

Monte Alen-Monts de Cristal Landscape

**Draft Strategy Document for Monts de Cristal National Park**

*A Consortium*  
*To Improve Natural Resource Governance and Management*  
*In the Monte Alen -Monts de Cristal CBFP Landscape (1)*



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

WWF

ZSL

INDEFOR

HERBIER NATIONAL DU GABON

Smithsonian

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

Universidad de Alcalá

Imperial College London

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE GUINEA ECUATORIAL

The convening process will be 100% convened by the end of FY08. There are still some areas which need to be completed before the end of FY08..

## **I. Identify and Define Roles of Planning Team**

The planning team will be facilitated by Martin Hega of WCS (supported by other WCS technical advisors) and the ANPN Conservateur of the Park. WCS will: 1) organize the planning team, 2) convene meetings of the planning team, 3) assign tasks to planning team members, and 4) assemble final drafts of the integrated landscape land use plan produced by the planning team. WCS will provide the technical management advice and carry out data collection.

Community (such as Community representatives and chefs du canton) and private sector stakeholders (such a representative from Lonmin, whose mining concession overlaps considerable with the Mbe sector of the park), as well as non-lead CARPE partners (WWF), will also be involved in the planning process at various stages in order to ensure that all stakeholders are in accordance and to facilitate the LUP adoption.

## **II. Information/Data Gathering:**

### a. Physical

Physical data of the park has been collected and shape files have been sent to CARPE. Park boundaries have been delineated. Maps exist and will be included into the management plan. Rivers, lakes and watercourses have been identified, as have villages. Work on gathering information on the Mbe watershed will be carried out in FY09. Physical data will continue to be updated.

### b. Ecological

#### *Key Wildlife Resources*

Recce surveys were done mostly in 2005. 222 km walked. Large mammal species list made and abundance (encounter rate of sign). Maps of all large mammal abundance have been made. It is still necessary to monitor wildlife abundance data as a result of the change in economic conditions of Equatorial Guinea (now a net importer of bushmeat due to very high prices paid in the capital). If possible, the next time transects should be run to estimate density

#### *Wildlife Migration Corridors*

There is a major problem of the electricity line (reported on in 2004) which cuts the Kinguele section in two, and thus creating a barrier, not a corridor (See Fig 1).

*Rare and under-represented plant communities*

Missouri Botanical Gardens and Gabon Herbier work in the Park. MBG has carried out field missions to establish a botanic baseline. Further missions are needed to continue this work.

*Other floral and faunal resources that are of key importance to the landscape and its populations*

Closed canopy rainforest at high altitude. Work will need to be done to assess the importance of this habitat. There has also been a survey of the butterflies done in the landscape in FY08, to assess their use as an indicator species group.

*Threats*

- Mining exploration permit includes much of the Mbe sector of the Park.
- Logging concession along the southeastern border of the Park (SEEF; permit 5/00) will threaten the Park itself (increased access to poachers)
- Hunting by the employees of the electricity company in the Kinguele area (south Mbe) and cross-border commercial poaching

All these will need to be assessed further and considered in the management plan.

