

SUFACHAC NEWS

The maiden Edition of the biannual publication of the Sustainable farming and critical habitat conservation to achieve biodiversity mainstreaming and protected areas management effectiveness in western Cameroon

Vol. 01 NO. 001 January 2019

DEAR PARTNERS & READERS,

Welcome to the maiden edition of the SUFACHAC News. This edition highlights project's inception (29 – 31 of March 2017) to on field implementation. ENJOY YOUR READING as your comments and observations are welcome.



EDITORIAL:

Dear Partners/Readers,

I feel delighted to share information related to the SUFACHAC PROJECT whose first year of existence had been dedicated to baseline information gathering. As a matter of reminder, SUFACHAC is building on previous conservation efforts that had taken place within the Bakossi Bayang Mbo landscape. Results of some of the studies carried out by both national consultants and implementing partners have been tremendous and are geared towards meeting the project's goal.

A review of the level of implementation of activities of 2017/2018 shows a significant progress on the level of achievements, number of current and potential stakeholders and partners (ERuDeF, CHEDE) involved. From the review process of collaborative management and conservation initiatives within the region and TOU experiences within the national territory it has been revealed that collaboration at all levels and communication has a significant role to play in attaining the set goals. I wish to appreciate the efforts of all our collaborators, partners and stakeholders for their continuous support in ensuring the progress made for this first year. Communicating our progress and lessons learned is of utmost important. While hoping that you find this maiden edition of the SUFACHAC NEWS interesting and informative I wish you a happy collaboration for the progress of conservation work within the landscape. Contributions for publications are welcome from each partner and stakeholder.

Zaboya Adele Epse Makomra
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, SUFACHAC

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Project Launching

Community Participation In
Conservation Activities

Progress Towards
Completing The BBML
TOU Creation

Interview "Tou, An Integrated
Landscape Management Approach To
Enhance Biodiversity Conservation"

Publisher:

National Director- SUFACHAC

Editor in Chief. GEF Operational Focal Point

Editors: Technical Coordinator- SUFACHAC,

Monitoring & Evaluation Expert - SUFACHAC

Admin/Finance officer- SUFACHAC

IT Expert - SUFACHAC

Admin/Financial Secretary - SUFACHAC

Communication Officer- SUFACHAC

Conception: Ongie Rose Mukete-

SUFACHAC communication officer

CAMEROON RECEIVES ANOTHER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE CONSERVATION WORKS AT THE BAKOSSİ BAYANG MBO LANDSCAPE

As a means of boosting up conservation efforts and improve on the protected area management land scape within the country, the Government of Cameroon benefited from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), a Medium Sized Project in the South West Region of Cameroon, on the “sustainable farming and critical habitat conservation to achieve biodiversity mainstreaming and protected areas management effectiveness in Western Cameroon” abbreviated SUFACHAC. It is worth noting that the SW Region where the Project is located is endowed with rich biodiversity of global significance that supports a high diversity of animal and plant species, large numbers with restricted ranges, and many of which are threatened (Cameroon 4th CBD National Report, Chap 1. Section 1.1, 2009) The project area ranges from 180m to 2,900m above sea level, harbouring a transition from lowland forests, montane forests and montane savannahs, thus conferring an extraordinary degree of ecosystem, habitat, plant and animal diversity for all taxa. It also provides a wide range of biological resources and ecosystem functions. The SUFACHAC project area comprises of 6 protected areas even though 03 of them are still to have an official legal status. The full list of the Protected Areas includes:

***Bayang Mbo wildlife sanctuary (66 200 ha);
Bakossi National Park (29 320 ha),
Proposed Mt. Kupe Integral Ecological
Reserve (4.676 ha),
Proposed Mount Manengouba Integral
Ecological Reserve,
Tofala Hills wildlife sanctuary (8087 ha),
Proposed Mak-Betchou wildlife sanctuary
(5900 ha). bringin a total surface area for
the proposed TOU to 459468 ha***

