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## SEKAKOH 2024, ACTIVITY REPORT



All images and pictures in this report are

*This document summarizes Sekakoh's activities for the year 2024 covering the three national intervention sites and beyond field activities.*



**PPI-6\_Mpem & Djim**



**BZS\_Benue**



**NEBLF-Ebo**

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## CHAPTER I – ABOUT SEKAKOH

### I- Editor: Coordinator of SEKAKOH 2024



Myself and Team are very pleased to announce that the year 2024 has been a better one in the life of Sekakoh than the previous years, although still plagued with economic hardship, increasing field pressure and financial difficulties and with the North West and South West (NoSo) socio-political unrest that is now known as the anglophone crises metamorphosing into streams of bombings, killings and kidnappings for ransom that has further kept us away from the Kom-Wum forest reserve which was initially our primary site. However, despite our unavoidable absence in Kom, information from our community managers still

confirms the presence of our target specie the Eliotti Chimps inside the Kom-Wum forest when reached on phone. The final lifting of COVID measures was effective down to the field levels and this gave a green light for conservation works to resume however, the government kept reiterating the need for everyone to do all they could to curb the spread of COVID-19 as its resurgence was reported again in some parts of the world. During this year, Sekakoh attended the Annual General Assembly and the Strategic meeting for the Central African Alliance for the Conservation of Great Apes (AGSAC) that held in Pont Noire. Sekakoh still holds the office of Secretary General at AGSAC. During this year ended, Sekakoh and her Bristol Zoological Society partners visited the Benue project and the Sekakoh team also visited delivered work packages at Ebo and Mpem and Djim sites maximizing the deployment of the available resources. Despite the limited resources we did realize the below with financial and material support from funders and partners. We do appreciate very gratefully the New England Biolabs Foundation for her renewed support, the Bristol Zoological Society and the African Wildlife Initiative of SOS-IUCN, PPI-IUCN FC for the continued support, Creative Action Institute, the Technical Assistant to the Mpem and Djim National Park, and The Alliance for the Conservation of Great Apes in Central Africa (AGSAC) in particular for their institutional support. I cannot pen-off without thanking Well Grounded and Maliasili for the different training packages they delivered to the benefit of myself and team. Many thanks to Cameroon's Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife and most especially the sectoral managers for their support to Sekakoh's works at the different intervention sites. I therefore call on donor bodies and other funders to open the access to resources for together we can make the world a better place for people and nature.

