The Role of the NGO
Chimpanzee Conservation Center in the
Protection of the Haut Niger National Park
GUINEA

Estelle Raballand, Centre de Conservation pour les Chimpanzés (CCC) - director
Why believing in GUINEA?

Low population density ~10 millions (1/5 in Conakry)
Size: 246,000 km²

©iPhoto
The Guinean forested landscape

- 49% tropical forest
- 28% savannah & other woodland
- 23% cleared

©ccc
Guinea: 10% of total is protected areas
Guinea: home to chimpanzees

Pan troglodytes verus
Guinea

The last stronghold of Verus chimpanzees

[Bar chart showing the population of Verus chimpanzees in different countries, with Guinea having the highest number.]
Guinea: the main threats

Unsustainable Agricultural practice
POACHING
OTHER THREATS:
DISEASES and HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT
The Haut Niger National Park
Unique landscape

Forest galleries
Savanna
Clear forest
Unique Mosaic
Mafou Protected Forest

Source: Bah, 2009
WELCOME to the CCC
Rehabilitation and Release Sites
Chimps: 43 at Somoria, monitoring 6 (+4) at Bakaria

Local Staff: 9 in Somoria, 3 in Bakaria

Management: 2 in Somoria, 1 in Bakaria (part time)
Chimpanzee Conservation Center
Core Activities

Care to all rescued chimpanzees

Rehabilitate

Release selected individuals

Education and environmental awareness

Protection of the park
CCC Rehabilitation

Travel for several kms, feeding, resting & playing

Learning tool-use skills through repeated observation and practice
Feeding on wild foods: e.g. pith of *Aframomum* sp., fruit of *Parkia biglobosa* & *Saba* sp.

Familiarizing themselves with their environment

Hunting galagos
The challenge of release

History of chimpanzee release not that good

Identify suitable release site
Our Release Site

Release camp

Mixed habitat types

Wild Chimpanzees
Comprehensive Preparation

- Lengthy rehabilitation process
- Identifying suitable release candidate
- Logistical preparation
- Genetic tests/Health check/tests prior release.
- Radio Collars: wore fake collars for >12 months prior to be equipped with real collars
Why distance Monitoring?

- Minimize risk of aggression;
- Promote weaning from human contact;
- Minimize potential risk of disease transmission;
- Facilitate integration of released individuals into wild communities
- Promote natural behavior and survival
ARGOS Collars (Telonics Inc.)

- Transmit GPS locations via satellite once a day recorded every two hours from 6am-6pm (7 points/day).
- Transmission success varied significantly with season (N=4 collars).

Humle et al. 2011
Unexpected dispersion

Humle et al. 2010
Post Release Monitoring
Results after 6 years
Protection of the PNHN

Forest protection

Wildlife protection

River protection

Education and Awareness
Forest protection → stopping illegal logging → bushfire
Wildlife protection → preventing poaching

North – 80 km along the river
West – 20 km along the road
A poacher arrested with guns and remains of 3 buffalos:
6 months in jail
Bushmeat in the PNHN

Baseline study for seven months in 2012
5807 bodies, 563 primates (no chimps) = 9.7%
Approximately 24 Tons (in ½ the park)
80% in the dry season (especially March-April)

Key meeting with regional/local officials
River protection

→ protecting river edges

→ making the 80 km of Niger river a fishery resources reserve

→ protecting river wildlife
Education and Awareness

J’♥le Parc National du Haut Niger et j’en suis fier!

Les chimpanzés sont guinéens
Tous ensemble, protégeons-les!
Community Support
What's next?

Helping the PNHN management to create long term protection plan
Collaborate with conservation NGOs
Influence extraction companies to reduce their impact
Advocacy Role

Guinea deserves recognition for the positive actions
PNHN is an important area for chimpanzee conservation
CCC is a major player in conservation in Guinea
Acknowledgments

Guinean Government

Park officials and director of protected areas

The PPF and PPI volunteers

• At Chimpanzee Conservation Centre (CCC)
  • The current and past managers
  • The scientific advisor: Dr. Tatyana Humle (University of Kent)
  • The CCC advisors (esp. Dr. Chris Colin)

and all the dedicated local staff and CCC volunteers
THANK YOU!

For further information:

www.projectprimate.org
www.projetprimates.com

Facebook:
Chimpanzee Conservation Center

Estelle Raballand:
eraballand@projectprimate.org