



# Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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



*Luca Catalano*

## *Newsletter June 2025*



## DSPA receives funds from



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## DSPA collaborates with



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## Wildlife

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### Limo Group Officially Open to Tourism

We are thrilled to announce the official opening of the Limo group to tourism. After a thorough assessment by the habituation team, all indicators confirmed the group is ready to welcome visitors.

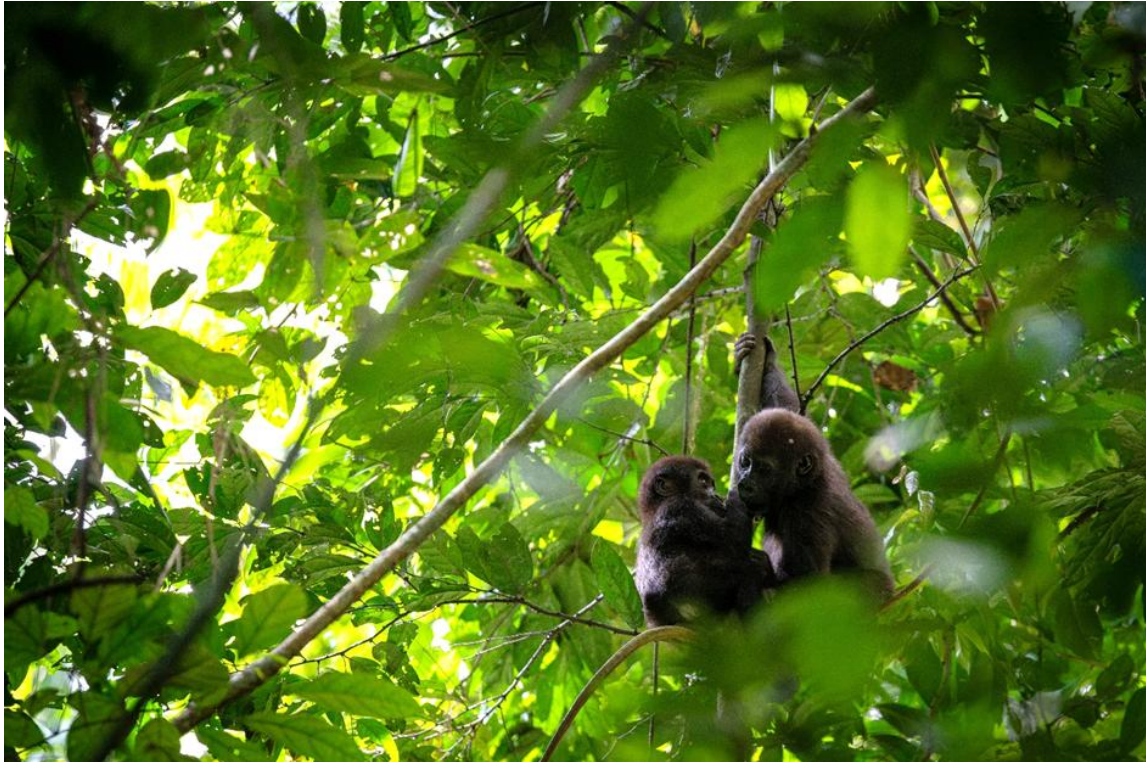
This milestone is especially meaningful, coming after three difficult years following the natural loss of all previously habituated silverbacks. Nearly a year after the passing of Makumba, who had been part of the DSPA family for 25 years, we are proud to introduce a new group to the public.

Thanks to a high number of already habituated females, the process to habituate the silverback Limo (2 years old) progressed rapidly. This success would not have been possible without the dedication and 25 years of experience of our primate habituation team.

