

How organic shea butter, honey and beeswax value chains can build climate resilient communities?

The largest National Park of Ghana, Mole National Park, is also one of the richest in terms of biodiversity with numerous elephants, monkeys, antelopes and other species. But these amazing species are threatened by poaching and deforestation caused by anthropic activities.



Phase 2 of the EconoBio project, in the continuity of phase 1 (2018-2020), will strengthen local participation in the sustainable management of the periphery of this emblematic protected area, and will support the local population in increasing their revenue thanks to the production of organic shea butter, honey and beeswax.



Full cost: 350,000 euros
Duration: 6 years
Start: January 2018

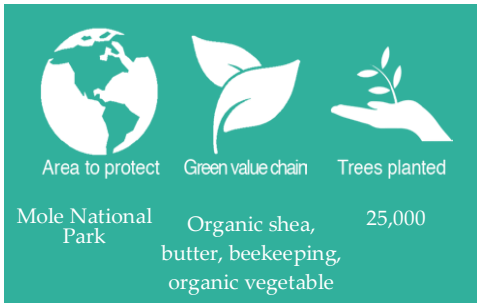
A project implemented by:



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The site and its biodiversity

Located in Northwestern Ghana, the Mole National Park was created in 1971 after being a hunting reserve from 1958. Covering a land area of 4577 km² of savannah, it is the largest protected area of the country.

It is known for its rich biodiversity, sheltering numerous fauna species such as elephants, buffalos and monkeys, and has one of the biggest concentrations of antelopes in Africa. This is also an important touristic site of Ghana.

Major issues

Created with the aim to protect its abundant fauna and flora, the National Park is still threatened by the hunting of game around and within the Park, mainly antelopes for provision of bush meat.

The Park though well protected has in recent times suffered from targeted well planned incursions to log Rosewood, a species of high timber value in Ghana.

Limited livelihood options compel neighboring communities to enter the park to access Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), which is an important source of income during the lean season.

Surrounding areas of the park are under threat from the increasing production of charcoal, clearing for agriculture and bush fires.

Committed partners

A Rocha and **Northcode**, partners already strongly involved in the area, work since several years with local populations to improve their livelihoods and protect Mole National Park.

The NGO A Rocha Ghana has a strong experience in establishing Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) – local governance structures – on the outskirts of protected areas in Ghana, including the Mole National Park where it has set up four CREMAs.

Located in the southwestern area of Mole National Park, Northcode supports the empowerment of women by strengthening their economic capacities. Its specific focus is the development of beekeeping, organic vegetable farming and the reforestation of degraded areas.

The project and the prospects for change

The project will ensure the sustainable and community-led management of Park periphery, through the development of green value chains benefitting communities and strengthening the local governance structures (CREMAs).

The objectives of the project are the following:

- Contribute to the development of sustainable economic sectors. These green value chains will benefit to

the communities by increasing their income and will participate to the protection of the Park.

The certified shea butter sector, which was strongly structured during the first phase of the project with the construction of a processing centre for organic shea butter, will be strengthened and supported to ensure the empowerment of women's cooperatives.

The beekeeping sector developed in phase 1 offers an additional income with the processing of wax on top of honey production. An organic vegetable farming pilot will be launched to diversify the women's sources of income.

- Ensure a better biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources by (1) the consolidation of the CREMAs already in place; (2) the establishment of Conservation Funds, ensuring the long-term self-financing of the CREMAs, which will be fed by Conservation Agreements signed with private sector stakeholders; (3) the reinforcement of community patrols and the establishment of an efficient bio-monitoring system; and (4) the reforestation of degraded areas.
- Ensure the capacity building of civil society and disseminate the project lessons-learnt.



Main achievements of phase 1 (2018-2020)

Biodiversity Conservation

1- A Rocha

- 10-year resources management plans developed for 4 CREMAs;
- 1 Mole Park Landscape Conservation Trust Fund (capital €12,600);
- 4 Conservation Agreements signed between CREMAs and Savannah Fruits Company;
- 80,000 seedlings produced, and 20,400 planted;
- 171 CREMA members (43M/128F) trained in nursery management, landscape restoration and forest fire management;
- 35 patrollers trained and involved in ecological monitoring (255 patrols conducted);

2- Northcode Ghana

- Creation of CREMA communities' committees and executive committees;
- Gazetting of CREMA bye-laws at the District assembly;
- 1 CREMA Management Plan being developed;
- 5,000 trees planted in degraded areas and in agroforestry.

Socio-economic Development

1- A Rocha

- Honey value chain analysis and business plan elaborated;
- 1,200 bags (85kg) per year of shea nuts sold with a total of over €28,700 income generated;
- 11 organic shea warehouses built;
- 1 environmentally friendly organic shea butter processing center built with innovative equipment;
- Over 3,000 liters of honey sold;
- Construction of a honey processing center launched;
- 852 shea collectors and 450 beekeepers (274M/176F) trained on business and financial management.

2- Northcode Ghana

- 1 Honey processing center completed;
- 400 beehives with beekeeping equipment provided;
- 200 beekeepers (84M/116F) empowered;
- 700 liters of honey sold;
- 4 new Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) established.

