

Assessment of NGOs in Central Africa

Case Studies in Cameroon, the Congo, Gabon and
the Central African Republic

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INTRODUCTION

This report constitutes the expected output under Contract # MA 97. It was prepared following a seven-week assignment in four of the Congo Basin countries: the Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic and Cameroon. The assignment took place from June 24 through August 10, 1996.

Setting

This assignment lies within the framework of preliminary studies for the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). The major objective was to assist BSP in preparing the CARPE Program by providing the basic data necessary for designing the CARPE grant program. The assignment was conducted in conjunction with the PVO/NGO-NRMS Project Director (Michael Brown).

Terms of Reference

The outline of the terms of reference were as follows:

- To inventory major NGOs involved in natural resource conservation and management in Gabon, the Congo and CAR; to classify them (development; influence; integrated conservation and development project; environmental education; research...).
- To describe the major features of NGO experience.
- To describe government and donor trends related to natural resource conservation and management.
- To identify NGO major problems at institutional and technical levels; to describe NGO perceived needs.
- To determine the elements for an environment suitable to NGOs.
- To evaluate the NGO capacity in Cameroon to operate as service providers for other NGOs in the Congo Basin countries.

Methodology

Stay in each of the CARPE-focused countries (Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic) has been approximately two weeks. Working time was used as follows:

- Seven or eight days in the capital for interviews with various kinds of actors in the environmental sector (government, donors, international NGOs, international projects, private sector, national NGOs). Approximately 30 interviews were conducted in each country.

- Four or five days outside the capital for field visits. In Gabon and the Congo a country consultant was recruited for the duration of field visits. As members of Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) the input of these consultants helped conduct field visits in the best way. In CAR a local consultant was recruited for a period of six days, partly in Bangui and partly for field visits. In this case also his input was unquestionable.

Usually sites for field visits were determined after two or three days in country, taking into account the terms of the contract (reasonable NGO concentration for potential involvement in CARPE activities) and opportunities including transportation.

A list of persons interviewed, and sites and organizations visited is annexed.

The data collection methodology was based on the triangulation principle (i.e., asking for the same information from various types of actors until one can perceive complex situations and major issues in an unbiased manner).

Major limitations encountered

This report is limited primarily to a comprehensive diagnostic of ENGOS in the various countries studied and to analysis of implications for CARPE. The triangulation principle helps to identify the core of most advanced NGOs in a country quite rapidly, as well as major strengths and weaknesses of the NGO sector as a whole. But two-hour interviews with NGOs cannot diagnose each institution individually. The result is that it is difficult to appreciate the potential of NGOs considered individually. For example, would this or that NGO be able to gather the necessary human resources to do more; does this or that NGO have the capacity needed to manage an amount of fund 2, 5, or 10 times higher than at present; does this or that NGO really have the technical capacity to conduct this or that type of activity.

Duration of the stay in Cameroon (one week, or five business days) seemed to us a little short compared with the terms of reference. Despite this impediment, we thought that inclusion of Cameroon in the study had been positive, and we did everything in our power to collect maximum information in the period of time allotted.

As a rule, we did not have any trouble in finding most resource persons, except for CAR. Due to military insurrection, various projects no longer have an office, their documentation has been destroyed, or project managers often are absent. In addition, some national NGOs could not be interviewed due to change of address or telephone number.

Time allotted to writing of the report (10 days) constituted a serious challenge insofar as the amount of information to be processed, having been collected over seven weeks in the field, was extensive.

Terminology

Environment. The terms of reference use the expression "natural resource conservation and management" to designate the major focus of NGOs. We preferred to use the term

"environment" because major NGOs involved in this sector most often qualify themselves as environmental NGOs. Sometimes this constituted some problem with interlocutors from other sectors who had some trouble to grasp the scope of the fields which we included under this term.

Thus we later specified that we were subdividing environment in five major fields: environmental education, natural resource management; lobbying and advocacy activities, alternative activities to relieve pressure on the forest ecosystem; study and research (see Annex 3 for a list of NGO potential activities in the environmental sector).

ENGOS (NGOs involved in environmental activities). Under this acronym we decided to group NGOs involved specifically in the environmental sector as well as multi-sectorial NGOs conducting part of their activities in the environmental sector. We preferred this to a separation between ENGOS (NGOs involved specifically in the environmental sector) and DENGOS (development and environmental NGOs = multi-sectorial NGOs conducting part of their activities in the environmental sector), because this separation gives credit to the idea that environmental issues are not related to development ones. Thus in CAR, NGOs involved specifically in environment were once excluded from the NGO collective group on the grounds that they were not involved in development. The acronym ENGO including specific ENGOS and multi-sectorial ENGOS helps to counter-balance this situation, at least in terms of vocabulary.

NGO and association. In the four countries visited, NGOs are associations since they have to register according to the procedure for associations. This report is based on this principle: NGOs represent one type of association, specifically focused on development, emergency and self-help issues. They co-exist with other types of associations such as sports associations. Under the law they are linked to other types of associations because they are non-political and non-profit organizations.

Report Format. Part I of the report is made of three case studies on the ENGO sector in Gabon, the Congo and CAR.

Part II is an analysis of implications for CARPE of data collected from the ENGO sector in the various countries, in particular:

- At the present time what are the elements necessary for the dynamics of NGOs, and how should the CARPE position itself in relation to these dynamics?
- With the data collected is CARPE in a position to make choices regarding the most relevant interventions to be supported (in terms of activity sectors and geographical area)?
- Which operational mechanism should CARPE develop?

Annexes include:

- A note on potential input from Cameroonian NGOs as service providers for NGOs in CARPE-focused countries (Annex 1).
- An actualization of diagnostics made on NGOs in the Congo and CAR in 1993 (these diagnostics were established by consultants under the PVO/NGO-NRMS Project (Annex 2).

- A table of present NGO activities in the countries studied (Annex 3).
- A comparison of national NGOs and international NGOs in the three countries studied (Annex 4).
- Proposals for further studies (Annex 5).
- The list of people met and visits conducted in each country (Annexes 6, 7 and 8).

Indicators (French version)

Table 1. Socio-economic Indicators, 1992 (Source PRGIE, 10-18-95)

	Units	Cameroon	RCA	Congo	GEQ	Gabon	Zaire
Population	Millions	12.2	3.2	2.4	0.4	1.2	39.8
Pop/area pop	%	21	5	4	1	2	67
Pop. growth	% par year	3	2,7	3,3	2,3	2,7	3,3
Area	Km ² (000)	465	623	342	28	258	2,268
Percent total area	% per area	12	16	9	1	6	57
Pop. Density	per Km ²	26	5	7	14	5	18
GNP/per capita	US\$	830	410	1110	340	4220	130
GNP	US\$ millions	10,126	1,312	2,664	136	5,064	5,174
% Labor Force							
Agriculture	%	63	66	34	70	48	57
Mining	%	2	3	5	0	10	5
Industries	%	10	9	20	5	11	10
Services	%	25	22	41	25	31	28
GNP Input							
Agriculture	%	24	41	10	60	9	38
Mining	%	12	10	28	0	39	9
Industries	%	19	9	10	5	12	8
Services	%	45	40	52	35	43	45

Table 2. Environmental Indicators, 1980-1990; forests and biodiversity

	Units	Cameroon	RCA	Congo	GEQ	Gabon	Zaire
Forest Area							
Tropical Forest	1000 km ²	155	52	213	17	227	1190
Protected Areas	1000 ha	1 127	436	1 215	315	1 790	6 313
Population size	millions	12,2	3,2	2,4	0,4	1,2	39,8
Population Residing in Forested Areas	millions	1,4	0,2	0,2	0,17	0,18	22
Population Living on Forest Ecosystem	millions						3
Biodiversity-species							
Mammals	All Species	297	209	200	184	190	415
	Endemic	10	2	1	1	3	25
	Endangered	27	12	12	15	17	31
Birds	All Species	848	668	500	392	617	1086
	Endemic	11	0	0	3	0	23
	Endangered	17	2	3	3	4	27
Plants	all Species	8260	3602	6000	3250	6651	11000
	Endemic	156	1000		66	7	3200
	Endangered	76	1	3	8	78	7

I.

Case Studies; the ENGO Sector in Gabon, the Congo and Central African Republic

The case studies address the following issues: NGO setting, ENGO sector, and ENGO external environment. Analysis of data collected and their most significant implications for CARPE are presented in Part II of this report.

A. Case Study in Gabon

1. NGO Setting in Gabon

As with the neighboring countries (CAR, Congo) NGOs in Gabon are combined with associations. Thus, in Gabon several hundreds of associations (between 300 and 800 referred to by interlocutors) would be reckoned, with only a small number being NGOs grouped according to their goals. The remaining are school, sports, confessional (not focused on development) associations, disguised political associations, producers' associations...

The NGO movement is recent in Gabon; national NGOs, however, are very numerous, but they have not reached an advanced stage in development. For example, very few NGOs have permanent staff and offices.¹ Most Gabonese NGOs have been established after 1990, taking advantage of the political liberalization. A few NGOs, however, had been established in the 80. At that time, it meant the existence of political support.

Major developments which have influenced the setting up of NGOs in Gabon are as follows²:

- The National Conference in 1990. Following the example of many other countries, NGOs were established to participate in the National Conference, but they rarely develop activities later on. Seventy NGOs attended the National Conference.
- International projects and donors have conducted a series of training seminars from 1991 to 1993 promoting the establishment of NGOs (WWF, French Cooperation, UNDP).
- Major international conferences (Earth Summit in Rio, Beijing) have contributed to the establishment of NGOs in relevant sectors.
- Financial support provided by some donors (French Aid, European Union) to counter social effects of devaluation is believed to have contributed to the emergence of NGOs.
- The African/Afro-American Summit which took place in Libreville in May 1993 also led to the establishment of a series of NGOs.

NGO initiators come from a variety of backgrounds: high school and college students, teachers, elected representatives, private individuals, administration officials, NGO or international project

members. This variety characterizes the NGO movement in Gabon and constitutes one of its strengths.

The NGO movement is also characterized by a high level in youth participation (high school and college students). Involvement of youth in Gabonese NGOs differs from the frequent concept of unemployed youth in the other countries (including the Congo and CAR). In Gabon it is a desire to devote oneself to a secondary activity (voluntarily or not) rather than to conduct a main activity. This desire arises among school youth clubs and church-related youth organizations.

Fewer NGOs have been established by civil servants than in neighboring countries. This can be associated to the labor market situation in the public sector which is better than in neighboring countries.

With a few exceptions these NGOs have no real associative base (few or no sympathizing or fee-paying members, no general assembly). Often they are small cores of individuals operating on a non permanent basis (this feature is found in the three countries).

The NGO community is quite involved in politics.³ The establishment of NGOs in order to participate in the National Conference has attracted in this sector individuals concerned with political activities. Political associations and unions use the same status (law of 1962, resulting from the French law of 1901) and adhere to the same collective group (NCNGO -- National Collective for NGOs) as development NGOs. Attempts for political recovery of emerging NGOs are observed. Finally, young people finishing their studies, who are the base for many NGOs, are often attracted by politics.

In Gabon the NGO movement is primarily urban. Most NGOs are based in Libreville from which they operate.⁴ Thus links between NGOs and rural people are scarce and weak. There is practically no fabric for organizations for local development (Associations Locales de Développement, ALD) and village groups. Few NGOs are established with the major aim of supporting the area where founders are from. There is virtually no ALD-NGO collaboration.

NGO collective groups are in an embryonic state in Gabon.⁵ There are two:

- The NCNGO is experiencing some difficulty in emerging. At the present time, this collective group is enjoying UNDP support. It includes development NGOs as well as other types of associations. The number of NGOs belonging to the NCNGO is not clear insofar as all NGOs attending the founding assembly (250) were considered as members without really being asked.
- The collective group of women's NGOs, COFEM, includes 25 women's associations. It was established in March 1996.

International NGOs are virtually non-existent in Gabon due to the classification of this country among middle income countries. Among the existing international NGOs, let's mention WWF, WCF (linked to Ecofac), Veterinarians without Frontiers (game herding project), IGAD (Gabonese Development Support Institute, a subsidiary of a French NGO under Gabonese law). All these structures operate in the environmental sector. The effects of scarce international NGO

presence on national NGOs are difficult to evaluate. On one hand, one can think that their scarcity can limit national NGO development because of limited opportunities for collaboration with international NGOs. On the other hand, one can think that this situation favors their development because donors have to rely on them.

2. The ENGOS

The ENGO collective group includes NGOs involved specifically in the environmental sector and multi-sectorial NGOs conducting environmental activities. National NGOs concerned with environmental issues on a regular basis amount to a dozen. They are briefly described in the table on the next page.

It should be noted that due to Gabon's specific situation (middle income country, huge forest areas), ENGOS represent a much more driving force among NGOs than in countries overwhelmed with serious social or urgent problems.

At the present time the strongest and most energetic structures involved in the environmental sector seem to be the Amis du Pangolin (the Pangolin's Friends), CIAJE, FOGAPED, and Humanitas. This core, however, cannot be considered as stabilized. Due to the young age of most of these structures, turnover is still extremely rapid. Thus for the GEF-Gabon design study (1991-92) this core was made of CENA, FEG, and IADR, three NGOs which are no longer mentioned. In 1993 a preliminary study for setting up RAAF refers to CENA (then declining), FOGAPED and Humanitas.

The three major sectors for ENGO focus and operation are environmental education, urban rehabilitation activities and lobbying activities.

The most significant results are as follows:

- Publishing of "Cri du pangolin", the most elaborated magazine on environment in the sub-region among publications by ENGOS; in addition it is the only environmental publication for the public (project publications like Ecofac being more selective).
- Emergence of an ENGO collective group monitoring forest uses: policy, cutting license granting, certification. This is a key feature of Gabonese ENGOS. This can be interpreted as the most tangible result to date from setting up RAAF/AFAN (African Forest Action Network).

Gabonese ENGOS are rarely involved in natural resource management directly-related activities (NRM). An exception is the Tourism Office of Lopé (Syndicat d'initiative de la Lopé⁶, SIL-écotourisme). The SIL has links with the other NGO partners of Ecofac (Amis du Pangolin, Aventures sans frontières); however, it is still cut off from the ENGO community. Mutual potential input from this "provincial" ENGO and from the ENGOS "in the capital" should promote further contacts.

Table 3. Major ENGOs in Gabon ⁷

Designation	Year Created	Goals/objectives	Major Environmental Activities	Other Features
CIAJE Collectif Inter Association Jeunesse et Environnement	1993-94		Urban rehabilitation EE Forest Policy Monitoring, Influence	Group including 30 associations (High school and college ecological clubs; youth and environmental associations; Pangolin's Friends) AFAN and AllWatch focal point
Pangolin's Friends	1991	To understand and protect nature in Gabon	"Cri du Pangolin" publication EE; Influence	CIAJE member; one of the associations with the most developed associative base
FOGAPED Gabonese Foundation for Development and Environmental Protection			EE; Traditional pharmacopeia (Dr. Gassita)	Includes primarily civil servants (members of the General Directorate for Environment, IRET researchers) AFAN Member
Jeunesse en Action/Environnement Développement	1992			Includes ENEF alumni. Has a unit at ENEF
Mains Vertes			WWF joint publication "Nono et Toutou"	
FED Women in Environment Development		Work in the field		Chairwoman conducts an Environmental Program on Africa no.1
Adventures Without Frontiers			EE; Turtle egg-laying site Protection	
MPPN Movement for Nature Conservation				Restructuring under way (Resulting from politicization problem)
POPACE Pan African Forum for Culture and Environment				
Jeune Chambre Economique (Professional association conducting ENGO activities)		Developing community of young professionals	Urban rehabilitation	Rather strong associative base, approximately 200 members
Humanitas (multi-sectorial)			Responsible for Literacy Component of IFAD APG Program	Includes teachers and university students. Works in IFAD-covered aeas. AFAN Member
GEDSF (Multi-sectorial) Gabon Environnement Développement Sans Frontières			Bridge construction for Hydro-electric Power Mini-plant Project	Linkages with ALD Wants to Work at Regional Level
Syndicat d'Initiative des Guides de la Lopé (Professional association with ENGO activities)	1995		Natural tourism	Should start development activities at regional level

ENGOS do not collaborate very much. Rather, they tend to compete for the same activities. Information/communication is inadequate among ONGOs.⁸ However, some collaboration is emerging among some NGOs for activities of influence. A Gabonese ENGO collective group has recently adopted a collective position regarding cutting license granting in the Lopé protected area. Evidence of this trend would signal a significant development of ENGOS in Gabon.

Gabonese ENGO development is based on three axes:

- Collaboration with international projects conducting local activities. In Gabon WWF and Ecofac seem to be the two pillars supporting national NGOs.
- Urban rehabilitation in Libreville. Local governments as well as donors are interested in this sector.
- Incorporation in organization network (AFAN, NESDA, IUCN...), which provides training opportunities, helps to extend linkages, and may lead to funding opportunities for projects of the NGO.

Network and collective groups in environment:

- AFAN: in Gabon AFAN members are five. They are: CIAJE, FED, MPPN, Humanitas, and FOGAPED.
- CIAJE includes approximately 30 associations, primarily youth organizations.
- Most of NGOs involved in environment are not NCNGO members. The reasons seem to be that the NCNGO is not yet legalized and that there is power at stake (ENGOS do not want to be absorbed by a collective group suddenly established with donor support). The NCNGO is also blamed for bringing together all kinds of associations. The NCNGO, however, seeks the membership of ENGOS, perhaps through the establishment of a sub-group of ENGOS.
- In the meantime, the most active ENGOS are considering the establishment of a collective for ENGOS.

3. The External Environment of NGOs

The government is exerting indirect pressure on NGOs to limit their sectorial and political activities. Donors, on the other hand, attract NGOs towards selected activity fields (through access and grant conditionalities). Finally, NGOs themselves do not think much about their present and potential role. They respond to solicitations of their external environment but they are not proactive.