Preparatory activities to set up the project began well before the official start-up date focusing mainly on four key issues: (a) research and rental of offices, (b) recruitment of staff, (c) procurement of equipments and (d) institutional arrangements for effective start-up of the project. Securing office space at the Divisional delegation of Environment protection of nature and sustainable development (DDMINEPDED) for Fako in Limbe and recruiting a project management implementation team of 04 members with 06 support staff headed by the National Director with the technical supervision by the Project Coordinator. An inception workshop was held to get the team members acquainted with the projects mandate. Mobilization of measures to identify partner institutions (NGOs, CSO, sectorial ministerial departments, local authorities and international organizations) to support in the effective implementation of the project activities was also done during the preparatory phase. The project, with a rational of bringing alternatives to the effective and participatory management of protected Areas (PAs), to ensure connectivity within the BBML landscape in collaboration with the implementing partners, traditional authorities and other sectoral ministries and community members developed an annual work plan for 2017/2018 . Though first phase of implementation was focused on obtaining baseline information with results to serve as inputs for support to continue with the project implementation, several successes have been registered.



Officials waiting for governors arrival

THE GOVERNOR OF THE SOUTH WEST REGION LAUNCHES ANOTHER BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECT

Adding to the number of conservation initiatives within the south west region an official launching of SUFACHAC was absolutely necessary for it to be presented to the public to ensure that the population is aware of its existence, vision, mission and objectives. This took place in Buea, the South West Regional headquarters. All the key stakeholders of SUFACHAC Project were present during this official ceremony to ensure that the various sectors were represented. Participants came from various backgrounds such as the civil society, NGOs working in the field within the project area, councils of the area and the main partners of the project. The Governor of the South West Region Mr. Bernard Okalia Bilai representing the Minister of environment protection of nature and sustainable development presided over this important ceremony and applauded the efforts of UNEP in supporting Cameroon to protect the rich biodiversity it possesses. Representing the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and Task Manager of the project, Dr. Adamu Bouhari who in his remarks used the

opportunity to congratulate Mr. Nantchou Justin (former GEF operational Focal Point) who was recognized by GEF as the most active participant. He recalled that this project will help Cameroon to fulfill its contribution by expanding its protected areas network, which is one of the recommendations and visions of the convention on biodiversity. He further clarified the role of partners involved in the implementation and execution of projects activities according to UNEP Approach. A brief technical presentation was done by Dr. J-Hude MOUDINGO, the project coordinator in order for participants to get an overview of the project in relation to its goals and objectives as well as the framework and the GEF tracking tool.



Officials waiting for governors arrival



Partners and stakeholders pose for family picture after official launching



Participants singing of the national anthem before launching speech



THE STEERING COMMITTEE SETS TO WORK

Steering committee examining annual workplan for 2017/2018.

Matching the overall goal of the project, validation of SUFACHA's work plan for year I & II and implementation report for year one have been a major preoccupation for the SUFACHAC's steering committee during this first phase of its existence.

The first and second sessions of the project's steering committee took place on the 31st of March 2017 and the 25th Of September

2018. These two sessions were dedicated to the examination and validation of the annual work plans and implementation report for year 1 (2017/2018). This two sessions ended with the final adoption and endorsement of the work plans and the reports.

These two sessions worked under the auspices of the Secretary General at the South west Governor's office Mr. Julius TATAH and the supervision of the Technical Adviser N°2 DAMOU LAMTOING and the Inspector General Dr. Ndong Barthelemy both from the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) representing the honorable minister.

SUFACHAC AD HOC TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) REVIEWS AND VALIDATES PROGRESS REPORTS



Technical working Group examining reports from partners and consultants for validation.

The SUFACHAC Ad Hoc technical working group of the project created by Ministerial Decision No. 00217/D/MINEPDED/SUFACHAC/of 27th Dec 2016 is a group made of 14 experts from different public, private and research

institutions, civil society organizations and universities supported by 02 other members who make up the technical secretariat to examine and validate reports and other documents produced by partners and national consultants. The principal mission of the group amongst others is to ensure the relevance of the documents (reports, work plans, monitoring and evaluation, communication plans Etc.) presented for examination related to the attainment of the projects objectives. Meeting sessions for the group are convened by the National Director of the project making sure not more than 05 sessions are held per year. During the year 2017/2018 there were 3 session held with 26 reports from partners and national consultants examined, 13 validated and 13 pending evaluation.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETING THE BAKOSSİ BAYANG MBO LANDSCAPE (BBML) TOU CREATION AND ITS PA NETWORKING

The Bakossi Bayang Mbo Landscape (BBML) supports a high diversity of animal and plant species and many of them are threatened. Its biological resources and ecosystems functions as well as its capacity to support human livelihoods are seriously threatened by the persistence of poaching, illegal and irrational exploitation of biodiversity and the development of small and large scale agro-industrial plantations. The lack of adequate guidelines for Environmental and Social Impacts Assessments increases the degradation of this landscape which limits the assessment of High Conservation Value Forests and Sustainable Farming practices. With such characteristics the landscape has been subjected to long-term investment in conservation and development efforts by several actors sometimes with divergent but antagonistic and or conflicting interest.