**The coordinator**

**NYUGHA Denis**



## II- Presentation of Sekakoh

### 1- Background of creation

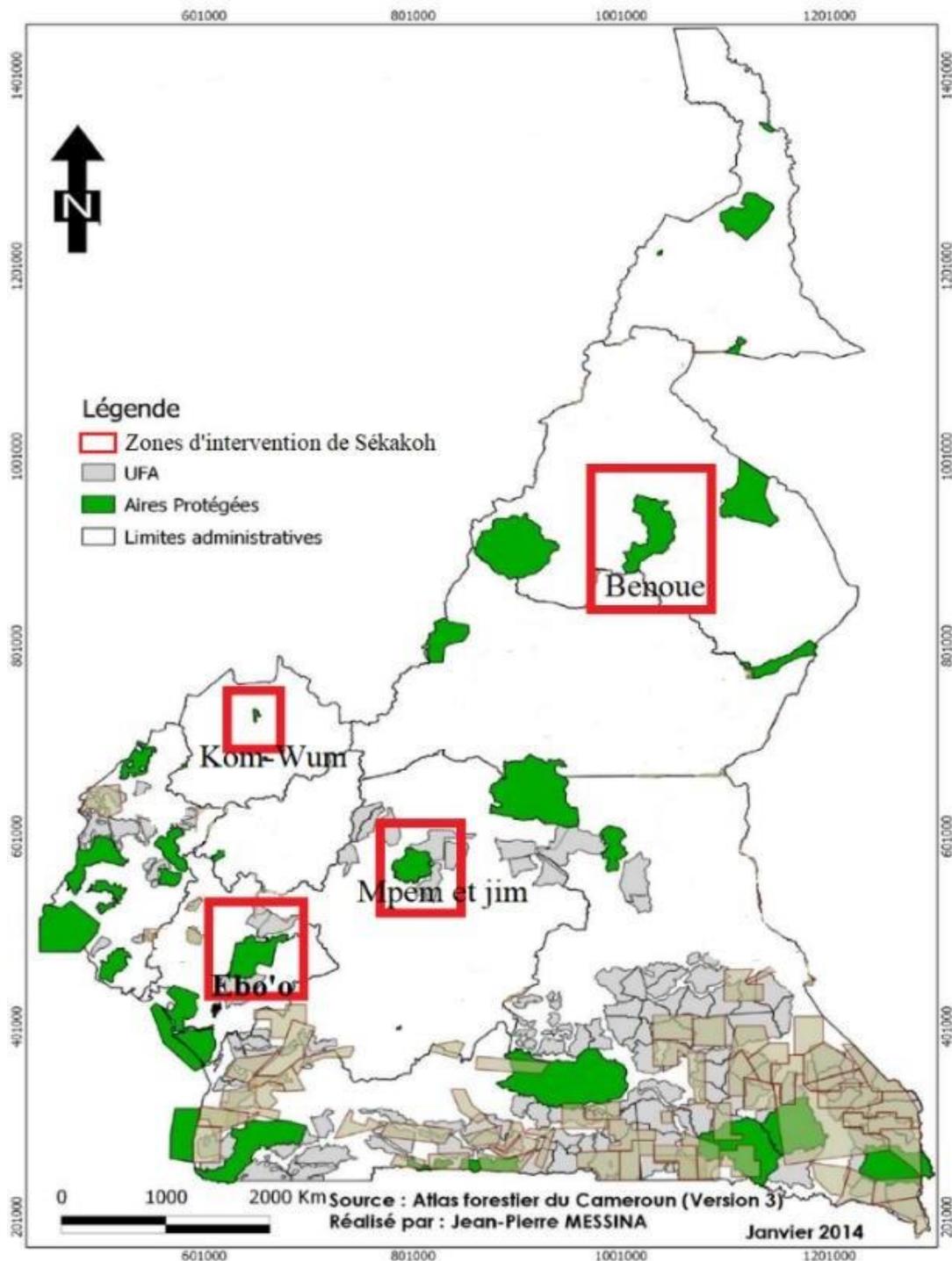
Sekakoh originated from the Elliotti Project initiated by Osiris DOUMBE a member of the IUCN SSC for Great Apes. The Elliotti biodiversity project aimed at (1) surveying the distribution of the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes ellioti*) and the diversity of other primates in the North-West Region of Cameroon; and (2) engaging community conservation through community sensitization and environmental education in schools within the area identified as biodiversity hotspots from the project. The rich results obtained from this project led to Sekakoh's creation in order to continue monitoring the Kom-Wum chimps as well as the whole biodiversity in Cameroon. Sekakoh was thus registered to the government of Cameroon on April, 2015 in Bamenda and recognized as an association under the Law N° 90/053 of 19<sup>th</sup> December 1990 governing the creation and existence of associations and groups. Following her good works, she became the first non-founding member of the Alliance for The Conservation of Great Apes in Central Africa ((AGSAC), a network of 8 central African civil society organizations drawn from Gabon, Congo, Cameroon and the Republic of Congo.

Sekakoh's slogan is “*Living in Harmony with Nature*” and its logo is a black rhino painted white, the color of grieve. The expression “Sekakoh” means "Remember them", in the Balikumbat dialect (Balikumbat is a village in the North West Region of Cameroon, it is the village of origin of the founding president). Our choice of a white Rhino color is in relation to the extinction of the West African black rhinos in Cameroon as the last individuals of the subspecies *Diceros bicornis longipes* were observed in the year 2000 and has since then been declared locally extinct. We therefore intend to avoid such ecological disasters in future for other species. Through these attributes, Sekakoh fits into a world where human actions have caused - and continue to cause - the degradation of natural habitats as well as the extinction of several plant and animal species. Through our actions, Sekakoh aims to help protect wildlife as our heritage through environmental conservation while ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, so that tragic extinctions are avoided or put at minimal level.