3.1 NGO Relationship with Government

As a whole, the relationship between NGOs and the Government is characterized by the following elements:

- NGOs consider that there is a significant gap between speeches ("NGOs are very important") and reality.
- Most Gabonese NGOs are not formally recognized. They receive a provisional authorization when they register their statutes and internal regulations. This does not hamper their activities but gives them the feeling that they are tolerated, nothing more. ENGOs hope that this situation will improve, but they have no clear strategy to reach some result.⁹ They also wish that the NGO sector be clarified (the NCNGO has included this issue in its agenda).
- NGOs are always considered as a political counter-power. Their actions are interpreted as a source of difficulty for the government. Field intervention is still considered with a dim view or as politically-oriented.
- Thus one notes that the government is willing to give some room to NGOs, but that it is not up to NGOs to decide to what extent.¹⁰ The government does not expect NGOs to go beyond the role it agrees to grant them.

Tangible measures taken by the government to favor NGOs are scarce:

- The Direction for Environmental worked together with an ENGO group on the Environmental Day. This Direction is open to collaboration with ENGOs and would like to have a budget line to support EE actions. This budget line could be funded by the Forest and Environmental Project (PFE).
- The Social and Economic Council (CES) tries to play a federating role among NGOs. With some NGOs the CES is now preparing an NGO forum which should take place in December 1996. The objective of this forum is to bring together national NGOs, international NGOs and donors.
- Some NGOs succeed in obtaining support from local governments. For instance, CIAJE uses premises made available by the City Hall in Libreville.
- So far, the government does not finance Gabonese NGO projects.

The following measures, taken by the government to protect the environment have or will have implications for NGOs:

- The National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) in Gabon was completed in 1995. The NEAP¹¹ defines Gabon strategies and priorities in the fields of ecosystem management and pollution control.
- The Tropical Forest Action Program (TFAP) is under way. Its goal is to define general policies which will guide future projects based on sustainable management.

- The Environmental Directorate has oftentimes been passed from ministry to ministry. It is currently under the Forestry and Telecommunications Ministry, since the Earth Summit in Rio. This directorate experiences some difficulty in being heard since it is not independent of the forest sector.
- Incorporation of EE in the curriculum is more advanced in Gabon than in the Congo and CAR. EE has been incorporated in the curriculum of the Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (GTZ-PFE support). A booklet called "J'améliore mon environnement" (I improve my environment) was prepared by the National Education Institute, WWF, for schools.¹²

3.2 Trends at International Program and Donor Level

Since Gabon is part of middle-income countries, presence of numerous bilateral and multilateral cooperative programs cannot be justified as in less advanced countries. One reason for cooperative programs would be the interest of communities and NGOs in the northern area in tropical forests. Accordingly, cooperation focuses primarily on the forest sector.

The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is present within the Rehabilitation Project conducted by the Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts. GTZ claims to be very concerned with tropical forests, but it hopes that in the future the Government of Gabon will contribute financially to cooperative programs conducted with Germany (due to its classification as a middle-income country).

The French Support (Cooperation Ministry and French Fund for Development) develops a regional approach called, "Sustainable Forest Management", carried out in the framework of the Integrated Pilot Developments (API). In Gabon, four companies will receive loans from the French Fund for Development to prepare sustainable working plans for their concessions.

The European Union is present through several projects: Lopé Reserve (Ecofac); Institutional Support for Water and Forest Services; Tropical Wood Certification Project. The program on the "Future of Communities in Tropical Forests" is present in Lopé, with a researcher working on protected area/local community relations.

The World Bank is the major donor for the Forest/Environment Project which main goals are: forest management improvement, institutional support for the Water and Forest Services; EE incorporation in the curriculum of the Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts.

The WWF unit in Belgium is developing a pilot project for wood certification (Cameroon-Gabon-Ghana).

The ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization) seeks funding for an inventory and management project to be carried out in the Minkébe Forest, in northeast Gabon (1,300,000 ha.).

GEF-Gabon (Global Environment Facility) aims primarily at protecting wildlife. Collaboration with national NGOs is planned.

Bilateral cooperation is being drastically reduced, due to budget constraints in the donors' own countries (Belgium, Canada).

Finally, two oil companies, Elf and Shell, are giving funds for international NGO activities. Shell contributes to WWF budget and Elf contributes to IGAD budget (Gabonese Development Support Institute).

3.3 Relations Between National NGOs and Donors

Funding sources that NGOs can seek for are rather limited:

- Contrary to the Congo and the CAR the UNDP does not have a grant fund for NGOs. The UNDP support for the NGO sector is limited to the NCNGO.
- WWF supports a core of ENGOs, primarily for EE activities.
- The MacArthur Foundation has set up a grant fund for NGOs conducting small projects on biodiversity conservation. Proposals are studied by a steering committee which includes WWF and WCS.

As with the other countries some donors have experienced difficult relations with national NGOs (usually at management and monitoring levels). They are seeking mechanisms for selecting NGO partners. Thus, in Gabon, the French Fund for Development and the French Mission for Cooperation will establish a unit within IGAD in 1997; this unit will be responsible for analysis and reformulation of applications which were previously submitted directly to them.

3.4 Other Potential CARPE Partners in Gabon

In this section we try to further describe actors in the environment sector.

Among government structures two research institutes and one teaching institute should be mentioned:

- IRAF (Institut de Recherches Agronomiques et Forestières, Institute for Agriculture and Forest Research), which works primarily on Okoumé plantations, genetic research and pathology of various tree species.
- IRET (Institut de Recherche en Pathologie Tropicale, Research Institute for Tropical Pathology), which focuses on plant and animal research and environmental impact surveys.
- ENEF (Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts), which trains water and forest engineers in Gabon.

The following private structure should be mentioned:

- The Fondation de la Forêt au Gabon (Foundation for Forest in Gabon). This foundation was being established when we visited Gabon.

Networking in rural areas:

- Groups, cooperatives, ALD. Generally the network is poor. Traditionally Gabon has not played an important role in community development. Cooperative development has reached a few areas through coffee/cocoa production, but coverage has been very limited. At the present time, a few projects are working on these issues, including IFAD (Support for Gabonese Farmers; outreach network in three provinces).
- Confessional structures. Their presence is very active (Churches, youth organizations), but it is not focused on development activities.

4. Implications for the ENGO Sector: Strengths and Weaknesses; Limitations and Potentialities

4.1. Strengths and Weaknesses

As with the other countries, the various kinds of interviewees focused primarily on weaknesses.

During interview needs expressed by ENGOs verify the information in table 4.

Priorities expressed by NGOs are as follows:

- To shift to the state of permanent and paid human resources. This is seen as a solution to ensure sustainable structures.
- To have improved working tools (computer, transportation).
- To be trained in order to master environmental issues.
- To be trained in institutional capacity strengthening (project management).

Table 4: Strengths and Weaknesses of Gabonese ENGOs

Interviewee	ENGO STRENGTHS	ENGO WEAKNESSES
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Awareness in Environmental Problems (Primarily Among Young People) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunism. • Embryonic state: One cannot rely on ENGOs. • Confusion between partnership and political commitment • Young people: social disincentive. • Lack of technical training (ENGOs do not always understand what they are talking about).
International (NGOs, Projects, Donors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people: No Corruption, Volunteer Spirit • ENGO founders come from a variety of backgrounds (youth, students, private individuals, civil servants, elected representatives). • Experience in Publishing (Cri du Pangolin). • Skills in Outreach/Extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunism • All ENGOs do the same. • Poor associative base and lack of knowledge on associative life. • Unstable structures (turnover). • Too broad ENGO goals (thus unrealistic). • Lack of analysis capabilities. • Poor financial management. • Heavy presence of high school and college students: risk for breaking up after studies. • Difficulty in completing lobbying actions (obtaining tangible results).
National NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people: no political commitment, no corruption. • Good will to work "in the field". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people: hard to get respect. • Lack of skills in project management: designing, submission for funding and fund management. • Lack of training in environmental issues (need for better understanding addressed issues) • Poor volunteer spirit. • ENGO = Club of good friends with no means.

4.2. Limitations and Potentialities

Major limitations are NGO internal weaknesses:

- Poor institutional and technical capacity.
- Unstable structures.
- Lack of cooperation among ENGOs.
- Trend to politicization (seen as a cause in collapse of structures).
- Responsive to external environment rather than pro-active.

External limitations to ENGOs include:

- Lack of government support.
- Total reliance on outside funding.

Potentialities for ENGOs in Gabon, however, seem quite promising:

At internal level:

- Youth are concerned with environmental issues and tend to become members of organizations.
- Urban population (73% in Gabon) is concerned with the environment.
- There are possibilities for strengthening cooperation among ENGOs.

At external level:

- Gabon has significant environmental potentialities (forests, biodiversity), and thus room for many useful interventions by actors.
- Gabon also has potentialities for ENGOs to help resolve many environmentally-related problems.
- Program starting up for cooperation with ENGOs (MacArthur Foundation, GEF-Gabon, CARPE) should favor their development.

B. Central African Republic (CAR)

1. The NGO Context in the CAR

In the CAR most NGOs are less than five years old, but some older structures exist, often established by churches. These pioneer NGOs have been primarily involved in structuring rural areas. Thus in the CAR what characterizes the NGO sector is that it emerged in rural areas.

In the CAR three periods of NGO emergence can be outlined.

1. From the 60s through the beginning of the 70s, churches mostly established development structures such as CARITAS-CAR (1972) or the CREF (Centre Rural d'Education et de Formation, Center for Rural Education and Training, 1966).¹³
2. In the 80s, the economic crisis and aggravation of social problems (unemployment, AIDS) produced a new generation of NGOs based on the principle that the government cannot do everything. The ACABEF (Central African Association for Family Welfare, 1987) is an example of NGOs established during that period.
3. In the beginning of the 90s, three major factors affected the formation of NGOs: the persistent economic crisis; the new context of political liberalization; and United Nations conferences. Mostly Rio and Beijing have brought crucial problems to light and have given some momentum to NGO corresponding sectors. The largest number of present NGOs came to light during this period.

For the last two periods NGO initiators are primarily civil servants. But this not the rule; some founders are discouraged civil servants, some are young unemployed and some are clearly people who have chosen to work towards developing the private associative sector.

National NGOs are more developed in social sectors such as childhood, rehabilitation, health (those are sectors of daily life problems which drain heavy outside support), as well as in support for grassroots organizations. Skills in outreach and setting structuring are extensive and various.¹⁴

National NGOs, while concentrated in Bangui, are present and active in more agricultural provinces. On the other hand, the Eastern and Northern regions and tropical forest areas are virtually untouched by NGOs.

Links between service NGOs (or development NGOs, according to designation) and organizations for local development (ALD¹⁵) or groups are not as strong and systematic as in other countries. However, ALD extension agents in villages often serve as entry point or intermediary for NGOs.

NGO collective groups are in a embryonic state in the CAR. There is only one, CIONGCA (an inter-NGO association for Central Africa. At the present time, CIONGCA enjoys UNDP support. This association includes 38 development NGOs and a number of other types of

organizations (including producers' groups). The presence of only one collective group characterizes the CAR.

As with the neighboring countries development NGOs cannot be identified easily among the other types of associations. This confusion results from the blend between associations and NGOs. All associations, whether they are leisure or trade associations, register under the same procedure (1961 law). At the present time the government works with the support of the World Bank on developing a development NGO-specific law (as in Cameroon).

Central African NGOs are little politicized. Few cases of political recovery are found. The political inclination of the previous CIONGCA team had led to a strong reaction from members.

International NGOs are more present in the CAR than in the Congo and in Gabon. The CAR belongs to less advanced countries, and its rural sector is more developed (which corresponds with the know-how of international NGOs); in addition there are serious social problems, such as the presence of refugees, poverty, and AIDS. International NGOs present in the CAR include, *inter alia*, OCSD-Canada; Africare; COPI-Italy; AFVP-France; DED-Germany; and WWF-US.

2. The National Environmental NGOs (ENGOS)

The ENGO group includes NGOs involved specifically in the environmental sector and multi-sectorial NGOs conducting environmental activities.

National NGOs concerned with environmental issues on a regular basis amount to approximately ten. They are briefly described on the next page. Most of them were established between 1991 and 1994 (except for CEDIFOD, 1989). The most active ones¹⁶ are the OCDN, CEDIFOD, and the Pavillon Vert (RAAF focal point).

The OCDN tries to enlarge its associative base (through local committees. This is a structure with clear ideas on its orientation (through an internal process for institutional evaluation funded by GTZ. CEDIFOD, with skills in training development agents, has become a partner in environment-related programs, such as PRE (Ecological Rehabilitation Project). CEDIFOD should be the NGO focal point for PRGIE. CEDIFOD also profited from the internal process for institutional evaluation funded by GTZ. Other NGOs are gradually developing skills in biodiversity-related sectors. Thus Education à la Maîtrise de la Fécondité (EMF) is working on traditional pharmacopeia.

Finally, some ALD also are concerned with the environment, either as main focus, or as one of several activities.

- The Development Committee for Bayenga (CDB) manages funds for natural tourism in the Dzanga Sangha National Park. The CDB runs primarily social programs, but it also attempts to develop environmental education activities for its members.
- There are committees for environmental conservation related to the Ecological Rehabilitation Project (more or less informal).

- The Association Operation Zendé (AOZ) works on a rehabilitation project for a neighborhood in Bangui.
- In some villages groups are emerging for production of tropical forest products (rattan,...).

As a whole, it is worth noting that environmental specialists (forest engineers, for example), are not present in NGOs.

The absence of information in some boxes means that none was collected. It does not mean that concerned NGOs have no goals or activities.

The present volume of activities conducted by ENGOs is reduced. ENGOs are primarily involved in EE (in schools through media), in reforestation activities, the quantitative volume of which is presently reduced. Some of them begin to show skills in conducting socio-economic studies (acquired through participation in studies, in particular in the east of the country: Alindao, Bangassou). Their most innovative input is that they show a clear interest focused on environment and invest in new activities, such as public advocacy for environment conservation.

There are many multi-sectorial NGOs with marginal environmental activities but their volume of activity is difficult to evaluate. For some types of activities such as reforestation their volume of activity is likely to be higher than for environmental NGOs.

Environmental publications printed by ENGOs are presently non-existent:

- Publishing of Massaragba (FOCSARENA) has stopped because of military insurrection).
- Pavillon Vert intends to start up a publication with letters from students (SOS Begnema). In addition, the OCDN would like to produce a newsletter.

Network and collective groups:

- ENGOs are not members of CIONGCA. They were initially rejected by CIONGCA which did not think that there was any connection between environment and development. Then there was a period during which CIONGCA adopted political positions which polarized certain organizations. For these reasons (and maybe others) environmental NGOs do not seem interested in becoming members of CIONGCA, even with its new management.
- AFAN (African Network for Forest Action): AFAN-CAR includes six members (Pavillon Vert, OCDN, CEDIFOD, JMA, ANPE). As with the other countries, the main concern is the difficulty in performing the assignment without any means, while members feel that information is poorly conveyed. The main AFAN impact on the countries visited seems to have shown NGOs what their roles could be as lobbying groups, including in monitoring of industrial forest uses.
- A network of environmental NGOs is in gestation -- which could be established through follow-up activities for International Convention to combat the desertification).

Table 5. Major NGOs in CAR

Designation	Year Created	Goals/objectives	Main Environmental Activities	Other Features
OCDN. Central African Organization for Wildlife Conservation	12/92	To inform, educate and act in forest conservation; To develop sanitation.	EE (radio) Forestry	
CEDIFOD. Center for Documentation, Information and Training in Development	1989	To train development agents; To maintain relations with and among basic structures.		AFAN Founding Member coming from private sector
FOCSARENA. Central African Foundation for Natural Resource Conservation			EE Studies	Association officially considered as serving public purposes; Restructuring under way; President of the Association presently is the Water and Forestry Minister.
JMA. Jeunesse en Mission pour l'Avenir				AFAN member
ANPE. National Association for Environmental Conservation	04/92	To inform people on environmental issues; To improve people's quality of life.		AFAN member
ACE. Art Culture Ecosystème	06/92	To establish and develop green areas; To create artistic work on environment; To raise environmental awareness among communities.		
AFC. Amis de la Faune en Centrafrique	11/91	To conserve fauna in CAR.		
CPP. Centrafrique Pays Propre	1996		Urban rehabilitation	Association established by the second wife of the CAR President
CAN.Club des Amis de la Nature	1992	To love wildlife; To conserve wildlife; to raise awareness among people regarding wildlife protection.		Association based in province (Ndélé).
AOZ. Association Operation Zendé	08-90	To develop sanitation; To rehabilitate Sica 2 neighborhood; To protect environment.	Cleaning of gutters. Latrines in marketplace	Rather an ALD
Pavillon Vert	12-93	To conduct environmental education. To conserve forests; To develop sanitation.	EE Urban rehabilitation	AFAN Focal Point. Formation of local committees in the country

3. The External Environment of NGOs

3.1. NGO Relationship with Government

As a whole, the main characteristics of NGO relationship with the government are as follows:

- NGOs are increasingly recognized by the government as competent partners. ENGOs, however, think there is still some hypocrisy: they are asked for their advice but it is not taken into account. Also, it is obvious that there remains a fringe of public agencies which do not like the existence of NGOs.
- NGO acceptance is made easier because some of the current government officials are close to the NGO community (cabinet reshuffling and democratization brought them responsible positions within the government). In addition, many NGOs are being initiated by government officials in place. Thus, links between NGOs and the government are often close, but NGOs claim there is confusion between both sectors.
- According to NGOs the major ambiguity in their relationship with the government is that the latter tends to see them as adversaries, while considering that NGOs must assist the government.
- In spite of the existence of an NGO coordination unit with the Planning Ministry, NGOs would like the establishment of an NGO-Government consultative body to determine the conditions for an environment enabling their development.
- In the CAR the registration of NGOs suffers the same problems as in the neighboring countries (administrative bottleneck, blend of all types of associations), but this does not seem to be a major concern for the NGOs visited (they hope to obtain final approval for legal status, but the lack of legal status does not prevent them from acting).^{17 18}

While the government claims that it is in favor of national NGO development, it takes few concrete measures to facilitate their development:

- In very few instances, the government makes available free of charge technical assistance to NGOs (for example, Pavillon Vert).
- Some NGOs were invited to be part of the steering committee for NEAP¹⁹ (Pavillon Vert; OCDN; CIONGCA).
- Some NGO programs are backed by supporting letters from the Planning Ministry when submitting fund requests to donors.
- Government grants to NGOs. Since wages are not paid regularly in the CAR, government contribution to the development of its own NGOs is unlikely to be significant. This issue, however, seems to be more discussed in the CAR than in the other countries, both in the government and among NGOs.

