

# **Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**24 May 2017**

**CEPF Grant 100813**

**Grantee: Wildlife Conservation Society, Nigeria Program**

***Project Title: Saving Cross River Gorillas from Extinction in Nigeria***

**Project Location: Cross River State, Nigeria**

## **Grant Summary**

Grantee organization: Wildlife Conservation Society, Nigeria Program.

Grant title: *Saving Cross River Gorillas from Extinction in Nigeria*

Grant number: CEPF Grant 100813

Grant amount: US\$350,000

Proposed dates of grant: 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020

Location: Cross River State, Nigeria

Date of preparation of this document: 24 May 2017

## **Project Background**

Cross River gorillas in Nigeria are restricted to three protected areas: Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, managed by the Cross River State Forestry Commission; the community-owned and managed Mbe Mountains, proposed as a community wildlife sanctuary; and the Okwangwo Division of Cross River National Park, managed by the Nigeria National Park Service, a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Environment. The survival of the Cross River gorilla depends on improving the management of these three protected areas and working with local communities to discourage activities that are clearly illegal, unsustainable and destructive. WCS has been working with the communities living within and adjacent to the biologically important forests of the Cross River gorilla landscape since 2000. Initially our work with local communities was mainly restricted to schools-based conservation education but has since expanded to include the use of radio drama and films as well as support for community-based conservation in the Mbe Mountains and the development of alternative livelihoods for hunters.

### ***Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo Landscape***

WCS research and surveys have confirmed the importance of the forests of the Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo landscape for biodiversity and their catchment values. Africa's most endangered ape, the critically endangered Cross River gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*), is restricted to these forests and the adjacent forests in Cameroon. The area is also home to 4 other globally threatened species: slender-snouted crocodile - *Mecistops cataphractus* (CR), Preuss's monkey - *Allochrocebus preussi* (EN), drill - *Mandrillus leucophaeus* (EN) and the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee - *Pan troglodytes ellioti* (EN) in addition to numerous important amphibian and reptile species. Although farming is the main socio-economic activity in the region, many local households also depend on the forests for bushmeat and NTFPs as an additional source of income, particularly for women and unemployed youths.

As a result of past hunting pressure fewer than 100 Cross River gorillas survive in Nigeria today. The main threat to Cross River gorillas and other species in the Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo region is widespread hunting. Although gorillas may not be targeted directly the use of wire snares to trap smaller animals is

common, and occasionally these snares inadvertently catch infant gorillas. With such a small and vulnerable remnant population, the loss of even a few gorillas is significant and presents a serious threat to the long-term viability of the population. Habitat loss due to logging and agricultural expansion is also a problem as it threatens to sever existing corridors linking Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary to the Mbe Mountains via the Afi River Forest Reserve and from the Mbe Mountains to Cross River National Park.

### **Project Preparation**

Preparation of this project took consideration of the following:

- Results from socio economic surveys conducted in the region.
- Ideas from discussion with other partners – the Conservation Association of the Mbe Mountains, the Cross River State Forestry Commission, the Nigeria National Parks Service and others.
- Engagement with the communities of the Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo landscape through previous projects.
- Different studies that WCS has been carrying out across the landscape for many years.
- Consultative meetings with local communities.

The main objectives of the project are to:

1. Protect Cross River gorillas and other key species at three sites.
2. Protect important forest habitat and corridors through co-management with local communities to provide benefits from improved cocoa production, bush mango harvesting and watershed protection.
3. Raise awareness and improve local attitudes and behaviours towards conservation through a schools-based conservation education and a radio drama program.

### **Participatory Implementation**

There will be full involvement of all communities in the implementation of the project including the Conservation Association of the Mbe Mountains, local women's groups, existing cooperatives and Boki Local Government Area. This will be achieved mainly through consultative meetings and group discussions. The selection of farmers to be trained will include procedures requiring community consultation.

### **Criteria for Eligibility of Affected Persons**

Eligibility for affected persons in this project will be the communities adjacent to Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, the Mbe Mountains and the Okwangwo Division of Cross River National Park, particularly those individuals who have farms in the key corridor areas. Those mainly affected by the project will be the hunters and NTFP collectors who rely on the forests for these resources. With funding from USFWS, CMS and GRASP, we are already working with some affected members through our successful bee-keeping project, and other affected persons also participate in our goat rearing project, funded by Whitley Fund for Nature.

### **Measures to Assist the Affected Persons**

WCS will work with CAMM and local chiefs to make sure that affected people such as hunters and women are involved in support for improved cocoa production and training. In Okwangwo, women are allowed to collect bush mango following regulations set by NNPS. In Mbe, hunters are employed preferentially as eco-guards by WCS. WCS will target disadvantaged groups such as women and unemployed youths for support for improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing. WCS will also target affected persons through environmental education and the 'My Gorilla My Community' radio outreach program.

