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### Did you know?

Plastics left for waste in our water sources, including small streams and the ocean, leach invisible chemical compounds into the water which are ultimately consumed by humans, either directly in drinking water or through food sources like fish, and are linked to many health problems, including infertility.

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## DRAFTING WORKSHOP OF THE NATIONAL PALM OIL STRATEGY FOR CAMEROON

The workshop on the drafting of the National Strategy for the Palm Oil sector for Cameroon took place from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014, at Hotel Florence, Ebolowa, Cameroon. The goal of this workshop was to bring together important stakeholders to develop a guiding policy for the impending development of the palm oil sector.

In attendance were participants from many sectors including the government represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Industries and Technological Development. International environmental organisations present were ZSL, WWF, and PROFOREST. The research institutions present were IRAD and IRD/CIFOR. Among producers were CDC and SOCAPALM (agro-industries) and UNEXPALM/PDPV (smallholders' representative). MINADER was the main workshop organiser and was responsible for selecting the participants, preparing their invitations and the workshop agenda.

Proceedings and deliberations were chaired by Madam Mebande BATE, Technical Adviser N° 2 in MINADER. Vince Smith, ZSL Cameroon Country Director, gave an opening speech focused on the importance of sustainable palm oil practices in Cameroon. Clement Toh, the ZSL Cameroon Oil Palm and Biodiversity Coor-

inator, provided an overview of the objectives of the workshop, which focused on developing a national strategy for palm oil production.

Plenary presentations of results, enriched by questions and answers as well as working group sessions, were made on the three main documents, which are pre-requisite for the development of the palm oil strategy. These documents were: The Legal and Institutional Framework Review presented by Durrel HALLESON of WWF, the Diagnostic studies of the palm oil sector in Cameroon presented by Mr Ngom Emmanuel, the Coordinator of PDPV/UNEXPALM with support from IRD/CIFOR, CIRAD, WWF, and lastly the Prospective Studies of the sector presented by Dr. Rabelais Jankam, the Technical Adviser N° 1 in MINADER.

In a true spirit of collaboration and partnership in their mission to conserve nature and biodiversity while improving livelihoods, the workshop was financially sponsored by ZSL with support funding from WWF. This workshop will be remembered as a successful first step in the elaboration of the National Palm Oil Strategy for Cameroon, which is expected to end in August 2014 with the validation of the final document. For more information contact Clement Toh Lo-Ah:

[Toh.Lo-AhClement@zsl.org](mailto:Toh.Lo-AhClement@zsl.org)

## Exchange visit to improve protected area management

From the 10th to the 20th of April, ZSL participated in a field-based learning and information exchange trip in the Lomako-Yokokala Faunal Reserve (LYFR) in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) organized by the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and funded through the Arcus Foundation. The trip was organised to bring together technical field practitioners and protected area managers to discuss the challenges of protecting great apes across conservation landscapes. The discussion focused on the use of CyberTracker technology for law enforcement and ecological monitoring. Participants came from great apes priorities landscapes including LYFR, Dja Biosphere Reserve (DBR) in Cameroon, Niokolo Koba National Park (Senegal), Maringa Lopori Wamba (DRC), Bili Uele Protected Area Complex (DRC) and the Virunga National Park (DRC)

This workshop was a good opportunity for practitioners to assess and review the effectiveness of current tools (Cybertracker, data collection sequence, etc.) and law enforcement approaches to ensure that reserve needs



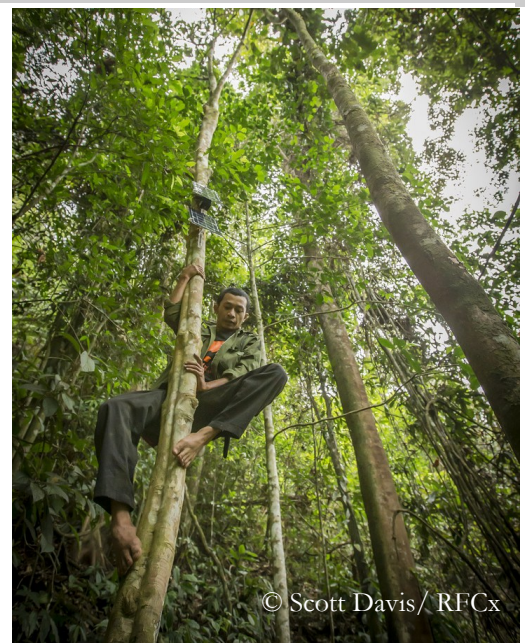
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across different socio-political contexts are met. The SMART software was also introduced to the participants as a next step to Cybertracker to fill the gaps identified so far in order to improve the law enforcement within these different landscapes. Presently ZSL is leading in testing and fine-tuning the SMART system prior to its implementation in Cameroon and in the sub-region. At the end of the field trip an information sharing system and a field practitioner network were initiated to promote collaboration among young field practitioners in apes conservation landscapes.

The next trip of this kind will be planned to take place in Cameroon in the DBR and ZSL hopes to present a functional SMART system for adaptive protected area management.