- The prospects seem to be that the Water, Forestry and Environment Ministry is willing to become involved in an effort to clarify the environmental NGO sector (through the establishment of a data bank on ENGOs) and plan a more active role in outreach to the core of ENGOs. This ministry hopes that NGOs will agree on national projects and wants to encourage donors to strengthen their components in support of ENGOs in all new stages of projects.

3.2. NGO Relationship with Donors

As a whole, the main characteristics of the NGO relationship with donors are as follows:

- Donors feel that NGOs lack methodology and experience but that they are key operators which should be strengthened.
- On the other hand, donors feel that funds they can make available for national NGOs surpass the absorption capacity of the NGOs (the absorption capacity includes the capacity in meeting donor requirements and methodology).
- Donor-NGO relations are dependent on overall relations between donors and the CAR. But in fact these have been frequently interrupted for several years due to various reasons (democratic conditionality, economic conditionality, military insurrection). Donors are often waiting for various repayments to release funds. This translates in slack periods not suitable for NGO development.

Concrete measures taken by donors in support of NGOs are as follows:

- The UNDP runs an NGO program primarily focused on support to CIONGCA (wages for the executive secretary). This program has a grant fund for NGOs with an ad hoc steering committee selected for each meeting.
- In October 1995 the World Bank established a new position for a consultant in charge of relations with NGOs. This consultant works on the NGO-specific law.
- Many other donors budget more or less important allocations for NGOs. These include, *inter alia*,: the FIMAC (Fonds d'Investissement des Micro-projets Agricoles et Communautaires-GTZ, Investment Fund for Agriculture and Community Micro-projects-GTZ); the European Union makes funds available to NGOs but they have to be sponsored by a European NGO; the Local Initiative Support Fund (Canada), managed in the CAR by OCSD (Canadian Organization for Solidarity and Development); the French cooperation mission can release CDIs (Deconcentrated Intervention Credits).

3.3. Other Potential Collaborators for CARPE

In this section we try to complete our description of actors for the environmental sector.

The consulting firm sector is rather limited in the CAR. 12 consulting firms are grouped within APEC (Association des Professionnels d'Etudes et de Conseils Centrafricains, Association of Central African Consultants and Experts). COSSOCIM has developed expertise in evaluation

and socio-economic studies useful for the environmental sector. CEDRE, whose function is reduced at the present time, was established by members of the Water and Forestry Ministry.

At the university level, there are two potentially interesting structures in the environmental sector. Géosynergie includes several teachers from the university in the geography department (which teaches credits in the environmental field). This group wishes to become involved in activities such as monitoring of the National Environmental Action Plan. One of the group members is the MARP focal point in the CAR (Zephyrin Mogba). The URES (Research and Social Study Unit) is an NGO connected with the university, which has already been used for various consultations.

Graduates without employment are numerous, however, many fewer than in West Africa due to closing of many higher educational institutions since 1989. Moreover, there have been several blank years (three in the past years).

Major programs conducted by the CAR Government in the environmental sector are as follows, with name of donor in parentheses:

- Natural Resource Development Project (World Bank): agroforestry support in Lobaye area.
- PRGIE (World Bank): has not started yet.
- GEF (World Bank-UNDP): being set up.
- Bangassou Biodiversity Conservation (UNDP-WWF): has not been officially approved yet.
- Lake Chad Basin Integrated Development Project (UNDP)
- Ecofac - N'Gotto (European Union).
- Northern Region Development Project (European Union).
- Ecological Rehabilitation Project (GTZ).
-
- Sesam-PAF-Nola (French Aid).
- Dzanga-Sangha Project (WWF-GTZ).

Many of these projects are operating at a slackened pace (military insurrection impact).

4. Implications for the ENGO Sector: Strengths and Weaknesses; Limitations and Potentialities

4.1. Strengths and Weaknesses

The table below summarizes ENGO strengths and weaknesses. Since the diagnostic made by interviewees from various sectors (government, international level, national NGOs), is more or

less similar, we are not presenting a diagnostic by type of interviewee, contrary to the Congo and Gabon.

NGO recognized strengths are primarily moral qualities, mobilizing capacity and relative independence. Weaknesses surpass strengths (at least quantitatively) and concern both institutional and technical capacities.

Table 6: Strengths and Weaknesses of ENGOs in CAR

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up and persistence capacity • Dynamism, and will • -Learning capacity regarding environmental issues. (ENGO expertise is improving.) • Presence of civil servants at ENGO level: They are the top quality human resources in the country, wage earners, thus able to do voluntary work, without fear for losing their job (in case they do not work with the Water and Forestry Ministry). • Capacity to mobilize human resources (graduates, cooptation civil servants, youth groups,...) • Complement actions taken by other actors (including government). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young, lack of experience • Totally relying on external funding (no internal support, neither from government nor private individuals). • Overall lack of means (no permanent office, no communication and transportation means, no permanent staff). • Poor information communication and cooperation among ENGOs. Lack of cohesion among ENGOs. • Frequent internal conflicts within ENGOs. • Problems between CIONGCA and ENGOs. • Presence of civil servants within ENGOs: lack of availability, scattering, government mentality, confusion. • Lack of training for human resources in environment-specific issues. ENGOs do not have environmental specialists. • Overall weakness of human resources (opinion expressed by BF and international ENGOs) • National NGOs are in search of their own training; this is reflected in services provided (shortages of services). • Non-compliance with BF guidelines (difficulty in producing financial and progress reports). • Insufficient reflection and clear policy choices. Difficulty in self-analysis and evolving according to external environment. Opportunistic strategies. • NGOs have little grasp within the country. Lack of outreach, actions of limited scope.

4.2. Needs

Needs expressed by ENGOs are linked with weaknesses. Needs perceived as priorities concern the following aspects of institutional strengthening:

- Shifting to permanent and financed human resources.
- Managing projects in focusing on improved access to donors (how to prepare a project, how to produce a report satisfactory for donors).

4.3. Limitations and Potentialities

Internal weaknesses as a whole constitute the major constraint on ENGO development. It is difficult to prioritize them. However, the most serious ones seem to be:

- ENGO difficulty in providing services of acceptable quality.
- Lack of cooperation among ENGOs.
- Lack of real leadership within the ENGO community.

Limitations resulting from NGO external environment (relations with government and donors), while existing, seem to be less constraining.

ENGOS concerned with lobbying group activities feel constrained in their actions since they do not know how to protect themselves against reactions.

While tropical forest predominates in most ecosystems in Gabon and the Congo, this is not the case in the CAR. This may result in less interest, a situation not favoring ENGO development.

ENGO potentialities result from the following:

- The CAR is a country with a significant core of tropical forest (5 million ha.). Thus, ENGOS can enjoy the support focused on tropical forest conservation.
- Potential environmental problems are high, justifying the intervention of various actors.

From an internal perspective, ENGO potentialities result primarily from:

- NGO experience in working with rural people in the CAR. This experience can help ENGOS to establish links with people (for ENGOS willing to work in rural areas).
- The presence of a core of people committed to environmental conservation.

C. Case Study in the Congo

1. ENGO Context in the Congo

The concept of association is new in the Congo since associations have been legally authorized only since 1989 (compared with 1961 in the CAR and 1962 in Gabon). Some confessional organizations, however, were present in the Congo before the beginning of political openness. For instance, Caritas-Congo has been present since 1951.

The following developments have particularly influenced the establishment of NGOs in the Congo:

- Establishment of legal status for associations in 1989.
- The National Conference from February through June 1991. One had to be a member of an association in order to take part, which generated the formation of many structures.
- International summits or conventions. For instance, the Rio Summit or the biodiversity convention were factors for the establishment of ENGOs.
- The economic crisis and divestiture have brought about opportunities for NGOs and other actors.

All these development worked towards an explosion of NGOs starting in 1990.

At the present time, associations continue to grow in number. Associations under the 1989 law would be approximately 800, including 200 to 250 organizations involved in development (DNGOs). In 1995 the directory of NGOs in the Congo, published by the UNDP, inventories 190 organizations.

Civil servants (retired or active) have initiated most of the NGOs. However, generalization would be abusive since some initiators belong to the private sector.

Contrary to the CAR and Gabon, there are many NGO collective groups in the Congo, but their legality is not always clear (real members, services provided, non-political involvement, independence). NGOs are interested in these dynamics but they are suspicious, primarily fearing state control and political recovery.

Existing NGO collective groups are listed below:

- FECONDE (Congolese Federation for Development NGOs). This group includes some of the most advanced national NGOs such as ACBEF (Association Congolaise pour le Bien-Etre Familial, Congolese Association for Family Welfare) and Women 2000.
- CCOD (Consultative Committee for Development NGOs. It is said to include 13 members.
- CNACOF (National Consultative Committee for Women's NGOs). Said to include 32 members.

- CONADEF (National Committee for Women's NGOs).
- CONACONG (National Coordination for NGOs). Established through the impetus of the UNDP in the early 1990s. This collective group has experienced politicization problems.
- Forum-NGOS. Said to include mostly confessional NGOs.
- CONADEC (National Convention of Development and Environmental Associations and NGOs in the Congo). Established in 1995. Said to include 150 associations.

Many associations are members of several collective groups. Thus Women 2000 is a member of CNACOF, FECONDE and CONADEC.

It is hard for Congolese NGOs to become politically neutral. On one hand, because NGO officials are politically committed, on the other hand because of the premise that if one is not in favor, it means one is against (nobody believes you if you say that you are neutral). Meanwhile, politicization is very often mentioned as a factor for discontinuance of NGOs.

Presence of international NGOs is limited in the Congo, due to the fact that this country is classified as a middle-income nation and does not experience emergency crises (hunger, refugees) which often lead to the penetration of international NGOs. International NGOs present in the Congo include WCS, IUCN, Agri-Congo (a subsidiary of Agri-Sud). In addition, some national NGOs receive support from "parent structures". This is the case of the Congolese Association for Family Welfare (ACBEF), supported by IPPF, Caritas supported by the French Popular Relief, Misereor and Cebemo. It is difficult to evaluate the impact of the limited presence of international NGOs on the development of national NGOs.

2. The ENGOs

As with the other countries studied, the ENGO group includes NGOs specializing in environment and multi-sectorial NGOs which are partially active in environment. Among these approximately ten NGOs conduct activities regularly in the environmental field. The major ones are briefly presented at the table below.

In the Congo willingness for ENGO regional penetration is stronger than in Gabon and the CAR (the objective of initiators is more often to bring support to their region of origin). It follows from this that potential capacity of operation in regions is likely to be higher in the Congo than in the other two countries studied.

Activities in which ENGOs are involved are primarily environmental education (EE), reforestation, urban rehabilitation and wildlife conservation.

ENGOs involved in reforestation (APEPF, Floras, ARCFP) are primarily active in the Pool region, an area characterized by savannization. Difficulties in firewood supplies seem to have favored community forestry operations in this region.

Several ENGOs are concerned with wildlife conservation. This is typical in the Congo. These ENGOs are: the Unité de Protection des Gorilles (Unity for Protection of Gorillas, UPG-Foundation John Aspinal-UK); AJIPAK; HELP (Habitat Ecology Liberty of Primates); ACCP; CFC; the Jane Goodall Institute.

The objective of several Congolese ENGOs is to gain further responsibilities in the management of protected areas. This is typical of NGOs in the Congo, compared to those in the CAR and Gabon.

Development of Congolese ENGOs occurs primarily through cooperation between international projects and national NGOs. This is illustrated with the following examples: ANN with Ecofac, IUCN with ANZAS, GTZ-Dolisie with Women 2000. Through these relationships national NGOs are used as entries to reach local people and to conduct training and extension activities. Institutional development of the national NGO is not the focal point of these linkages.

While in other sectors there are national NGOs which are subsidiaries of international NGOs, there is apparently no similar instance with ENGOs.

There is still a significant turnover among ENGO leaders (unstable structure). In the 1995 directory published by the UNDP, six Congolese NGOs are indicated with environment as their major activity. From these six NGOs only one (Floras) was mentioned to us as being among the most active at the present time; it does not seem to recover after the death of its founder (ACAE); and the others do not seem active.

NGO overall capabilities in the environmental field have improved in the past years. Thus, NGO input in seminars, fora, and meetings is increasingly recognized and appreciated.

ENGO-specific Network and collective groups:

- AFAN includes four members (ANN, APEPF, Floras, and CFC). At the present time the network is not very efficient in the Congo and seems to lag behind when compared with the other countries (primarily Gabon, but also the CAR) in terms of impact for lobbying activities conducted by ENGOs.

ENGO Publications:

- At the present time, they are non-existent, but ANN hopes to publish "l'Araignée" starting in September 1996.

Table 7. Major ENGOs in the Congo

Designation	Year Created	Goals/objectives	Main Environmental Activities	Other Features
ANN: Alliance Nationale pour la Nature	1992		EE (Brazza schools)	Established by graduates. AFAN focal point. Ecofac partner. IUCN-The Netherlands partner.
APEPF: Association for environmental Protection and Forest Development			Reforestation (Pool region)	AFAN member
FLORAS: Flora Association				AFAN member
AJIPAC: Japanese Association for Wildlife Conservation in the Congo		Wildlife Conservation	EE (children visiting the zoo)	
ANZAS: Solidarity Association for Zambis		Development in Zambis District	Outreach activities within the Conkouati Project (IUCN)	Based in Pointe Noire. Rather an ALD
ACAE: Congolese Association for Environmental Action	1989	Sound natural resource and environmental management	Reforestation (Brazza)	Initial ENGO in the Congo. Does not operate at the present time. Restructuring problems after death of president
ACNL: Association for Nature Conservation in Likouala	1996	Sustainable natural resource uses	EE Hunting control. Forest use monitoring.	Has just been established. Regional base (Likouala). WCS potential partner. Wants to have linkages with foresters (mbr. of bd.) Will be soon an AFAN member
ACCP: Congolese Alliance for Primate Conservation	1992	Primate conservation	Gorilla export control (Pointe Noire)	
CFC: Congolese Wildlife Conservation	1992	Wildlife conservation		Partner of the IUCN-The Netherlands Committee. AFAN member
CPAPN: Club for Conservation of Protected Areas in Niari	1994	Protected areas restoration		GEF-Congo partner. No activity at the present time.
Association N'Tokou for the Development	1996	Setting up new protected area		Has just been established. Regional base.
ARCFP: Association for Reforestation and Forest Conservation in the Pool Area				
PROJEP: Forum of Young Producers for the Development				

The absence of information in some boxes means that none was collected. It does not mean that concerned NGOs have no goals or activities.

3. The External Environment of NGOs

3.1 Relationship between NGOs and Government

The importance given to NGOs in general rhetoric and in the government documents is increasing. All recent reports on environment refer to ENGOs (NEAP, TFAP,²⁰ new Forestry Code). The existence of the NGO sector and of its potential input is recognized, but further explanation is rarely given regarding the concrete role of NGOs, or when further explanation is given, it is used to confine NGOs to very specific sectors. Thus, in the NEAP summary, the role of NGOs is mentioned only once, as a potential operator for waste collection and treatment in urban areas.

In private interviews with government officials, however, rhetoric is not so uniform. In worst instances, NGOs are considered as empty shells, established for opportunistic reasons. For some government officials, the existence of NGOs confirms the government failure, which is difficult to accept. Accordingly, support sometimes consists merely in words. Finally, the overall feeling is that NGO-government relations are unstable because they are often dependent on individual relations, thus subject to changes.

Tangible actions in support of NGOs initiated by the government have been rare since the law authorizing the establishment of associations. Only a few national NGOs, such as ACBEF, have conventions with the government and are considered as real partners. National NGOs do not receive financial support from the government (some NGOs feel that the government is asking them for more than what it gives them). The government assists very little in NGO formation (however, recently CONADEC has organized a workshop for submission of projects, conducted by CEPI, a public structure which offered these services for a discount fee). Nor does the government seem to assist its NGOs in incorporating information networks.

The Congolese NGOs visited have not expressed any specific problem regarding the registration procedure. This is under the Interior Ministry.

A Direction General for the Environment has been established under the Tourism Ministry (thus independent of the Water and Forestry Ministry). This is different from Gabon and the CAR. This external positioning makes it easier for the General Directorate for the Environment to take independent positions, including stands on forest use. But this situation tends also to multiply technical supervisory divisions on the environmental sector.

3.2 NGO Relationship with Donors

Some of the donors active in the Congo have allocations for national NGOs. These include the UNDP, GEF-Congo, Decentralized Intervention Credits from the French Cooperation, the IUCN-the Netherlands Committee. In addition, some projects subcontract activities to national NGOs, for instance GTZ with Dolisie (Women 2000; improved stoves) or IUCN-Conkouati with ANZAS.

Donor support to national NGOs involved in environment still remains limited in volume.

- The UNDP has been financing four to six projects every year since 1990 for an average amount of US\$ 3,000. Four NGO collective groups (CNACOF, FECONDE, CONADEC, and CCOD) are members of the steering committee for the UNDP support program to national NGOs (the UNDP has not used specific standards for their incorporation in the committee). A few ENGOs have enjoyed UNDP grants (APEPF, ACAE).
- GEF-Congo has maintained a fund in support of NGOs since 1993, but it has funded primarily international NGOs. Regarding ENGOs, the PAPN Club and ANN have received support.
- The French Cooperation supports primarily reforestation ENGOs active in the Pool area (APEPF, Floras).
- The IUCN-The Netherlands Committee has three partners at the present time, including ANN and CFC.

This represents a small core of organizations used to deal with donors.