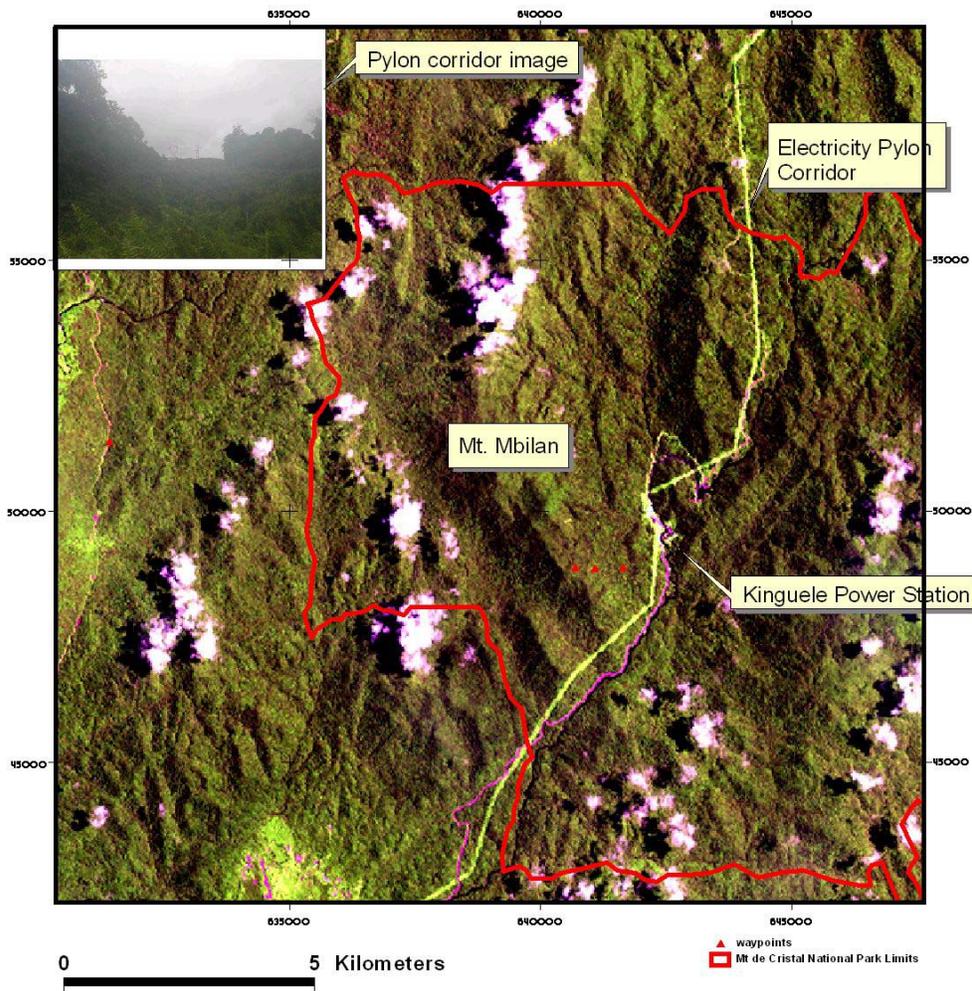


Fig. 1. Satellite image of the southern part of the Mt. Mbé sector of the Mt. De Cristal National Park, showing the scrub corridor under the electricity pylon line (also shown as a photo), and how the corridor divides the western part of the Park from the rest.

### c. Socio-economic

*Identify villages, foot paths, transport routes, key economic centers within and around the landscape, agricultural activities, hunting/fishing areas, areas of subsistence level timber extraction*

4 villages have been identified within the park. There are many footpaths and one main transport road maintained by SEEG. There are 4 keys economics centers around the landscape (KANGO, MEDOUNEU, NTOUM, COCOBEACH), Agriculture activities around the NP are mainly in the south. Hunting and fishing activities in the park are mainly by seasonal gold miners in MAKABANE and MADOUAKA villages. The logging company, SGG, is using community permits around the NP in the S-SW and along the road some sawyers are extracting timber to build houses or to sell in NTOUM or KOUGOULEU.

Work still needs to be done mapping these villages and including them into the management process. This will be done through examination of other case studies, field missions and working in collaboration with other partners.

*Identify all stakeholders of landscape of landscape (including populations outside the landscape).*

Mining companies: LOMIN, SOCO BTP, COLAS, ENTRACO, SEEG

Logging companies: SEEF, SGG, BSG and 2 non identified Malaysians

Government: Forestry department representative from KANGO, MEDOUNEU and COCOBEACH

Mining department geology head office

ANPN; park conservateur

Research center

Law enforcement department

District division for the 4 towns

District council representative

Chiefs of villages grouping (10)

Agriculture department

Local community association

Work needs to be done in insuring the relevant agreements for collaboration have been signed and this will be done through stakeholder meetings to explain and collect documentation.

*Identify those resources and regions of landscape utilized for subsistence purposes vs. larger commercial trade.*

- Bush meat trade in main cities from all the landscape
- Timber extraction in the South and S-West of the park for trade to NTOUM and LIBREVILLE
- Slash and burn agriculture in the West and North (cassava and pineapple in large scale) to sell in Libreville

Continued work needs to be done on monitoring this trade, its importance for local livelihoods and its impacts on the National Park.

*Map location of economically desirable timber species or mineral deposits not currently in any concessions*

We still need to get information on this, both from forestry and mining department maps, as well as from local community knowledge. This will be done through meetings with local forestry and mining department representatives and with the local communities.

- d. Assess government management authority presence on landscape and capacity to play role in planning process

The government management authority is the ANPN – who have overall responsibility for management. As such ANPN will play a key role in all stages of the planning process. CARPE partners will build capacity in land use planning where necessary. WCS continues to provide technical support and training to ANPN. WCS field monitoring in the past years have helped track human activities in the landscape and support for eco-guard patrols remains necessary to improve the protection of wildlife in the landscape.

### **III. Creation of a Public Participation Strategy**

The public participation strategy will: 1) continue the socio-economic surveys; 2) implement a public conservation education and awareness campaign in the communities of the landscape and in urban areas with populations of rural migrants; 3) develop mechanisms to allow the structured participation of civil society representatives in land use planning and implementation; and 4) encourage public participation in natural resource management by supporting sustainable economic growth.

- a. Identify those stakeholders that must be included in process; Interested and affected publics.*

All the stakeholders cited above must be involved in the planning process:

Mining: LOMIN, SOCO BTP, COLAS, ENTRACO, SEEG

Logging: SEEF, SGG, BSG and 2 non-identified Malaysian companies

Government: forestry department representative from KANGO, MEDOUNEU and COCOBEACH, mining department, ANPN conservateur, law enforcement department, district division for the 4 towns, district council representative, agriculture department

Communities: village representatives, chiefs of village groupings (10), local community associations.

