

**October to
December
2014**

No° 008



Did you know?

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing deprives legal fishermen and coastal communities of up to \$23 billion USD of seafood and seafood products annually and threatens the long-term sustainability of global seafood supplies. Science provides an important way to manage fish stocks to ensure their sustainability.

In this edition

ZSL supports arrest of ivory trafficker in Djoum Pg.2

Oil palm workshop in Kumba a big success to support RSPO certification Pg.3

Communities contributing to wildlife protection Pg.4

ZSL CAMEROON: 2014 IN REVIEW

As ZSL Cameroon's Director, I would like to show gratitude for all of our collaborations that have made 2014 an eventful and successful year for ZSL's contribution to wildlife conservation in the region. We now have a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the government of Cameroon (MINFOF) to provide support to the protection of Cameroon's wildlife. Additionally, this year we became members of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

In the Dja Biosphere Reserve, we have continued to provide equipment to the Conservation Service (CS) and are now for the first time successfully implementing the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART). The CS are patrolling the reserve using this adaptive management system, which will greatly improve patrolling efficiency and effectiveness.

Across the wider landscape, we have continued to provide technical assistance to the wildlife protection teams of 2 timber companies in logging concessions neighbouring the Dja- SFID and Pallisco. Furthermore, a toolkit to introduce best practice wildlife management methods has been produced for the forestry sector and will soon be made publicly available.

In efforts to bring wildlife conservation into the 21st century, we have partnered with Rainforest Connection to place solar listening devices high up in the canopy in order to pick up the sounds of chainsaws and motorbikes and send an SMS message, complete with GPS coordinates and sound recording (page 2). We are also trialling a GPS tracking system on logging trucks in order to decrease the collaboration between drivers and poachers and traffickers.

Elsewhere in villages neighbouring the Dja, we are trialling two different information networks, including a Community Surveillance Network (page 4) and an intelligence network (page 2)- both with the goal of increasing the amount of intelligence information on illegal wildlife activities. Both networks are starting to show suc-



cess and continued support in 2015 should increase the effectiveness of these networks.

ZSL's new project in Lake Ossa, entitled "Our lake, our life" is now up and running and we are beginning to engage with the local population and the CS to improve comanagement of Lake Ossa. Early work has thus far focused on capacity building of the CS, and early studies will help guide the implementation of later work. Material support has also been critical, and with the new project boat, 2015 will see improved management of the lake.

Finally, we have continued our work with agro-industries, engaging with the palm oil sector to introduce best practice management methods to reduce their environmental and social impact. We organised three workshops for key stakeholders operating within the industry to improve the adoption of RSPO nationally, and to assist interested stakeholders in implementation of RSPO standards. ZSL envisions that support to agro-industry sustainability in the future will focus more on implementation of improved wildlife management practices with the leaders in the industry.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate ZSL Cameroon's Research, Surveillance, and Monitoring Coordinator, Oliver Fankem, for his service to ZSL and to wildlife conservation in Cameroon. Oliver was recently selected from all ZSL employees to receive ZSL's prestigious Exceptional Contribution Award. His years of service at ZSL are highly appreciated and have contributed immensely to wildlife conservation in the region. Thanks to all for a great 2014!

ZSL supports major ivory seizure in Djoum

On the 14th of October 2014, the Conservation Service of Dja Biosphere Reserve, following a tip-off from an intelligence network supported by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), seized 39 forest elephant tusks hidden under 201 bags of cocoa in a truck in the South Region of Cameroon in the town of Djoum.

The suspect, a local businessman and owner of the truck, was arrested and is been currently trialled. He risks receiving between 1 and 3 years of imprisonment and a fine payment of up to 10.000.000 FCFA. While many poachers and traffickers in other cases are able to bribe their way out of jail sentences and hefty fines, ZSL is providing financial support to the Conservation Service and promoting media visibility of the trials to ensure that the trafficker serves a fair sentence for his crimes.

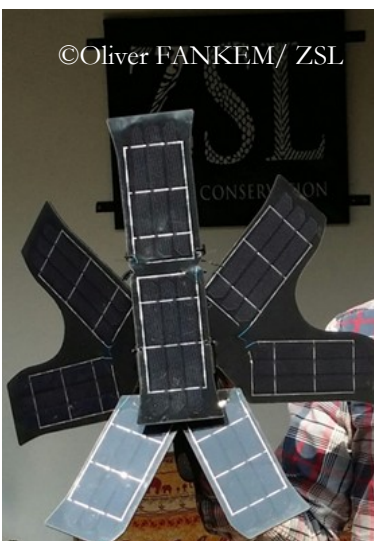


Each tusk was labelled, measured, weighed and documented by the Conservation Service with the support of ZSL. The information was later transmitted to the national CITES (Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species) branch. This data will be added to a global database, which tracks the illegal trade and identifies trafficking hotspots.

The tusks are most likely from elephants killed in northern Gabon and Congo, and represent a minimum of 20 elephants slaughtered for only their ivory. Elephant populations in the region have declined by about 76% since 2002, and ZSL is looking forward to increasing support provided to the Conservation Service to ensure that all wildlife crimes are tried and sentenced in the court of law.