Donors tend to cooperate always with the same national NGOs. On one hand, this results from the limited number of competent national NGOs, and this reflects an overall lack of trust from donors towards ENGOs (donors prefer to form a partnership with a "recommended" NGO). ENGOs sum up the situation as follows: "At the internal level we do not receive any support to start up; at the external level we are asked what we have already done."

Both donors and the government see NGOs as field operators in charge of outreach and technical extension. Hopefully they will serve as a link between the population and the government and between the population and international projects. A rather directive approach is often hoped for ENGOs: "To inventory what should be done and to see who could do it."

3.3. Other Potential Collaborators for CARPE

In this section we indicate, without going into detail, a few programs and structures complementing the picture of the actors in the environmental sector.

The Zoological Park and related NGOs. Among the three countries visited the Congo is the only one with a zoological park. From some angles, this park can be considered as an EE tool. Several ENGOs are connected with the park. These are AJIPAC (Japanese Association for Wildlife Conservation in the Congo), which established a small documentation center for children in the park and conducts outreach activities; UPG (Unity for Protection of Gorillas, under the Foundation John Aspinal-UK), and the Institute Jane Goodall.

Environment-related projects and programs:

- Protected Areas in Odzala (Ecofac)

- Protected Area in Nouabalé N'Doki (WCS)
- Protected Area in Conkouati (IUCN)
- Agroforestry Project in Southern Congo (Dolisie) (GTZ)
- GEF-Congo (World Bank-UNDP): Restructuring under way
- PERGIE (World Bank): Has not started yet
- GTZ-Ouessou
- Research Program for Sylviculture in Dense Forest (Water and Forestry Ministry/OIBT)
- Integrated Pilot Developments in North-Lekoumou (Socobois-French Aid)
- Pilot Development Units for Reforestation and Agroforestry (Congolese Agency for Reforestation and Land Development)
- Industrial Forest Use Unit in Congo (located in Pointe Noire)
- Regional Project for the Equatorial Forest (FAO): Has not started yet.

4. Implications for the ENGO Sector: Strengths and Weaknesses; Limitations and Potentialities

4.1. Strengths and Weaknesses

The table below summarizes ENGO strengths and weaknesses perceived by interviewees.

Observations:

- Whoever the interviewee was, NGOs show more weaknesses than strengths (Everyone starts with citing weaknesses, even if he is asked first for strengths).
- The Congo is the country in which lobbying skill and potential of NGOs are most contested. It was indicated that to conduct lobbying activities, one has to master his subject, mostly in a context where "everything becomes the truth when written down".
- The cost-benefit analysis regarding the presence of civil servants in NGOs is similar to that done for the CAR.
- NGOs are becoming aware that the overwhelming number of these organizations hinder their operations. NGOs, however, have not reached the stage yet to take initiatives to solve this problem.

- Difficulty in avoiding politicization is emphasized.

Table 8. Strengths and Weaknesses of Congolese ENGOS

Interviewee	ENGO Strengths	ENGO Weaknesses
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of civil servants in NGOs: extensive network of capacities and capabilities. • Willingness. • Begin to set up at regional level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many empty shells. • Opportunism. • Brains are in Brazzaville. • Do not include rural people (civil servants + intellectuals). • Few technical skills in environment. • Lack of know-how. • Lack of means (necessitating at times politicization to seek support). • Poor information communication.
International (NGOs; projects; donors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach capacity towards local people. • Dynamism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging structures, lacking experience. • Presence of civil servants in NGOs: lack of availability. • Opportunism. • Lack of associative culture, lack of ethics. • Confusion with political sector. • Poor skills regarding environmental issues (Lobbying is dangerous in such conditions). • Poor management of projects. • Lack of contacts at grassroots level.
National NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of civil servants in NGOs: extensive network of capacities, • Skill mobilization capacity. • Willingness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak collective groups: self-proclaimed groups. • Lack of credibility (due to the overwhelming number of NGOs). • Poor information communication. • Internal problems (cults of personality). • Lack of means.

4.2. Needs

Priority needs expressed by the ENGOS visited are as follows:

- To reach a more professional state (i.e., to have permanent and financed human resources).
- To strengthen financial means.
- To strengthen overall technical and institutional capacities (current technical and financial limitations are usually perceived as a more dissuading factor than institutional capacities).
- To create dynamics to guide and coordinate activities.
- To have access to information.
- Technical training (reforestation, improved stoves, EE techniques, participatory approach in conjunction with conservation).

The correlation is not absolute between weaknesses identified by ENGOs and needs perceived, including needs for training. However, together both sources of information help to get a rather clear idea regarding constraints on ENGOs.

4.3. Limitations

In this paragraph we refer again to what seem to be major limitations in the development of ENGO capacities in the Congo.

Internal weaknesses constitute the major limitation (see table). Among these the lack of permanent human resources and its corollary (unstable structures, poor quality of services provided) are a major constraint, as well as collaborative problems among ENGOs. Relations with the government and donors could be improved, but they do not seem to constitute a bottleneck at the present time.

Another limitation results from the poor involvement of graduates in ENGOs. Graduates are not fully at ease with NGOs. Non-access to civil service is still seen as a failure. It is not uncommon that a graduate working with an NGO applies for a civil service position and says that he recently graduated and is not employed. This hinders ENGO development because graduates who devote themselves entirely to this sector are not numerous.

Another limitation results from the use of ENGOs by international projects to ensure a linkage with local people. This approach confines national NGOs to outreach activities and makes it difficult for them to gain additional environment-related skills.

4.4. Potentialities

In the Congo (such as in the other CARPE-concerned countries) there is potentially significant room:

- Both forest and biodiversity are extensive in the Congo.
- Potential environmental issues are also significant (forest uses, shifting cultivation, hunting, firewood,...).
- Many donors are concerned with tropical forests and are willing to cooperate with ENGOs.

Internal potentialities of ENGOs result from:

- Congolese ENGO willingness to work in regions (in the field) and in protected areas.
- The diversity of activities conducted by ENGOs (more extensive than in the CAR and Gabon), which can provide an impetus.

II.

Study Case Analysis and Recommendations for CARPE

A. Major Elements in the Dynamics of ENGOs and Their Implications for CARPE

1. ENGO Growth and Skill Development: Role of CARPE in this process

In the following paragraphs we examine the relatively standard role that CARPE may play with ENGO communities. We are not making any value judgement regarding this standard operation, but try to focus on its major weaknesses.

1.1 Growth

In the three countries studied ENGOs are emerging structures willing to expand. We found that ENGOs succeeding in expansion are, for the most part, those which are able to cooperate with international projects. Most of their activities consist of subcontracting with these projects, while a limited number consists of activities conducted independently.

In addition, the expansion of fields invested in by NGOs occurs in successive leaps, either because they find out that NGOs in another country conduct different activities, or because donors lead them to new sectors. It is rare that intervention sectors result from an analysis of NGO roles and capacities.

Thus, the CARPE Grants Program for NGOs should result in facilitating NGO development. CARPE, which is not a program in the field seeking subcontractors for identified activities, should enable NGOs to increase the portion of their activities conducted independently. This consideration supports innovation. In addition, due to its regional mission, CARPE will be ideally positioned to play a role in identifying, introducing and training activities based on innovative experiences conducted by ENGOs. This role could lead to an expansion of fields covered by NGOs.

But CARPE must keep in mind that this will contribute to NGO thinking on their own roles only slightly. Therefore ENGOs may remain passive regarding the program instead of being proactive.

The NGO growth strategy (described above) is often depicted as opportunistic by other actors because it is based on opportunities enabling them to skip over structural stages (offices, permanent staff, transportation means, national scope,...) and it often forces the structure to modify its objectives according to circumstances. This opportunism is considered as one of the NGO weaknesses and is often directly associated with unfairness, at least from an intellectual point of view.

The question is to know if this opportunism poses a risk or not. For us it seems impossible to misjudge NGOs on the basis of opportunism (who, an individual or a structure, is not at times opportunistic?). Particularly for setting up a structure, a good dose of positive opportunism seems to be even desirable. Thus, the real problem does not lie in opportunism but in intellectual unfairness. The CARPE Grant Program for NGOs will have to come to terms this situation. It will have to be able to differentiate positive opportunism, bearing potential, from a negative opportunism, unwilling to commit itself.

1.2. ENGO Skill Learning Process

Poor technical and institutional ENGO capacities are limitations to their development. Although this is recognized, one finds that the ENGO learning process for new skills is virtually informal (meaning that everyone must have to cope alone).

ENGO learning process is a complex phenomenon involving: attendance to seminars or fora; reading; taking part in studies (for instance, PRA); taking part in projects; implementing projects; training (workshops); coopting human resources.

NGO partners, as a whole, seem to consider that there is no other learning process alternative, although, in fact, it consists of a natural selection process (based on cleverness), rather than of a real learning process. Besides, this aspect of natural selection is probably what affects NGO partners, since it proceeds to a screening that NGO partners are incapable or unwilling to do.

NGO skill learning rarely results from formal training (although this provides a basis for analysis and understanding). Environmental training is rarely included in formal curricula. No reference was made to us on any regular short-term environmental training for professionals. Moreover, water and forestry engineers are little represented in environmental NGOs (particularly in the CAR).

By enabling several NGOs to gain experience in the field and disseminating information on a regional basis, CARPE will assist ENGOS in gaining expertise, but according to the informal process described above.

2. Two Major Needs in Institutional Capacity Development: Training in Project Management and Shifting to Permanent Human Resources

Here we address two issues of institutional development, which correspond to needs most frequently expressed by the ENGOS visited: training in project management and shifting to permanent human resources.

2.1. Training in Project Management

Training in project management is part of the needs regularly expressed by NGOs. It is considered as necessary to enable NGOs to improve efficiency and fulfill donor requirements.

Now evidence shows that this type of training already largely occurs. Most projects or donors assisting national NGOs conduct activities in this sector -- although often without coordination. Several NGO collective groups, such as CONADEC in the Congo, also organize this type of training. Poor information communication, lack of knowledge sharing (within the same NGO), rapid emergence of new NGOs, non-permanent human resources and NGO procedures seem to necessitate the recurrence of regular training. None of the three countries has any organization to ensure the coordination of NGO training.²¹

NGO training in project management presents a second problem. Several countries are now experiencing situations where NGOs are not able to use their new skills for lack of available financing. According to donors this is not the case in the three countries studied. Thus, NGO training in project management could have some leverage by allowing for additional fund disbursement. Nevertheless, one should endeavor to ensure insofar as possible that NGOs could use their new skills.

As a result of these findings, CARPE approach could be:

- To support structures (NGO collective groups, ENGO grouping) willing to ensure training coordination (this coordination could concern fields of training other than project management).
- To agree, on a trial basis, to fund proposals based on project ideas, training being provided later on as an integral part of the project. Reflection on selection criteria should be part of this experimentation.

Shifting to Permanent Human Resources

Shifting to permanent human resources is mentioned by many NGOs as a major objective. The term professional is most often used; it implies job permanency and salary. The work quality consideration is not addressed in this definition; thus, it will be understood that permanency and salary lead to quality, i.e., a "good" professional.

Actually, it seems necessary that ENGOs become more "professional" if they are to play a significant role. Their potential activities largely consist of lobbying actions or use of media, two types of intervention requiring a good command of environment-related issues. On the other hand, environmental problems are not about to be resolved and therefore the situation requires a long-term commitment.

The major practical question raised by shifting to permanent human resources is the transfer of expertise. Generally, skill learning in a given NGO affects one single person (the president, the founder). When the NGO shifts to permanent human resources, these persons may not be available (as is the case with civil servants or students, for instance), and it will have to call on new persons who might not have the same skills. Thus, the risk of loss of capacities is high.

Therefore it seems desirable that NGOs manage as soon as possible in forming a core of people (3 to 4 per NGO, maybe by regrouping several ENGOs) who are simultaneously improving and should include the permanent staff when shifting to permanent human resources. Preferably the CARPE Program should assist the NGOs who select this approach.

The question raised lies in finding out also how to help NGOs to shift to permanent human resources. Most donors reject the idea that NGOs incorporate wages or partial wages in their proposed budgets. Then they pretend to believe that NGOs are acting on a totally volunteer basis. Therefore, relations between donors and NGOs are initiated on a shaky basis. CARPE could go against this trend by agreeing to gradually fund working time.

3. Three Major Weaknesses of the NGOs: Cohesion and Collaboration; Information Communication; Associative Base

3.1. Weakness in Cohesion and Collaboration

National NGOs feel that they compete, mostly to have access to external funding but also to be recognized on the local level. They fear that cooperation would lead to greater loss than gain. Therefore, considerations for competition among themselves prevail over cooperation.

This competition appears in three very obvious forms:

1. Poor information communication (either it is not disseminated or people do not want to humble themselves to ask for it).
2. Non-use of experiences learned by other structures (this type of behavior is found also among donors and international NGOs).
3. Difficulties for representative NGO collective groups to emerge.

Major implications are:

1. Difficulties in obtaining leverage. If cohesion remains poor it will very difficult to have a strong impact (especially in influence activities).
2. Duplicated and repeated errors.
3. Some mistrust from external operators (donors).

Along with the lack of cohesion, one can note an increase in network, focal points, groups and sub-groups and, in the Congo, in NGO collective groups. Since cooperation problems among NGOs have not been resolved previously, one can easily imagine the constraints which such initiatives are soon going to face.

In view of this situation CARPE should:

- Urge cooperation among NGOs. For instance, through funding of joint proposals or group training among NGOs. Of course, it is not a matter of forcing structures to cooperate when they may have good reasons to be unwilling to do so. Rather it is a matter of showing NGOs that they may benefit from some aspects of cooperation, while continuing to compete among themselves (for instance, NGO cooperation under a mechanism for funding is profitable for the whole community of NGOs).

- Not to promote the establishment of new structures (network, focal points, CARPE group); rather, to focus on strengthening existing ones.

3.2. Weakness in Information Communication

ENGOS have great need for information, but the major weakness is that information does not circulate well among themselves. Information communication among NGOs will be a major challenge for CARPE (information on NGO innovative experiences, CARPE goals, crucial environmental issues), which will, therefore, have to address the problem of information retention.

CARPE could ensure specific information and training on its own central issues (justification of CARPE goals in economic, social, climatic and biological terms) and on overall environmental issues, in order to help NGOs to become technically more credible.

ENGOS have needs for information on what their counterparts do in other countries. This information brings them new ideas for their own activities. For this reason, through its regional mission CARPE should play a dynamic role in identifying, introducing and training activities based on innovative experiences conducted by ENGOS and other actors. Innovative experiences should be considered in technical sectors (for example, an NGO develops an EE program specifically designed for hunters), as well as institutional sectors (for example, a number of NGOs sets up a collective group for environment). Within this framework, innovative experiences could come from non-focal countries (Cameroon-Zaire-Equatorial Guinea) and from focal countries (Gabon; Congo; CAR) as well.

For some issues which concern virtually all ENGOS, such as EE, CARPE could establish a key data bank for dissemination. This could consist of a library made of educational materials on EE for dissemination in various countries. This exchange of information could be complemented by training (how to prepare and disseminate an EE message).

Finally, CARPE could play a role in data screening and selecting for the announced period of increasingly available information (more or less in a role of information certification).

In terms of information production, CARPE should make sure that it does not publish too many documents. For instance, CARPE should not have its own review but rather become associated, maybe through rotation, with existing publications (AFAN, Cri du Pangolin,...).

3.3. Weakness in Associative Base

NGOS receive little support within their own countries. They usually have few supporters and donors. Actually, many NGOs are small cores of individuals (sometimes one single individual) who do not seek to establish their operation on a really associative base. Now NGOs tackle problems which concern all societies (health, rural development, environment), and therefore they should be able to enjoy some limited support.²²

This situation leads to handicaps:

- NGOs are totally dependent on external funding.
- NGO efficiency as a lobbying group remains limited especially since they do not make up for their limited human resources with cooperation among themselves.

CARPE should preferably assist those NGOs which seek an associative base and seek to develop financial support locally, either from the government or from individuals.

4. Local Analysis and Comprehensive Understanding of Environmental Issues

Generally ENGO members have not received initial training for environmental technical skills. Literature available to NGOs does not express one sole opinion, so it is difficult to make a judgement (this is best illustrated by the literature on advantages and inconveniences of forest uses, in which one can read all manner of contradictory views).

ENGOS (particularly those which are willing to intervene as lobbying groups) want to be able to reason out their positions and to improve overall understanding of environmental issues (economic challenges, impact on climate, prioritization of threats).

For those which are willing to intervene "in the field" a sound analysis of local situations is necessary and must be meticulous, since the problematic may be very complex. As an example of this complexity, a recent PRA study conducted in Gabon showed that trawling fishing was reducing the catch of a village of traditional fishermen who could respond by developing hunting activities endangering biodiversity.

With these findings in mind the role of CARPE should be to instrumental in improving situational analysis capacities, at both local and global levels. At local level, a good command of methods (such as MARP or others) helps to better understand local situations and target actions which should be promoted. This consideration is very important especially since ENGOS in CARPE-focused countries do not have very strong links with local people.

At global level CARPE should ensure information and training regarding its own goals and environment-related issues. Better understanding at global level will help in comparing the various threats to tropical rain forests. For example, logging is much more destructive in tropical rain forests than traditional activities conducted by forest pygmy people; how should this information be included in EE actions conducted with these people?

5. Comprehensive Problematic in Institutional Capacity Development

In the preceding points we have addressed the problematic of strengthening institutional capacity under two aspects:

- Weaknesses which should be eliminated.
- Expressed needs which should be fulfilled.

This approach has enabled us to outline several orientations for CARPE. But it has not enabled us to answer other questions, such as:

- What is the level of institutional capacity needed for NGOs to be able to contribute significantly to the CARPE goal?
- Are proposed orientations consistent enough to contribute to institutional development?

What is the level of institutional capacity needed for NGOs to be able to contribute significantly to the CARPE goal?

