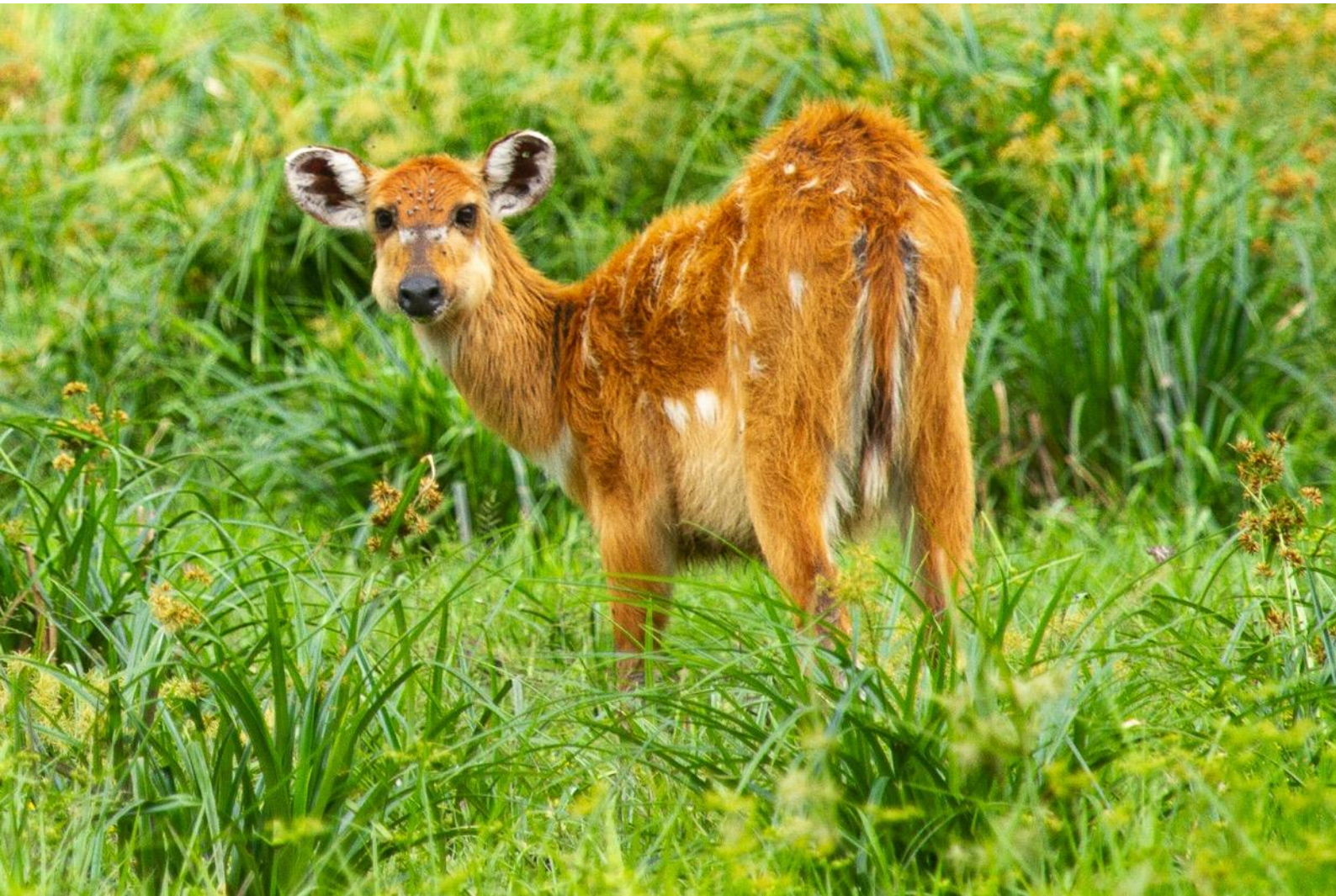




Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

www.dzanga-sangha.org



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Newsletter May 2022





Wildlife

More than 3 years after the birth of her offspring, Mbindjio, the female Mabor at Bai Hokou was observed mating with the silverback Makumba for the first time towards the end of April and more frequently during the month of May. With the group down to just 07 individuals at the moment, if this frequent mating should lead to conception, we would be expecting a new gorilla baby at the beginning of next year.



