Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

www.dzanga-sangha.org



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Newsletter Juin/Juillet 2026

DSPA receives funds from

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Cornell

K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics

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et l'agriculture

AFRICAN FOREST
ELEPHANT FOUNDATION

DSPA collaborates with

CHENGETA WILDLIFE

MEFP

ELEPHANT LISTENING PROJECT

HIOH HELMHOLTZ Institute for One Health

SMA

WildinSYNC

INSTITUTE OF VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY CZECH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

RADIO NDJOKU BAYANGA RCA

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SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

Planète radio

GAME RANGERS ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA

SAPELI Programme Communautaire Aires Protégées Dzanga Sangha

THE FOREST COLLECTIVE

Wildlife



Sometimes, it's the elephants that are outnumbered ©Thomas Nicollon

To better understand grey parrot populations, researchers at Dzanga Bai and Cornell University are comparing visual counts with acoustic data. Three days a week, every 30 minutes, they count or estimate the number of parrots present at Dzanga Bai. In parallel, they use audio recorders to estimate the number of individuals based solely on sound. This project will determine whether acoustic monitoring is as accurate as direct observation or if there is a significant discrepancy between the two methods. If the results confirm that acoustics can effectively estimate the number of parrots in a clearing, passive acoustic monitoring will become a powerful tool for studying remote sites.

Newborn for Gomorrah V

Gomorrah V, a 14-year-old subadult female (born in 2012), was initially recorded as a male in our identification database. In 2022, her sex was corrected following a re-identification process based on a distinctive tear in her left ear, first observed in 2016 and unchanged ever since. Since her first appearance, Gomorrah V has been a regular visitor to Dzanga Bai, often accompanied by her mother, although she is occasionally observed alone. On 7 July 2026, Gomorrah V returned to the bai with her first offspring, a

newborn female named Gomorrah V(II). This new addition represents another encouraging sign for the long-term viability of Dzanga-Sangha's forest elephant population and highlights the importance of continued monitoring efforts 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.

Juin 2026

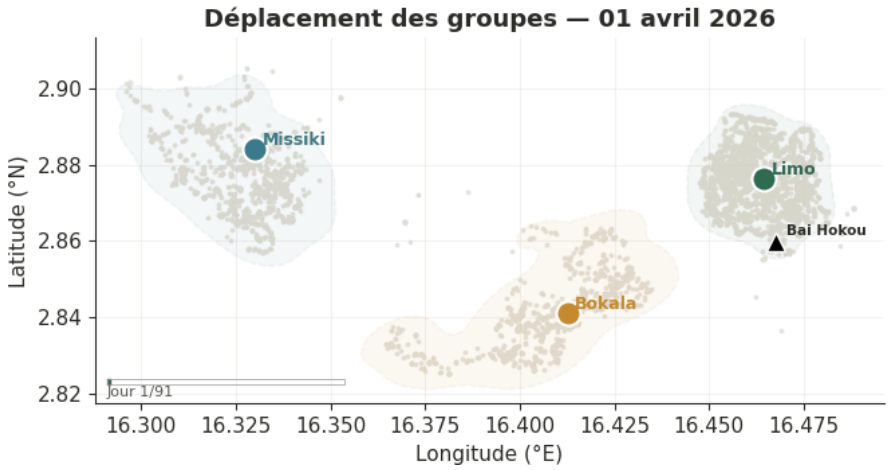
Species	*Minimum*	*Average*	*Maximum*
	**15**	**72**	**126**
	**0**	**14**	**36**
	**0**	**7**	**14**

Juillet 2026

Species	*Minimum*	*Average*	*Maximum*
	**20**	**71**	**153**
	**0**	**2**	**32**
	**0**	**7**	**13**

Gorilla group territory

Monitoring teams continued intensive tracking of the three habituated gorilla groups of Dzanga-Sangha. Updated movement maps now provide an increasingly precise picture of gorilla space use and habitat preferences, strengthening both conservation planning and tourism management. The Limo group maintained a 100% contact rate throughout the quarter.





Limo©Allard Bloom

Antipoaching

"The month of June saw the deployment of 114 écoguards, who conducted 57 patrols throughout the protected area and its surrounding buffer zone. These operations totaled 2,296 eco-guard days and covered 4,742 km, including more than 2,534 km completed during foot patrols (and 3,132 km specifically under regular foot patrol missions). One patrol team alone (Rapid Response Team) covered 373 km on foot during the month.
Anti-poaching operations resulted in the seizure of 22 firearms, including 13 homemade firearms, 8 shotguns, and 1 war rifle, as well as 85 shotgun cartridges (12-gauge manufactured). Écoguards also removed 5,101 wire snares from the forest. In addition, 190 kg of bushmeat were confiscated.
A total of 3 elephant carcasses resulting from poaching with firearms were discovered during the reporting period (with 3 ivory tusks seized). Teams carried out 7 arrests and conducted 64 awareness sessions."

