoumboungnan François (2023). Determination of the minerals of *Galatea schwabi* Clench, 1929 clam from the lower Sanaga Cameroon. *International Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Studies* 2023; 11(3): 88-93. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/fish.2023.v11.i3b.281>
7. Olive M. YEMELE1, Mbezele Junior Yannick Ngaba and **Gordon N. Ajonina** (2023). Stakeholder perceptions of wetlands management effectiveness in Cameroon. *Journal of Ecology and The Natural Environment*. Vol. 15(3), pp. 50-60, October-December 2023 DOI: 10.5897/JENE2023.0959 .

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## Financial Overview

### Analysis of income and expenditures

EXPLANATION	YEAR 2022	%	YEAR 2023	%
<b>INCOMES</b>				
Brought	105,980	0.043%	14,809,773	2.9%
Transfers from partners	239,628,423	97.7%	443,227,791	87.4%
other incomes	5,670,000	2.3%	48,839,479	9.6%
<b>TOTAL INCOMES</b>	<b>245,298,423</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>506,877,043</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Operating costs	103,993,832	41.2	143,992,650	29.5%
Networking and others institutional	3,024,902	1.3	771,300	0.2%
Field projects/monitoring initiatives	123,469,916	48.8	343,854,134	70.4%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>230,488,650</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>488,618,084</b>	<b>100%</b>
BALANCE	14,809,773		18,258,959	

### INCOME SOURCES

#### PARTNERS CONTRIBUTIONS

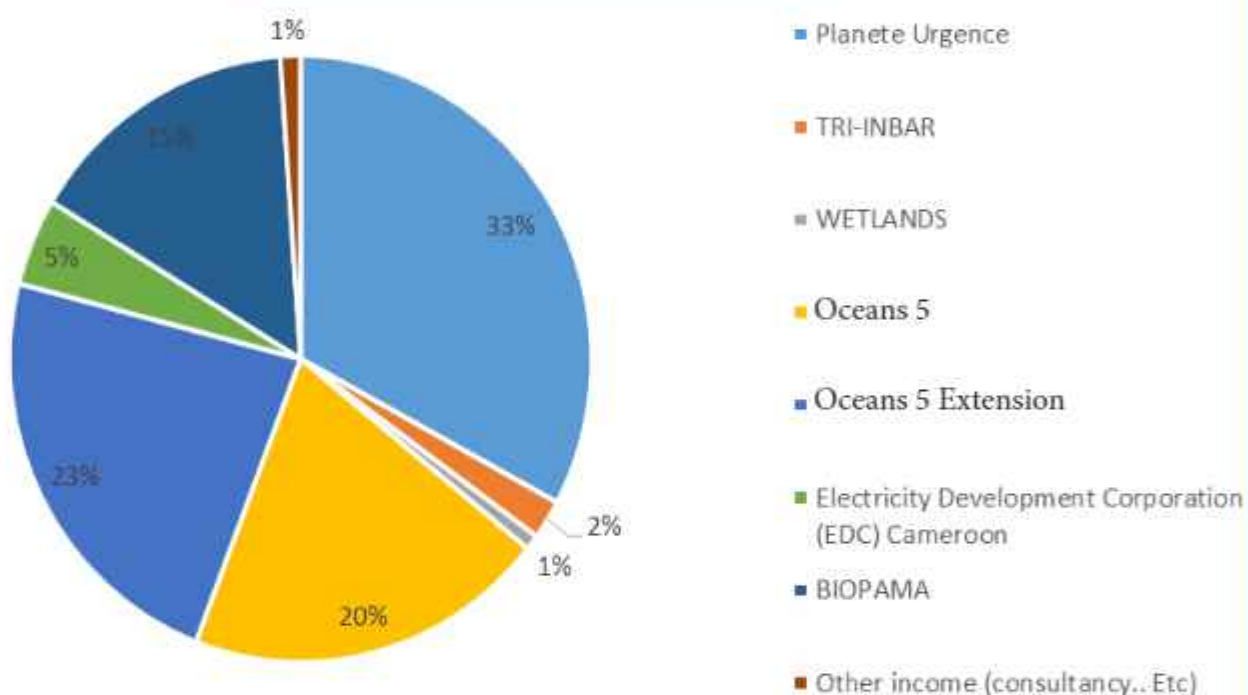
Planete urgence	147,224,955
TRI-INBAR	9,460,000
WETLANDS	3,600,000
Oceans 5	90,100,275
Oceans 5 Extension	103,751,944
BIOPHARMA II	68,212,968
EDC	20,877,649





# THE DIFFERENT PROJECTS AND FUNDING SOURCES, 2023

BUDGET IN FCFA





# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS

We remain grateful to our donors, partners and supporters for their unwavering support over the years. Without you, the remarkable successes of 2023 would not have been achieved.