### **Conflict Resolution and Grievance Mechanisms**

WCS is the only NGO actively working in the area, and over the years, it has developed strong relationships and established hard-won trust with many of the communities within the Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo landscape. WCS has supported conservation education in the area since 2000 that includes regular meetings with local communities in and around Afi-Mbe-Okwangwo. In the Mbe Mountains WCS works very closely with CAMM and the nine Mbe communities. During recent awareness meetings, communities around Afi have raised concerns over the poor management of the wildlife sanctuary and widespread illegal logging. WCS took these concerns to the Cross River State Forestry Commission (CRSFC) which has pledged to address them. To ensure that this project is going forward WCS always ensures the link between communities, the Conservation Association of the Mbe Mountains, the Cross River State Forestry Commission and the National Parks Service. All affected local communities will be informed of the objectives of the grant and the existence of a grievance mechanism. Any grievances raised with WCS will be communicated to the RIT and CEPF within 15 days, together with a proposed response. If the claimant is still not satisfied following the response, WCS will then submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director via the dedicated email account ([cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)) or by mail. Contact information of the grantee, the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director will be made publicly available through appropriate means.

## Implementation Arrangements

The implementation arrangements are summarized in the following table which indicates how different stakeholders will participate in the 3 key components of the project:

Component	Stakeholders involved	Roles and responsibilities
Protect Cross River gorillas and other key species at 3 sites	WCS	Provide training in SMART; provide field equipment; provide support for patrols in Afi, Mbe and Okwangwo. Collect data on Cross River gorillas and other key species at all 3 sites; analyse data and produce regular reports.
	CAMM	Support patrols of Mbe Mountains to enforce local rules and regulations.
	NNPS	Lead patrols of Okwangwo; produce regular SMART-based patrol reports.
	CRSFC	Lead patrols of Afi; produce regular SMART-based patrol reports.
	Communities, chiefs	Provide local information to help guide the patrols of Afi, Mbe and Okwangwo.
Protect important forest habitat and corridors through co-management with local communities to provide benefits from improved cocoa production, bush mango harvesting and watershed protection.	WCS	Conduct BNS survey. Explore opportunities for local community-private sector partnerships. Provide bush mango training. Monitor progress of training and evaluate impact on yields and income.
	CAMM	Engage in the process; enforce local rules and regulations to protect forest habitat in corridor area. Assist with selection of individuals, user groups and cooperatives to be trained.
	CRIN	Lead the cocoa training and establishment of farmer field schools. Identify demonstration farmers.
	Communities, chiefs, women's groups, user groups	Identify individuals, user groups and cooperatives to be trained. Participate in the training and respect terms and conditions of the conservation contracts signed.
Raise awareness and improve local attitudes and behaviours towards conservation through a schools-based	WCS	Species and habitat survey and lead establishment of District Environmental committee
	CAMM	Engage in the establishing District Environmental committee

conservation education and a radio drama program.	CRBC	Weekly broadcast of radio magazine shows from Calabar and Ikom.
	NNPS	Support conservation education efforts in Okwangwo.
	CRSFC	Support conservation education efforts in Afi.
	Communities and school conservation clubs	Participate in environmental education program; provide feedback to MGMC through listener groups.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

WCS will conduct regular community meetings throughout the duration of the project to assess the involvement of communities in the project. Minutes of meetings held will be kept for records, with all participants signing attendance sheets. We will monitor the impact of the project and evaluate its success or otherwise by:

- By 2020 there has been no decrease in the number of Cross River gorilla nest sites recorded per km and the area occupied by Cross River gorillas increases by 10% compared to baseline established in 2017.
- By 2020, levels of knowledge, attitudes and behaviors improve by 10% compared to 2014 baseline.
- Levels of hunting within the 3 protected areas, measured as the number of wire snares recorded per km walked, decrease by 10% by 2020 as measured against the 2016 baseline.
- By 2020, household incomes increase by 10% due to improved cocoa production and bush mango collection compared to 2017 baseline.

### Final Note

To answer questions contained within the official response from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund to our Letter of Inquiry dated 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017, I can confirm that:

- The project will not involve the handling of live animals.
- The project will not support any forestry activities such as nurseries or tree planting.

### Acronyms Used

BNS	Basic Necessities Survey
CAMM	Conservation Association of the Mbe Mountains
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CRBC	Cross River Broadcasting Corporation
CRIN	Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria
CRSFC	Cross River State Forestry Commission
GRASP	Great Ape Survival Partnership
MGMC	My Gorilla My Community
NNPS	Nigeria National Parks Service

NTPP	non-timber forest product
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society