"The month of July saw the deployment of 118 écoguards, who conducted 57 patrols throughout the protected area and its surrounding buffer zone. These operations totaled 2,149 eco-guard days and covered 4,651 km, including more than 1,742 km completed on foot (with 2,463 km covered under regular foot patrol missions). One patrol team alone (team 17) covered 258 km on foot during the month.
Anti-poaching operations resulted in the seizure of 13 homemade firearms, as well as cartridges (522 shotgun cartridges of 12-gauge and 3 factory-made rounds). Écoguards also removed 5,415 wire snares from the forest. Compared with the previous month, the sharp increase in both the number of firearms and wire snares seized highlights the intense, sustained pressure being exerted on wildlife.
One elephant carcass resulting from poaching was discovered during the reporting period (with 0 ivory tusks seized). Teams carried out 4 arrests and conducted 4 awareness sessions."



Boxes of Ammos seized by DSPA Rangers©*DPS/APDS*



Monthly seizure©*DPS/APDS*

Recognising Courage on the Frontline

A patrol team from the Department of Protection and Surveillance was officially recognised for bravery and professionalism following a successful anti-poaching operation that resulted in the arrest of an armed poacher and the seizure of an AK-47 rifle and ammunition



©DPS/APDS

Community Conservation

Solar Mamas

The Barefoot programme has now entered its implementation phase. Following their training at the Barefoot College in Zanzibar, the Solar Mamas have begun installing solar home systems in communities across the landscape. Working alongside APDS Community Development staff and the DSPA solar expert, they are now putting their newly acquired skills into practice by installing solar panels, inverters and household lighting systems, bringing reliable energy to households in their remote villages.



©Thomas Nicollon



©ThomasNicollon

Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients (June/July 2026)

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	475
Belemboke Health Post	900
Community consultation	1162
Total	2537