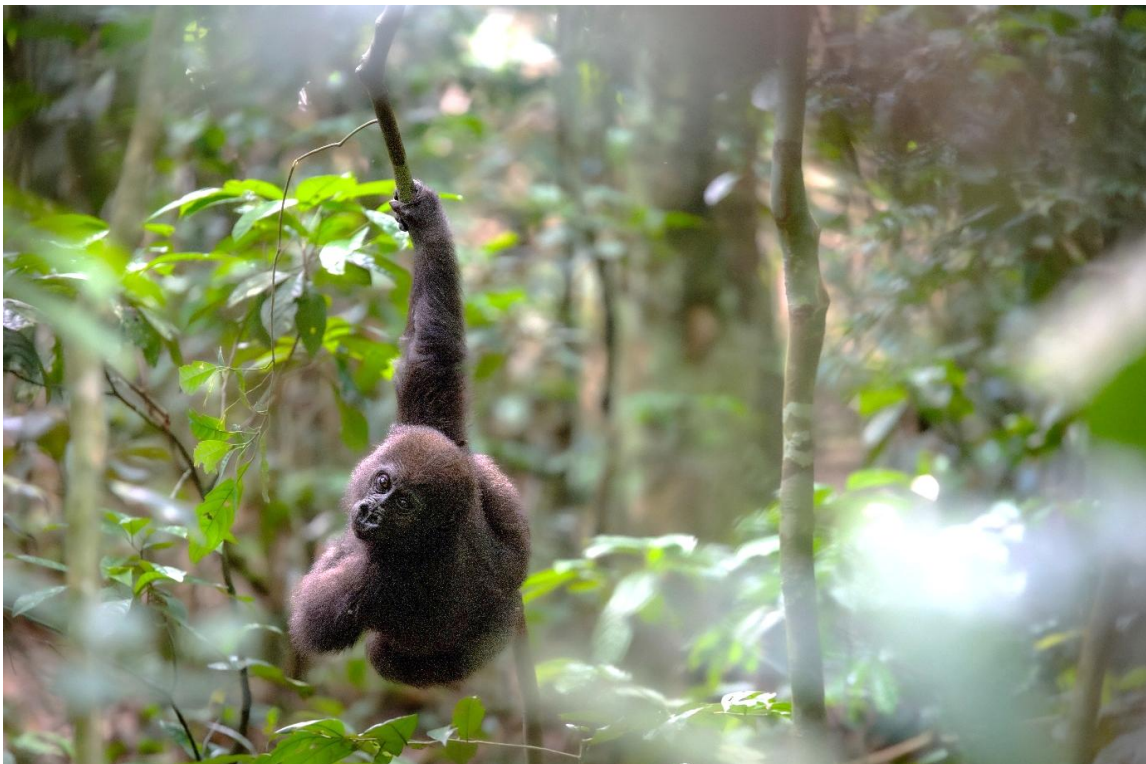


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#### Dzanga Bai Monitoring :

Beta, a 43 year old pregnant elephant, was seen lying down and rubbing her belly several times in one afternoon, an unusual behavior for adult elephants. She appeared uncomfortable, suggesting possible abdominal pain related to her pregnancy. A similar case was observed in Maureen, another female, shortly before she gave birth to a male calf.





Beta lying on the ground in pain at Dzanga Bai. © ELP pour le Yang Center/WWF.






Beta experiencing discomfort while lying on the ground at Dzanga Bai. ©ELP pour le Yang Center/WWF





*Beta attempting to stand up during a painful episode at Dzanga Bai. ©ELP pour le 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 60 minutes from 11:00 to 16:00 each day of the month.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
	0	77	125
	0	7	30
	0	8	11



## Discover the biodiversity of DSPA

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Class: Insecta

©Miguel Bellosta

Order: Mantodea

Family: Dactylopterygidae

Genus: Theopompella

Species: *T. fucra*

Common name: **bark mantis**

*Theopompella fucra*, commonly known as the bark mantis, is a remarkable praying mantis species found in the rainforests of Central Africa, including DSPA. This elusive insect lives entirely on tree trunks and branches, where its mottled brown and grey camouflage makes it nearly invisible.

