

## BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER DECEMBER 2024

**Dear Friends of the Lac Télé Community Reserve,**

The last two months of 2024 have been eventful, particularly with the organization of a meeting with the Local Management Committee (CLG) of the Lac Télé Community Reserve (RCLT). This committee, which represents the Reserve's local communities, had not convened for several years. The workshop brought together no fewer than 140 participants, fostering rich discussions on the Reserve's key challenges.

Another highlight was the participation of one of our researchers in an international workshop on dwarf crocodile conservation. During this event, the Reserve was recognized as a reference site in Central Africa, thanks to the extensive research conducted on this species.

Below, you will find a summary of the activities carried out in November and December 2024.

**Wishing you all a Happy New Year 2025!**

**Dr. David Brugière & Fabien Nzolani Silaho**

**WCS-MEF Coordination**

**Lac Télé Community Reserve (RCLT)**

## KEY DATES & HIGHLIGHTS

- November 1–4, 2024:** Visit by two representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the implementing agency for IKI funding, of which the Reserve is one of the beneficiaries.
- November 12, 2024:** Signing of a collaboration agreement between WCS and the Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences at the University of Tartu, Estonia, for the long-term monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions from the Reserve's peat swamp forests.
- November 20, 2024:** Launch of the consultancy mission for the update of the Simple Management Plans for the 27 villages within the Reserve.
- November 28, 2024:** Completion of the school supplies distribution campaign in primary schools across the Reserve's villages.
- November 28, 2024:** Official handover of the renovated Mokengui water supply system to the community and establishment of a borehole management committee.
- December 13–14, 2024:** Two-day workshop in Épéna between the Reserve's coordination team and the Local Management Committee.

## COMMUNITY CONSERVATION



### School Supplies Distribution Campaign –

Launched on **October 29, 2024**, in the village of **Mboua**, the school supplies distribution campaign for primary schools in the Reserve continued throughout **November**, concluding on **November 28** in **Mokengui**.

In total, **88 classrooms** and **3,658 students** benefited from this initiative—a much-appreciated support for parents, teachers, and students alike! This campaign was carried out in close collaboration with the **Departmental Directorate of Primary Education of Likouala** and the **Primary Education Inspectorate of Épéna**.



### Cocoa Sector Update

Our two cocoa technicians conducted a mission across **16 villages** in the Reserve from **October 28 to November 30, 2024**. Based on predefined criteria, they pre-selected producers and then visited plantations to finalize the selection of beneficiaries.

A total of **160 producers**, managing **156.4 hectares of plantations**, were selected to receive **training support and agricultural equipment**.

The technicians are now preparing the first **training session on nursery establishment**, which will enable producers to **increase the density of their plantations**.

## GOVERNANCE



### Revitalization of the Local Management Committee (CLG)

The **Local Management Committee (CLG)** of the **Lac Télé Community Reserve (RCLT)**, established in **2020 by prefectural decree**, represents the populations of the **27 villages** within the Reserve.

To revitalize this dormant structure, the **Reserve Coordination** organized a **two-day workshop** with the CLG on **December 13–14, 2024**, bringing together **140 participants**, including **four representatives from each village** and **local authorities from Épéna**.

The morning of 13 December was devoted to a presentation by the Coordination of the main activities conducted under 2024 and the new community development policy. These presentations led to lively question-and-answer sessions. In the afternoon, CLG members split into two groups to tackle two crucial issues: the application of the mini-fishing charter and the control of bush fires, with many proposals being put forward. On the morning of 14 December, participants worked on setting up the new CLG governing bodies.

The meeting was a great success and was praised for its spirit of collaboration between the Reserve and local people.

## ANTI-POACHING

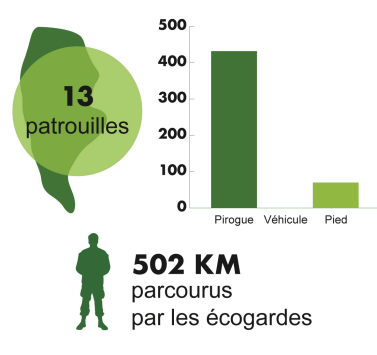
### Interpellations



### Saisies



### Efforts de patrouille



In August 2024, two poachers were arrested for killing a gorilla, a fully protected species. They were jointly fined 500,000 francs and ordered to pay 500,000 francs in damages to the Direction Départementale des Eaux et Forêts. The court did not impose a prison sentence, taking into account the defendants' claim of self-defence.

## RESEARCH AND MONITORING



### Peatland research

From 18 to 24 November 2024, a joint team of researchers from the University of Tartu (Estonia) and Marien Ngouabi University (Congo) visited the Reserve to study gas emissions from peatland forests. This is the second mission in the rainy season, following the first in the dry season in March 2024. The aim is to measure the fluxes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) as a function of environmental parameters such as soil moisture and the degree of canopy openness. This study is funded by the European Research Council.



### International workshop on dwarf crocodiles

Mr Bola Madzoke, a researcher at the Lac Télé Community Reserve since 2003, represented the Reserve in Abidjan from 18 to 21 November at the 'Red List Assessment and Conservation Planning Workshop for Dwarf Crocodiles', organised by the IUCN. He presented the results of studies on the dwarf crocodile *Osteolaemus osborni*, showing that the Reserve is a reference site in Central Africa for this species, thanks to the work and knowledge accumulated over several years.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION



**The clean-up of the Mandougouma river**, which began in September, was completed in November. A total of 38 km of river was cleared, facilitating local navigation. Most of the trees blocking the river had been weakened by fires and collapsed in the wind. This observation fed into the Local Management Committee's discussions in December on fire management in the Reserve.

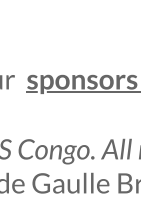


**Renovation of the buildings at the Epéna base camp** is progressing: a building for the finance team has been operational since November and the large meeting room has been tiled. The Guest House has been fitted with solar panels. The logistics team has worked intensively on these improvements.

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH



In December 2024, the Reserve convened the Local Management Committee under the aegis of the sub-prefect of the Epéna district to work with the representatives of the 27 villages on the major issues facing this protected area.



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151 Av Ch de Gaulle Brazzaville,

BP 14537 République du Congo

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