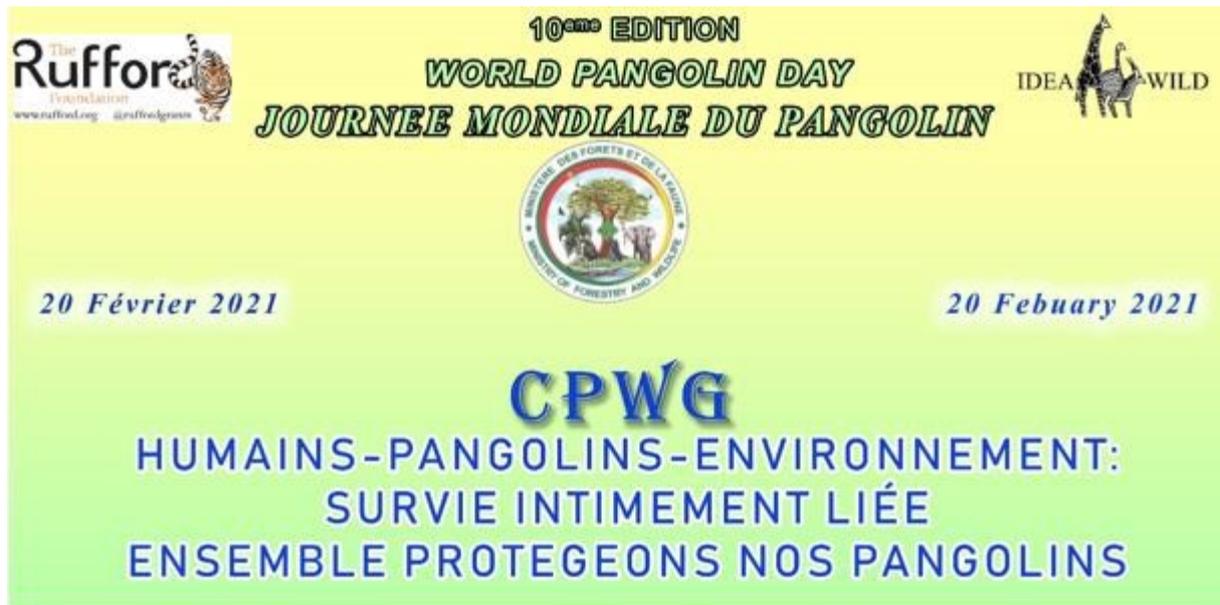


Project Update: March 2021



Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Cameroon is tough to be one of the countries most involved in the trafficking of pangolin and their derivatives (Ingram et al., 2019). Since the transfer of all pangolins species to CITES Appendix I (COP 2017abc), pangolins are classified as Class A species in Cameroon, affording them the highest level of protection (MINFOF 2017). Poaching and trafficking of pangolins in Cameroon remain rampant despite the protection afforded to them under Cameroonian law (Ingram et al., 2019). Conservation effort in Cameroon includes training programs, for example MENTOR-POP (Progress on Pangolins) Fellowship Program (Ichu et al. 2017), MENTOR-Bushmeat Fellowship program, the Central Africa Bushmeat Action Group (CABAG); the Center of Pangolin Rescue and Rehabilitation at Mefou, the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group (CPWG) and Pangolin researchers from Universities. Their actions include public awareness campaigns, often highlighted on World Pangolin Days.

The World Pangolin Day (WPD) is an international event to raise global awareness about pangolins, the alarming threats they face, and the inspiring efforts to prevent them from going extinct. It is celebrated every year on the third Saturday in February since 2012. This year activities have been organized in the village Linté adjacent to Mpem et Djim National Park situated in the Mbam et Kim Division in the Centre Region of Cameroon.

Pangolins are facing a lot of pressure today particularly in Cameroon, known as a main sourcing country with the largest number of domestic seizures recorded (Ingram et al., 2019). The last seizure include more than 4 tons of pangolin scales (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/323586867994708/permalink/1991720644514647/>). It is therefore important to scale up sensitization and education around urban (cities) and rural areas (villages) as well as to evaluate the actions undertaken on the field. To achieve a large scoop, we joined our effort to the plan of the CPWG that include member from a large network to organize the 2021 WPD. We took the responsibility to lead the activities in the rural area in the village Linté while activities in the city Yaoundé was left at the responsibility of other members of the CPWG. We aimed at raising awareness on the role that pangolins play in the ecosystem and also what could be the downside of their extinction.

Activities includes:

- Educational section through a PowerPoint presentation and short videos Quiz section
- Pangolin drawing workshop
- Sensitization through broadcasting of “the eye of a pangolin”

2021 WPD Activities

Outreach activities in the rural area

Prior to the celebration of the 2021 WPD at Linté the team went to meet with the government authorities at Ntui in the MBAM et KIM to get the necessary permission to conduct the outreach activities at Linté. They were introduced to the Park Conservator, Divisional Officer and the Chief of Village and the populations of Linté.



Meeting of the team with the Mpem et Djim NP Conservator

Protective measures against Covid-19

With the increasing number of people infected to the Covid-19 in Cameroon it was crucial to take some appropriated measures to prevent any contamination or transmission. We proceeded to the distribution of protective masks as well as hydroalcoholic gel for hand disinfection before the event. We also provide the population with some guidance on how to behave at the event.