When the problem is addressed from this perspective, one is soon faced with a difficulty: has CARPE been clear enough in what it expects from NGOs so that relevant institutional capacities needed can be determined? For example: **1.** Let's suppose that the CARPE objective for NGOs is to form a core of 5 to 6 NGOs in each country with clear objectives and an action plan and capability of carrying out the action plan activities. This objective is related to rather definite needs for institutional capacity development. **2.** Now let's suppose that CARPE is not willing to have clear objectives for NGOs, but rather to monitor and support movements inherent in NGOs which favor the CARPE goal. In the latter instance, needs for institutional capacity development are much less predictable.

Are proposed orientations consistent enough to contribute to institutional development?

Institutional capacity development depends on several elements (training, suitable external environment, appropriate human resources, working means, external catalyst). Thus this is difficult to implement. In addition, each institution has reached a different level of capacity and therefore has its own theory on customized needs.

For this reason consistency in proposed orientations for institutional development is far from guaranteed. Reaching an acceptable level of consistency would need further reflection on this question.

B. Adequacy Between CARPE Goals and NGO Interventions

In the preceding points, we primarily tried to give some benchmark to answer two questions: **1.** Which ENGOs should we cooperate with, how can they be identified? **2.** Which support is needed for institutional capacity development?

Now we will try to answer the following question: What are the choices for CARPE regarding the type of projects to be supported and their locations?

Here we look intentionally at the level of activities which CARPE participating ENGOs are going to implement. Is it possible to target activities likely to have a greater impact when compared against CARPE goals? For example, should CARPE support preferably NGOs which conduct environmental education activities in schools, based on the thought that this generation will be able to change behaviors? Or should CARPE cooperate preferably with ALDs managing benefits from natural tourism, based on the thought that these are structures capable of favoring protected area conservation in the long term?

If CARPE makes such choices, would it not risk assuming a role too directive towards NGOs?²³

Logical choices can concern sectors in which NGOs are currently weak, while strong sectors are excluded. Isn't it a loss of time and energy not to rely on strengths?

1. Selection of Activities

This selection seems possible only when threats to tropical forests and biodiversity are prioritized.

1.1 The Case of Gabon

Threats to "tropical forest" ecosystem seem to be easier to prioritize in Gabon than the other countries. However, it would be wrong to say there is an agreement on this issue.

Threats to Gabonese forests would seem to be more the result of industrial logging than of traditional forest (firewood) and agricultural activities. In fact in Gabon urban population is predominant, while rural population is rather scarce on a vast territory. Forest area represents 20 million hectares for a rural population of less than 500,000. This is a unique situation. Rural population pressure on forests is low. For example, opening up of roads by foresters is not followed by settlements. Clearing by foresters is not followed by land use for cultivation by villagers (case of the Congo). Rather, most of the Gabonese forest is subject to various permits related to forest use (inventory, logging).

Thus, in the case of Gabon, it seems easier to relate the CARPE goal (biodiversity conservation and tropical forest preservation) with definite actions, such as:

- EE with sustainable forest uses as a final aim.

- Lobbying aiming at sustainable forest uses.
- Field work in connection with logging operations.

EE with sustainable forest uses as a final aim. Several Gabonese NGOs are already doing some significant work in environmental education (for example, le Cri du Pangolin). They target urban people in Libreville who could thus become increasingly concerned with environmental issues. But this does not necessarily mean that forest use will be improved. CARPE could support these NGOs in such a way that they can analyze their impact on forest use and direct their EE actions accordingly.

Lobbying aiming at sustainable forest uses. A group of Gabonese NGOs (primarily NGOs members of AFAN) keeps abreast of what is happening in the field of forest use (permits granted, certification, specifications) and voices its positions. CARPE could support this trend in contributing to additional training for several members of concerned NGOs (lobbying requires to master perfectly one's subject and in funding working time. At regional level, it would be interesting to produce a yearly publication from gathered information and lobbying actions conducted by NGOs in the different countries. This publication could be incorporated in the AFAN publication (AFAN Infos) or could constitute a special AFAN Infos issue, supported by CARPE.

Field work in connection with logging operations. Contrary to the two preceding points, at the present time Gabonese NGOs are virtually non-existent in this field. Those visited declared that they are interested in this intervention sector. In a first step CARP could organize reflection on potential activities in this field for NGOs (involvement in preparation of land use development plans, socio-economic studies or environmental impact assessments before logging, people and logging interface, wastes from logging operation). In this framework, some Cameroonian NGOs could convey their experiences.²⁴ In a second step, CARPE could fund proposals for ENGOs in this direction.

Therefore, in the case of Gabon, it is likely that CARPE will give preferential support to certain types of intervention which are more directly related to its goal.

1.2. CAR and the Congo

In the other countries studied (Congo and CAR), prioritization of threats cannot be done easily between industrial logging, firewood gathering and agricultural activities; therefore the range of activities conducted by ENGOs which may have an impact on the CARPE goal is much broader (see list of potential activities by ENGOs, annex no.3).

Implementation of the preferential approach seems difficult. It requires a definite diagnostic with prioritized environmental constraints; but there is no consensus at this level.

The major tropical forest area in the CAR (3.8 million hectares in the southwest part of the country) is an example of this complexity. Activities in this area include diamond mining, coffee production, logging; pygmies also live in this area which includes two protected areas (Dzanga

Sangha and N'Gotto); the northeast part of this forest (south of Bangui) supplies firewood to the capital. How is all this related? How do macro-economic phenomena affect local situations? What are the priorities to preserve forests?

1.3 CARPE Position Regarding Urban Rehabilitation Actions

Urban rehabilitation is one of national NGO preferential fields in the Congo, Gabon and the CAR (primarily in Gabon). This reflects that ENGOs are primarily based in capitals, and that two out of these three countries have high urban population densities (the Congo and Gabon), making urban rehabilitation a national priority. Thus, CARPE is automatically faced with demands from ENGOs for proposals in urban rehabilitation to be considered. In order to avoid discussions and wasting time CARPE should define its position in this respect and make it known to ENGOs in the different countries.

2. Choices in terms of location

Is it possible and desirable to restrict geographical areas where CARPE should intentionally intervene?

2.1. Is it possible?

Such a restriction is certainly possible on an arbitrary basis. For example, for purposes of geographical unity CARPE could agree to concentrate its support in the area uniting the three countries which are the focus of CARPE (southwestern CAR, northern Congo and northeastern Gabon); or, CARPE could arbitrarily agree not to consider savanna areas.

Intentional restriction of geographical areas for CARPE intervention on a sound basis would require the ability to show that this or that type of intervention in a specific geographical area leads more efficiently and directly to the CARPE goal. However, there is no consensus at this level and therefore this approach seems difficult to implement. As an example, how can we predetermine if the introduction of sustainable agricultural practices in a savanna area has greater, lesser or equal positive impact on forests as opposed to the work of an NGO in community use of nonwood products?

The other sound approach would be to collaborate in operations conducted in varied geographical areas, deliberately selected in order to cover a range of pre-identified situations. This approach has several advantages:

- It recognizes that consensus and data are insufficient to restrict the spheres of geographical intervention by CARPE on this basis.
- It helps to improve the situation (lack of consensus and data) in supporting and monitoring diversified experiences.
- It works towards gradually improving CARPE effectiveness.

- It is in agreement with the CARPE mandate (to identify how tropical forest preservation can be improved).

For these reasons, we feel that this approach is more appropriate, should any intentional restriction of geographical areas for CARPE intervention be decided upon.

2.2. Is it Desirable?

Restriction of geographical areas for CARPE intervention offers both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages:

- Restriction reduces risks in the program dispersal.
- Restriction allows one to match interventions with available budget (The budget cannot be infinitely extended, therefore it is logical to make choices).

Disadvantages:

- Restriction excludes certain areas and, therefore, certain NGOs.
- Restriction favors neither innovation (innovation can come from anywhere), nor NGO reflection on their roles (the program makes choices which NGOs must abide by).

In overall, we still feel that advantages prevail over disadvantages.

2.3. The Case of the Congo

The Congo offers a good example for this reflection. Most extensive forest areas are in the northern Congo, a region where the government is weak (communication difficulties). Therefore CARPE could primarily support NGOs which would like to work in that area. At the present time, however, most dynamic NGOs work primarily in Brazzaville and the Pool region (savanna). By its rigorous selection of locations, CARPE would cut itself off from this core.

In the Pool region NGOs have developed skills in community forestry. They are probably the leading NGOs for this sector in the three countries visited (CAR, Congo and Gabon). CARPE cooperation with these NGOs could fit into the approach in the selection of pre-identified situations. Thus the theme for the Pool savanna region would be: community forest development impact on tropical forest preservation and biodiversity conservation.

C. Recommendations Regarding the CARPE Operational Mechanism

Here we focus on the practical operation for CARPE, i.e., who will perform the following tasks and how: the selection of CARPE-funded proposals under the grant program, management, and monitoring and evaluation.

Since NGOs are going to benefit most of all from this program, we have tried primarily to gather their opinions on this issue.

1. Common Opinions Among NGOs from Various Countries

The NGOs met in the three countries would like the mechanism to include the following features:

- Proximity.
- Transparency and effective communication of information.
- Flexibility.
- Low cost.
- Speed.

Proximity: this wish led the NGOs met to declare themselves in favor of three national mechanisms, rather than of one regional mechanism.

Flexibility: guidelines are necessary, but also some flexibility is necessary (new NGOs are not bureaucratic, so their operational mechanism should not be too bureaucratic).

Low cost: most funds should go to grants for NGOs.

Speed: NGOs (primarily those which are active only on a temporary basis) do not understand why it takes so much time between the submission of an application and the starting up of an activity.

Another reason why NGOs declared themselves in favor of a country mechanism is to avoid, to the extent possible, problems which do not concern other countries.

2. Specificities for each country

CAR

Opinions were gathered at the final workshop in the CAR which included representatives from six national NGOs and one representative of CIONGCA (OCDN, CEDIFOD, FOCSARENA, JMA, CARUB, Radio Rurale, CIONGCA).

It has been suggested that the setting up of the GEF mechanism be coordinated with the establishment of the CARPE mechanism. Another suggestion is that some representatives of the Ministry be present in NGOs with the condition they have no right of veto. The majority think that involvement of NGOs with environmental experience is necessary. Opinions are mixed on the establishment of a CARPE representing entity independent of any other structure in the CAR.

For the time being, there is no funding for national NGOs managed by a steering committee including national NGOs. The closest case is the credit line for UNDP-related NGOs which operates with a steering committee but the composition of which varies on an ad hoc basis and rarely relies on national NGOs. This has two implications for the CARPE mechanism:

- National NGOs have not gained experience from being associated with fund steering committees. This suggests that it may be necessary to provide clear information on roles and responsibilities for national NGOs to become involved in the CARPE mechanism.
- For national NGOs to become involved in CARPE managerial operations, a steering committee should be established.

Gabon

The seven national NGOs grouped at the end of the mission (FOGAPED, CIAJE, Mains Vertes, Humanitas, FED, Amis du Pangolin, Humanitas) have declared themselves in favor of a selection process for CARPE activities conducted within an ad hoc structure including the regional office for CARPE, international ENGOs and national ENGOs. These NGOs opposed the presence in this structure of staff representing ministries.

The Congo

In the Congo the adopted methodology consisted in asking each individual NGO met which advantages and disadvantages they felt for different mechanisms. Their answers are presented in the table below:

Table 9. Congolese ENGO opinions on different operational mechanisms.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. A national NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO empowerment • Economic • Understanding of problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mistrust among NGOs • Conflict risk • Lack of financial maturity • Politicization
2. A national NGO collective group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO empowerment • Structure and credibility strengthening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presently too young • Conflict risk • Politicization • Lack of financial maturity
3. National NGOs associated with an international NGO or with CARPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity • Transparency • Sound management 	
4. A UNDP-type structure or U.S. Embassy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to other funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance • Lack of transparency • Cost • Lack of flexibility
5. CARPE regional office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance • Transparency • Lack of flexibility
6. An international NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound management • Impartiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency problems

The proposal most often cited was no. 3. It has often been felt that NGOs were primarily seeking a mechanism with minimum risk of being excluded. Thus, collective groups or NGOs have declared that they are interested in and capable of taking charge of the mechanism, but they finally opted for no. 3.

Table 10. Comparison Between International NGOs and National NGOs in the CARPE-focised Countries (CAR, Gabon and Congo)

	CAR		Congo		Gabon	
	National NGO	International NGO	National NGO	International NGO	National NGO	International NGO
1. Spheres of Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EE • Reforestation • Sustainable Agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected area management (WWF-Ecofac) • Urban environment (OCSD) • Institutional support MEF (VED-DED) • Support for National NGOs (COOPI) • Sustainable Agriculture (AFVP-Peace Corps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EE • Reforestation • Urban Rehabilitation • Wildlife Conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected area management (IUCN-WCS-Ecofac) • Environmental policies (IUCN) • Sustainable Agriculture (Agri-Congo) • Wildlife Conservation (J. Goodall Inst.; John Aspinal Foundation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EE • Lobbying • Urban Rehabilitation • Ecotourism (SIL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EE (WWF) • Protected aream management (WWF-Ecofac-APFT) • Sustainable Agriculture (IGAD; Peace Corps) • Game Herding (VSF)
2. Publications	Massaragba (Focsarena, discontinued)		L' Araignée (ANN, not started yet)	Canopee (Ecofac-Nouabale Ndoki)	Le Cri du Pangolin (Amis du Pangolin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nono et Toutou (WWF; Mains Vertes) • Galago (PFE)
3. Means Used	National NGOs (CAR, Congo, Gabon) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of offices, permanent staff, transportation and computer hardware • Ni instance of expatriate proffrsionals from NGOs in the North region who have been assigned to ENGOS 			International NGOs (CAR, Congo, Gabon) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offices, permanent staff, transportation, computer hardware, better access to information 		
4. Recognition by Government	Registration sucha s an association. There is status for associations officially considered as serving public purposes (e.g.Focsarena)	Frame agreement or convention signed with government. Entitlement to tax exemption.	Registration such as an association. A few national NGOs have conventions (no ENGO)	Frame agreemtn of convention signed with government. Entitlement to tax exemption.	Registration such as an association.	Frame agreement or convention signed with government. Entitlement to tax exemption.

Comparison between NGOs continued:

	CAR		Congo		Gabon	
	National NGO	International NGO	National NGO	International NGO	National NGO	International NGO
5. Government Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO participation in seminars or planing process (NEAP) • Technical assistance delivery • NGO sector outreach by weak government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International NGOs more frequently considered as full partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO participation in seminars or planing process (NEAP) • Technical assistance delivery • Environmental directorate independent of the Water and Forestry Ministry • NGO sector outreach by weak government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International NGOs more frequently considered as full partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO participation in seminars or planing process (NEAP) • NGO sector outreach by less weak government (NGO forum in December 1996) • Space provided in town hall of Libreville-CIAJE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International NGOs more frequently considered as full partners
6. 1. Relations with donors: general information	National NGOs (CAR, Congo, Gabon) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-contracting (with or with-out involvement in design) • Access to funds allocated for NGOs (design prepared by the NGO) • No competition between national and international NGOs for funding (required budgets are not of the same amount) 			International NGOs (CAR, Congo, Gabon) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-contracting (more frequent involvement in design) • Better access to funding • More significant budgets received 		
6.2. Relations with donors: specific iinformation		Assignment of NGO staff to bilateral or multilateral projects (e.g., ACSD with PARN, VED-DED with PRE)				Financial contributions of oil companies to WWF (Shell) and IGAD (Elf). Assignment of NGO staff to bilateral or multilateral projects (WWF with GEF)
7. Relations between national and international NGOs	No ENGO to international affiliate	International NGOs are passive members of collective groups (CIONGCA)	No ENGO to international affiliate	International NGOs are not members of collective groups	No ENGO to international affiliate	International NGOs are not members of collective groups (CNONG)

ANNEXES

1.

Use of ENGOS in Cameroon as Service Providers for ENGOS in CARPE-focused Countries

Specifications were focusing on Cameroonian NGO ability to intervene as service providers for NGOs in CARPE-focused countries (Congo, Gabon and CAR).

Methodology

One methodological issue has been raised:

- Should the study be based on NGO needs in other countries and then examine if Cameroonian NGOs had skills in these fields? (for example: Congolese NGOs would like to assume more responsibilities for managing protected areas; are there Cameroonian NGOs with extensive experience which could be used?)
- Should the study identify strengths of Cameroonian NGOs and then examine if these strengths could be used in the other countries? (for example, Cameroonian NGOs have experience in structuring the human environment; could this experience be used in training Gabonese NGOs which are willing to work with rural people but have no experience in how to make new contacts with them?).

The first approach seems to answer specifications more directly. However, in a practical way, both approaches had to be combined for the following reasons:

- In conducting the assignment in Cameroon, we did not know yet what the needs in the CAR would be (since the assignment took place later). This made it necessary to use the second approach.
- The first approach requires a keen analysis of needs in the other countries, which was incomplete at that stage.
- The second approach is more positive since it consists of asking NGOs what they can do well, rather than embarrassing them by asking them if they have specific skills.
- First interviews, conducted within the first approach, have not been productive, leading one to believe that Cameroonian NGOs had more or less the same needs as Congolese and Gabonese NGOs.

General Comments

It would seem difficult for Cameroonian NGOs to intervene as "finished" service providers. Rather, it seems that their input could consist of experience sharing and contributions to working groups.

In more than half of the interviews, the idea that Cameroonian NGOs were able to intervene as service providers for NGOs in other countries has been contested. This implies that interviewees considered the overall NGO community as weak.^{25, 26} It was difficult, however, to have interviewees understand the concept of service provision as exchanges for all types of experiences which could benefit ENGOs, rather than simply fully finished services.