To respond to these concerns, curtail threats and enable Cameroon to meet its targets in terms of Biodiversity Conservation globally, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), approved a 04 year medium sized project 'SUFACHAC' (acronym) to run from 2017 to December 2020 with three approved outcomes described below

Component 1:

Critical wildlife habitat conservation through creation / strengthening of protected areas. Leading to Outcome 1: Fully completed, strengthen and effectively managed Bakossi Banyang Mbo Lebiale (BBML) Technical Operation Unit (TOU) and its strengthened and well managed PA network.

Component 2:

Sustainable farming practice and promotion of communities' livelihoods and biodiversity conservation through Integral Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP). Leading to Outcome 2: Strengthened regulatory framework and coordinated investments mitigate environmental

and social impacts of development projects and PA management.

Component 3:

Knowledge Management, monitoring and evaluation. This component aims to improve knowledge and monitoring of the socio-economic & environmental values of BBML landscape fosters implementation of integrated land use plans, leading to Outcome 3: Improved knowledge and monitoring of the socio-economic & environmental values of BBML landscape

Efforts at having a fully completed, strengthened and effectively managed Bakossi Banyang Mbo (BBML) Technical Operation Unit (TOU) and a well-managed Protected Areas network, have been ongoing through the support of the project, the national consultant, implementing partners and MINFOF.

Progress has been made in obtaining baseline socio economic information within the landscape, additional wildlife surveys have been conducted and efforts towards the classification and the management of new protected areas (Tofala Hill Wildlife



Sanctuary (THWS), proposed Mak-Betchou Wildlife Sanctuary (MBWS), proposed Mount Manengouba Integral Ecological Reserve (Mt Manengouba Herpetological sanctuary) have been made. The draft management plan for the Tofala Hills Wildlife Sanctuary has been adopted and a roadmap for its elaboration and validation has also been updated. The Technical Note for the creation of the Mt. Manengouba integral ecological reserve (Mt Manengouba Herpetological sanctuary) has been validated and presented to MINFOF. The draft technical note for the TOU has been reviewed and the road map for follow-up activities elaborated and submitted to MINFOF as well.

Beneficiaries for the effective management of Protected Areas within the BBML have equally been

identified and classified under the following 03 levels;

First level:

People involved in activities to produce outputs - (they include Pas/ TOU Services, GIS Unit at RDFOF-SW, sectorial ministries that are statutory members of TOU technical and management committees, conservation and development NGOs/CSOs, CIGs, traditional rulers, and VFMCs);

Second Level:

People benefiting from development outcome - (cash crop and subsistence farmers, NTFP collectors, hunters, councils, and schools);

Third Level:

People who will benefit from potential impact - (PAs and farmers

“

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FROM OTHER STAKEHOLDERS FACILITATES COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

”



Tinto chiefs in a sensitisation meeting in support of the new conservation initiative



Forces of law and order, local and traditional authorities supports conservation initiative



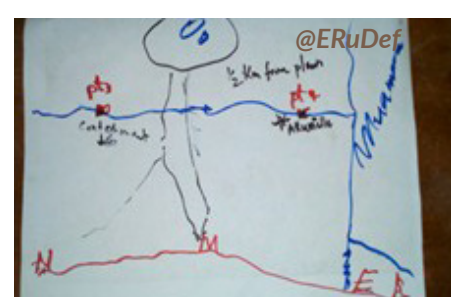
Participants at the sensitization meeting with sectorial services

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

Village Forest Management committees have been created, existing ones strengthened and trained on various basic wildlife and sanctuary rules and other natural resource management skills. They have been very active in the boundary demarcation exercises of the proposed Mt. Muanenguba Integral Ecological Reserve (Mt Muanenguba Herpetological sanctuary). The Communities through the review of Socio-economic activities identified crop cultivation and animal domestication as the most prioritized livelihood options to compliment conservation efforts



