

PROGRAMME FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CAMEROON – SOUTH WEST REGION (PSMNR-SWR)

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT AROUND PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH WEST REGION OF CAMEROON

Background

The South-West Region of Cameroon, as part of the Gulf of the Guinea Forests, is as one of the eight biodiversity hotspots in Africa of utmost importance for biodiversity conservation in Cameroon and worldwide.

At the same time, the region presents favourable conditions for agricultural production. Agro-industrial development (oil palms, hevea) and small and medium holder agriculture development (oil palms, cocoa) lead increasingly to deforestation and habitat fragmentation. The land use planning process in South West Region has been initiated, but is far from completion and land is often acquired in an uncoordinated manner.

PSMNR-SWR is intervening actually in and around four National parks (Mt Cameroon, Korup, Takamanda, Bakossi) and one Wildlife Sanctuary (Bayang-Mbo) which the Government of Cameroon has created for the protection of this extra-ordinary biodiversity. Two of these PAs, Korup and Takamanda NP share boundary with the Cross River National park in Nigeria, one of the last lowland forest in this country.

Approach of PSMNR-SWR

Protected Areas (PAs) cannot be managed in isolation due to numerous interrelationships with surrounding areas. The PAs in SWR are relatively small (between 30,000, 60,000 and 120,000 ha) and long term viability of many species can be only enhanced by management of wider conservation areas around the PAs – inclusively areas cross border in Nigeria - and connectivity between the different PAs. The PSMNR-SWR intervention logic is therefore integrating protected area management in a landscape approach.

The landscape approach looks at wider areas around PAs which cannot be managed without the participation of a number of different stakeholders.



Deforestation for a oil palm plantation in South West Region.



Technical Operation Stakeholder meeting.

Achievements Mitigating of land use conflicts

PSMNR-SWR has since 2006 contributed to the creation of the three of the four Landscape Technical Operation Units (TOUs) of SWR and supports the management of all of them. The four TOUs cover the entire SWR. Technical Operation Units (TOU) are a institutional set-up which allows the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to bring to one table other sector ministries, agro-industrial companies, concessionaires, councils and communities and other development projects to address and mitigate identified land use conflicts concerning conservation issues.



One of the major achievements in the last years was to defend community rights and conservation objectives in a creation of a 100,000 ha oil palm plantation to replace valuable tropical low land forest. Due to the intervention of PSMNR-SWR between others, the project was downsized to 20,000 ha.

Participatory Corridor management

PSMNR-SWR collaborates with the councils where the PAs are located to integrate crucial information on land use, protected area and PA peripheral zone development into Council Development plans.

PSMNR-SWR has developed in collaboration with PNDP (National Participative Development Project) a council land use planning methodology which was in his major parts adapted for the national guidelines of council land use planning. Part of the methodology is the integration of participatory corridor management in the process. The elaboration of council land use plans in SWR is still pending.

PSMNR has identified potential corridor areas through land cover analysis and field work and is supporting communities to create community forests in these areas as one of the strategies to realize these corridors.

Wider conservation areas through collaboration with other forest entities

PSMNR-SWR is supporting community and council forest creation and management in the vicinity of PAs to create wider managed conservation areas and provide benefits to local communities. PSMNR collaborates also with forest concessionaries around the PAs. It is foreseen to focus the collaboration in future on wildlife management.

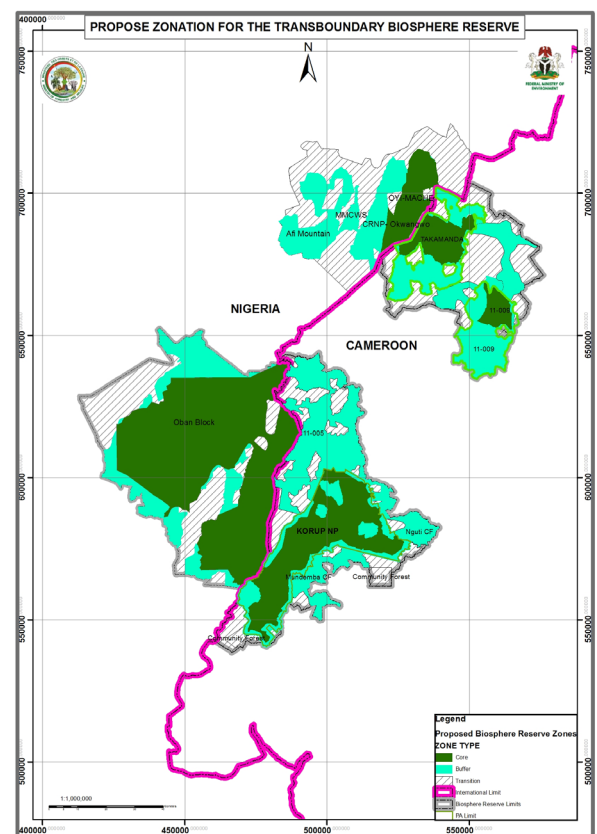
For more information

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Creation of trans-boundary Biosphere reserves between Korup and Takamanda NPs and Cross River NP in Nigeria

- In 2016 PSMNR-SWR initiated the creation of two trans-boundary Biosphere reserves (TRBs) under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme (MAB). A working group has elaborated a road map and proposals on the vision and objectives, management structures, zonation and common management programmes. In parallel and in coordination with the TRB process an initiative of creating a transboundary World Heritage Site in the same areas is on the way.
- PSMNR further supported the Cameroon Government with the elaboration of a Cooperation Framework Agreement on "transboundary ecosystems conservation" between Cameroon and Nigeria.



Zonation of trans-boundary Reserves
Cameroon / Nigeria