



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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DSPA receives funds from



Co-funded by the European Union



K Lisa Yang



Wildlife

Blacky was first seen in 1991 and the physical characteristics to identify him are one small tear on his right ear, and his long tusks. His age estimation is of 51 years and while other individuals are seen regularly at the clearing, Blacky has been absent since mid-2022. Big tuskers have become rare at Dzanga Bai, and seeing Blacky gives us hope that they are still around, and in good shape as he is.



We can compare the size of Blacky to other adult elephants © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF

Several individuals of the Echo family have reunited in the clearing after months of having been seen separated. Echo, the matriarch of the family, her daughters Echo III and Echo V, as well as the dependent offspring of each of them have been observed engaging in a greeting ceremony and spending time together. Greeting ceremonies take place when family or friends gather and recognize each other. The individuals flap their ears, stiff their necks, vocalize, sometimes even trumpeting, and many times offspring engages in play behavior after the greeting ceremony is over.

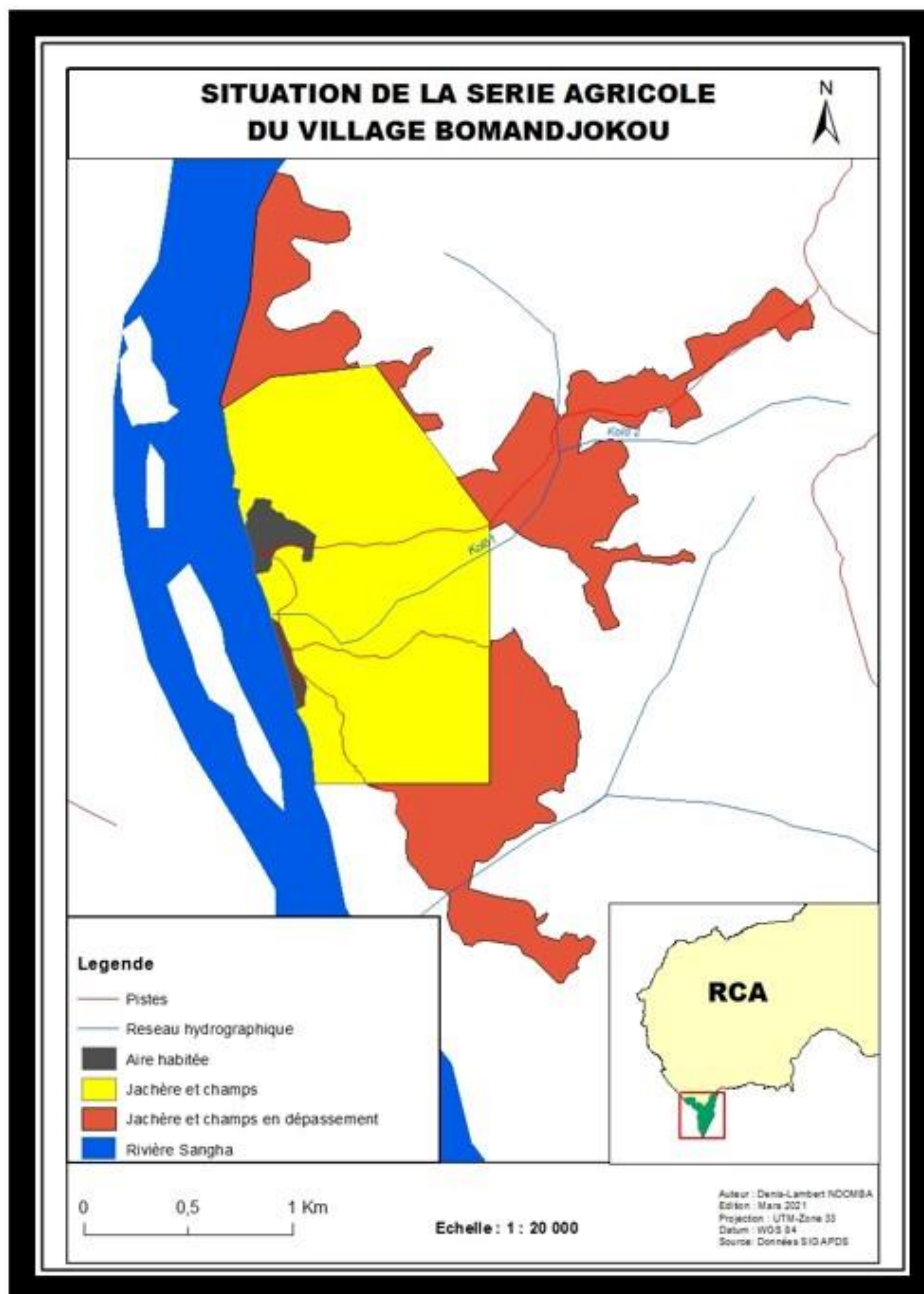


The greeting among the members of the Echo family © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



With the goal to further involve and train our partners at the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Area in the use of passive acoustic monitoring a joint field mission was organized in April, including representatives of the Dzanga Team, Chengeta Wildlife, eco-guards from the DSPA antipoaching department, the Hunter Association of Bayanga, the Ba'Aka Union, the park administration, and experienced trackers and porters. The team's objective was to exchange batteries and SD-cards for acoustic units, test firmware updates and the use of the new configuration utility on Android devices. The team walked 62km in four days and visited seven acoustic units!

The mapping study of the crop strip that started in June 2023 ended with the mapping in the villages of Kunda-Papaye and Kanza in April 2024, on the northern outskirts of the DSPA. There is now a complete inventory of the use and land status of the agricultural strip in the commune of Yobe-Sangha, which will greatly help the DSPA to develop rural development activities.