- b. Prioritize which stakeholders should be engaged earliest; based on current activities that pose existing threat to key resources*

However, engagement with ANPN, local community leaders, and private companies (particularly those within the park) are a priority.

- c. Describe how to engage with different groups; local villagers, migrant populations, timber/mining interests, NGOs, etc*

We will first work with target groups (such as men's and women's associations and a new consortium for private companies in the landscape). There will also be outreach and education with the different groups and general meetings evaluating the costs and benefits of activities and where the stakeholders can discuss their vision and objectives for the park.

- d. *Create a process for conflict/dispute resolution between interests/stakeholders.*

A process for conflict resolution needs to be established as part of the planning process. The planning process will establish and formalize this through stakeholder meetings.

#### **IV. Creation of Strategy for Formal Recognition of Plan**

- a. *Formulate strategy for having the plan formally recognized by the necessary authority.*

ANPN is the government authority responsible for the National Parks and therefore they must formally recognize and adopt the LUP. The ANPN conservateur is a key member of the planning team and will therefore be involved at all stages of the planning process.

Some logging/mining concessions and villages are located in the buffer zone. For issues relating to overall management with the companies, we will request collaboration from the relevant ministries (Ministère des Eaux et Forêts and Ministère des Mines). For issues relating to local communities, it will be extremely important that there is recognition and acceptance of the management plan.

During the management planning stage: consultation meetings with the villagers; all stakeholders, and individuals will be included in the planning of the different zones and regulations. The current process of meetings with stakeholders needs to be formalized but this consultation will ensure that the plan is recognized.

For formal recognition by the government the draft plan will be submitted to the ANPN for feedback and approval.

#### **V. Creation of Vision and Objectives for the Macro-zone**

- a) *Stakeholder groups convened to describe their expectations, desired conditions, and purpose of the landscape plan. [Note: CARPE landscapes are not necessarily a recognized or known entity to many stakeholders on a landscape, therefore the creation of objectives for the entire landscape may not concern all stakeholders. These groups, however, must be implicated in the creation of objectives for each zone.]*
- b) *Objectives should reflect the desired conditions of the landscapes*
  - a. *Agreements reached and objectives defined for the landscape.*
  - b. *The landscape vision and objective creation should include a prioritization process which takes into account and targets the most pressing needs on the landscape, taking into account the importance of such issues for long term conservation on the landscape and the time sensitivity of each.*

The ANPN have gone through a process of defining a vision and objectives for this Park in their plan cadre.

The global objective is:

- The protection and valorization of the national parks of Gabon are assured over the long term.

The specific objective is:

- The protection of the cloud forests of Monts de Cristal National Park is assured, through the harmonization between the preservation of a vast forest area and its fauna, eco-tourism and hydroelectric power production, in partnership with economic operators and local populations.

The sub-objectives are:

- The conservation of biodiversity and habitats in the PNMC and its buffer zone is assured
- Multidisciplinary scientific research contributes to effective management of the Park and to the training of Gabonese students
- Eco-tourism in the Park and its periphery contribute to the conservation of the park and the promotion of Gabon as a tourist destination on the international market
- Local populations and economic operators in the region support the conservation of PNMC
- Participatory natural resource management in the peripheral zone contributes to the protection of PNMC and to the sustainable development of the region.

## **VI. Identify Management Micro-Zones and Associated Objectives and Guidelines**

- a. Objectives defined to reflect desired conditions of each zone, guidelines created to address known threats.*
- b. Identify differing rules in each zone for different habitat types, activities, and resources.*
  - i. Delineate micro-zones, within these larger zones, as needed to define locations where certain activities will be permitted/prohibited.*
  - ii. Define additional rules for each micro-zone.*

To be completed. The macro-zone will be divided into micro-zones as part of the planning process.

## **VII. Elaboration of Implementation Plan**

The following activities need to be carried out in order to complete the land use planning for Monts de Cristal National Park

- Consultation meetings with the authorities, communities and private sector to propose, discuss, and agree upon the vision and objectives for the park
- Consultation meetings with the villagers and the authorities and private sector to delimit the micro-zones, and discuss the objectives and rules for each.
- Proposition of a method to hunting within the park.
- Implementation of an environmental awareness campaign with the companies and local communities.
- Continued physical, ecological and socio-economic data collection.
- Proposal for the monitoring techniques within the park
- Proposition of the land use management plan document

### **VIII. Creation of Monitoring Plan**

WCS will continue to coordinate the monitoring of the park. As identified above, biological and human impact data should be done in order to identify changes since the 2005 surveys.

WCS will work with partners such as MBG for the botanical data.

WCS will then facilitate the distribution of the monitoring in results to the stakeholders also that it can be taken into account in the management plan.

It will also be necessary to identify means of ensuring that this monitoring is carried out on a continued basis so that the management plan can be adapted according to new threats/challenges that arise.