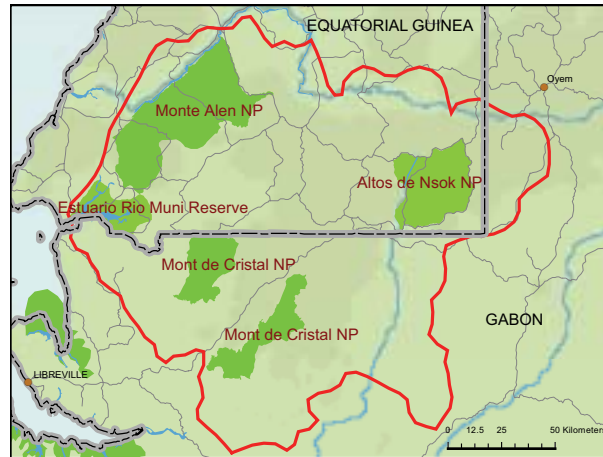


# Monte Alen–Mont de Cristal Inselbergs Forest

The Monte Alen–Mont de Cristal Inselbergs Forest of Gabon and Equatorial Guinea is characterized by sparse human populations, large tracts of intact forest, granite inselbergs, cloud and montane forests, and pleistocene refugia on which forest cover has been contiguous over geological time. These features promote dramatic botanical richness with at least 3,000 species of vascular plants, with 100 endemics. High rainfall and intact watersheds make the landscape an important repository of freshwater biodiversity as well as a valuable source of hydroelectric power. Industrial logging dominates land use and the economy.



## Sustainable Resource Management

The landscape contains three national parks and one national reserve in a sea of logging concessions. Only one logging concession (Rougier) carries certification and makes serious efforts to control illegal hunting. National park management is at an incipient stage throughout the landscape. In Equatorial Guinea, where local people have traditionally had little involvement in land use planning, there are preliminary management plans for the protected areas—as well as a model plan for the forestry concessions. The plan for Monte Alen is being partially implemented, but no forestry concessions are under best practices management. Laws exist to control wildlife hunting, but they are not enforced. In Gabon, park management is incipient, stakeholder meetings have begun, and park limits have been physically established. Illegal logging in the park has been stopped, and a park antipoaching unit has been established.

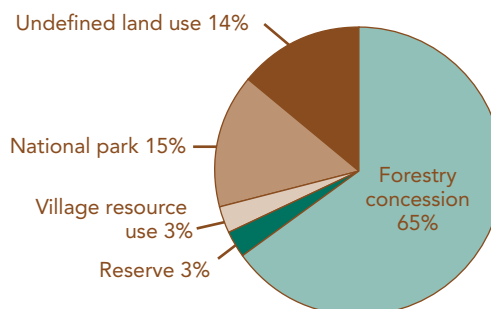
## Natural Resource Governance

Three national government agencies are responsible for natural resource management in the landscape, two of which are newly created entities. In Equatorial Guinea, INDEFOR has legal jurisdiction over national parks and logging concessions. Created in 2002, INDEFOR has technical ability, but little acceptance or influence within the government, or even within its own ministry, to match its management responsibilities. Having received no operating budget for two years, INDEFOR has not been able to implement existing management plans, establish a management presence in the landscape, or engage with local communities. In Gabon, an inter-ministerial body, the CNPN, was created in 2002 to manage the nation's national parks, while the Ministry of Water and Forests is responsible for management in

logging concessions. CNPN will likely receive its first budget allocation from the Government in 2005. CNPN and the hydroelectric company, SEEC, operating in the landscape will sign a collaborative agreement soon to include plans for park headquarters development.

## Natural Resource Monitoring Institutionalized

Natural resource monitoring is, like management, incipient, and there is no landscape-scale monitoring or research program. In Gabon, baseline plant, animal, and socioeconomic studies involving national and international institutions began in late 2004. Five permanent 1 ha botanical plots were established for long-term monitoring of forest dynamics. In Equatorial Guinea, capacity is developing with a number of promising collaborations between INDEFOR, the national biodiversity institute (IUBioma), the University of Acalá, Missouri Botanical Garden, Imperial College, and Conservation International. IUBioma and INDEFOR are developing a national research and monitoring plan, within which the landscape will be integrated.



## Landscape Highlights

Surface Area: 26,747 km<sup>2</sup>

Partners: UNGE, INDEFOR, University of Acalá, Missouri Botanical Garden, Imperial College, CNPN, MINEF, Gabon National Herbarium, Wageningen University, Boston College, Smithsonian Institution

National Parks: 3, covering 3,900 km<sup>2</sup> (15% of landscape)

Biodiversity (N species)

Plants: > 3,000

Mammals: TBD

Birds: > 340

## Threatened Species

Animals

- Forest elephant
- Western gorilla
- Chimpanzee
- Hippopotamus
- Slender-snouted crocodile
- Leopard

Plants

TBD

## Major Threats to Landscape

Direct

- Unsustainable hunting
- Unsustainable industrial and community “coupe familiale” logging
- Mineral and gold mining

Indirect

- Weak landscape management institutions
- Urban demand for bushmeat
- Lack of alternative protein/income sources
- Crop damage
- Lack of planning information

## Key Interventions

- Threats assessment
- Establishing a national biodiversity institute
- Establishing a conservation monitoring system
- Developing sustainable wildlife and timber management systems in logging concessions
- Developing sustainable community resource use plans