Gorilla Tourism in Dzanga Sangha:
A 17-year story ... that continues

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Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas
Presentation outline

- Introduction of Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas (DSPA)
- Biodiversity of the DSPA
- DSPA administration/activities
- Primate Habituation Programme (PHP)
- Habituation process
- Achievements
- Major challenges
- Perspectives
Location of DSPA in CAR
Reserve
3.408 km²

Pre park

Community hunting zone

National Park
1.253 km²
Rich biodiversity of DSPA
The indigenous people of DSPA
Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas administration

Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources

MEFCP
MDTA

Aires Protégées
Dzanga - Sangha

WWF
Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas administration

**Conservation**
- Integral protection of NP
- Assure sustainable use of resources in reserve

**Tourism**
- Valorization of natural and cultural resources
- Generate revenue
- Create employment

**Sustainable development**
- Develop strategies/Integrated development measures for conservation of biodiversity and management of natural resources

**Forest and data**
- Follow up forest concessions
- Assure concessions respect conventions and laws
Anti-poaching

- Daily patrols by anti-poaching units
- Jan-Jun 2015 - 5502 man/day

First quarter 2015 seizures:

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<th>Type</th>
<th>January 2015</th>
<th>February 2015</th>
<th>March 2015</th>
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<td>High Caliber 10.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium caliber Baïkal</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>04</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Medium caliber Simplex</td>
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<td>Snare cable (Roll)</td>
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<td>00</td>
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<td>Tusks</td>
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<td>02</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bush meat – protected species (Kg)</td>
<td>20</td>
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Tourism in Dzanga-Sangha
Distribution of gorillas in Africa

Western Lowland Gorillas

• Critically endangered
• 1300 - 4600 in DSPA

Principal Threats:

• Poaching
• Loss of habitat
• Disease
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Objectives:

TOURISM

RESEARCH

CONSERVATION
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What is habituation:
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Gorilla habituation: what it takes

- 4 – 7 years required
- Skilled trackers
- Good trail system
- Daily follows of groups
- Repeated contacts
- Gradual change in reactions
  - Fear
  - Aggression
  - Curiosity
  - Ignore
Aggression
Curiosity
Close approaches
Ignore
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Identification of individuals

Bombe

Malui

Mopambi
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The road so far:

- 2 camps (Bai Hokou and Mongambe)
- Solar panel energy system
- Over 60 employees
- 2 habituated gorilla groups open to tourism (Makumba and Mayele)
- 2 groups under habituation (Mata and Wonga)
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MAKUMBA group: today N = 4

- Malui:
  - Mossoko: 02/2004
  - Tembo: 12/2007
  - Ngombe: 11/2012

- Bombe:
  - Mobangi: 07/2006

- Mopambi:
  - Bokata: 01/2006
  - Sopo: 07/2010

- Mopatapata:
  - Kunga: 1999
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MAYELE group: today N = 10

Diagram showing the structure of the MAYELE group with subgroups including Duma, Elili, Penge, and Mapoki, and individual gorillas named Yoko, Wiya, Elili, kaya, Sosa, Moangale, Mopangu, Lungu, and Manjome.
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The road so far:

- Over 3000 tourists/media
- Sensitization through the media
- Increase information through research
- Over 45 published articles
- PhD and Master theses
- Almost attained self-sustainability
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Preventing disease transmission:

- Great ape and human health monitoring
- Improved Hygiene Rules & Measures
- Routine Health Monitoring
- Regular collection & preservation of biological samples
- Regular observations & recording of observational health data
- Standard Employee Health Programme (EHP)
Importance of gorilla tourism to DSPA

2010 DSPA tourism revenue:

- Gorilla permits (€65,000)
- Park activities (€24,815)
- Park entry (€21,043)
- Film fees (€9940)
- Community activities (€8110)
- Research fees (€500)
- Vehicule hire (€397)
- Sales (€330)
Importance of gorilla tourism to DSPA

2011 DSPA tourism revenue:

- Gorilla tracking: 48%
- Doli Lodge royalties: 13%
- Park entry: 12%
- Visit to elephants: 11%
- Sangha-Lodge royalties: 8%
- Community activities: 5%
- Mangabey tracking: 2%
- Research fees: 1%
- Bai tour: 1%
- Boutique sales: 1%
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Major challenges:

- Political instability
- Global financial crisis
- Coup d’état
- Election

Graph showing changes in revenue and number of gorilla tourists from 2001 to 2013.
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Major challenges:

- The March 2013 coup d'état
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**Major challenges:**

- Effects of the March 2013 coup d'état

- Looting of project headquarter
- Insecurity in the region
- Evacuation of expat staff
- Influx of villagers into NP
- Suspension of tourism
- Zero tourism revenue
- Need for emergency funding
- Self-sustainability delayed
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Perspectives

- Continue to habituate gorillas with minimum impact
- Continue ecological and behavioral research
- Implementation of Health Monitoring Program
- Capacity building of local guides, guards, tour operators
- Develop landscape-level gorilla-tourism
Acknowledgment

Great commitment of WWF US to DSPA

- Grants: ex. USFWS and Sacharuna

- Active leadership of ex-APDS staff: Allard Blom, Lisa Steel, Richard Carroll

- Support to AfGAP by WWF US species team
Thank you!!

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