Detection of poachers in SFID logging concessions by 2015

A pilot project is newly underway to test the use of solar powered listening devices in the monitoring of illegal activities in logging concessions, such as logging and poaching. Rainforest Connection (RFCx) first had success with their “upcycled” smart phones, that is smart phones equipped with solar panels and modified to “listen” to sounds in the forest, in Southeast Asia, and with support from KfW’s PPECF (Programme for the Promotion of Certified Exploitation Forestry) funding, the second trial is underway in Cameroon. After developing and assembling 30 listening devices, RFCx Rainforest Connection’s Dave Grenell, Tophier White, and Kevin Keller have travelled to Cameroon ready to collaborate with ZSL and SFID-Mbang to detect poaching activities before they occur.



On November 14th a meeting was held at SFID headquarters in order to clarify the objectives of the intervention, present the system and explain how its intended to work and discuss SFID expectations including the kind of information they will like to receive and possible messages format.

So far, the RFCx team has been able to test the internet service for data management, test the telephone provider service and choose an appropriate data plan, and identify possible project obstacles and potential sites for device deployment. Presently a few devices have already been installed and are sending data back to the cloud server that manages the noises captured in the forest. The system is expected to go live by the end of January 2015, enabling SFID-Mbang to detect all motorbikes entering the concessions, and the company and the local forest authorities will determine the best course of action to prevent poaching.

Measuring project impact across natural resources and surrounding communities

Often, conservation projects that aim to improve the conditions of life for rural communities struggle to concretely demonstrate the positive impact they have on both communities and the natural resources. Sometimes the challenge is that the resource is too vast to simultaneously make impact on the resource and the local communities. Other times, the challenge is related to the limited time of the project and the limited means available.

Because of the relatively-limited geographic scope of the Lake Ossa Wildlife Reserve and surrounding communities, work in and around the lake presents a unique opportunity for short-term pilot projects to demonstrate impact. On November 24, ZSL and the Conservation Service began the process of carrying out a census for all 11 Lake Ossa communities. The first day, a training of census-takers was carried out, and data collection began the following day. The purpose of this census is to better determine how many people depend directly on the lake and lakeshore resources for their livelihoods, and will be carried out once again at the end of the project.

Information gathered from the census can help other partners interested in working in the area to better understand major economic activities carried out in the area. This census will also help to better determine fishing activities being carried out in the lake, and will help to better guide the identification of local community members as stakeholders. The census is expected to be completed by the end of January, 2015, and a final report will be produced and made available on ZSL's website, or may be provided in the future by contacting Lauren.Redmore@zsl.org.



ZSL hosts workshop in Kumba for the promotion of sustainable oil palm production

In order to promote the uptake of best practices in the oil palm sector, ZSL's Sustainable Oil Palm and Biodiversity team organised an awareness-raising and capacity building workshop that took place in Kumba in December 2014. More than 40 participants attended from various stakeholder groups and from four key palm oil production basins in Cameroon. This workshop focused on increasing the sustainability of the palm oil sector and Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) development in the region. Participants were provided with information about RSPO (Principles and Criteria) and other related concepts (HCV, FPIC...), and discussions were held about points of convergence between RSPO norms and Cameroonian legislation.

In addition to discussing the supply chain requirements for sustainable oil palm products, the workshop also enabled participants to learn more about the RSPO standards for group certification, the code of conduct for RSPO members, and the role of improved production methods on sustainability in the palm oil sector, including improved seeds, agricultural practices, cultural aspects, etc. Relating to implementing RSPO norms in Cameroon, extensive group work throughout the workshop enabled participants to discuss the various barriers preventing producers from engaging in RSPO practices, as well as to brainstorm on the benefits and the way forward to improve the adoption of RSPO standards amongst regional producers.

The workshop was a success and will enable ZSL to better determine future interventions to assist with the implementation of RSPO standards to ensure minimal impact of the oil palm sector on Cameroon's vast natural and cultural resources.



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Our Partners



Direct from the field

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Participatory mapping has many uses for development and conservation projects around the world. In Lake Ossa, ZSL's project "Our Lake, Our Life" relies on participatory methods to ensure the most accurate and local knowledge possible. Participatory mapping of the names and places in Lake Ossa will enable lake users and other interest groups to better localize activities and resources, especially considering the extreme geographic complexity of the lake. Here, participants present a local representation of the lake, and this information supported the development of an accurate map with over 75 local areas of the lake listed, a tool that will serve local communities, administration, and any conservation interventions in the lake.

COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATING IN REPORTING ILLEGAL WILDLIFE CRIME

Over this December's holidays, ZSL and MINFOF have had their first success in effectively managing poaching-related information being reported by community members in rural villages around the Dja Biosphere Reserve (DBR). This time, the community member's call enabled MINFOF personnel to prevent a

bushmeat trafficker heading to Lomié town carrying three sacks of bushmeat on a motorbike. ZSL's Community Surveillance Network initiative has been working with communities to develop anonymous lines of communication to allow community members to secretly report information related to poaching or other illegal forest activities. This first success proves that providing community members with a rapid means of communication, combined with a quick reaction from relevant authorities, can help discourage wildlife trafficking and trade. ZSL looks forward to reinforcing the support to community members and will facilitate improved communication to contribute to reduced poaching in and around the DBR.



LIVING CONSERVATION