



30 years  
1990-2020

# Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

[www.dzanga-sangha.org](http://www.dzanga-sangha.org)



*Halloween night in Dzanga Sangha © David Santiago*

## Newsletter October 2020



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## Wildlife

Just like every year at this time, elephants spend most of their time around our headquarters. Most of them are males, both young and adult, and move either as solitary or in groups. Interestingly, they are especially numerous this year. However, their presence very close to the village poses a new kind of challenge as children try to get close enough to observe them, without any fear. The younger children even try to interact with the elephants by shouting or throwing stones thereby endangering themselves. Mindful of the potential risk, we have designated ecoguards to closely observe the situation especially in the evening to minimize any interactions and possible accidents.



*A room with a view © Luis Arranz*

There has been heavy rainfall throughout the month with most parts of Bayanga flooded.



*Bayanga, the African Venice © Denis Lambert*





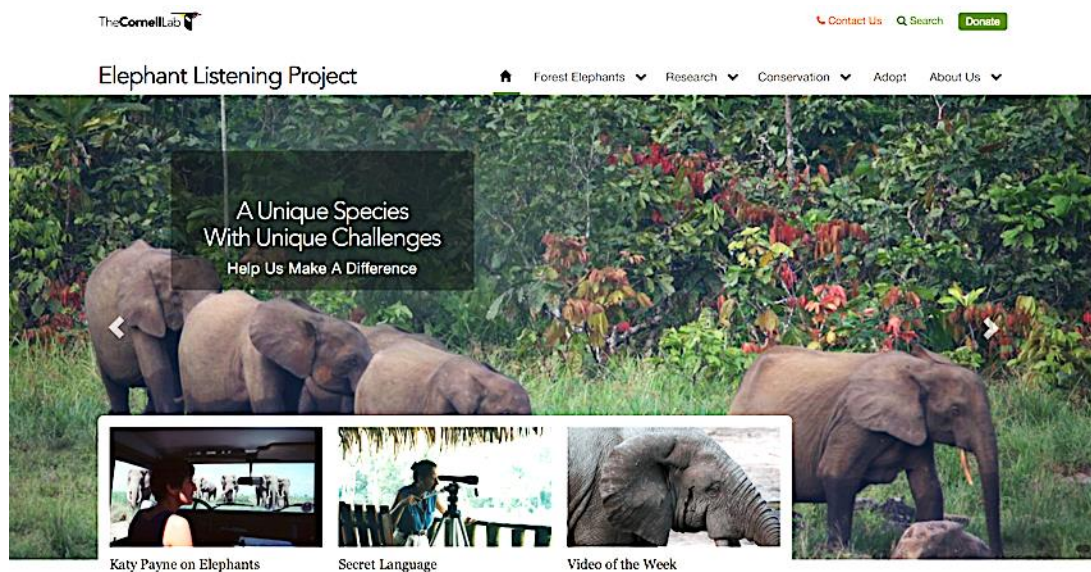
In October, we received another wave of camera trap collected by the ecoguard teams. Out of the 328 cameras installed during the wildlife survey, we have received 260 back and lost 19 cameras, some to elephants (5) but the majority to people. We will receive the last cameras from the field at the beginning of November.

A new infant was born into the Makumba gorilla group by the female Malui on October 23. Malui who is the mother of the twins, gave birth exactly 4 years and 9 months after the birth of the twins. We have observed than mother and infant are doing well. The baby was named Epolo referring to dead leaves on which Malui was found lying with the baby for the first time.



*Epolo, the new member of the Makumba family ©Janika Wendefeuer*

We have finally signed an MOU with the Elephant Listening Project (<https://elephantlisteningproject.org>) from Cornell University to re-establish a research presence at Dzanga Bai, for the purpose of monitoring the health and demography of the forest elephant population and to deter poaching in the vicinity.



## Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA



© Miguel Bellosta

<b>Scientific name:</b>	Pantodon buchholzi
<b>English name:</b>	Butterfly fish
<b>Taxonomy:</b>	Class Avtinopterygii
	Order Osteoglossiformes
	Family Pantodontidae
	Genus Tantodon



Butterfly fish live in swamps or the calmer parts of the rivers where they can be seen on the surface. They require a year-round temperature of 73–86 °F (23–30 °C).

They grow to a maximum length of 12 cm and have a large mouth, with numerous teeth adapted to hunting. The caudal fin is long, pointed and rather ragged. They have extremely brilliant colored dorsal side of the body olive-colored and ventral side silvery yellow.

The freshwater butterflyfish is a specialized surface hunter. Its eyes are constantly trained to the surface and its upturned mouth is specifically adapted to capture small prey along the water surface

They are able to jump hugely out of the water, to escape from predators or to search for food. They are carnivorous, feeding on terrestrial insects and aquatic larvae and nymphs of insects

For its reproduction, produce a mass of large floating eggs at the surface which hatch in about seven days.