As in the neighboring countries, the emergence of NGOs in Cameroon dates from the beginning of the 90s (law on freedom of association). Thus, how NGOs could have advanced significantly is unclear. However, the growth model for NGO growth in Cameroon is a little different for two reasons: 1. They have established linkages with external structures more quickly. Several programs in support of NGOs were quickly set up in Cameroon (GEF), or concerned only Cameroon (Africa 2000; PVO/NRMS); international NGOs are more present. 2. A major part of the country is located in the Sudanian zone (Sahelian region towards Lake Chad), resulting in an older and stronger associative dynamic (groups, organizations for local development-ALD). This can be attributable to either difficulties in the local environment, or the organization (often compelled) relying on agricultural production. Whatever the reason, two major consequences are the presence in Cameroon of a denser ALD network and the emergence of NGOs based in regions.²⁷ This establishes a balance with "NGOS in the capital" (which therefore find regional relays more easily).

Search for specific skills was not successful (one of the reasons why we used both approaches). We were not able to identify innovative experiences or leading NGOs involved in environmental education for hunters, local population and logger interface, protected area management, or in environmental impact assessments. The general feeling imparted is that, in technical fields, input from Cameroonian NGOs should lie within a strategy for experience sharing among ENGOs, rather than within a training strategy for ENGOS in the CARPE-focused countries based on ENGO experiences in Cameroon. But this should be verified with a more systematic screening system.

In the field of institutional capacities (association management, project management), there are Cameroonian NGOs with skills which could contribute to training for NGOs in the CARPE-focused countries. In this field, however, skills already exist in each country (not necessarily in the NGO sector). Is it desirable to seek skills in the other countries for this single purpose?

Finally, Cameroonian NGOs are advanced (compared to NGOs in the other countries) in terms of links which they have developed with NGOs in other African countries, and several NGOs are willing to intervene at the regional level (Enviro-Protect wishes to set up in the CAR). This dynamic (which leads emergence of regional or twin NGOs) seems to be positive. CARPE could support it, for example in funding proposals jointly submitted by NGOs in different countries.

Strengths and experiences of Cameroonian NGOs which could be used in the CARPE-focused countries

1. The INTERPLAY (JEU). CARPE will have to set up a mechanism for channeling grants to NGOs. The INTERPLAY is a kind of feasible and interesting mechanism linking national NGOs, international NGOs, representatives of Ministries, and representatives of supporting

funds for NGOs. The INTERPLAY was successful in channeling several supporting funds to NGOs (PVO/NRMS; GEF; Africa 2000); this mechanism can lead to better consistency in donor and NGO involvement. Thus, the INTERPLAY could be introduced to national NGOs (along with other alternatives) when selecting one or more mechanisms.

The presence among the INTERPLAY members of associations more like an ALD than an NGO is also a positive factor. The INTERPLAY becomes richer in a diversity of structures which see environmental issues under various perspectives.

Another positive consideration is that this kind of mechanism promotes some cooperation among NGOs. This cooperation is beneficial for NGOs since it results in funding of some of them, without excluding competition. This can help show NGOs that cooperation and competition among NGOs can coexist.

2. Reform on NGO Status. The CAR, Gabon, the Congo and Cameroon are experiencing a similar problem in NGO status (difficulties in getting final approval, no difference between development associations and other types of associations, including political ones in some countries). Cameroon is now working on a new law on NGOs.²⁸ A limited group of Cameroonian NGOs is associated with this work. If this work is successful (completion planned end of 96), CARPE could then introduce and discuss the process and its results in the other countries.

3. The role of NGOs in the interface for local population/logging operations. Strengthening this role could be a major objective for CARPE, including activities such as publicizing laws, supporting people in negotiation and enforcement of specifications with logging operators; socio-economic studies and environmental impact assessments preceding logging operation; logging-related activities such as logging waste recovery. In this field Gabonese and Congolese NGO achievement is insignificant; although Cameroonian NGOs do not have extensive experience, several have begun to invest in this area. Linkages (experience sharing, field visits, workshops) could be beneficial. Cameroonian NGOs interested in this field include Enviro-Protect which will soon become a partner of SNV (Dutch Cooperation) for actions conducted with people surrounding the Dja Reserve; other NGOs include SAILD (Local Initiative Support Service for Development), works with a Canadian NGO (APEC-UDD, Appui à la Protection des Ecosystèmes-Union pour le Développement Durable) in the forest area (Lolodorf). In addition SAILD is preparing a book on "Conflicts and Forests". CIEFE (International Center for Forest and Environmental Studies) is also involved in this field within an Integrated Development Project conducted in the northwestern area (Monts Bamboutou).

Finally, it seems that many (and maybe more) lessons can be learned from people themselves and from their ALDs. Cameroon is the only country where we heard that villagers would block the road to prevent trucks from a logging company to move on in order to enforce specifications.

4. Structuring and Outreaching the Human Environment. Cameroon is indisputably distinguished from the Congo and Gabon in this field (significance of group network, village associations, federations and unions in Cameroon). In Cameroon some NGOs have extensive experience in structuring and outreaching (e.g., INADES, CERUT,²⁹ CEREP, SAILD). This

experience could be used in the other countries, not necessarily for structuring activities, but rather for improving NGO capacity in developing contacts and working with rural populations (in the Congo and mostly in Gabon NGOs are primarily urban. In addition, people residing in a forest environment have little structure. Together both elements make it difficult for NGOs to develop contacts with local people whom they would like to work with.)

5. Experience of NGO collective groups in Cameroon. None of the four countries visited really has positive experience which can be highlighted in the field of cooperation among NGOs (but of course one can learn a lot from negative experiences). In Cameroon COPAD (this collective group is regaining trust among donors following changes in personnel and operational procedures. FONGEC (Federation of ENGOS in Cameroon; 11 members) is experiencing some difficulties in emerging for good. CONGAC (Collective Group of NGOs for Central Africa, based in Douala) seems to be marginal despite its willingness for regionalization. In none these countries was a collective group successful in bringing together all ENGOS. Thus in Cameroon, FONGEC members are not RAAF members. Gabon and the CAR have no real experience in NGO collective groups, while in the Congo there are many collective groups, but they seem to be the result of the willingness of collective group initiators, rather than the willingness of NGOs themselves (top-down). In the other countries there is some willingness to bring ENGOS together, either under a separate collective group, or under a working group for generalists. CARPE should monitor various experiences which will come to light and disseminate them at the regional level, but CARPE is not sure that the most interesting experience will come from Cameroon.

2.

Comments on Summaries Regarding the NGO Sectors in the Congo and the CAR Established in 1993 (Memos for PVO/NGO-NRMS)

In 1993 PVO-NGO/NRMS published a report called: "Non-governmental Organizations and Natural Resources: an Evaluation in 18 African Countries". The Congo and the CAR were among the countries studied. The terms of reference of this mission included a review of information gathered in 1993 to see if they were still valid and to possibly propose suggestions for updating.

CAR

The methodology applied was as follows. The 1993 diagnosis on the NGO sector was handed out to national NGOs visited. At the end of the assignment, a meeting was organized with a group of NGOs during which their opinions were gathered on both the 1993 diagnosis and major changes over the 1993-96 period.

Key comments on the 1993 diagnosis focused on the following four assertions:

"Establishment of NGOs to attend national debates." According to participating NGOs, emphasizing NGO establishment for this single purpose is very restrictive. Furthermore, very few NGOs attended national debates. It should be reminded that in the CAR national debates were organized and controlled by the then government, contrary to sovereign national conferences which took place in many other countries at the same time, in which the whole society was represented. In theory, a national conference was to be organized after the election of President Patassé, but it never took place. Thus, it appears that establishing NGOs to take part in national debates should be considered as a marginal cause, specially if compared with developments such as international conferences sponsored by the United Nations (Rio, Beijing), the economic crisis or the influence of West or East Africa.

"NGOs are set up by civil servants." This assertion should not be generalized. Some NGOs have been established by individuals obviously choosing to operate in the associative private sector (CEDIFOD), others by retired civil servants, and others by unemployed graduates. Nevertheless, it is true that most NGOs are initiated and led by civil servants. This is because civil servants are in the best position to travel and attend seminars (or conduct visits) at which they learn ideas and information on what is done elsewhere.

"NGOs consider it very important to be closely related to the government." Participating NGOs felt that the formulation was very clear. If one means that it is important for NGOs to have spokesmen and entries to the government, then this is as true in 1993 as in 1996. But if this assertion suggests that NGOs have no autonomy, then interviewees feel that it was going too far. There is a consensus among participating NGOs that NGOs gained some autonomy between 1993 and 1996.

"Donors cannot find NGOs willing to work with them." Regarding this assertion national NGOs attending the meeting ask the following question for 1993 as well as for the present time: "Are there really funds from donors available to NGOs, or it is only a publicity measure from donors who know that they will not actually disburse the funds? Was a sincere effort made to know national NGOs and develop linkages with them?"

We add the following personal comments:

NGO Experience. "There are very few NGOs in the CAR." This assertion is no longer true. It should be replaced with "There are NGOs in the CAR. The NGO community as a whole, however, is weak, even if some structures are gradually emerging."

The Political Environment. This situation regarding wage payment has not improved over the period 1992-96.

"Funds from donors are on hold." This was often the case in past years for various reasons: elections, economic conditionality, military insurrection. It seems that this characteristic has been predominant in CAR-donor relations since the beginning of the 90s.

"The difference between the private sector and NGOs is ambiguous and the NGO concept is loose." The writer's thought is not clearly understood. Does he mean that NGOs are profit organizations? Does he mean that members of an NGO are not volunteer (must they be volunteer?). In 1996 the lack of associative culture is again mentioned as a weakness of NGOs. Here two elements are at stake: 1. the associative culture: do NGOs apply the key operational procedures of associations (general assembly, elections, non-profit,...). It appears that very few NGOs hold regular general assemblies. 2. Volunteer work. In the CAR there is a commonly held false opinion that an association cannot have paid employees. Hence, all NGOs with paid employees or compensating their members would be usurpers.

"In principle market prices should stop most large-scale cutting activities." Industrial cutting activities remained at a more or less constant level from 1992 through 1995. CFAF devaluation revitalized competition in this sub-sector. Few specialists think that cutting activities are going to slow down.

Government and donor trends in natural resource management planning. A comparison among major programs in the environmental sector between 1993 and 1996 shows that interventions have significantly increased in this sector (Ecofac, PARN, PRN, PRE). As in the instances of the Congo and Gabon the period 1993 through 1996 corresponds at a time when many initiatives for sustainable natural resource management were begun.

NGO Needs. According to the 1993 diagnosis, NGOs do not seem to have priority needs in technical fields. On the contrary, 1996 NGOs need to strengthen their capacities in both the institutional and the technical fields.

General Findings and Recommendations. To be productive:

Recommendation 1: ("Round table with national NGOs, international NGOs and donors") would need more trust from donors towards NGOs. A strong core of leading ENGOs would also be necessary to facilitate this round table (the meeting held in Gabon in December 1996 will be an interesting precedent for further meetings between weak national NGOs, international NGOs and donors).

Recommendation 2: ("Workshop conducted by WWF in Bayenga") is still valid for ENGOs in the CAR, with the two following objectives: 1. to establish links between the CDB and ENGOs; 2. to promote reflection on potential roles for NGOs in and around protected areas.

Recommendation 3: information dissemination and visits of innovative experiences in neighboring countries, is still valid for CARPE.

The Congo

Methodology. Analysis of the 1993 diagnosis was performed in two directions: 1. What were the major changes between 1993 and 1996 and, therefore, what are the elements of the diagnosis which are still valid? 2. What are the elements of the diagnosis which are disputable? This analysis was completed based on information and impressions gathered during the mission in the Congo. Contrary to the CAR, the 1993 diagnosis was not presented to interviewees visited for feedback.

NGO Experience. The first paragraph is difficult to understand because of the mixture of the terminology used. It seems that "National Assembly" was understood for "General Assembly" and "National Conference" for "National Congress". Attendance at the National Conference is always cited among the historical causes in founding NGOs, but additional influences have been added since (Rio, for example, for NGOs). It is always right to say that most NGOs are set up by civil servants and that setting up is carried out with little or no interaction with rural communities. It seems that NGOs have improved on this latter element and that their legitimacy is strengthened in relation to the communities.

Since there is a quick turnover among NGOs, many initial NGOs have disappeared, and it would be interesting to find out what happened to the founders of these initial NGOs.

Nowadays objectives of NGOs seem to be less political, but on the other hand, one cannot assert that the NGO movement has been able to become politically neutral. NGOs are always in some way politically associated, insofar as it is difficult for them to escape a political classification once they do something.

The ENGO scope of interest has been modified. In 1993 ENGOs seemed to be predominantly concerned with urban and marine environment issues. In 1996 Congolese ENGOs are concerned with reforestation, EE, urban rehabilitation, wildlife conservation and protected area management. In Pointe Noire there is an NGO which is concerned with marine pollution from

oil tankers (ECO), but still this is not enough to say that this has become a major sector for ENGOs.

The ENGO sector has experienced quantitative growth between 1993 and 1996. According to the 1993 evaluation, ENGOs seemed not be advanced enough to be mentioned (although ACAE and ACCP existed). In 1996 the number of ENGOs is approximately 10, some of which have reached a rather large scale. Regarding the NGO collective groups, they have been increasing rapidly during the period 1992-96, which makes it difficult to analyze them.

The Political Environment. The political and economic environment has not fundamentally evolved. The Congo is still part of middle-income countries (NGP/person = US\$1,100 IN 1994). Most resources come from oil and the country is still under structural adjustment.

The 1993 report indicated that "the political environment is favoring liberalization of NGOs and it seems that this attitude will prevail". Indeed, this attitude did prevail and should continue to do so (Except in the instance of a coup, it is difficult to imagine that a democratically-elected government could reverse its attitude towards freedom of association). Rather, few additional measures were taken in concrete terms to support NGO development.

Both paragraphs on the transfer of government services to NGOs are not really clear. They seem to mean that the government provided services in the environmental field and that it is withdrawing. Environment, however, is a new concern, and thus it is not clear what services they refer to. It is true that the government is gradually withdrawing from protected area conservation. Nevertheless, one feels that this paragraph deals more with NGOs in social sectors, such as health and education, rather than with ENGOs.

"Expected role from NGOs must be fully discussed and determined...". This was not done (in any of the countries). The role for NGOs is gradually determined through their new skills, the sectors in which they invest on their own or through the drive of donors and sometimes governments.

Trends of Governments and Donors in NRM Planning. The most significant evolutions (compared to the description made in 1993) are as follows:

- The emergence of many projects and programs aiming at maintaining ecosystems and primarily tropical forests. In fact, Ecofac, APIs (Integrated Pilot Developments), GEF (and others) were set up after 1993.
- The willingness to cooperate with national NGOs, which starts to emerge in the 1993 diagnosis, became more concrete, with linkages with national NGOs -- with international projects and the availability of some funds for NGOs (IUCN-The Netherlands Committee; UNDP; GEF-Congo).

USAID Planning and Potential Support for PVO-NGO/NRMS Projects. No comments.

NGO Needs. The "huge and complex" needs are not determined, thus it is difficult to know if they are the same in 1993 as in 1996. An interesting consideration is that the consultant clearly feels that contacts with international NGOs favor NGO development.

Potential Links with Existing NRM Support Network. This paragraph could have been incorporated in the previous one (needs). Finally, in reading paragraphs 5 and 6, one concludes that in 1993 contacts with foreign countries were the top priority for Congolese NGOs. In 1996, priority needs for NGOs are rather to have access to means and training in order to develop their structures.

General Findings and Recommendations. The third paragraph goes back over this specialty of ENGOs in urban and marine environment in the Congo, which, we think, no longer reflects reality in 1996.

The last paragraph ("The Congo offers an excellent opportunity") is still valid. Specifically, one can say that NGO capacities have increased a little. All facts mentioned are in agreement that there is potential for ENGOs in the Congo.

Other paragraphs do not raise specific comments, either because they are very broad (5), or because they are in a difficult context for analysis (1 and 2: these are events which have not taken place).

3.

Table on the Major Fields of Intervention for ENGOS

(In the Congo, Gabon and the CAR; list prepared as a result of interviews with NGOs from the various countries).

Potential Activities for NGOs in the environmental sector	GABON	CAR	CONGO
Environmental Education (EE)			
Educational material production			
EE documentation center			
EE through mass media (publications, radio programs,...)	++	+	
Teacher training in EE		+	
EE in schools	++	+	++
EE in urban environment			
EE in rural environment			
EE for specific target groups (hunters, people surrounding protected areas, woodcutters,...)			
EE incorporation in school curricula			
Lobbying. Political influence.			
NGO involvement in developing environmental policies (NEAP, Forestry Code, laws,...)	+	+	+
NGO involvement in developing sustainable land use plans			
NGO participation in international fora	+	+	+
Preparation of seminars and meetings for influence			
Follow-up of international conventions ratified by governments			
Direct pressure on forest operations (field visits,...)	+	+	
Publications, newsletters, programs on radio or television	+		
Wood certification	+		
Natural resource management			
Protected area management			
Buffer zone activities			+
Natural tourism development	+	+	+
Wildlife conservation (primate reintroduction, turtle egg-laying site protection,...)	+		+
Active anti-poaching (reporting,...)			
Non-wood product use			
Population/logging operation interface (negotiations and specification monitoring, logging waste recovery,...)			
Reforestation		+	++
Pollution control, rehabilitation	++	+	++
Alternative activities			
Reduced firewood use (improved stoves, alternative energy, stabilized bricks,...)			+
Periurban reforestation			
Sustainable agricultural activities (alley cropping,...)	+		
Livestock (game, pisciculture, cattle and small livestock)			+
Craft industry			
Job creation for young unemployed			
Research and studies			
Environmental impact assessments			
Socio-economic studies, socio-environmental studies	+	+	+
Forest inventory			

++: ENGO community significant experience

+ : ENGO community limited experience

4.