Makumba still in good fit © Severin Bwanga

On the other hand, Moandja, the latest offspring of the female Mapoki in the Mayele group at Mongambe has started to be curious about the environment around him just one month after his birth.

This month we have broken the record for elephants in Dzanga bai. In May there were 195 individuals observed at the same time in the bai.



Counting (a lot of) elephants from the observation platform @ Nuria Ortega






It is said that only better adapted individuals survive in nature. We usually assume that animals with handicaps will not survive but we have been proven wrong by a young male elephant approximately 20 years old. This individual has a deformed leg since it was a calf and as a result is limping very strongly. In fact, to take a step he must put all his weight on his deformed leg, take the step with his good leg and then drag the deformed leg along, leaving an easily recognizable track behind. He has been observed by the Dzanga Bai team since he was a calf. Even though he does not visit the clearing regularly, his tracks are often observed on the path that goes from the research camp to Dzanga Bai. He is also seen several times on the river and during such encounters all measures are taken by the team to avoid imposing on him to run away quickly as this may lead to further injury.



Despite its deformed leg, despite its tusks, here it is @ Ivonne Kienast

Dzanga bai data: based on the number counted every 30 minutes between 11:00 to 16:30 each day of the month.

Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	8	109	195
	0	16	39
	0	6	9

Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA



@ Stef De Béthune

Scientific name	<i>Merops muelleri</i>
English name:	<i>Blue-headed bee-eater</i>
Taxonomy:	Class : birds Order : coraciiformes Family : meropidae Genus : merops Specie : <i>M. muelleri</i>



The blue-headed bee-eater (*Merops muelleri*) has a very wide range and is a common bird. It is found in forest habitats in tropical West and Central Africa, but there is also a small population in the West of Kenya. It is a species frequenting the edges of dense humid forests or natural clearings.

The sexes are similar, and adults are about 19 cm in length. The back and wings are dark brown while the remaining plumage is mostly ultramarine blue. The crown of birds living in the east of the range is blue fading to white on the forehead; western populations have entirely blue heads.

The blue-headed bee-eater is usually found singly, or sometimes in pairs or trios. It perches on a high branch in the canopy beside tracks and clearings and swoops down on small butterflies, honeybees and other insects before returning to its original perch.

Antipoaching

On May 27, 2022, a Ceremony was organized to mark the end of 90 days of Basic Training for newly recruited ecoguards. This training was delivered by Chengeta Wildlife in close collaboration with the DSPA Protection and Surveillance Department extensively covering, among many others, the topic of human rights in law enforcement. To celebrate this event which signifies the integration of 25 new eco-guards responsible for the protection and surveillance of DSPA, it was very important to mobilize high authorities of the Sangha Mbaéré Prefecture. The ceremony was chaired by 'Madame Le Préfet' of Sangha Mbaéré.



The new ranger promotion is now ready to help us @ Christian Bassoum

The ceremony was also open to the community who had come in large numbers to celebrate the assignment of these new recruits with us. The attendance and joy observed during this ceremony was proof of the community's enthusiasm and appreciation for the organization, transparency and integrity of the entire recruitment process.

It is also important to note that this is an exemplary group of new recruits in terms of diversity in gender and ethnicity.

42 regular patrols and 3 patrols from the tri-national anti-poaching brigade were conducted. In total 1.443 rangers/days, 2.208 km traveled on foot and cover an area of 1.268 km². This resulted in the seizure of 15 manufactured 12-gauge shotguns, 43-gauge cartridges, 559 kg of meat and 4 kg of pangolin scales. In addition, 3349 metal snares were dismantled. 22 people were arrested, sensitized and released. Two elephant carcasses were found, one natural dead and the other unknown.