Community sensitization meeting Janda village



Participatory map with boundary points identified



Training of Village forest management committees



“TECHNICAL OPERATION UNIT (TOU), AN INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION”

the opinion of Mr. Atemnkeng William Tazanu, Conservator Bakossi National Park

The Concept of Technical Operations Unit (TOU) was developed upon the creation of the then Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MINEF) in 1992. The Forest Environment Sector Program framework was elaborated in 2003 by the Government of Cameroon with the assistance of international development partners and organisations. TOU considered as a delimited geographical area based on the ecological, socio-economic, cultural and political characteristics for the enhancement of integrated landscape management involving all stakeholders is a participatory management concept suitable to enhance Biodiversity Conservation within the BBML expounded by the conservator in an interview with the SUFACHAC communication officer. Below are his responses;

**How can we best describe the TOU?
(A tool, Concept, an approach or a platform)?**

The TOU process can be considered with all the above appellations depending on the context in which it is used. It can be termed an integrated landscape management approach as it deals with various land use aspects (BDC, farming, watershed management, resources use), equally as a multi-

stakeholder land use-based forest management tool since it focuses on management interventions on specific land uses. On the other hand since it promotes societal dialogue between managers of various land-use types it can also be considered a platform that brings together these various actors to discuss, exchange, consult, coordinate and mitigates on existing and potential conflicts on land and resource use.

Why was it adopted in Cameroon?

A multiplicity of activities have been going on within and around the protected areas by different actors with little or no considerations on the sustainable management of natural resources resulting to a lot of Conflicts.

In order to minimize such conflicts between actors and increase their active involvement in the management of natural resources there was need for such a coordinated platform. Most rural livelihoods are dependent on the use of natural resources that usually results to uncertainties in its management thus the adoption of this platform to serve as a forum for exchanges between resource users and managers to identify and agree ways to increase contribution of natural resource management to poverty alleviation.

Are there any existing TOUs in Cameroon?

Yes, 05 existing ones (Korup Ndongore, Mount Cameroon, Takamanda, - mone) in the SWR, South East TOU in the East region and the Campo MAAN in the South.

How are they currently managed?

The conservator of the TOU is the Divisional Delegate of MINFOF within the division where the TOU is found. The latter is appointed by Prime Ministerial decree. A Management Committee is equally created and organized by PM decree as well. The key advantage is that within the TOU area, all stakeholders elaborate and implement a holistic management concept using the synergy of their partnership. Its operation involves bringing together the actors in meetings and workshops for update on the implementation of their various activities once a year.

Are there any new ideas or innovations that have come up in the course of present management which can be replicated elsewhere?

Yes. Most TOU meetings or workshops are held only once a year but if it could be increased for at least twice a year then it will help to well inform the TOU management to minimize errors currently encountered in the management process. The TOU conservator is the Divisional delegate for MINFOF whose impact/presence is hardly felt by various actors in the field since most of the actors are not MINFOF hence increasing interactive activities will strengthen collaboration

What can you say about the creation of the TOU within the BBML in terms of sustainable farming and biodiversity conservation?

The Coming of TOU in this landscape is really timely as it is going to reinforce conservation initiatives within the landscape. Firstly the TOU managers will speak same language with existing Protected Area (PA) managers within the landscape. Secondly it will have a stronger voice as far as the conservation of natural resources outside the PAs is concern. The activities of the existing PAs are limited only to the villages that are within the periphery of the PAs in question, but the TOU with a higher management mandate will be able to extend activities to include all other villages within the landscape to

obtain higher participation in natural resource management. The creation of TOU can support the organization of farmers into cooperatives to help market their products within the landscape. It can also help to add value to their products through capacity building on transformation and preservation of agricultural products. Existence of a TOU can support in marketing the existing potentials (agriculture, tourism and forestry) of the landscape to attract private sector investor's and researchers. TOU might be an advocate for important developmental projects which are supportive to biodiversity conservation but are not currently considered by other actors within the landscape.

Any other information we need to know about the TOU?

Oh yes though not new information but I will like to emphasize that partners and communities within the TOU need to be fully aware of the TOU concept in order for them to be actively involved in every aspect of the TOU management. The conservator on the other hand also need to be empowered in terms of upgrading his/her capacity to better coordinate partners to improve on the implementation of related activities.



***SYNERGY BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS
STRENGTHENS COLLOBORATION AND
EFFECTIVE MANAGMENT***