Many key biodiversity areas in Cameroon are under serious threats due to human activities. Increased terrorism wars at the surroundings and within Cameroun have pushed migrants into KBAs, thereby increasing resource extraction threats. Most people from rural communities rely mainly on natural resources for their livelihood. Pushed by population growth and societal needs they “ignorantly” tend to over-exploit these resources in unsustainable ways because of their poor economic situation or unawareness. We believe in Sekakoh that a successful conservation initiative is one that blends local communities' knowledge, priorities and needs in the whole process while effectively ensuring their participation both in field and at benefit sharing levels. The next step for them is to find alternative ways of subsistence that are harmless to the natural environment, thus the implication of Sekakoh in raising awareness, supporting community development and providing micro economic projects that fit community needs. Sekakoh while supporting anti-poaching patrols and law enforcement, also carries out socio economic and scientific

research to facilitate her landscape / species-based conservation efforts with the aim to help biodiversity and humanity flourish.

**The map below represents our intervention sites in Cameroon.**



*-The Kom-wum Forest is a forest reserve with no status nor management plan measuring 8000ha and rich in primates, (PT Ellioti, six apes species including Preus' monkeys and six species of nocturnal primates). Work here has been reduced to distant monitoring of past project results.*

*-The Ebo Forest in Littoral region measuring 150,000ha forms part of the Congo basin forest and an unclassified forest, rich in biodiversity (with plant and animal species of international concern) home to PT Ellioti, Preus' monkey, drills, Goliath frogs and western lowland gorillas and more. Field works ongoing with NEBF grands ending 2025*

*-The Mpem and Djim National Park in center region of Cameroon, a NP created in 2004, measures 97000has, the nearest to Cameroons political capital and home to Hippopotamus, Forest elephants, primates and an impressive variety of avian species. Field works ongoing with PPI funds running to end in 2025.*

*-The Benue National Park, in North Cameroon is a 1981 UNESCO Biosphere reserve measuring 180,000ha found in wooded savana, lays between the Faro and Bouba Djida National parks and forms part of the Benue Complex. It is home to the CE Kordofan Giraffe, lions, hippos, leopards and Eland Derby. Field works ongoing with SOS grant running to an end 2024.*

## **2- Our Vision**

***SEKAKOH ENVISIONS A WORLD WHEREIN HUMANS SUSTAINABLY CO-EXIST WITH THEIR ENVIRONMENT FOR A BETTER SOCIETY AND IMPROVED WELLBEING.***

## **3- Our Mission**

***SEKAKOH SEEKS TO PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION VIA COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR A JUST AND EQUITABLE WORLD WHERE RESOURCES ARE GAINFULLY AND SUSTAINABLY MANAGED.***

## **4- Our Objectives**

Following from Our New Strategy, we have set out four core objectives as below;

### **1) KNOWLEDGE VALORIZATION**

We define knowledge management as a process of collecting, curating, creating, identifying, managing and valorizing knowledge base. From the time of existence of humanity on earth, humans have individually or collectively designed strategies to survive while exploiting sustainably their natural resources. However, research has shown a remarkable change. We therefore intend to collect, document and valorize these past conservation practices by local communities. The end result of the knowledge base is to revamp and reuse these past conservation techniques that remain indigenous and little known. Sekakoh will promote such and work to ensure the valorization and use of knowledge generated from the communities we work with.

### **2) ECOSYSTEM HEALTH**

Staggering declines have been recorded in recent times on both faunal and flora species by conservation actors across the globe. These declines are largely driven by unsustainable human activities. Specifically, decline in species populations have been largely driven by uncontrolled hunting for income and food by locals. Large industries in need for raw materials also tend to cut down large forest patches to create farms for their raw materials. Equally, the actions of giant timber exploitation companies are pushing wildlife habitat loss which also results in wildlife raiding crop farms thereby igniting human wildlife conflicts that result in retaliatory killing through either poisoning, traps or by fire arms etc. These activities are on a larger part imposed from the central powers or multi nationals and work at the detriment of the poor local communities living at the door steps of these wild places, on the other hand, ignorance of the local populations on their rights, sustainable practices and lack of tools also push the declines through unsustainable activities. Sekakoh therefore aims to address this by reinforcing community knowledge, skills and raising awareness.

