



# Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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



Artistic illustration of Dzanga-Sangha highlighting its rich biodiversity and the strong connection between local communities and conservation ©Gabriel de la Riva

## Newsletter February/March 2026



## DSPA receives funds from



Co-funded by  
the European Union



FONDATION  
POUR LE  
TRI-NATIONAL  
DZANGA  
SANGHA

**Cornell**

***K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation  
Bioacoustics***

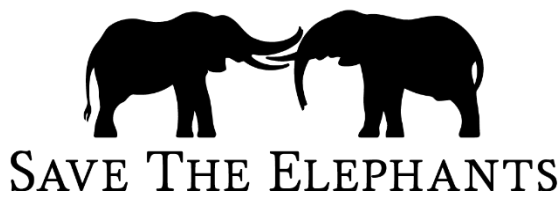


## **Ehepaar Fronja**





## DSPA collaborates with



## Wildlife

---

A 16-year-old female known as Gavra III, the daughter of Gavra (mother), was first identified in 2022. Since that initial observation, she has consistently frequented the salt pan. Gavra III was observed to be pregnant; however, due to the lack of detailed information on the stages of elephant pregnancy, it was not possible to predict an expected birth date. Finally, on February 23, 2026, she returned accompanied by her newborn calf.



Adult female Gavra III at Dzanga Bai seen on Feb 23, 2026 with her newborn. © ELP for the Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics/WWF

---

### Newborn Arrival for 7th Tuskless III

A 35-year-old female known as 7th Tuskless III was first identified in 2022. Since that initial observation, she had been consistently visiting the bai while in an advanced stage of pregnancy. In October 2023, she was finally seen with her newborn male calf at the bai. Tragically, just one month later, on November 23, she lost the calf at the bai. A veterinary team conducted a necropsy, which returned inconclusive (negative) results. Following this event, 7th Tuskless III continued to visit the bai. At first, it was difficult for us to determine whether she had conceived again, given the shock she had experienced. However, over time, it became evident that she was pregnant once more.




On February 15, she returned again to the bai, this time accompanied by a new female calf. It is important to note that elephant gestation lasts approximately 22 months. Based on this, we assume that she conceived again not long after the loss of her previous calf.



Infant of 7th Tuskless III at Dzanga Bai seen on Feb 15, 2026. © ELP for the Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics/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.**




**February 2026**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
	42	96	209
	0	20,4	40
	0	13	14



March 2026



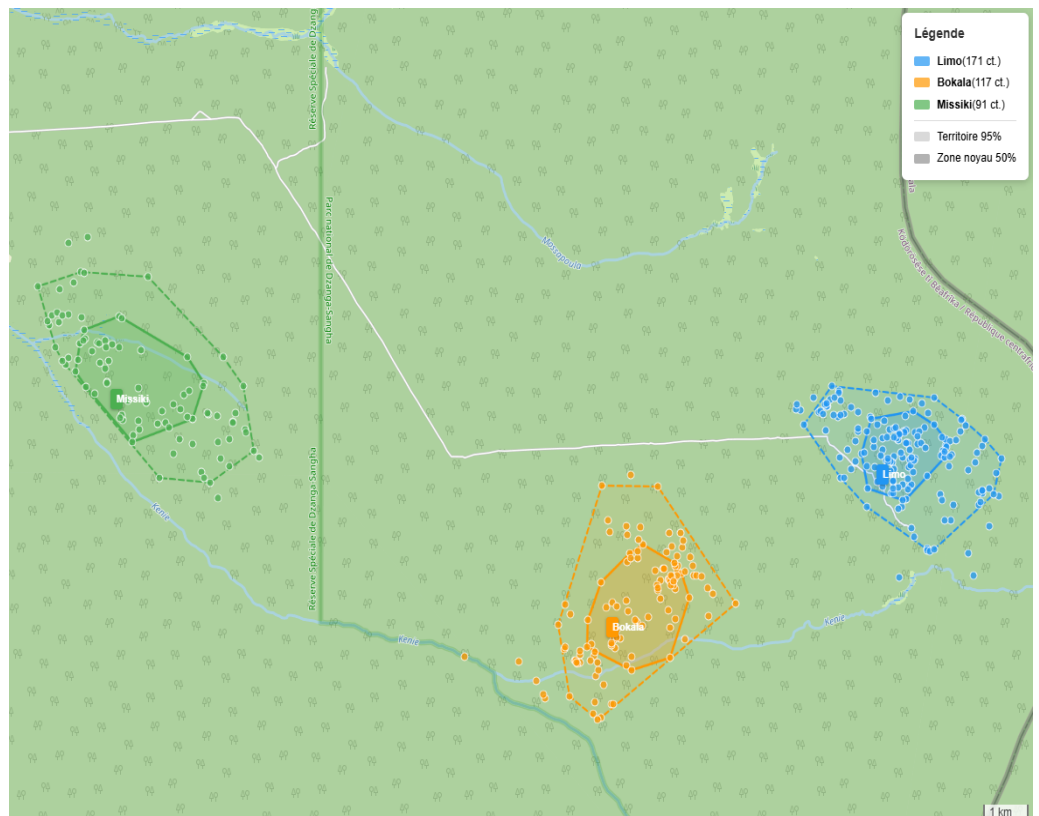
Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	42	66	134
	0	18,3	40
	0	10,4	16