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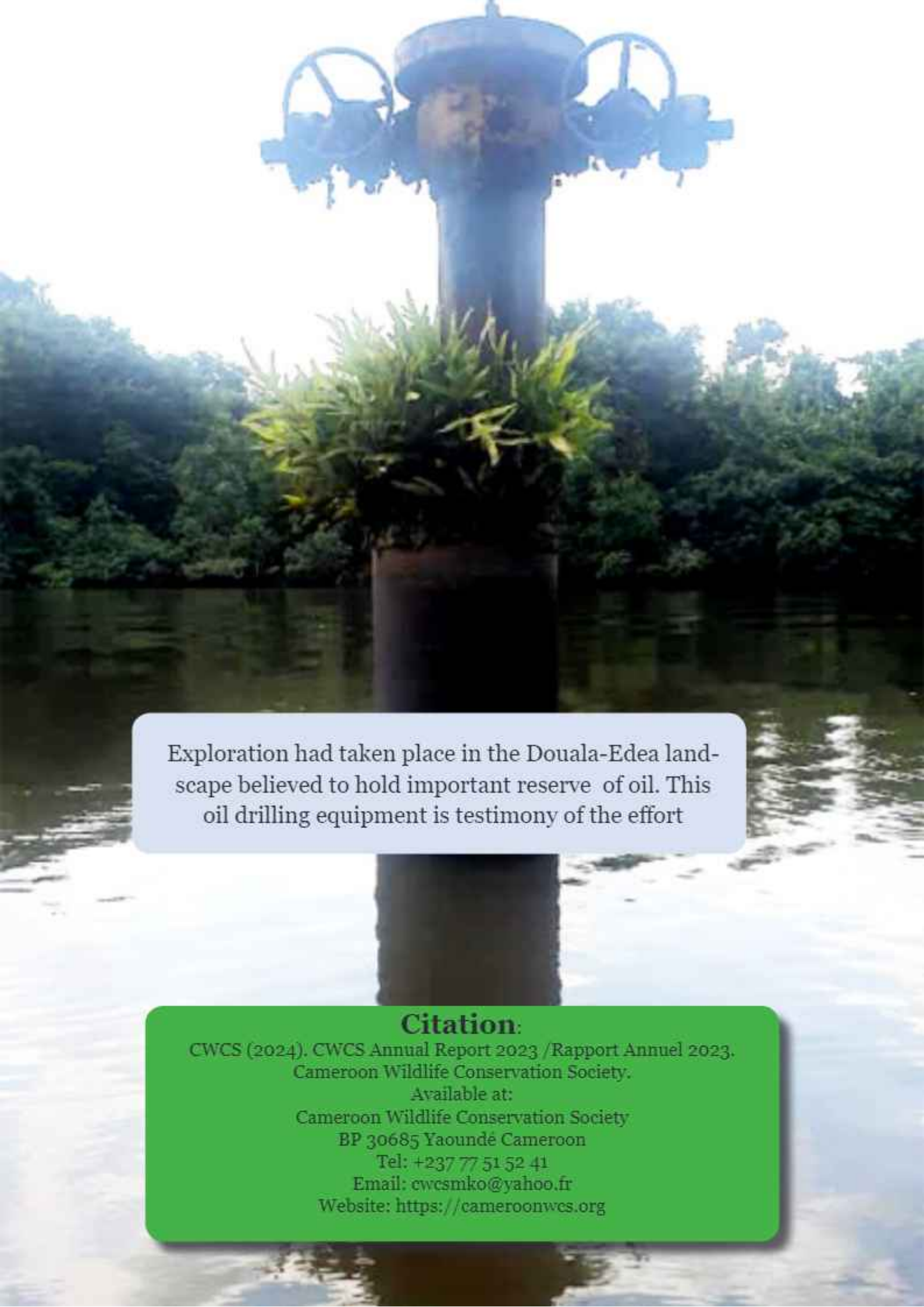


PLANETE URGENCE  
VOLONTARIAT & DEVELOPPEMENT  
| GROUPE SOS |



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Exploration had taken place in the Douala-Edea landscape believed to hold important reserve of oil. This oil drilling equipment is testimony of the effort

### **Citation:**

CWCS (2024). CWCS Annual Report 2023 /Rapport Annuel 2023.  
Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society.

Available at:

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