DSPA Administration

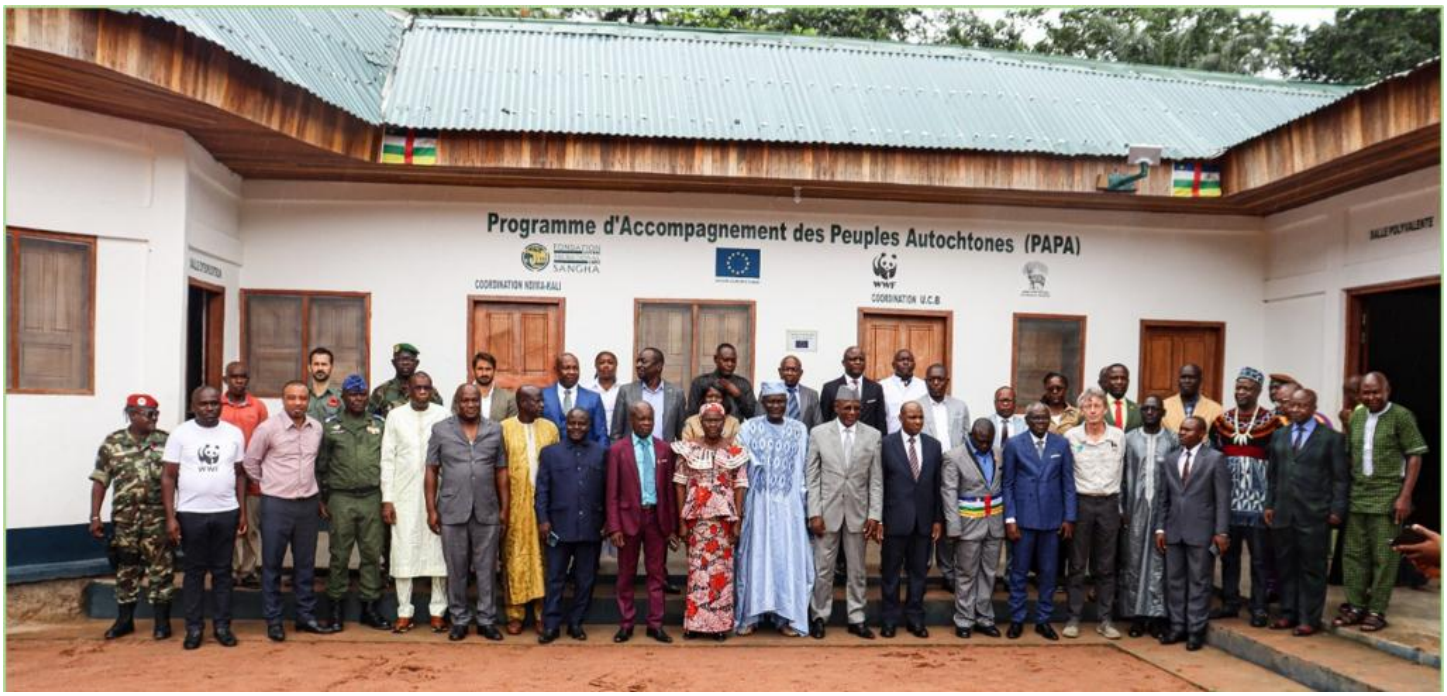


©Pierre Jean Fasan

In June 2026, the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas welcomed a delegation from the European Union Delegation to the Central African Republic, led by H.E. Diego Paturel Escalona, accompanied by Mario Frances Biosca and Jean-Marc Gauthier. The delegation was joined by a media team comprising Pierre Jean Fasan and Hybrid as part of the EU Biodiversity Communication Campaign. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss the European Union's future engagement in Dzanga-Sangha and to highlight the landscape's contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. This photograph was taken during a courtesy visit to the Bayanga Town Hall.

Bayanga Hosts the 9th Tri-National Sangha Monitoring Committee Meeting

From 16 to 18 July 2026, Bayanga hosted the 9th meeting of the Sangha Tri-National Monitoring Committee, bringing together representatives from Cameroon, the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. Discussions focused on transboundary conservation, anti-poaching cooperation, World Heritage management and future priorities for the TNS landscape.



©APDS/WWF

A New Vision for Waste Management

A feasibility study conducted by DSPA and The Flipflopi Project confirmed that a community-based waste management system is feasible in Bayanga. The assessment identified 18 dumpsites and highlighted strong community support for improved waste collection and recycling. Survey results showed that 75% of households would be willing to separate their waste, providing a solid foundation for future action.

The next phase of the project will focus on community consultations, pilot collection systems, staff training and the development of Bayanga's first waste sorting and recycling facility, helping protect both local communities and the surrounding forest landscape.





©Flipflopi

FIGURE 3.2.1a

Household survey, part 1: who was asked and what they do

Bayanga, 2026. n = 114 households across 14 neighbourhoods. Percentages are of all 114 respondents unless stated.

114 households surveyed — one duplicate record removed

14 neighbourhoods covered — of 14 in Bayanga

7.7 mean household size — median 7, range 1 to 20

51 : 49 male to female respondents — 58 men, 56 women

Respondent profile

WHO WAS ASKED

AGE BAND		HIGHEST EDUCATION	
35 to 60	55%	Primary	47%
25 to 35	32%	Secondary	33%
18 to 24	7%	None	13%
60 and over	5%	Tertiary	6%

Storage and handling at home

CURRENT PRACTICE

CONTAINER USED FOR WASTE

No container	43%
Bucket or basin	36%
No answer given	21%

No lidded bins recorded. Of the 41 with a container, 44% empty daily; the 49 without sweep to a fixed spot, 94% daily.

68% — **Empty daily** — 77 of all 114

84% — **Under 2 min walk** — to a disposal point

How mixed waste is disposed of

SELF-REPORTED

Only 2% sort waste at home, so almost all of this is mixed waste.

Open burning	39%
Burying, shared hole	16%
Dumping outside the compound	15%
Burying, individual hole	14%
Dumping inside the compound	12%
Dumping in the river	4%

69% burn or bury on the plot, only 27% moves off it.

Who empties the waste

SERVICE DESIGN

Multiple answers allowed, n = 113 households answering.

Child	71%
Wife	69%
Husband	25%
Brother or sister	25%
Parent	8%
Other	2%

Children and women carry the waste, plan for them.

Purposive sample, not randomised, so figures describe the sample and are indicative for Bayanga rather than statistically representative.
n = 114 after removing one duplicate record. The earlier n = 115 is superseded. Container type: 24 households (21%) gave no usable answer, shown as "no answer given".
Three answers of "poubelle" were recoded to "no container": respondents use the word for the dumpsite, not a lidded bin. River disposal is self-reported and very likely under-reported.

THE FLIPFLOPI PROJECT

Source: Main Database, Waste Bayanga, September 2026

Tourism and marketing

Celebrating Culture Across Borders

Another highlight of the period was the participation of Ba'Aka, Sangha-Sangha and M'piemou community representatives in the 5th edition of the FESTIBABA Cultural Festival, held in Salapoumbé and Lobéké National Park, Cameroon. The event provided a valuable platform to celebrate cultural heritage, strengthen cross-border cooperation and promote the unique traditions of communities living across the Sangha Tri-National landscape.