## ZSL partners with Rainforest Connection to fight forest crime

In an innovative effort to protect Cameroon's forest from poaching and illegal logging activities, ZSL has teamed up with Rainforest Connection (<https://rfcx.org/>), a US-based start-up company that "upcycles" smartphones into solar-powered listening devices. Other technologies, like drones used widely across the savannahs of Kenya, are often incapable of penetrating the forest canopy. These devices will be deployed for the first time in Africa after a successful pilot test in Indonesia, and they will be programmed to alert forest managers about human activities. With support from KFW-funded PPECF (Programme de Promotion de l'Exploitation Certifiée des Forêts) ZSL and Rainforest Connection will collaborate with one of ZSL's partner FSC-certified logging companies to trial the deployment of these devices in zones likely to capture even the most minute amounts of telephone service. The trial will begin in August and will require support with the partner logging company and MINFOF to determine the best protocol for how to react to information about illegal human activity in the forest.



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# Lake Ossa Wildlife Reserve set to see improvements in the coming three years

Although freshwater biodiversity is amongst the most threatened and neglected in Africa, human communities are heavily dependent on it. At 4,000ha, Lake Ossa Wildlife Reserve, on the Lower Sanaga River, is a refuge for endangered West African manatees and freshwater turtles. More than 80% of the 600 households neighbouring Lake Ossa are heavily dependent on lake and reserve resources, though they suffer from high levels of poverty.

With support from the UK Darwin Initiative, ZSL and local partners will team up over the next three years to improve livelihoods and conservation in the Lake Ossa Wildlife Reserve by building the capacity and technical skills within vulnerable communities and the Conservation Service tasked with the management of Lake Ossa Reserve.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>, ZSL organized the first annual planning meetings to present components of the project and to develop a work plan for this first fiscal year. Partners present included the Conservation Service of Lake Ossa and the MINFOF chef de poste, Watershed Task Group, Cameroon-Ecology, Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society and the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organization. Work will begin in the coming months, and many studies will be carried out in the field to determine the impact on local communities, fisheries and wildlife over the course of the project. ZSL looks forward to bringing more attention to the unique and complex biodiversity found within the Lake Ossa Reserve and to secure its position as the most important lake found within the boundaries of Cameroon.



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## Health and safety at work

With a mission of "promoting and achieving the worldwide conservation of animals and their habitats," the Zoological Society of London develops and implements numerous conservation projects around the world, and often in developing countries with poor infrastructure and health facilities. As such, the health and safety of the employees involved in the development of these projects is an important concern for ZSL.

Accordingly, from the 21<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>th</sup> April 2014, ZSL Cameroon staff took part in a first aid training held in the ZSL office. The training was facilitated by an instructor of first aid and emergencies at the Cameroonian Red Cross and alternated between the theoretical and practical components.



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The theoretical components focused on an overview of the Red Cross movement, general information related to first aid such as various ailments of the human body such as respiratory, circulatory, skin damage and bone injuries. The practical component allowed the ZSL team to perform the techniques that save lives such as inversions and emergency releases, vital signs assessment methods, artificial ventilation, methods to stop bleeding, and capital and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, among others.

The 3 days of training were spent in good humour and the staff was grateful to receive a practical, hands-on training that can help save lives.

CONTACT US!

ZSL Cameroon office:  
Phone: (+237)91370471  
E-mail: zslcameroun@gmail.com

## OUR PARTNERS



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Even though he works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Sustainable Development (MINADER) to improve the sustainability of the palm oil sector, ZSL's Clement Toh Lo-Ah also works in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) to better integrate forest conservation into concepts of sustainable development. The concept of High Value Conservation (HCV) as it relates to forest conservation may seem contradictory to the goals of agro-industries like palm oil. In this new economy, however, society is recognizing the need to develop a more sustainable industry that incorporates the needs and demands of local and global populations. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, ZSL Cameroon organised an HCV concept awareness workshop with the main objective of raising awareness of stakeholders on the concept of HCV and its relevance in sustainable palm oil production in Cameroon. The workshop brought together 26 invitees from different stakeholder categories, notably the MINADER, MINFOF, and the Ministry of Lands, as well as smallholders and NGOs. Unfortunately, only one agro-industry attended the workshop.

## ZSL AND MINFOF SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

On May 13, 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), providing a formal understanding of cooperation between the two institutions that have been working together for over five years.

The document was signed on behalf of the MINFOF by the Minister himself, His Excellency NGOLE Philip NGWESE, and for the ZSL by Vince SMITH, Director of ZSL Cameroon.

The MoU will allow the two parties to merge efforts of ecosystem and wildlife conservation, in particular within the implementation of Cameroon's Programme Sectoriel Forêt Environnement (PSFE) and towards Cameroon's biodiversity efforts made to support the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The two institutions mutually agree to collaborate under four work themes related to:

- Scientific research in areas of interest for both institutions;
- Biodiversity conservation in Cameroon;
- Sustainable management of forests and wildlife in Cameroon;
- Capacity building for conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity.

In addition, both institutions mutually agree to increase information sharing, monitoring activities in the field, as well as opportunities for capacity building.



LIVING CONSERVATION