With jagged limbs and a flattened body, *T. fucra* is perfectly adapted to ambush prey while blending into bark and lichen.

For those interested in learning more about mantid diversity in the region, see: Moulin, N., Decaëns, T., & Annoyer, P. (2017) *Diversity of mantids (Dictyoptera: Mantodea) of Sangha-Mbaere Region, Central African Republic, with some ecological data and DNA barcoding*





## Antipoaching

### Basic Field Ranger Training Underway in Kongana

The basic field ranger training is ongoing in Kongana, led by Chengeta Wildlife trainers under the supervision of the APDS Chief Warden. We are currently training 42 new rangers through an intensive program, including several weeks in the deep jungle of DSPA. The training emphasizes teamwork. Becoming a ranger is more than just a job, it's a lifelong commitment. You can also follow our upcoming photo documentary series explaining the ranger recruitment process now nearing completion on our Instagram: [instagram.com/dzanga.sangha](https://www.instagram.com/dzanga.sangha).



Every step demands effort and coordination in the mud ©Luca Catalano



Strengthen trust, coordination and team spirit ©Luca Catalano



### June Patrol Highlights from Dzanga-Sangha :

In June, a total of 33 regular patrols were conducted, involving 74 rangers, who completed a total of **1,374 patrol days**, covering **3,161 km on foot**. These efforts led to the seizure of **23 firearms** (including 3 homemade weapons and 6 hunting rifles), although no ammunition was confiscated.

A total of **2,756 wire snares** and **58 kg of bushmeat** (from 10 pieces) were also seized.

**Three individuals** were arrested for illegal hunting inside the National Park, and **13 awareness-raising sessions** were conducted with local communities.

## Community Conservation

### World Environment Day in Dzanga-Sangha

On June 5th, Dzanga-Sangha celebrated World Environment Day under the theme *“Beat Plastic Pollution”* with a vibrant day of activities in Bayanga. The event featured an environmental art and youth project competition, a tree planting campaign with 53 trees across town, a community cleanup, and a canoe race on the Sangha River. A mini-marathon was also held in tribute to the late APDS tracker Mr. Ngombo Dieudonné. The day served as a powerful moment of awareness and cultural celebration with local communities and Indigenous Peoples.



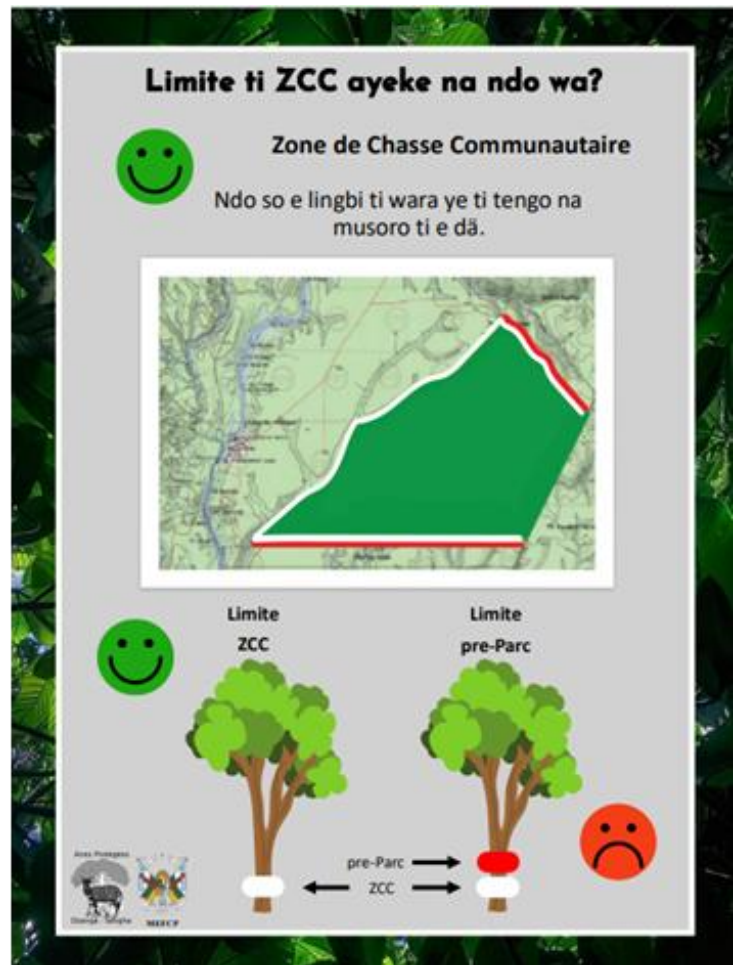
A symbolic tree planting session was carried out by the Deputy Brigade Commander of Bayanga and the Chief Warden of the APDS ©Frederic SINGA