Acronyms used in Table 10: Comparison Between National NGOs and International NGOs in the Three Countries Studied

AFVP	Association Française des Volontaires du Progrès (Voluntary French Organization for Progress, NGO)
ANN	Action Nationale pour la Nature (National Action for Nature, NGO)
ANZAS	Association Zambie Solidarité (Solidarity Association for Zambie, NGO)
APFT	Appui aux Peuples des Forêts Tropicales (Support for People Living in Tropical Forests)
CIONGCA	Collectif Inter ONG de Centrafrique (CAR) (Inter-NGO association for Central Africa)
CNONG	Collectif National des ONG (Gabon) (National NGO Collective Group)
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale (NGO-Italy)
EE	Environmental Education
FCIL	Fonds Canadien pour les Initiatives Locales (Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives)
FOCSARENA	Fondation Centrafricaine pour la Sauvegarde des Ressources Naturelles (Central African Foundation for Natural Resource Conservation, NGO)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IGAD	Institut Gabonais d'Appui au Développement (Gabonese Development Support Institute, NGO)
MEF	Water and Forest Ministry
OCSD (Canadian	Organisation Canadienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement Organization for Solidarity and Development, NGO)
PARN	Natural Resource Development Project (CAR)
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
PFE	Forest and Environmental Project (Gabon)
PRE	Ecological Rehabilitation Project (Gabon)
SIL	Syndicat des Guides de la Lopé (Tourism Office of Lopé)
IUCN	World Conservation Union
VED-DED	Volontaires Européens du Développement (European Volunteers in Development)
VSF	Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (Veterinarians without Frontiers)
WCS	World Conservation Society
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

5.

Proposals for Further Studies for CARPE

1. Identifying actors for the environmental sector in the CARPE-focused countries: Innovative experiences and leaders.

Interest of the Subject Matter for CARPE

The major objective of CARPE is to determine what are the conditions required for sustainable tropical forest management. To answer this question, CARPE needs to fully understand programs, approaches and methodologies carried out in the whole region.

This understanding will enable CARPE to play a privileged role in introducing and training based on innovative experiences. Dissemination of innovative experiences and possible use of leaders as trainers will promote progress among collaborators in the Small Grants Program.

Background

The study conducted in July-August 1996 helped to begin the identification work regarding ENGOs but was unable to outline the involvement of other actors (public sector, commercial private sector; individuals; international projects).

The study conducted in July-August 1996 helped to prepare a list of potential activities for the environmental sector which could serve as a basis for identifying innovative experiences and leaders at the regional level.

Terms of Reference

Major task: To identify at the regional level (CARPE-focused countries) leaders and innovative experiences based on the list of potential activities. All categories of actors should be considered: public sector, commercial private sector, associative private sector, individuals, and international projects.

Secondary tasks:

- To conduct an in-depth analysis on innovative aspects. To assess their replicability within the Small Grants Program.
- To prepare (or collect) cards presenting identified leaders and experiences, including goals and objectives, work approach and methodology, and findings.
- To examine to what extent identified leaders could be used as trainers or extension agents within the Small Grants Program.

Methodology:

- To conduct preliminary questionnaires and interviews (innovative experience and leader pre-identification). A group of resource persons in the CARPE-focused countries and in other countries will be contacted for pre-identifying (examples of resource persons: Environmental Ministry in the different countries; national and international ENGO representatives, CARPE members, Strategic Objective Team, etc.).
- To conduct interviews and field visits in the CARPE-focused countries.
- To collect analyze existing literature (project papers, evaluation papers, publications).
- Each CARPE-focused country should be considered, as well as potential non-CARPE countries. Binary consulting (association of an external consultant with a national consultant) would guarantee bias restriction. The national consultant could be responsible for supervising pre-identification work in the country. The external consultant would then work with the national consultant on the analysis of innovative aspects (follow-on interviews, field visits, analysis).

Difficulties to be anticipated:

- Lack of consensus among leaders.
- Lack of regional vision from most interviewees. Most information gathered will have a national dimension. Then it will be the responsibility of the external consultant for giving a regional dimension.
- It will be difficult to compare innovative effects among very different structures (for example, how to compare large-scale reforestation conducted by a public structure with small community reforestation conducted by NGOs or ALDs).

2. Competition and cooperation among NGOs: How can the situation be improved?

Interest of the Subject Matter for CARPE

Through the Small Grants Program, CARPE aims at increasing NGO-conducted actions in support of tropical forest conservation and seeks to determine suitable conditions for sustainable tropical forest management.

This cannot be envisioned without strengthening participating ENGOs. In order to reach significant results, the CARPE Small Grants Program must take into account ENGO weaknesses and develop an approach aiming at improving the situation.

This study must be incorporated in a broader reflection by CARPE on the kind of institutional support required for ENGOs.

Background

The study conducted in July-August 1996 identifies the lack of cooperation among NGOs as a major bottleneck in their development, resulting in a series of constraints:

- Poor information exchange.
- Non-use of experience gained by other structures (repeated errors).
- Difficulties in getting leverage.
- Difficulties in emergence of representative coordinating structures.
- Mistrust of external environment regarding NGOs (in particular donors).

This situation originates from competition among national NGOs to have access to external funding and to get recognition at the national level. Generally NGOs feel they have more to lose than to gain through cooperation.

The question is not to force structures to cooperate, when they may have sound reasons for not doing so. Rather the question is to demonstrate to NGOs that cooperation, while maintaining some competition among themselves, can benefit them.

Terms of Reference

Major task: To identify a series of measures for CARPE promoting cooperation among NGOs.

Secondary tasks:

- To determine causes and mechanisms leading to poor cooperation among NGOs.
- To identify measures which maintain a fair competition among NGOs, while promoting cooperation.
- To identify whether it is required to strengthen cooperation among NGOs from different countries before trying to develop cooperation among NGOs in the same country (or vice versa).
- To propose a series of indicators to monitor results and impact of the measures.

Methodology:

- Interviews with NGOs, NGO collective groups and other actors in the development sector of the different countries.
- Bibliographical research and analysis.

- All CARPE-focused countries should not be necessarily concerned because of the similarity of situations in the different countries. One country (maximum two) should be chosen for carrying out this study. The Congo or the Congo and Gabon would seem to be a good choice.
- Pairing of a national consultant (from the NGO sector) with an external consultant would be an enriching factor.

Difficulties to be anticipated:

- One could be tempted to propose a series of solely financial incentives (to fund proposals jointly submitted by NGOs, for example). This could lead to forced collaborative relations which would not solve the basic problem. The consultant would then be expected to submit more diversified proposals.

3. National NGO skill learning: How can this process be improved?

Interest of the Subject Matter for CARPE

Questioning the NGO skill learning process is important for the CARPE Small Grants Program. This must help in developing an approach for the CARPE contribution in training participating national NGOs.

This study must be incorporated in a broader reflection by CARPE on the kind of institutional support required for ENGOs. In order to reach significant results, the Small Grants Program must take into account ENGO weaknesses and develop an approach aiming at improving this situation.

Background

NGO skill learning is a complex process involving: attendance at seminars and fora; reading; involvement in studies (e.g., MARP); involvement in projects; project implementation; training (e.g., workshop on institutional diagnosis); human resource cooptation.

It is a semi-informal process with certain qualities and strengths (the ability to be invited to this or that seminar, the ability to approach donors) at stake, rather than a real learning process.

Furthermore, the learning process within an NGO often involves a single person (the president, the founder). The risk of loss of capacities is high then. In fact findings show high turnover among NGOs.

Terms of Reference

Major task: To determine whether the present training process among NGOs is: 1. satisfactory or, 2. should be improved. If 1, to justify. If 2, to justify and propose concrete measures.

Secondary tasks:

- Based on concrete instances, to specify how training for ENGO officials is taking place.
- Is the present training process ruling out other categories of NGO initiators? Which other qualities could these categories provide? Should an effort be made to recover these other categories and why?
- How can the risk of capacity loss be restricted?
- How can it be guaranteed that training benefits the whole structure and not only the individual?
- To test feasibility of the following suggestion: implementation of formal training modules taught regularly by resource persons (teachers, researchers, experts), specifically designed for ENGOs. To identify in which settings modules could be brought to light (university linkages, donor involvement, other suggestions).

Methodology:

- Interviews with development sector actors as a whole.
- Research and analysis of available bibliography.
- All CARPE-focused countries should not be necessarily concerned because of the similarity of situations in the different countries. One country (maximum two) should be chosen for carrying out this study.
- Pairing of a national consultant with an external consultant would be an enriching factor.

Difficulties to be anticipated:

- Identification of the initiators whose NGOs fail to emerge in the present system. Due to their failure to emerge, identifying them can prove to be difficult.
- The present training process for national NGOs is rarely questioned, either by national NGOs or other actors. Conducting exciting discussions on this subject would require one to master the mechanism (concrete study cases).

4. Role of CARPE in shifting permanent human resources for NGOs

Interest of the Subject Matter for CARPE

This subject is closely related to the previous one (training), which it could be associated with. It is part of a broader reflection by CARPE on the kind of institutional support required for ENGOs.

Background

Shifting to permanent human resources is a key objective for many NGOs. In fact, it seems really necessary that ENGOs become more "professional" for them to be able to play a significant role.

The question at stake is the perennality of human resources for NGOs: in many NGOs, expertise is shared only by a single individual. If he leaves the NGO (appointment, training abroad), expertise may disappear.

Thus, it seems desirable that NGOs can constitute as soon as possible a core of persons who can improve skills simultaneously and include permanent staff, thus permitting potential shift to permanent human resources.

A large part of NGO human resources comes from the public sector. These professionals, although attracted by the NGO sector, are not willing to resign from their position as civil servants due to reasons of employment security. Therefore they share their energy between their employment as civil servant and their involvement in NGOs.

Terms of Reference

Major task: How can CARPE help NGOs move to the stage of permanent human resources based on a core of three or four persons improving their skills simultaneously?

Secondary tasks:

- What is the kind of cooperation among NGO partners which could apply to this specific issue of shifting to permanent human resources?
- Which process could be considered to enable civil servants who have initiated NGOs to devote themselves entirely to these NGOs without losing their benefits (status, wages).

Methodology:

- See previous study.

5. Prioritization of the threats to tropical forest conservation and biodiversity preservation. Prioritization of activities to be supported by the CARPE Small Grants Program.

Interest of the Subject Matter for CARPE

Prioritization of the threats to tropical forest conservation and biodiversity preservation (if it is feasible) would help CARPE to advance towards its major objective: to determine suitable conditions for sustainable tropical forest management.

This prioritization would also help the Small Grants Program to select activities with some more direct impact on the CARPE goal, thus avoiding arbitrary choices and effort dispersal.

Background

In most cases threats to tropical forest conservation and biodiversity preservation are difficult to prioritize. Neither available literature nor opinions from actors reflect any consensus.

Terms of Reference

Major task: To prioritize threats based on the broadest possible consensus.

Secondary tasks:

- Based on the prioritization determined, to deduct preferential intervention areas for CARPE.

Methodology:

- To collect and analyze available bibliography.
- To conduct interviews with various types of actors.
- It is a long-term task (such as a master's or Ph.D. thesis), rather than a task for a short-term assignment.

Difficulties to be anticipated:

- Multiplicity of local situations, making generalizations difficult.
- Impossibility to reach a consensus.
- Large volume of bibliography to be processed.

6.

Dates and Operation for the Assignment in Gabon

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visit
07/06	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jean Jacques Mallemanche, Afrique Média, • Assim Coulibaly, VSF Administrator. 	
07/07	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP Ndoutoume Nze, President, • Association des Eleveurs Gabonais d'Aulacodes (ADEGA). 	
07/08	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Hammond, WWF, Acting Representative, • Sylvie Nkousse, WWF, EE and NGO Officer, • Constant Allogho (President), Aurélien Mofouna (Wood Officer), Comité Inter Association Jeunesse et Environnement (CIAJE). 	
07/09	Libreville Cap Estérias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eberhard Gotz, GTZ, Rehabilitation Project, Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts, • Kristin Clark, Peace Corps, Manda Forest, • Mrs. Koko, Direction Nationale de l'Environnement, • Jean Marc Bouvard, French Cooperation, Environmental Advisor for Central Africa. 	
07/10	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pierre Nyar-Ollame, National Coordinator for PAFT, • Jean Pierre Profizi, PAFT, • Denis Dravet, IGAD (Institut Gabonais d'Appui au Développement), • Sonia Vanloo-Assaf, Belgian Cooperation, • Filippo Saracco, European Union, Environment, Forestry and Agriculture Officer, • Mignolet, IFAD, Support for Gabonese Farmers. 	
07/11	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Messone, Peace Corps • Didier Guy Mebaley, UNDP, National Economist. Also President of CNONG and founder of the Jeune Chambre Economique. • Mrs. Eugénie Dicki, Femmes Environnement et Développement, • François Epouta, National President, Jeune Chambre Economique du Gabon. 	

Dates for Gabon Assignment continued:

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visit
07/12	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katie Simons, student in forestry policy, c/o US Embassy, • Guy Jérôme, Land Administration Ministry, in charge of application processing for approval of associations, • Hubert-Eyi-Mbeng, National Director for wildlife, • Mr. Brosse, Advisor for Humanitas, • André Pellissier, PFE, Senior Advisor. 	
07/13	Libreville Owando	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNONG Assembly 	Raising of Aulacodes, VSF
07/14	Libreville La Lopé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guy Philippe, Ecofac and Adventures Without Frontiers. 	
07/15	La Lopé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syndicat d'Initiative des Guides de la Lopé, • Claudine, Avenir des Peuples des Forêts Tropicales, • Lee White, WCS. 	La Lopé Forest
07/16	La Lopé-Oyem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esther, Brigade for Wildlife Control in la Lopé 	
07/17	Oyem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar on Environment, Peace Corps, • Regional Inspection for Water and Forestry, • Oyem City Hall, • APG Program Unit, IFAD 	Model Farm, Peace Corps
07/18	Oyem-Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Inspection for Youth and Sport, • Regional Inspection for People's Education. 	
07/19	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP Profizi, PAFT, • Mr. Bile Allogho, Water and Forestry Ministry, Director for Inventories, Land Planning and Forest Regeneration. 	
07/20	Libreville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrapping-up Session with an NGO Group 	
07/21	Libreville-Douala-Yaoundé (plane/bus)		

Gabon Directory

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel., Fax (Area Code for Gabon = 241)
Jean Jacques Mallemanche	Afrique Média		Tel: 75 83 05 Fax:
Assim Coulibaly	VSF, Administrator	BP 204223 Libreville	Tel: 73 80 86 Fax: Same
JP Ndoutoume Nze	President, Association des Eleveurs Gabonais d'Aulacodes (ADEGA).	BP 4327 Libreville	Tel: 74 05 53 Fax: 77 81 05
Tom Hammond	WWF	BP Libreville	Tel: 73 00 28 Fax:
Constant Allogho (President), Aurélien Mofouna (Wood Officer)	Comité Inter Association Jeunesse et Environnement (CIAJE)	S/C WWF	
Eberhard Gotz	GTZ, Projet de Réhabilitation de l'Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts	Cap Estérias BP 7052 Libreville	Tel: 75 02 48 Fax: 72 94 73
	Peace Corps	BP Libreville	Tel: 73 33 33 Fax:
Mrs. Koko	Direction Nationale de l'Environnement	BP Libreville	Tel: 72 27 00 Fax:
Jean Marc Bouvard	Coopération Française, Advisor for the Environment in Central Africa	BP Libreville	Tel: 73 94 25 Fax:
Pierre Nyar-Ollame	PAFT, National Coordinator	BP 199 Libreville	Tel: 76 05 70 Fax: same after 5 p.m.
Jean Pierre Profizi	PAFT	BP 199 Libreville	Tel: 76 05 70 Fax: same after 5 p.m.
Denis Dravet	IGAD (Institut Gabonais d'Appui au Développement)	BP 20423 Libreville	Tel: 73 07 84 Fax: 73 10 93
Sonia Vanloo-Assaf	Coopération Belge	BP 13692 Libreville	Tel: 73 07 33 Fax: 73 00 01
Filippo Saracco	Union Européenne, Environment, Forestry and Agriculture Officer	BP 321 Libreville	Tel: 73 22 50 Fax: 73 65 54
Laurent Edou	IFAD, National Director	BP Libreville	Tel: 72 78 61 Fax:
Mr. Messone	Peace Corps	BP 2098 Libreville	Tel: 73 33 33 Fax:

Gabon directory continued:

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel., Fax (Area Code: 241)
Didier Guy Mebaley	UNDP, National Economist	BP 2183 Libreville	Tel: 77 49 28 76 22 18 74 34 97 Fax: 74 34 99
	CNONG	BP Libreville	Tel: Fax:
François Epouta	Jeune Chambre Economique	BP 9079 Libreville	Tel: 78 75 52 75 90 27 (cell)Fax: 77 36 30
Mrs. Eugénie Dicki	Femmes Environnement et Développement	BP Libreville	Tel: 76 00 01 Fax:
J. Hubert Eyi-Mbeng	National Director for Wildlife	BP Libreville	Tel: 76 14 44 Fax:
Mr. Okogo	Humanitas, President	BP 9569 Libreville	Tel: 75 04 85 (cell) Fax:
André Pellissier	PFE, Senior Advisor	BP 9293 Libreville	Tel: 77 29 95 Fax: 77 29 94
Mr. Bile Allogho	Ministère des Eaux et Forêts, Director for Inventories, Land Planning and Forest Regeneration	BP Libreville	Tel: 72 23 33/34 Fax: 76 10 73
Serge Akagah	Les Amis du Pangolin, Director	BP 2103 Libreville	Tel: 77 54 57 Fax: 74 63 13
Jean Hilaire Moudziegou	FOGAPED, Treasurer, also civil servant with the Environmental Ministry	BP Libreville	Tel: 72 27 00 Fax:

7.