### **3) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT;**

It is no longer news to anyone that communities living at the door steps of key biodiversity sites who have acted as guardians of these spaces over time are most often least developed and abandoned to themselves, and enclaved in most cases.

Multinational firms and industries that come to tap resources from these areas will collaborate with a few Elites and at all cost protect their interest in these communities to keep the chain flowing. Community development with outputs that resolve overarching community difficulties have been identified as a buy in tool in conservation, to improve community alignments and agreement to protect the environment. Sekakoh has rich experience in co-identifying with communities their development issues, cross cutting needs and sourcing for resources to address them. It is worth noting that not all community problems have import solutions, some have part solutions within the community, and in such cases, Sekakoh gives the required technical and/or financial support lagging. Community development needs identified across Sekakoh's intervention sites are mostly socio-economic ranging from roads maintenance, bridges, build or equipment of educational or health facilities, access to potable water, community halls amongst others.

#### **4) INSTITUTIONAL RESILIENCE**

During eight years of operation over no less than four regions of Cameroon, Sekakoh has experienced working with many stakeholders, social groups including major offices that lacked a well-structured organization. This threatens the NGO's long-term survival and sustainability. The Sekakoh team had been pushed to look at its long-term sustainability strategy after the COVID-19 health crises that shut down the world and the organization was almost pushed out of operation. For their activities, the team has over the years, searched online and responded to grant calls opportunistically, with no real secured multi-year grants or donor supporting them. Looking at the instabilities and economic uncertainties rocking the world that seems unending, it has become eminent for the team to work on multi-year grants for the different sites, establish partnerships with major donors for non-restraint funds to guarantee a more stable functioning. In this regard, Sekakoh should be able to own an office, energy source, field gears, moving equipment, office materials and recruit quality staff to render operational most of the essential offices like the program's director, data management lead, finance, communication and fund raiser offices. They shall put in place plans to back stop any shock through team skill building to ensure continuity when a member leaves the team (resilience). Sekakoh should be able to carry out annual financial audits with certified external audit firms.

## 5- Our Team.



**Vewuseh Hope A.K.**  
**Research Lead;**



**Elionore Bakam**  
**Finance Lead**



**Nkeh Ophilia**  
**Secretariat Lead**



**Ndengue David Antoine,**  
**Community Lead Ngoro**



**Guy Janvier**  
**Community Lead Seréré**



**Salou Mvetoh**  
**Community Lead Yoko**



**Lisuk Louis**  
**Ebo Community Lead**  
**Manager**



**Ngotonye Jean**  
**Ebo Women lead**



**Djuidje Suzanne**  
**Benue Field Operations**



**Amu Simon**  
**Grants Writer**

## CHAPTER II – REALIZATIONS IN 2024

This year has been successful to an extent despite the continued financial stress still hitting the life of Sekakoh with funding cuts, rising prices and unsuccessful grants. There was limited success in the search for funds to support project activities. However, our team recorded remarkable achievements from our field activities with the available funds:

### **I- Sekakoh in and around the Benoue National Park (North Region)**

The Benue National Park is a United Nations Biosphere reserve since 1981. The 180,000ha park is facing increasing pressure from boko haram induced migrants, cattle raising and illegal resource extraction. Government funded activities to run the park has witnessed large budget cuts there by making the park more exposed to illegal activities. The 24 months project funded by the SOS-IUCN- AWI ended this year. Together with our partner The Bristol Zoological Society we continued supporting and supervising field activities in the park (support consisting financial payment of cold meals for eco guards, equipment, and trainings), alongside wildlife monitoring with Camera traps across the park, and infrastructure development.