Canoe race on the Sangha ©Amandine TOUMBOU and Christian BASSOUM

As part of the community hunting zone management plan, the 15 village bureaux set up as local resource governance structures, were sensitized on the ongoing demarcation of the hunting zone and deployment of the bioacoustics grid. The painting missions started in June and will finish in July, covering around 100km of linear distance.



Sensitization posters on the demarcation of the ZCC, and the field teams in action ©field team



### Barefoot College Partnership in DSPA

We welcomed partners from Barefoot College International to DSPA to launch a solar energy project aimed at bringing sustainable power to remote villages. Following community consultations, two women from Babongo and Nguenguéli were democratically elected as the first DSPA Solar Mamas. They will receive training at Barefoot's school in Tanzania and return as technicians to support their communities.



DSPA's new solar Mama, and meeting held in Babongo and Nguenguéli ©Amandine Toumbou





This month, we continue **agricultural campaign activities** in anticipation of the rainy season, including the purchase and distribution of yam seeds in four pilot villages. A video of this initiative is available here: [instagram.com/dzanga.sangha/reel/DMXPTMxiAId](https://www.instagram.com/dzanga.sangha/reel/DMXPTMxiAId).

**DSPA continue supporting four BaAka students** in their higher education in Bangui. Advanced students Cécile Assio Aya and Célestin Moyondo continue their law studies, with Cécile attending a UN training in Geneva this summer.

First-year students Robert Mboyo and Léonie Gbaya stand out : Robert completed agricultural training and was admitted to Agronomy Engineering School, while Léonie is pursuing nursing and recently finished a hospital internship. Both live with host families in Bangui and represent a hopeful future for BaAka youth.



Robert received his agricultural training completion certificate from the head of the Père Carme Agricultural Training Center in Bangui.  
© Father Michel Farina



A few images of Léonie during her neurology internship at Bangui General Hospital. © Sister Brigitte Bissa