It is a very appreciate species for aquariums



## Anti-poaching

The guards carried out regular and informed patrols throughout the month. Two elephant carcasses were found not far from Bai Hokou resulting from poaching.



*We have lost two elephants this month © Frederick Singa*

### **Main DSPA Patrols data:**

43 regular patrols and 3 BLAB patrols. In total 1.808 rangers/days, 1.637 km traveled on foot and covering an area of 1.512 km<sup>2</sup>. No one bi or tri national patrol because the COVID 19. This resulted in the seizure of 9 manufactured 12-gauge shotguns, 3 homemade 12-gauge shotguns.80 cartridges type 00. In addition, 4.914 metal snares were dismantled and 25 kilograms of meet were confiscated.

2 recent poaching death carcasses were found

11 small scale poachers were caught, sensitized and liberated.

## Community Development

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We do not know how long we will be able to continue saying this, but another month has just passed and we still have not detected any case of coronavirus in the area. For our part, we continue to test all visitors who come from abroad upon arrival and keep them isolated until we have the results the next day.



*Testing at the arrival to DS ©Luis Arranz*

That is the good news. The other side of the coin is that after 8 months of keeping people alert about the pandemic but no cases observed here, people are already letting down their guard. We continue with sensitization campaigns but in as much as we insist that the virus still exists, people here consider it as something that has already passed. This has made implementation of protective measures even more challenging.

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The DSPA assisted Ba'Aka communities at the end of the period of confinement, in the rehabilitation and reconstruction



*©Luis Arranz*

of houses belonging to the most vulnerable people of the community. We provided raffia roofing sheets and the beneficiaries provided the rest of the local materials including wood, sticks, and ropes which we also helped them to transport.

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Two anthropologists visited Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas in October and November to support and strengthen ongoing community led initiatives as part of the community team for Chengeta Wildlife. Together with these anthropologists we have started the planning phase of the socio economic survey of DSPA and its periphery.





Aires Protégées



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The complaints mechanism in DSPA has been validated by the local community during a workshop organized by the Human Rights Center, led by the NGO Maison de l'Enfant et de la Femme Pygmées (MEFP). The validated document was approved by all stakeholders including the Sous-prefet of Bayanga, the Mayor of the Commune of Yobè-Sangha, DSPA directors, the Human Rights Center, village chiefs, district heads, the representatives of BaAka communities, youth representatives, representatives of women and religious groups. This mechanism will ensure peaceful and consensual resolution of conflicts concerning the Park. It should be noted that the mechanism was first conceived in 2018 and has been undergoing experimentation since then.



Participants at the complaint mechanism validation © Luis Arranz

#### **Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients**

Structure	Number of patients
Lindjombo Health Post	35
Monasao Health Post	181
Belemboke Health Post	356
Bayanga	43
Mobile clinic	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>793</b>



## Park Administration

Due to the regular heavy rainfall, the road to Bangui is in a very bad state, making our already complicated logistics very difficult. After spending 10 days on the road from Bangui, the tanker truck transporting our diesel could not arrive and we had to transport the 14,000 liters in drums to the Park.



*We tried...©Salem Koffi*



*...but it was not possible © Salem Koffi*



*Sometimes 4 x 4 is not enough and 20 x 20 is needed © Luis Arranz*

We are in contact with Project C.U.R.E. (Commission on Urgent Relief and Equipment) regarding the possibility of improving our health project in DSPA. CURE is a nonprofit, humanitarian relief organization that delivers donated medical supplies and equipment to hospitals and clinics throughout the developing world. Potential support from them would enable the installation of medical equipment in three of our health facilities in the area; Bayanga hospital and Monassao and Belemboke health posts.