Ivonne Kienast, principal investigator of the Dzanga Forest Elephant Project, has been awarded the [Maribel Garcia Community Spirit Award 2024 by the Cornell Einhorn Center for Community Engagement](#). The award is given each year to a Cornell student for making a remarkable and creative contribution to the spirit of humanity. Ivonne received the honor in recognition of her creation of the “Ita Ti Doli” program that immerses young adults of communities in the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Area into the research and conservation activities at Dzanga Bai.

Of course, this award recognizes not only a Cornell student, but the full program that is a joined effort of the Dzanga Forest Elephant Project and the DSPA. The Club of Friends for Nature, led by Christian Bassoum, makes possible the selection of the participants of Ita Ti Doli, as well as the entire organization for taking the adolescents to the field site. The entire Dzanga Forest Elephant Project team is in charge of the hosting and the well-being of the children, as well as of the performance of the activities that they are immersed in. We want to congratulate everyone involved!



The Dzanga Forest Elephant Project team with two participants of the Ita Ti Doli program © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF

Dzanga Bai data collected in collaboration with the Elephant Listening Project: presence of mammals at the clearing based on the number of individuals counted every 30 minutes from 11:00 to 16:30 each day of the month.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
	0	73	151
	0	2	35
	0	7	9



Antipoaching

Araluen “Azza” Schumann, Director of the Pangolin Crisis Fund (PCF), visited Dzanga Sangha, which is home to three of the four African pangolin species: the giant, the black- and the white-bellied pangolins. Azza came to assist the DSPA with Chengeta Wildlife and the Forest Collective on conservation capacity building by implementing a community-driven approach to pangolin conservation in the DSPA. She was accompanied by Anthony Coe, from Chengeta Wildlife.



© Nuria Ortega

41 regular patrols were conducted involving 87 rangers. In total 1.584 rangers/days. 2.014 km were traveled on foot.

This resulted in the seizure of 6 manufactured 12-gauge firearms, and 2 homemade firearms, with 28 ammunitions.

174 kg of illegal wild meat were seized, and 1.438 metal snares were dismantled.

1 elephant carcass was found and 1 suspect arrested.

Community Conservation

In order to intensify the links of dialogue, a major football tournament was organized in Bayanga by the DSPA under the theme "Social cup for the biodiversity". Participants of the tournament were staff members of the DSPA departments (anti-poaching, logistics, community development, administration, research and logistics) and representatives from the villages of the DSPA (members of the hunters association ADELAC, the Union of Ba'aka Communities (UCB), the moto-taxi drivers, and the commercial traders). During the football several quizzes and competitions were organized with numerous prizes to be won (educational booklets, T-shirts, and basic supplies such as soap, basins, and buckets). The goal was to raise awareness on the subjects of conservation of biodiversity in a fun and engaging way among the general public present during the matches.



Rangers vs moto-taxi drivers © Amandine Toumbou



Show during the half time of the match © Amandine Toumbou

The measurement of plots of cultivable land has been completed and the beneficiaries have been identified. In total, 11 villages were selected for the agricultural campaign, reaching a total of 237 beneficiaries including 94 members of the Ba'aka community. The total area of old fallow prepared for this campaign is of 159 km². The process of purchasing a large quantity of corn, peanut and cassava seeds is underway for all the selected villages.

A total of 25 young people aged 18 to 30 received from the DSPA a kit of professional integration materials. 18 young single mothers received materials for sewing and saponification, 2 men for sewing and 5 young men for carpentry. The beneficiaries trained in saponification methods received refresher courses in saponification and awareness on handling of chemicals.



Homemade soap in Bayanga © Christian Bassoum

The extraordinary meeting of the DSPA Reflection and Exchange Committee was held on April 18th, 2024 in the Banquet Hall of Bayanga Town Hall, bringing together 45 participants from different social strata. The general objective of this meeting was to validate the draft of the new decision related to the DSPA Reflection and Exchange Committee (CRE-DSPA).



The relaunch of the weekly radio awareness program took place this month of April. Two programs were recorded and broadcasted. One hosting the anti-poaching department under the theme "Human-elephant conflicts: obligatory basic security measures" and second one hosted by the department of community conservation under the theme "Conservation and community development".



Radio Ndjoku is a really useful way to reach a great number of people living in the DSPA © Amandine Toumbou

Ndima-Kali organized 12 workshops for the youth to learn about cultivation and domestication of wild yams. The activities took place in 12 target villages of the project. Because many Ba'aka people depend on yams, the aim of this first experiment is to test the domestication of wild forest yams by making them available very close to households. Four villages (Yobé, Kounda-Papaye, Kanza and Nguenguéli) already have their seeds to start sowing.

Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	423
Belemboke Health Post	527
Total	940

Park Administration

An UNDP mission has visited DSPA to see the activities carried out last year thanks to their support, and to decide if they continue to provide support. They have confirmed that the financial support to DS will continue.



Members of the UNDP delegation who visited DS © Stef de Bethune

The DSPA Steering Committee composed until now only of members of the Ministries of Water and Forests and of Tourism on one hand, and of WWF on the other, decided in its last meeting to integrate the mayor of Sangha Mbaere and two representatives of the indigenous populations (one of them a woman). The goal is to involve the Ba'aka community in the management of the Park. We organized a meeting where the Ba'aka representatives were elected.



Participants to the meeting for choosing the Ba'aka representatives © Christian Bassoum

Tourism and Marketing

April was again a very busy month regarding tourists in DS.



DSPA is much more than elephants. Dancing.... © Nuria Ortega



...and climbing © Nuria Ortega



Arrivals and departures



© Nuria Ortega

Anthony Coe from Chengeta Wildlife visited DS on a work mission. Chengeta, has been supporting us for more than 6 years now and greatly improved the effectiveness of the law enforcement department.

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