Community Development

We supported the community offices of the Ba'aka Community Union (UCB) to create community fields for their self-sufficiency food project. We also distributed peanut seeds, maize, sweet amaranth, pumpkin and agricultural tools to the different villages.



Dancing, a health activity for young and less young © Nuria Ortega

This month we facilitated the transport of 203 people from villages in DSPA to exam centers to enable 171 candidates to seat for the First School Leaving Certificate exams and the entrance exam into secondary school.

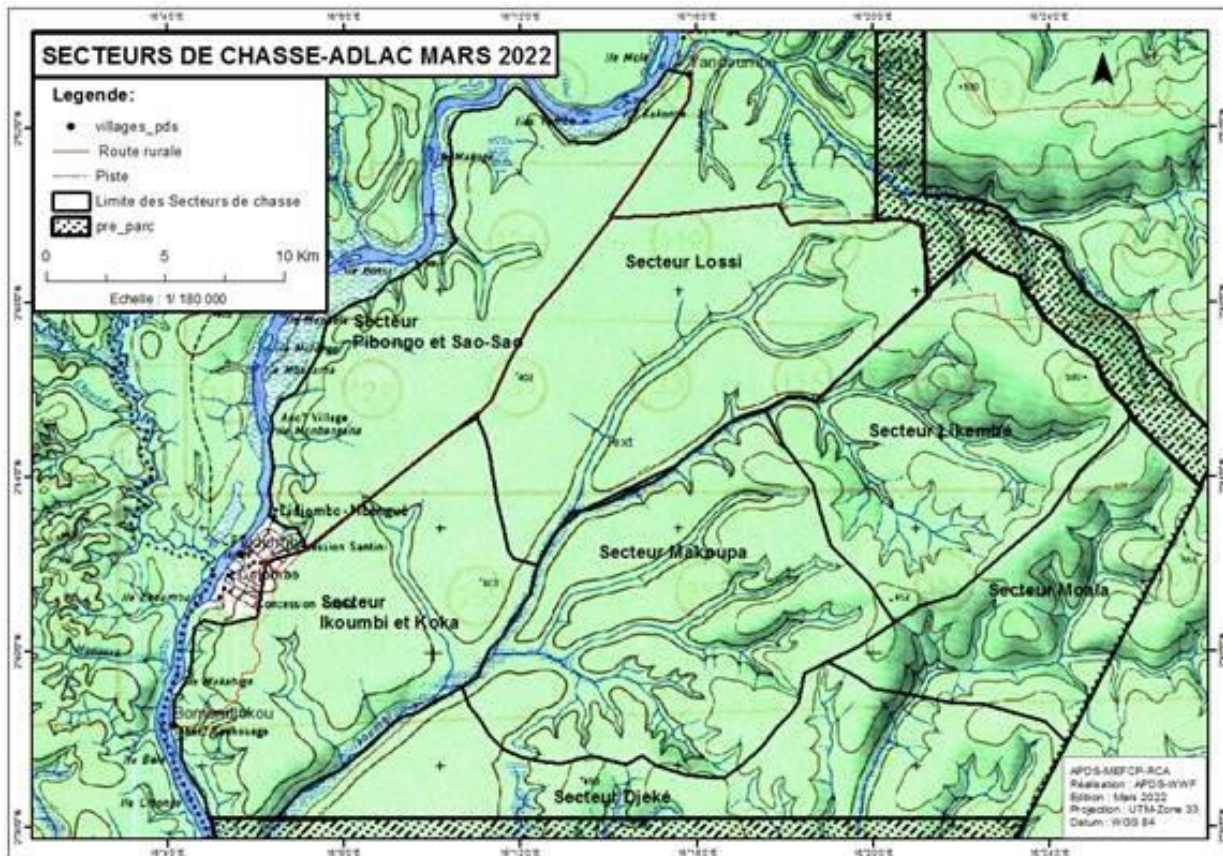
A round table was organized on the community radio during which community representatives implementing the support project for indigenous people gave feedback on their activities related to the education of children in the Yobé-Sangha Municipality.