©Padou Lambert



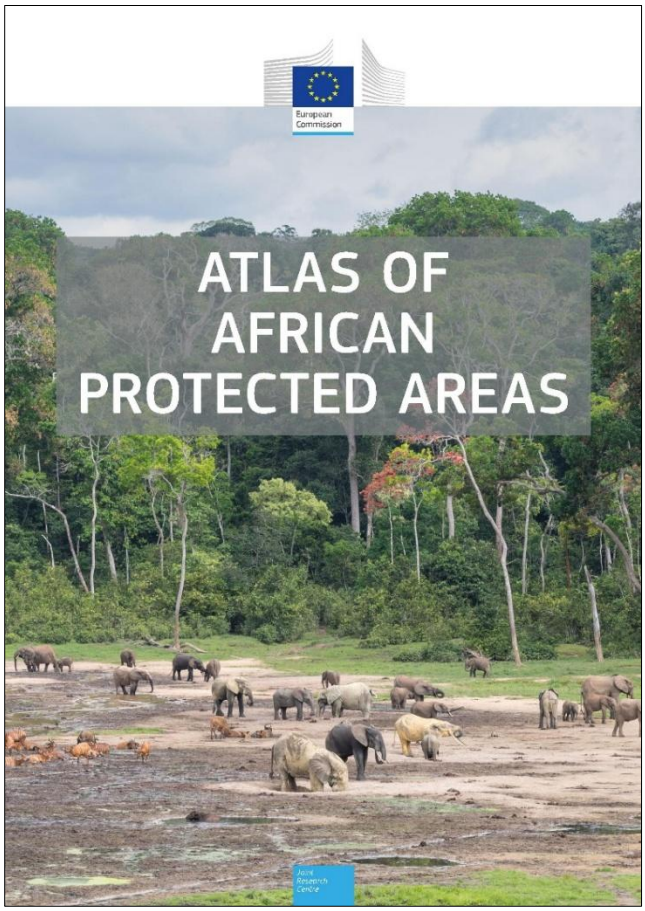
©Padou Lambert

As part of ongoing efforts to enhance visitor experiences, four new guides successfully completed a comprehensive training programme alongside the existing guiding team. The training covered guiding techniques, biodiversity interpretation, Ba'Aka cultural heritage, visitor reception and safety, tropical

forest survival skills, and **first aid**, further strengthening the professionalism and preparedness of APDS tourism staff.



1st Aid training with Chengeta Wildlife©*Padou Lambert*



Dzanga Sangha are featured prominently in the published Atlas of African Protected Areas - Mapping the Complexity of Conservation on the Continent, produced by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission through the BIOPAMA programme. It is a source of great pride for DSPA that an image of Dzanga Bai was selected for the cover of this landmark publication, placing one of Central Africa's most iconic conservation sites in the spotlight.

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC137018

Arrivals and departures



We were pleased to welcome George Wittemyer to Dzanga-Sangha during the recovery of the first acoustic recording device deployed on a GPS-collared forest elephant, underscoring the significance of this pioneering initiative to better understand the movements, behaviour and communication of forest elephants.



We also had the visit from Henry Wismayer and Marcus Westberg who were there to write some amazing articles on Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas.



We were pleased to welcome Eric Kilolo from Chengeta Wildlife, who visited Dzanga-Sangha to provide technical support and mentoring to APDS law enforcement teams as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen ranger capacity and field operations.



We were pleased to welcome DJIMASSE Maryse as the new Head of Ecotourism at DSPA, where she will lead efforts to enhance tourism management and visitor experiences in Dzanga Sangha.



Stephane YOUFEINA, WWF Central African Republic Country Director, visited Dzanga-Sangha in july to meet field teams and discuss progress across conservation and community programmes, pictured with Beatrice and Prisca representatives of Ndima-Kali and Radio Ndjokou,



Cyrani Koula Souagbati, a Master's student from the University of Bangui, spent more than three months working alongside the Elephant Listening Project and Dzanga Bai monitoring teams as part of his research on activity patterns and social dominance among dependent male forest elephants. His work contributes to improving scientific knowledge of forest elephant behaviour while strengthening national research capacity.



After more than five years with APDS, Stef de Bethune leaves behind a lasting contribution to a concrete inclusive conservation in Dzanga-Sangha. We warmly thank him for his dedication and wish him every success in his future adventures.



After more than eight years in Dzanga-Sangha, Nuria Ortega helped transform the landscape into a leading Congo Basin ecotourism destination, increasing annual visitor numbers from around 80 to nearly 700 in 2025. We thank her for her dedication and wish her every success in the future.

©Martina Arranz

- *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.*