Protective measures against the Covid-19 contamination and transmission

Education of local people on ecological roles of pangolins and the importance of conserving them

Many administrative authorities of the village were present at the event this include Chief of the gendarmerie company, park management staff members, religious authorities, Director of the primary school and Principal of the secondary school, primary and secondary school teachers and students. Together with the population they all attended the presentation on the ecological roles of pangolins and the importance of protecting pangolins from overharvesting. To achieve this section, we used a PowerPoint presentation, short videos with educative messages. We first introduce some wildlife conservation concept and ended with the importance of protecting pangolins. We also made banners and additional ones were provided by CABAG. Those banners were displayed in various places including the secondary school where they left after the activities to ensure a long-term education.



Banner with the theme and slogan of 2021 WPD



Public at the PowerPoint presentation and educative program

Group discussion and quiz section

After the presentation we held a group discussion with the participants, and they were given the opportunity to ask questions about the presentation and also aspects of conservation of pangolin they don't quite understand. Some of the questions are listed below:

How many pangolins are in the wild? What is the name of a female pangolin? For what reasons should we protect pangolins? How can we live without eating wildmeat since we were born in this practice and are used to?

Some of the participants mentioned that with alternative meat to wildmeat they are ready to reduce their hunting frequency emphasizing the need to assess their need and develop a long-term conservation program.

We answered the question to us addressed by the community and take this opportunity to explain again the pangolin conservation status, their biology and ecology especially their role in the maintenance of the ecosystem health we also talk about pangolin trafficking and their derivatives as well as the impact of overharvesting on the wild population of pangolin known to have a very low reproduction rate.

Pangolin quiz

After this section we did a small pangolin quiz with oral questions posed to the students who participated in the activities organized and those that gave good answers were rewarded with symbolic gifts including exercise books, pens, rulers and pencils T-shirts and calendars. Some the questions posed are listed below:

- What is the defensive tactic of pangolins?
- How many offspring per year a pangolin can have?
- Pangolin are a type of reptile true or false?

- Pangolins have teeth true or false?
- Pangolin scale can cure some disease true or false?



Students responding to question and receiving symbolic prizes

Almost all students that attended the presentations and oral questions received at least one school material as a souvenir of the 2021 WPD and they expressed happiness through dancing



Youths expressing their happiness through dancing

Education through short pangolin videos

Short educative videos on pangolins was provided by WildAid a member of the CPWG and they were used for sensitization. The participants learned about the efforts made elsewhere to conserve pangolins. Children were happy and dancing the African song for baby "Le Petit Pangolin malin" available online from YouTube https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=le+petit+pangolin+malin



Youths' participation to short educative videos

Pangolin drawing Workshop

Many students participated at the drawing section and were asked to draw one of the pangolins species occurring in Cameroon which are the giant pangolin, the white-bellied pangolin and the black-bellied pangolin. Six winners received special reward for encouragement and were further chosen to volunteer as pangolin ambassadors in their school and the village.



Youths of both primary and secondary schools of Linté at the drawing workshop



The six pangolin drawing champions of Linté chosen to be the pangolin ambassadors in their schools and village

Broadcasting of “eye of the pangolin”

Eye of the Pangolin is the story of two men who venture out across the African continent to get all four species of African pangolin on camera for the very first time. It is a powerful sensitization tools which show the critical situation facing the African pangolin. The film *subtitled in French* was broadcasted in the village Linté to sensitize the community. During broadcasting of the film, local people were astonished and shocked to see the large number of scale bags and death pangolins that can be assembled for trafficking. It appears they were not aware of the extent of the body and scales trafficking of pangolin around the world. We summarized the film in the French language and give the opportunity to people to share their emotion about the film. All those who agreed to share their emotion expressed desire to participate in the conservation of pangolins. While we recognize that this desire won't last for long before they return to hunt a pangolin, it is crucial to establish a long-term conservation initiative in the area.



Public attending the film EYE OF THE PANGOLIN broadcasting at Linté



Images retrieved from the film EYE OF THE PANGOLIN which have shocked the participants

Outreach campaign in Yaoundé

Awareness-raising in the city of Yaoundé was carried out by displaying a billboard in a strategic point of the city known for their high rate of use by the population. The billboard was installed the eve of the event and for a period of 30 days. The calendars and T-shirt were also shared in Yaoundé City to few people to inform them of the WPD.

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@ Franklin Simo T. and @ Ghislain Difouo F. at the central place of Yaoundé next the billboard use for the 2021 WPD



**PROTÉGEONS
NOS PANGOLINS**

**ILS GARDENT
NOS FORÊTS ET NOS TERRES
EN BONNE SANTÉ**

**LEUR LIBERTÉ.
NOTRE SÉCURITÉ.**



JOURNÉE MONDIALE DU PANGOLIN 2021



Billboard displaying the poster of pangolin with message related to their protection and the forest welfare at the Center Poste in Yaoundé

JOURNÉE MONDIALE DU PANGOLIN
20 FEVRIER 2021

**THEME: HUMAINS - PANGOLINS - ENVIRONNEMENT:
SURVIE INTIMEMENT LIÉE**



PANGOLIN GEANT



PANGOLIN A VENTRE NOIR



PANGOLIN A VENTRE BLANC

ENSEMBLE PROTEGEONS NOS PANGOLINS

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