A market study (conceived in April and launched in May) is being conducted in Bayanga in collaboration with Chengeta Wildlife, and will go on for 12 months. This study which repeats efforts conducted by GTZ around 2010 (baseline) will evaluate the main products (including wild meat) circulating in the local market areas, to better understand the local value chains.



A new activity has been launched to map the community hunting zone in DSPA. A previous survey (2020-2021) conducted by Chengeta Wildlife on hunting practices highlighted a number of areas within and outside the hunting zone as ‘popular’ hunting grounds. The ongoing mapping exercise will provide more understanding of the hunting practices within this zone.

The end result will be a detailed map of the entire community hunting zone that will allow an increased understanding of the use of the zone by the hunters themselves, as well as provide vital information needed to establish a management plan for the community hunting zone.



The newly recruited Head of the Health Project has finally arrived in Bayanga. In addition to coordinating all human health activities, she will restart the mobile clinic that will regularly visit villages within DSPA and its periphery.

No cases of COVID 19 were recorded this month.

<i>Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients</i>	
Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	321
Belemboke Health Post	494
Total	815

Park Administration

This year we celebrated the first of May (International Labour Day), after failing to do so the past two years due to the COVID 19 pandemic. It is the only occasion of the year during which all DSPA staff members come together to feast and to party.



Celebrating the first of May © Christian Bassoum

Six DSPA staff were selected to take part in a one-month training course at the Garoua Wildlife School in Cameroon as part of continuing education scholarships funded by the European Union and the German government that aims to strengthen the capacities of institutions in the sub-region involved in Protected Areas management through the development of human resources. This scholarship is dedicated only to field-level personnel in ECOFAC sites.

One of our EU projects should end on June 30 this year. However, one of the main activities of the project – the installation of a 100 Kw solar power plant to provide electricity to Bayanga – is still ongoing following delays caused by the Covid 19 pandemic and delays in manufacturing, especially batteries. We have therefore requested the EU for a one-year extension to permit us complete this activity.

This month we organized an annual staff retreat which saw the participation of the Head of People & Culture, Africa at WWF International based in Nairobi.



Tourism and Marketing

An article about DSPA was published on Mongabay

<https://news.mongabay.com/2022/05/to-serve-the-vibrant-diversity-of-central-africas-forests-include-indigenous-people-commentary/>



RAINFORESTS OCEANS ANIMALS ENVIRONMENT BUSINESS SOLUTIONS FOR KIDS DONATE IMPACT MORE

To search, type and hit enter.

Mongabay Series: [Global Forests](#), [Indigenous Peoples and Conservation](#)

To conserve the vibrant diversity of Central Africa's forests, include Indigenous people (commentary)

by Anahita Verahrami on 16 May 2022



A new documentary film has been produced by Pronto Prod production centered on understanding how prevention and cooperation can prevent Pangolins from extinction.

French <https://vimeo.com/694002929/6dea5293ee> English: <https://vimeo.com/694319779/c5181e6b0b>

We receive tourists by plane, by boat and even by motorbike.



It is OK to visit DS by any means of transport © Luis Arranz



Two experts are in DSPA to help us in the realization of a children's book whose story will be developed in DSPA. The illustrator organized a drawing workshop in which 30 children from different schools participated. On one side, the teacher taught the children to draw, and on the other, the children expressed their vision of nature. © Esther Peces, Carlos Serradilla and Luis Arranz



Arrivals and departures



© Nuria Ortega

Lena Martensson from Sweden has arrived to head the Health Programme and to restart the mobile clinic visiting villages in the area. She is very experienced and well known in this region following many years of service here



© Nuria Ortega

Esther Peces and Carlos Serradilla, came to know DS and be able to write a story for the children



© Nuria Ortega

Diana Gombe, the Head of People & Culture, Africa at WWF International, victorious after landing in DS



© Nuria Ortega

Felix Mmata, WWF Regional Quality Assurance Advisor Africa, Jean Bakouma, WWF Congo Basin Conservation Director, and Eric Somba WWF Regional Head, E&S Safeguards, Africa have come to work on the Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework.

- *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.*