ZAH SOO
NATIONAL PARK,
TCHAD
Zah Soo National Park is located in southwestern Chad near Cameroon, and is in a transition zone between sudanian and sahelian regions.

Together with the Binder-Léré Wildlife Reserve, it is part of the Binder-Léré Complex of Protected Areas (CAPBL). It includes a unique variety of wetlands as well as the largest waterfalls in the country, the «Zah Soo Falls», with an abrupt drop of 45 meters.

The falls create an unsurpassable natural barrier for fish species from the Niger Basin to the Chad Basin. The protected area consists of open forests and forest corridors populated by large sudanese savannah trees and perennial grasses, large floodplains serving as spawning and nursery grounds for many fish, as well as two lakes (Léré and Tréné) hosting a rich bird wildlife.

The Kordofan Giraffe (Giraffa camelopardalis antiquorum), widely distributed in Chad, is threatened by the destruction of its habitat, mainly due to deforestation.

Parcs de Noé’s mandate

15-year partnership agreement for the management of the Zah Soo National Park and Binder-Léré Wildlife Reserve.

Surface area

Zah Soo National Park: 815 km².
Binder-Léré Wildlife Reserve: 900 km², totaling totaling 1,715 km² (Complex of protected areas of Binder-Léré)

Special attributes
- IUCN II and IV Category
- Ramsar site
- Important Bird Areas (IBA)

Biomes
- Wetlands, floodplains, lakes
- Forest corridors
- Eastern sudanese savannahs

Key endangered wildlife species

Critically endangered: Kordofan giraffe, hooded, white-backed and Rüpell’s vultures
Endangered: savannah elephant
Vulnerable: red-fronted gazelle, hippo, African manatee, panther, abyssinian ground hornbill

Key governance actors
- Local authorities (Governor, decentralized government services, etc.)
- Traditional authorities (Gong of Léré, Lagon and Lamido of Binder)
- Local communities through the Local Orientation and Decision-Making Bodies (ILOD : Instances Locales d’Orientation et de Décision)

Technical partners
- Wings for Conservation
- Université d’Exeter (Royaume Uni)
The protected area’s land holdings stretch across the domain of three customary chiefdoms controlled by the Gong (traditional chief) of Léré, the Gong of Lagon, and the Lamido (traditional Peuhl chief) of Binder. Approximately 120,000 people make up these three chiefdoms and live mainly from intensive subsistence agriculture (cereals, oilseeds, vegetables), cash crops such as cotton, agropastoralism (large and small ruminants, pigs, poultry, etc.) and non-industrial fishing in lakes Léré and Tréné. The gathering of wood for fuel or construction is an important activity, as well as the production of fruits, leaves, roots and honey.

Due to uncontrolled poaching and loss of habitat over the years, most of the species in the protected area have disappeared or reached alarming numbers requiring rapid intervention for their recovery. Among the emblematic fauna, one of the most remarkable species is the manatee, which lives in the lakes. The reserve is also home to giraffe, hippo, roan antelope, reedbuck, Oribi and Grimm duiker. Since 2006, the third largest population of elephants in Chad has found refuge in the protected area.

An area of international importance for bird conservation, it consists mainly of afro-ethiopian species such as the white-faced and fulvous whistling duck, the gambian goose and the helmeted duck.

### Traditional chiefdoms

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### Threatened wildlife

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> An estimated population of 150 hippos (Hippopotamus amphibius), classified as vulnerable by the IUCN, has found refuge in the 2 lakes of the Binder-Léré Wildlife Reserve in Chad.
The protected area in 2030

Our vision is for Zah Soo National Park to become an island of biodiversity integrity and good governance, with its wildlife populations and ecosystems restored, and its neighboring communities enjoying inclusive development. This vision can only be achieved by balancing the three pillars of sustainability: environment, society and economy.

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Implementing a safety mechanism (infrastructure, human and financial resources).
- Monitoring key species to guide protection efforts.
- Restoring habitat through vegetation regeneration and increased protection of micro-habitats.
- Strengthening wildlife populations through reintroduction of endangered and extinct species.

**SOCIETY**
- Creating local employment.
- Contributing to the security of the territory.
- Implementing a land-use plan for the agro-pastoral sector and the seasonal migration of livestock.
- Reducing human-wildlife conflicts.
- Supporting education and health programs.
- Integrating communities into governance bodies.

**ECONOMY**
- Developing self-financing mechanisms for the park in exchange for environmental services (grazing areas, spawning grounds, etc.).
- Including and giving responsibility to socio-economic actors, such as the agro-industry, in the protection of ecosystems.
- Developing natural chains that are respectful of the environment.
- Promoting agroecological and agroforestry techniques.

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**Parcs de Noé** is a program of the NGO Noé, which is a non-profit public nature protection organisation created in 2001. Noé has programs in France and around the globe to safeguard biodiversity for the benefit of all living, including the human species.

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Plus d’infos

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