Aires Protégées

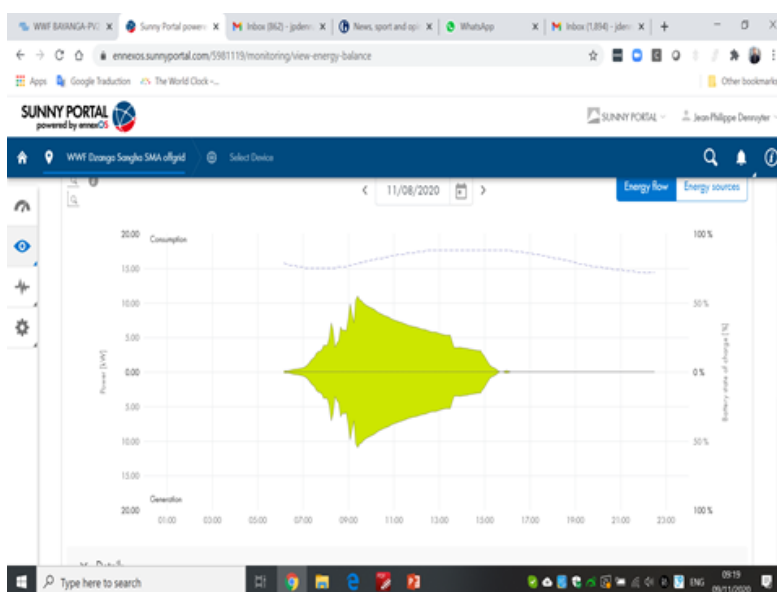


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A team of solar energy experts has come this month to increase again the solar capacity at Bayanga. An old, dysfunctional 20kWp solar power station was refurbished with new Victron inverters and works fine now. The power station is connected to the internet, enabling efficient remote monitoring. The already existing (SMA) solar plant has now also been connected to the internet, which means that the entire Bayanga grid operation can now be followed on the internet from wherever in the world. With this new increased solar production capacity, the diesel generator will only be used once in a while, when the weather is really bad.



©Luis Arranz



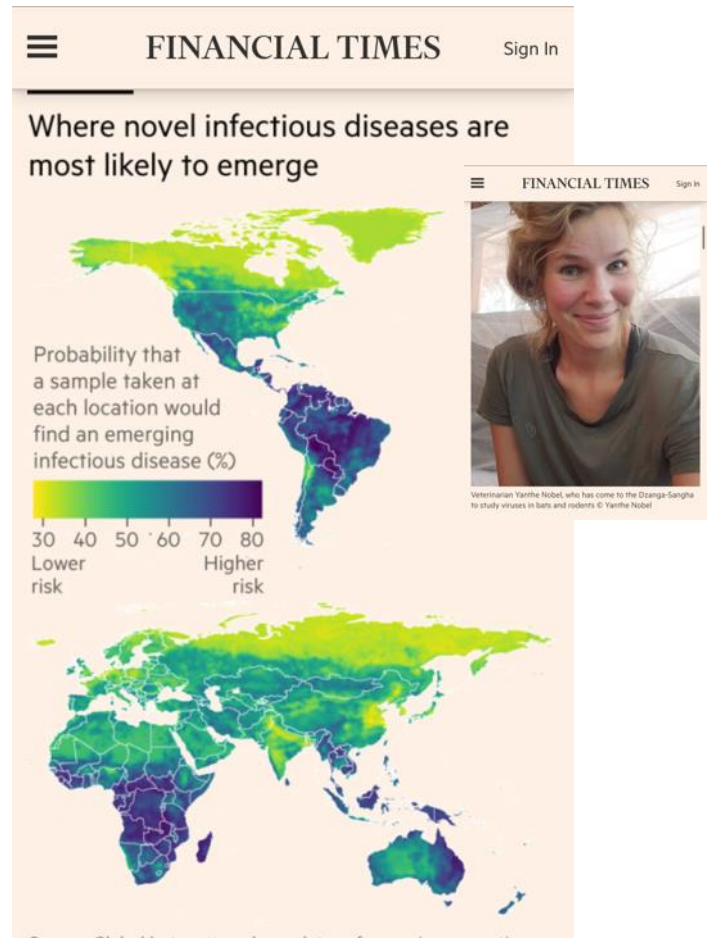
Now we can know exactly our production and consumption at any moment



## Tourism and Marketing

We took part in the second meeting with managers of other Parks in the region to share updates from each Park and try to plan for the future of tourism in the region. Given that the current situation in Europe and the US - where most of the tourists come from, is not favorable - we all agreed that it is too early to make any predictions. The Parks will remain closed until the month of January when we meet again.

Another couple of articles have been published this month. The first one is in the Financial Times about virus research in DSPA <https://www.ft.com/content/2a80e4a2-7fb9-4e2c-9769-bc0d98382a5c>.



The other one is about the TNS and was published in the EU DEVCO Green Development newsletter [https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/devco/item-detail.cfm?item\\_id=690551&newsletter\\_id=227&utm\\_source=devco\\_newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Green%20Development%20News&utm\\_content=Providing%20stability%20through%20conservation%20in%20the%20Congo%20Basin%20rainforest&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/devco/item-detail.cfm?item_id=690551&newsletter_id=227&utm_source=devco_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Green%20Development%20News&utm_content=Providing%20stability%20through%20conservation%20in%20the%20Congo%20Basin%20rainforest&lang=en)



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### Providing stability through conservation in the Congo Basin rainforest

15/10/2020



Wildlife conservation goes hand in hand with improving local livelihoods in one of the world's most intact tropical rainforest landscapes, the Trinational Sangha World Heritage Site in Central Africa.

© Tom Aveling



## Arrivals and departures



© Luis Arranz

Dr. Jost Robinson (right) has been working in DSPA since 2008. She currently serves as the Director of Sociocultural Research and Engagement for Chengeta Wildlife. Liz Hall (left) began working in DSPA in 2017 and is now the Technical Advisor for Chengeta Wildlife in this area



© Luis Arranz

Jean-Philippe Denruyter is solar energy expert from WWF who had already been at DS last year. Alim Koulchoumi and Felix Safouet are also solar energy experts from Cameroon