

Project Update: July 2021

The objectives of the project were:

1. Provide a local range-wide status review of high-priority species of the Doume Communal Forest.
2. Enumerate experiences, knowledge, innovations, and challenges in biodiversity conservation of key plant species by stakeholders.
3. Inform, sensitise and train the riparian people in the Doume Communal Forest as well as Doume Council on their role in the implementation of policies for the conservation and sustainable forest management (SFM).
4. Propose a process for implementing high-priority species conservation strategies and ensure sustainable Doume Communal Forest management.

Working in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this project did not follow its normal course. Despite this, the majority of the activities have already been completed. Indeed, the first meeting with the administrative authorities of the Doumé town hall for the starting modalities took place in October 2020. We then had a meeting with the sub-prefect of the Doumé district with whom we discussed the different problems that the population's socio-economic survey could bring to light at the end of November 2020. After obtaining the authorisations from the sub-prefect to deploy in the field at the end of November 2020, the preparation of the deployment in the field for the socio-economic surveys took place during December 2020. For that, a meeting with the village chief was organised.



To start with the socio-economic surveys in each of the 13 villages surveyed, a meeting with the chief and his notables of the village was organised a few days before (varied in function of the availability of them in each village). Then the number of days required to finish the socio-economic surveys varied in function of the survey village because it was function of availability of traditional authorities and also resource persons. During this meeting with the village's traditional authorities, we discussed the study's importance and the management of the Doumé Communal Forest by the town hall. Once the discussion with the chiefs was over, they prepared their people to welcome us for interviews and focus groups.



Fig. 1. Images of meeting between the surveys team and some Chief's villages and their notable when they were available. Above with the chief of Bonando village; in the middle with the chief of Djaglassi and its principal notable below with the chief of Nkoum.

The socio-economic surveys consisted of semi-structured interviews. In addition, focus groups were also conducted to raise awareness of their rights and duties towards the Doumé Communal Forest.



Fig. 2. Images of interviews and some focus groups with populations.



The second significant activity of our project was the botanical inventory of high-priority species for conservation. Firstly, a meeting was organised with the Mayor of Doume and responsible of communal forest unit in March 2021. After our meeting, they provide us an authorisation to make a botanical inventory and put in our disposition one member of communal forest unit to guide us in the field. Then, the botanical inventory took place from April to June 2021. For a botanical inventory, 20 transects of 2500 x 5 m were inventoried. The fieldwork activities consisted of collection of information on each target high-priority species for conservation such as vernacular/common or scientific names, diameter at breast height, and geographical coordinate of each individual of target species found.



Fig. 3. Images of field mensuration and the whole field team.