Dates and Operation the Assignment in CAR

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visits
07/29	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zephirin Mogba; Consultant, socio-economist, BM, NGO Support, CIONGCA President, RADI Coordinator. • Carpophore Ntagungira, UNDP, in charge of VNUs and NGO Support Project. 	
07/30	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakoué Téné, Minister, Water, Forestry and Environment. • Gustave Doungoubé, DG Environnement. • Marc Karangaze, CEDIFOD, President. • Etienne NGounio, FOCSANERA. • Maxime Faustin Mbringa Takama, UNDP, Program Officer. • Jacques Krenozou, Pavillon Vert, AFAN focal point. 	
07/31	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georges N'Gassé, Ecofac, National Director. • Mr. Sowaya, PARN, National Director. • René Sakanga, OCDN, Founding President. • Marc Freudemberger, WWF. 	
08/01	Bangui-Bayenga (WWF vehicle)		
08/02	Bayenga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDB General Assembly • Allard Bloom, WWF Representative. 	
08/03	Bayenga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoire Gaza, Rural Development Advisor for the Dzanga Sangha Project. • Emmanuel Soué, CDB President. • Gilbert Kounet, Regional Delegation for Sangha-Mbaere Rural Development. 	
08/04	Bayenga Bayenga-N'Gotto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. N'Gaza, EE Officer for Dzanga-Sangha Project, OCDN Committee in Bayenga. 	Dzanga-Sangha Saline.
08/05	N'Gotto N'Gotto-Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremie Maro, Ecofac Curator. • Michel Banannee, Ecofac Officer for Rural Development Component. 	
08/06	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pierre Gbianza, Consultant for ecological rehabilitation project, a member of CEDRE (consulting firm). • Abel Alafei, Director for ecological rehabilitation project (GTZ funding) • Vincent Morel, OXFAM/OCSD, Representative. 	

Dates for CAR assignment continued:

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visit
08/07	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Mukadas and Koko, University Arts and Humanities Department, members of Geosynergie. • Frederic Doumio, COSSOCIM, Assistant to DG, a member of JMA (NGO). • Thomas Schmidt, DED-AFVP, Program Officer. • Philippe Makendebou-Tende, American Embassy, Program Officer. • Frans Jacobs, PDRN, Director. • Claudio Tarchi, COOPI, President. • Father Gauthier, CARITAS. 	
08/08	Bangui Centrapalm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miss Marie Solange Pagonendji Ndakala, Association Operation Zendé. • General Secretary for the UNESCO. • Joel Beassem, General Director • Centrapalm. • OCDN Local Committee Centrapalm. • Benjamin Lena, Action 21, Founder. 	OCDN Local Committee activities for Centrapalm.
08/09	Bangui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilbert Guillot, NGO Coordinating Unit, Planning Ministry. • Pierre Gaba-Mano, DG for Regional Services, • Water and Forestry Ministry. • Laurent Boconas, Deputy, President National Assembly Committee for Production, Natural Resources and Environment. 	
08/10	Bangui Bangui-Paris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with national NGOs: OCDN, CEDIFOD, JMA, CARUB, Radio Rurale, FOCSARENA, CIONGCA. 	

CAR Directory

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel., Fax (Area Code: 236)
Maxime Faustin Mbringa Takama	UNDP	BP 872 Bangui	Tel: 61 19 77; 49 77 Fax: 61 17 32
Allard Bloom	WWF	BP Bangui	Tel: 61 42 99 Fax: 61 10 35
Léon Ngérétiá	World Bank, in charge of relations with NGOs	BP Bangui	Tel: 61 61 38 Fax:
Jacques Krenozou	Pavillon Vert, RAAF focal point.	BP 440 Bangui	Tel: 61 16 63 Fax: 61 10 85

CAR Directory continued:

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel., Fax (Area Code: 236)
	CEDIFOD	BP 1389 Bangui	Tel: 61 32 89; 25 00 Fax:
Georges N'Gassé	Ecofac, National Director	BP Bangui	Tel: 61 62 58 Fax
René Sakanga	OCDN, Founding President	BP 147km5 Bangui	Tel: 61 07 30 Fax:
Abel Alafei	Ecological Rehabilitation Project, Director	BP 930 Bangui	Tel: 61 40 61 Fax: 61 40 09
Vincent Morel	OXFAM/OCSD, Representative	BP 973 Bangui	Tel: 61 09 73 Fax: 61 40 74
André Nzapayeke	COSSOCIM, Director	BP 1031 Bangui	Tel: 61 40 38 Fax:
Thomas Schmidt	DED-AFVP, Program Officer	BP 1269 Bangui	Tel: 61 24 26 Fax:
Philippe Makendebou-Tende	American Embassy, Program Officer	BP 924 Bangui	Tel: 61 02 00 Fax:
Frans Jacobs	PDRN, Director	BP 1444 Bangui	Tel: 61 85 89; 50 23 71 Fax:
Claudio Tarchi	COOPI, Representative	BP 1335 Bangui	Tel: 61 41 07 Fax:
Father Gauthier	CARITAS	BP Bangui	Tel: 61 46 21 Fax:
Kuppens	European Union	BP Bangui	Tel: 61 30 53 Fax:
	Association des Professionnels d'Etudes et de Conseil Centrafricains	BP 672 Bangui	Tel: 61 58 33 Fax:
	Jeunesse en Mission pour l'Avenir (JMA)	BP 960 Bangui	Tel: Fax:
Pierre Gaba-Mano	General Director, Regional Services, Water and Forestry Ministry	BP 830 Bangui	Tel: 61 24 31 Fax:
Laurent Boconas	Deputy	BP 1003 Bangui	Tel: 61 21 76 Fax:
	CARUB		Tel: 61 12 18 Fax:

8.

Dates and Operation for the Assignment in the Congo

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visits
06/23	Montreal-Detroit-Paris		
06/24	Paris-Brazzaville		
06/25	Brazzaville	Michael Brown (briefing mission). Mr. Banvidi, PROGECAP/GEF-Congo. Ndinga Assitou, IUCN, Regional Coordinator, Central Africa. Germain Nkombo, Club for the Promotion of Protected Areas in Niari. Dr. Accel Arnaud Ndinga-Makanda, Association for Ntokou Development.	
06/26	Brazzaville	Michael Brown (briefing mission). Conrad Aveling, Ecofac, Coordinator for Central Africa. Mr. Issanga, National Director for the Environment.	
06/27	Brazzaville	Michael Brown (briefing mission). Henri Djombo, President, Association for Nature Conservation in Likouala (ACNL). Isaac Moussa, President National Alliance for Nature, AFAN focal point in the Congo. Hélène Tessa-Lissouba, Club for the Promotion of Protected Areas in Niari.	
06/28	Brazzaville	Jean Nanga-Maniame, Coordinator, NEAP. Rufins Mackita, Coordinator, National Convention for Development and Environment Associations and NGOs in the Congo, teacher. Rigobert Eboudzo, General Director, Water and Forestry. Richard Ruggiero and Heather Eves, WCS. Samuel Nana-Sinkam, FAO Representative.	
06/29	Brazzaville	Anicet Pan, AJOC (Association for Young Catholic Workers). Georges Makosso-Ukeiye, Director for the Zoological Park in Brazzaville. AJIPAC (Japanese Association for Wildlife Conservation in the Congo).	
06/30	Brazzaville-Pointe Noire (plane)		

Dates for Congo assignment continued:

Date	Travel	Interviews	Field Visits
07/01	Pointe Noire	<p>Joseph Mana, Solidarity Association for Zambis (ANZAS), KMF manager (private sector), a member of the Municipal Council in Pointe Noire.</p> <p>Mr. Otsimi-Moke, Regional Director, Water and Forestry.</p> <p>Gérard Bence, Environment Officer, Elf Congo.</p> <p>François J. Rodriguez, IUCN, Conkouati Project manager.</p> <p>Narcisse Poaty-Packa, Coastal Ecology in the Congo (ECO), Director.</p>	
07/02	Pointe-Noire-Dolisie (plane)	<p>Paul Tsiba, AgriCongo, Agro-economist at the Dolisie Center.</p> <p>Mr. Mbatu, Manager for the Agroforestry Project in Southern Congo, GTZ.</p> <p>Gérard Athané, private sawing enterprise.</p> <p>Abdullahi Moulolo, Regional Director for the Environment.</p> <p>Mrs. Guimdi, Manager for ELOJE Dolisie (enterprise fighting youth idleness).</p> <p>Monique Bettibouanga, Women 2000, general secretary, Section Dolisie.</p>	
07/03	Dolisie	<p>Julien Onkagui, Regional Director for Water and Forestry.</p> <p>Dolisie Market Association.</p> <p>Mr. Droquet, Forester.</p>	<p>Ludima Gazetted Forest.</p> <p>Dolisie Market.</p>
07/04	Dolisie-Brazzaville (plane)	<p>Florent Mboundou, ACBEF Executive Director (Congolese Association for Family Welfare).</p> <p>Ndinga Assitou, IUCN, Regional Coordinator for Central Africa.</p>	
07/05	Brazzaville Brazzaville-Libreville (plane)	<p>Alain Chaudron, French Cooperation, Advisor to the Water and Forestry Minister.</p> <p>Joseph Leon Samba, Head of the sylviculture and agroforestry department, Floras NGO general secretary.</p> <p>Rufin Antoine Oka, Advisor for wildlife and protected areas, ACCP President (Congolese Alliance for Primate Conservation).</p> <p>Mrs. Joséphine Nsika, general secretary Women 2000.</p> <p>François Xavier Sala, Assistant General Secretary, Caritas Congo.</p> <p>Alphonse N'Koula, UNDP, in charge of NGO support.</p>	

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel, Fax (area code: 242)
Mr. Banvidi	GEF		Tel: 83 18 46
Ndinga Assitou	IUCN, Regional Coordinator for Central Africa	BP 244 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 49 08 Fax: 83 49 07 E-Mail: robcb@h.q.iucn;ch
Germain Kombo	Club for the Promotion of Protected Areas in Niari		
Dr. Accel Arnaud Ndinga-Makanda	Association for Ntokou Development	BP 2499 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 39 99
Conrad Aveling	Ecofac, Coordinator for Central Africa	BP 62 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 76 56 Fax: 83 76 55
Mr. Issanga	National Director for the Environment		Tel: 83 30 46
Henri Djombo	President, Association for Nature Conservation in Kikouala (ACNL)	BP 501	Tel: 82 29 51
Isaac Moussa	President, National Alliance for Nature, RAAF focal point in Congo		Tel: 82 02 37 Fax: 83 49 07
Rigobert	APEPF		Tel: 85 20 63
Jean Nanga-Maniame	NEAP Coordinator	BP 1413	Tel: 83 73 15 Fax: 83 55 02
Rufins Mackita	Coordinator, National Convention for Development and Environment Associations and NGOs in the Congo	BP 14372 Brazzaville	Tel: 82 11 17
Rigobert Ebondzo	General Director, Water and Forestry	BP 98 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 24 58 Fax: 83 24 58
Richard Ruggiero and Heather Eves	WCS	BP 14537 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 22 91 Fax: 83 73 63
Samuel Nana-Sinkam	FAO Representative	BP Brazzaville	Tel: 83 03 46 Fax: 83 68 13
Georges Makosso- Ukeiye	Director, Zoological Park in Brazzaville	BP 2429 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 33 15
Joseph Mana	Association Solidarity for Zambi Solidarité (ANZAS)	BP 592 Pointe Noire	Tel: 94 59 60 Fax: 94 06 94

Congo Directory continued:

Name	Organization and Position	Mailing Address	Tel, Fax (area code: 242)
François J. Rodriguez	IUCN, Conkouati Project Manager	BP 5700 Pointe Noire	Tel: 94 10 36 Fax: 94 24 72
Gérard Bence	Environment Officer, Elf Congo		Tel: 94 67 25
Narcisse Poaty-Packa	Coastal Ecology in the Congo (ECO), Director	BP 1570 Pointe Noire	Tel: 94 15 00 Fax:
Paul Tsiba	Agri-Congo, Agro-economist, Dolisie Center	BP 257 Dolisie	Tel: 91 04 51
M. Mbat	Director, Agroforestry Project in Southern Congo, GTZ	BP 210 Dolisie	Tel: 91 08 06
Mrs. Mombo Monique Bettibouanga	Women 2000, President and General Secretary, Dolisie Section	BP 369 Dolisie	Tel: 91 07 14
Florent Mbougou	ACBEF Executive Director (Congolese Association for Family Welfare)	BP 945 Brazzaville	Tel: 82 63 31
Alain Chaudron	French Cooperation, Advisor to the Water and Forestry Minister	BP 2175 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 14 08 Fax: 83 23 93
Mr. Demangelle	World Bank	BP Brazzaville	Tel: 83 55 02
	EU	BP Brazzaville	Tel: 83 38 78; 37 00
	Mission de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle Française	BP Brazzaville	Tel: 83 05 81; 06 96
Rufin Antoine Oka	MAEEFP, Advisor for wildlife and protected areas, ACCP President	BP 13794 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 18 47 Fax:
Mrs. Josephine Nsika	Women 2000, General Secretary	BP 13488 Brazzaville	Tel: 83 47 43 Fax: 83 78 80
Alphonse N'Kouka	UNDP, in charge of NGO Support	BP Brazzaville	Tel: 83 76 88 Fax:

Notes

¹ National NGOs consider that the lack of permanent natural resources is a constraining factor to their development. We will analyze the implications of this situation for the CARPE in Part II of this report, section 1.2.

² Government, international NGO and donor representatives often describe national NGOs as opportunistic because they try to graft on trends or fashions. This opportunism concept and its implications for the CARPE will be analyzed in Part II of this report, section 1.1.

³ In the three countries most of our interlocutors brought us to see politicization as negative. According to them, several NGOs disappear because they become involved in politics. By this we mean that they get closer and bind themselves with a political trend, and that political activities start to surpass development activities which then become secondary. Here we are talking about politicization of structures, which has nothing to do with politicization of individuals.

⁴ This finding refers to important questions for the CARPE::

- Are there networks which the CARPE could use to reduce its impact?
- What is the legitimacy of NGOs towards forest inhabitants? Is this legitimacy necessary?

⁵ The weakness of NGO collective groups refers to problems faced by NGOs in cooperating among themselves. We will analyze the implications of this element for the CARPE in Part II of this report, section 1.3.

⁶ The Syndicat d'Initiative of Lopé is not a syndicat (trade union) as such. Then the name is not appropriate since in Gabon the term syndicat has a direct political connotation.

⁷ The absence of information in some boxes means that none was collected. It does not mean that concerned NGOs have no goals or activities

⁸ We will study the effects of these findings for CARPE in Part II of this report, section 1.3.

⁹ Registration procedure for NGOs in Gabon:

- 1962 law on associations.
- submission of statutes to the Ministry for Land Administration; issuance of a receipt; three-month waiting period during which the Ministry must verify a number of considerations; no answer at the end of the waiting period stands for an approval (but without written confirmation). Very few development NGOs receive a written approval.

¹⁰ It should be noted, however, that when questioning government representatives on the room which should be granted to NGOs there is no consistency. Thus some think that lobbying activities come under NGOs, while others think the contrary.

¹¹ At the present time carrying out planning and coordination exercises such as the NEAP and the TFAP is a common trend in numerous African countries, with the joint support of several donors. In theory, these exercises are profitable for national NGOs because they should be associated to these processes (more or less closely) and because they generally recognize their future role -- without specifying it clearly, however.

¹² Incorporation of ERE in the curriculum could strengthen NGO-school linkages for activities such as outreach and visits of non-classified sites (Mondah forest, Lopé reserve, marine turtle egg-laying site).

¹³ One of the reasons would be secularization of teaching in the beginning of the 60s, which would have urged churches to establish new structures with the aim of strengthening contacts with people.

¹⁴ Structuring of the Central African rural environment started in the 1970s under a program for community development (government) and rural outreach (Caritas). The National Federation for Central African Herders (FNEC) was established in 1972, and the Rural and Pastoral Interest Groups (GIR and GIP) were being set up in the 1980s. Structuring is stronger in savanna areas (cotton, livestock) than in forest areas where groups structured for coffee production, however, can be found.

¹⁵ ALD: under this designation we include GIRs, Village Development Committees, women's, youth or neighborhood organizations. Their communality as a clearly identified community is the focus for development.

¹⁶ Identification of the active core of national NGOs: cross-checking of information collected during interviews (triangulation principle), inventory of NGOs which have previously received external funding, and NGOs with virtually permanent offices and natural resources.

¹⁷ Registration procedure for NGOs in the CAR:

- 1961 law on associations. The procedure is standard: provisional receipt when application is submitted (status, rules and regulations, office composition) and then final approval after inquiry morality. This procedure is under the responsibility of the Land Administration.
- International NGOs sign up agreements with the Planning Ministry. These agreements allow certain benefits (tariff exemption). A few national NGOs also have agreements with the government.
- Also there is a state-approved associative status which grants other benefits (government financial support, international recognition). FOCSARENA enjoys this status.

¹⁸ In the three countries studied, NGOs suffer from being combined with associations as a whole (whatever their purposes are). However, they fail (or they do not wish) to resolve the issues themselves, for instance, through the establishment of NGO collective groups strictly controlling their members. For NGOs, the solution must be the result of the NGO status review or the establishment of a separate status. Most NGOs feel that the government should assume

responsibility for this reform. This is what is happening in Cameroon and the CAR with support of the World Bank and cooperation of limited NGO groups.

¹⁹ NEAP: National Action Plan for Environment, process stopped since military insurrection.

²⁰ NEAP: National Environmental Action Plan; TFAP: Tropical Forest Action Program.

²¹ This can be seen as a sign of the weakness of NGO collective groups in these countries.

²² Including countries which have a relatively developed middle class, as in Gabon.

²³ This refers us to a classical debate on NGO support programs: We want NGOs to be the focus of the program, but the program itself has related goals to which NGOs are the object.

²⁴ For example, Enviro-Protect, SIALD or CIEFE (see Annex no.1: The role of Cameroonian ENGOs as service providers for ENGOs in CARPE focused countries.

²⁵ Some of them were familiar with the NGO sector in the neighboring countries, but others did not.

²⁶ Nevertheless, as an indicator, in a week in Yaoundé we met as many ENGOs with an office as we did in six weeks spent in all three countries, i.e., 3.

²⁷ A similar situation (Sudanian zone, with a traditional organization of communities around production, presence of ALD and NGOs in regions) exists in the CAR, the other country studied where forest coverage is not predominant.

²⁸ CAR is also working on a new law but less progress has been done.

²⁹ CERUT: Center for Environment and Rural Transformation.