### Primate Habituation Program

During February and March 2026, the Primate Habituation Program maintained strong field performance, with consistent daily monitoring and a high gorilla contact rate. The habituated Limo group continued to show stable behavior, with long observation periods and minimal reactivity, confirming its advanced habituation status, while also receiving a steady number of visitors. Meanwhile, the Bokala and Missiki groups remained under active habituation, showing gradual progress despite lower visibility linked to dense vegetation and late contacts. In parallel, habituated agile mangabeys were regularly tracked in the Bai-Hokou sector. Overall, field efforts remained intensive and productive, contributing valuable data on primate behavior and habituation progress.

#### Données Q1 2026 — Contacts nettoyés

Limo	
Contacts	171
Surface 95%	8.6 km <sup>2</sup>
Janvier	60
Février	53
Mars	58
Bokala	
Contacts	117
Surface 95%	10.7 km <sup>2</sup>
Janvier	48
Février	39
Mars	30
Missiki	
Contacts	91
Surface 95%	11.7 km <sup>2</sup>
Janvier	37
Février	23
Mars	31



Territories of the 3 habituated gorilla families



## Elephant Monitoring: February Collaring Mission

From February 21 to 28, a collaring mission was successfully conducted with the involvement of Frédéric Singa, the DSPA veterinarian, and the support of Joel Alves, a veterinarian from WildScapes.

During this mission, 10 elephant collars equipped with built-in drop-off mechanisms were deployed, along with 7 acoustic units. The University of Colorado provided specialized bioacoustics support, marking the first deployment of such devices on African forest elephants.

The data collected from these technologies will significantly improve our understanding of how elephants use APDS and help inform and adapt conservation strategies accordingly.



©Antoine Ede



The collaring team, just before the elephant wakes up, already equipped with a GPS device and an acoustic unit ©Antoine Ede

## *Antipoaching*

**During the month of February**, 42 regular patrols were conducted, mobilizing 102 rangers. These operations totaled 1,930 patrol days, covering 4,314 km on foot inside and around the protected area. Law enforcement activities resulted in the seizure of 10 firearms, including 3 homemade weapons, as well as 45 hunting rifle cartridges. Teams also carried out the removal and destruction of 3,734 wire snares, and confiscated 19 kg of bushmeat and one ivory tusk tip. As part of efforts to combat wildlife crime, four individuals were arrested for illegal hunting activities targeting protected wildlife species. The suspects were transferred to the competent judicial authorities by DSPA. An elephant carcass of undetermined cause of death was discovered. In addition, confirmed poaching incidents involved one forest elephant and one western lowland gorilla.

**During the month of March**, DSPA mobilized 101 eco-guards to conduct 44 regular patrols, totaling 1,868 patrol days and covering 4,606 km on foot within the protected area. These operations resulted in the seizure of 18 firearms, including 9 homemade weapons, as well as 5 rounds of ammunition. Teams also carried out the removal and seizure of 1,545 wire snares and confiscated 28 pieces of bushmeat. Four individuals were intercepted while engaged in illegal activities. Following verification, they received awareness-raising sessions. A carcass of a chimpanzee, confirmed to have died from natural causes, was discovered.



©Emmanuel Cenciai

DSPA warmly thanks the Game Rangers African Association (GRAA) for their generous donation of Jim Green African Rangers Boots for our field teams.



## Community Conservation

In February, DSPA reinforced its commitment to education by distributing school supplies and teaching materials to 6,637 students and 159 teachers across 31 partner schools. The official ceremony, held at Bayanga High School, stood out this year with the meaningful involvement of rangers, whose presence created powerful moments of connection and inspiration among students.

This initiative not only supported learning but also sparked new vocations, encouraging young people to become future conservationists and environmental stewards.



©Amandine Toumbou et Rogatien Massamba



©Amandine Toumbou et Rogatien Massamba



Five DSPA artisans completed a two and a half month training in Bangui with NDARA to strengthen their skills, including tailoring. Back in Bayanga, they will set up a workshop to produce high quality, locally made crafts for tourists and wider markets, helping boost community income.



