

The Kwabre-Tanoé trans-border reserve to save three African primates from extinction

The swamp forests of Kwabre in Ghana and Tanoé in Ivory Coast are a unique sanctuary, home to three endangered flagship primates. Caught between deforestation, forest product trafficking, and bush meat trade, their survival hangs by nothing more than a thread and... the will of human beings!

The creation of a trans-border community-managed protected area on the initiative of local communities offers a unique example of positive partnership between two countries and should allow for the protection of the entire area.



GHANA / IVORY COAST

Full cost: 600,000 euros
Duration: 8 years
Start: September 2017



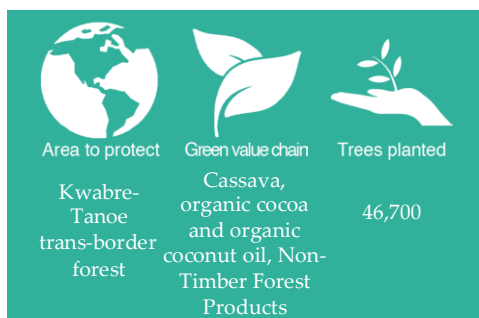
A project implemented by:



And supported by:



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The site and its biodiversity

The forests of Kwabre in south-western Ghana (2,500 ha) and Tanoë in south-eastern Ivory Coast (12,000 ha) extend on both side of the Tanoë River.

They are home to an exceptional biodiversity with 1,800 endemic plant species, 31 bird species, 35 mammal species, and 49 amphibian species.

They are also the last habitat of the Roloway monkey (*Cercopithecus roloway*), one of the 25 most endangered primates of the world, as well as the White-Naped Mangabey (*Cercocebus lunulatus*), and possibly Miss Waldron's Red Colobus (*Piliocolobus waldronae*) which may already be extinct in the wild.

Major issues

These exceptional spaces are endangered by the deforestation associated with the large-scale development of cocoa, rubber tree, and oil palm plantations.

Today, failing any formal agreement between Kwabre (Ghana) and Tanoë (Ivory Coast) forests, an increasing number of people venture into the forest to traffic forest products and bush meat.

For several years, biologists are alarmed by the risks of extinction of the endangered primate species sheltered by these forests and have encouraged governments and the civil society to tackle this issue.

Unless action is taken, the fate of these forests is at stake and the local populations will become increasingly vulnerable.

Committed partners

Created in 2001, **WAPCA (West African Primate Conservation Action)** aims to conserve endangered primate species in Western Africa.

WAPCA has supported the communities on the outskirts of Kwabre forest in establishing a Community Resource Management Area (CREMA), a local governance structure aiming at ensuring a community-led sustainable management of natural resources.

On the Ivorian side, the activism of the association **ACB-CI (Action pour la Conservation de la Biodiversité en Côte d'Ivoire)**, with the support of **CSRS (Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques en Côte d'Ivoire)**, has already protected Tanoë forest against a project of palm oil plantation.

With the support of both NGOs, the communities have set up a community-led organization (Association villageoise de gestion) and have created in 2016 the very first community-managed Voluntary Natural Reserve in Ivory Coast.

The project and the prospects for change

Phase 2 of the EconoBio project, in the continuity of phase 1 (2017-2020), aims at ensuring the sustainable management of Kwabre and Tanoë forests by and to the benefit of local communities, by setting up alternative income-generating activities and strengthening the community-led governance structures (CREMAs).

The specific objectives are the following:

- Contribute to the development of sustainable economic sectors (certified organic cocoa, organic coconut oil, cassava and non-timber forest products). These green value chains will benefit to the communities by increasing their income and to biodiversity conservation by decreasing anthropic pressure.
- Ensure a better trans-border biodiversity conservation by:
 - (1) initiating the creation of the first African community-managed trans-border reserve with Ghanaian and Ivorian authorities;
 - (2) strengthening the community-led governance structures and setting up a Conservation Fund to ensure their self-financing in the medium run;
 - (3) planting trees of economic-interest to delineate the forest and create a buffer zone.
- Ensure the capacity building of civil society and disseminate the project lessons-learned.

Main achievements of phase 1 (2017-2020)

Biodiversity Conservation

1 Kwabre-Tanoë Transborder Forest Management Plan in development.

1- WAPCA

- 40,700 trees planted;
- Over 2,300 patrols conducted with 157 arrests, 46 chainsaws and 4,265 wooden boards confiscated;
- Implementation of a patrol data collection system (Event Book and trials on CyberTracker);
- 1 Conservation Fund created and fed by 2 Conservation Agreements signed between CREMA on the one hand and Savannah Fruits Company and Yayra Glover Ltd on the other.

2- CSRS

- 6,000 seedlings planted;
- Land certificate for the Tanoë-Ehy swamp forest obtained.

Socio-economic Development

1- WAPCA

- 1 organic coconut oil processing center constructed and new equipment installed;
- 61.6 tons of organic certified coconut oil purchased by The Savannah Fruits Company (SFC);
- 1,144,040 coconuts supplied by 202 farmers (162M/40F) organized in 7 groups;
- 529 cocoa farmers (438M/91F) organized in 13 groups and trained in agronomic practices and organic certification standards;

2- CSRS

- 67 cassava producers (8M/59F) organized in 4 groups and trained in cooperative management and record keeping and in good agricultural practices;
- 5 demonstration plots of 52 MT of raw cassava and 14 MT of Gari production capacity established;
- 24 NTFP collectors trained on good practices for the harvest, drying and storage of *Ricinodendron heudelotii*, *Xylo-pia aethiopica* and *Irvingia gabonensis*.