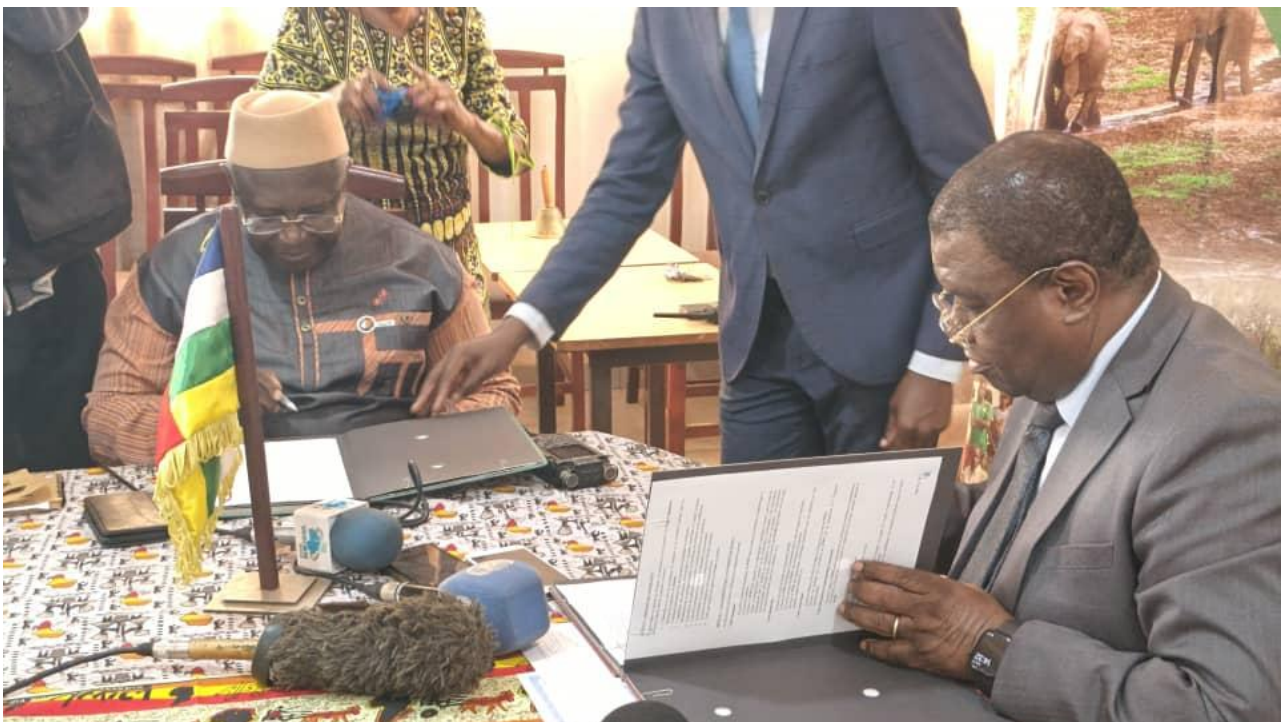
### *Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients*

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	
Belemboke Health Post	541
Community consultation	260
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>

## *Park Administration*

### **WWF CAR and University of Bangui Strengthen Scientific Cooperation :**

On June 23, 2025, WWF Central African Republic and the University of Bangui signed a scientific collaboration agreement. The agreement will support research on biodiversity and conservation, offering new opportunities for students and researchers. It also aims to build national capacity to address environmental challenges, including joint initiatives within the DSPA.



©Josiane Yassi

### **EarthRanger System Finalized and Training in DSPA**

In June, Ella Le Borgne supported the DSPA team in finalizing the EarthRanger system for data collection across departments. Team members from Law Enforcement, Research & Monitoring, and Community Development were trained in its use, marking the completion of the DSPA EarthRanger model.





This centralized system will strengthen our understanding of conservation efforts and enhance field impact. The next step is to develop smart dashboards to analyze data and generate actionable insights.



©Antoine Ede



**Solar Pumping System Installed at Baï Hokou Research Camp**  
A solar pumping system was installed at the Baï Hokou research camp to protect biodiversity, promote green energy for electricity production, and improve living conditions for staff, researchers, and visitors staying temporarily or regularly at the camp.

©Felix Safouet



## Professional Training for Mechanics and Drivers

An 10 day technical training was provided by Toyota Gibraltar Stock Holdings (TGS), led by Valerian Lemoine. Twenty three participants including drivers from Bangui and APDS, garage chiefs, a mechanic, and a logistician attended.



©Ray Hencker

## Arrivals and departures



As part of the ongoing IKI project in DSPA, Dr. Simon Hoyte, Ingrid Lewis (UCL) and Dr. May Hokan (WWF Germany) came to visit and help design ongoing activities focusing on participatory natural resource management and 'One Health'. UCL also gave training on their famous Sapelli tool.

© Stef de Bethune



Brenda Geoffrey and Valentin Karm from Barefoot College International

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