©Ndara

*Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients (February/March 2026)*

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	376
Belemboke Health Post	976
Community consultation	1062
<b>Total</b>	<b>2414</b>

## One Health

### HIV/Tuberculosis Awareness Campaign

In partnership with the Bayanga Secondary Hospital and the DSPA mobile clinic, an awareness and screening campaign was conducted over seven days in three villages (Yandoumbé, Mossapoula, and Yondo). Approximately 2,000 people were reached through sensitization activities, and 124 individuals were screened for Tuberculosis and HIV.



## Ecoguard Training and Community Engagement

Twenty-two ecoguards were trained in carcass swab sampling to strengthen epidemiological surveillance in remote and hard-to-reach areas.



Training workshop for ecoguards on sample collection using swabs ©Frederic Singa

A total of 174 participants, including bushmeat vendors, hunters, porters, and firearm owners, attended a community meeting on bushmeat monitoring. The feedback showed 73% support for surveillance activities, 9% opposition, and 18% abstention.



©Frederic Singa



## DSPA Administration

---

DSPA have long been committed to achieving energy independence, with a steady and sustained effort over the years to develop renewable energy solutions. This long-term vision has progressively materialized through the expansion of solar infrastructure, which now supplies most of the electricity used in the park and surrounding communities, supporting both conservation work and local development.

For more details, please see the full article:

<https://wwf.panda.org/?15589966/Forest-Elephants-And-Football-Games-in-Dzanga-Sangha>

---

### Forest elephants and football games in Dzanga-Sangha

*Posted on January, 23 2026*

In the heart of the Congo Basin, Dzanga-Sangha boasts breathtaking wildlife alongside growing solar capacity. With 98% of electricity consumption powered by the sun, conservation efforts and local quality of life are looking brighter.



Forest elephants at Dzanga Bai, Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas, Central African Republic. Photo Credit: ©Andy Issacson / WWF-US

\*It is an exceptional place...the one and only place in the world where more than 100 forest elephants can be observed and

---

On March 16, 2026, DSPA organized the official insignia ceremony for five newly promoted non-commissioned officers and senior officers from the Ministry of Water and Forests, followed by their oath-taking on March 17 at the Nola High Court. The event, attended by the Prefect of Sangha-Mbaéré, featured military honors, official speeches, and concluded with a parade.

All five officers are assigned to DSPA, where they contribute across key departments, including research (notably elephant monitoring and agroforestry projects), and law enforcement activities.



©APDS/WWF

## Tourism and marketing



In March, we organized for the first time a combined visitor experience between **Dzanga-Sangha and Salonga**, with charter flights linking these two extraordinary Congo Basin landscapes, marking a major step forward in ecotourism development.

The journey brought together Lisa Yang, Luis Arranz, former Director of DSPA and now Senior Director in Salonga, Yang Kwai-Chern Lisa, David Akana, and Rhet Butler, who experienced both parks as part of this pioneering cross-landscape visit.

©APDS/WWF



Flight over the Congo Basin ©Alice Peretie



## *Arrivals and departures*



We warmly thank **Andrea Sotto Mayor** for nearly three years of dedicated service to the Primate Habituation Programme (PHP). Through deeply emotional moments, including the loss of Makumba, he showed exceptional resilience and redoubled his efforts to support the programme's recovery and strength. His commitment and humanity have left a lasting mark on the team.

The bar has been set very high for his successor.



We welcome **Nazi Tiestella Namkoisse Gbippa**, a Central African veterinarian recruited as a PhD student under the InForBio project. Her research will focus on small mammals.



We also welcome **Jésus Herman Boutélé** who has integrated the Biomonitoring Unit. A trained forest engineer, he has recently been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the Ministry of Water and Forests.



We welcome **Gloria Maret Lassem** as the new Environmental Education Facilitator for the Ita ti Doli APDS children's programme.



A WWF US delegation composed of Cesario Kerry Michelle, Paya De Marcken, Brittany William, Melanie Gade, and Gillian Pais from Mc Kinsey visited Dzanga Sangha.



Also we were happy to host a working visit from WWF Germany leadership team, composed of Philipp Goeltenboth, Meike Zeddies Knappe, Manuela Anita, Selvi Naidu, and Paula Stuckatz.



We also host a film crew working on a One Health documentary, with Jonas Gerding, Dietmar Klump, and Lukas Arkadius joining us in the field.

We also had the pleasure of hosting a conservation expert team composed of Siva Sundaresan, Mark Gately, Luke Hunter, Ashley Robson, Chris Thouless, and Peter Lindsey, as part of a visit supported by the Rob Walton Foundation.

- *This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of WWF CAR and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*