- a) Anti-poaching patrols and punch operations;** Between January and December of 2024, 12 series of SMART led anti-poaching patrols were implemented under Sekakoh/BZS support, including 3 “punch operations” which were reinforced by military men from the 32<sup>nd</sup> Military base in Tcholerie. These patrols, estimated at 1560 ranger-days led to the arrest of 30 armed poachers, burning of 11 active camps and 3 abandoned camps, 15 cattle herders, 18 gold miners, 68 farmers opening new farms in wildlife corridors, 30 charcoal burners, 215 illegal settlers sensitized and sent out of the park, 2 motto bikes seized, 8 cattle herds driven out of the park and a stone crushing quarry for gold extraction burnt down. All arrested defaulters respond to their offences either at the Banda base of the conservation service or depending on the intensity of their crimes (for example; illegal settlers fleeing boko haram were sensitized and asked to settle outside the park) and get registered and identified by traditional authorities around the park other criminals responded to their offences at the designated courts in Tcholerie in front of the competent authorities. In total, there were 60 trials in court with 9 sentenced to jail terms ranging between 1 month to 3 years.
- b) National Giraffe Conservation Strategy Workshop;** In November this year, a Sekakoh/BZS delegation participated at the National Giraffe conservation workshop that held at the Garoua Wildlife School (GWS). Supported by the Giraffe Conservation Foundation actors and civil society organizations assembled at the GWS to brainstorm with Giraffe experts from Kenya in a bid to reduce the decline in Giraffe populations in the park. All 38 participants agrees that cattle herding, habitat loss and poaching were the main drivers of Giraffe population declines. Actions to address this decline are being elaborated and shall be shared with different partners once finalized.

- c) Infrastructure;** In line with our SOS project, we maintained the weather station at the buffle noir camp inside the park and maintained over 20kilometers of earth road within the park. The road and equipment maintenance activities are aimed at supporting patrol teams when residing at the buffle noir camp and the roads are meant to facilitate teams' deployment to the different directions of the park with ease during interventions. The weather station helps interpret the relationship between weather changes and wildlife behavior inside the park.
- d) Ecological monitoring;** In parallel to monthly patrols, there was wildlife monitoring through Camera traps carried out across the park through camera to identify Giraffe hotspots and other wildlife that came to an end in June. A total of 45 Bushnell Trophy HD Camera traps were diploid and data downloaded from their memory cards in June 2024 after retrieval. During the camera withdrawal missions, we noticed that 20 cameras were either stolen or damaged. Data from the cameras were processed, cleaned and stored at the park's data base in Banda and shared to partners. To note also was the direct observation of Giraffes during camera trapping missions. Three Giraffes in total were encountered along the North eastern parts of the park.
- e) SOS-IUCN Grantees review workshop In Nairobi;** From the 17-19 of November This Year, The SOS-IUCN Africa Wildlife Initiative Grant scheme invited all grantees for a 3 days review meeting in Nairobi-Kenya. The Grantees review meeting, fist of its kind was an opportunity for funders and beneficiaries to discuss together their successes, challenges and perspectives for future grants. This workshop enabled grantees to equally network and share opportunities. Our SOS project was recognized as being the Best reported in West and Central Africa.



-Patrol teams ready for SMART patrol

-Illegal settlers inside the park



-Destroyed Camera trap from the park

-SOS Nairobi Grantees workshop and Price award.

## II- Sekakoh in the Mpem and Djim National Park (MDNP)\_CenterRegion of Cameroon

Following the successful completion of our PISCCA project funded by the French Embassy In Cameroon, that reached 5 communities in sensitization campaigns, training of common initiative groups on bee keeping as livelihood alternatives and provision of potable water to support community development, we decided to continue work around the park by sourcing for additional funding from other sources. For 2024, we continued work with our PPI grant in the communities of Yangba, Linte and Kpouroung. By the end of 2022, we secured the Global Green Grants Fund to reach 2 more grazer communities of Jerusalem and Kamkata. Our work in the Mpem and Djim, targets grazers to enrich pasture, train on pasture management and support local women in farming.

The Nurseries put in place in 2023 by our PPI project were exploited from where we collected planting material for pasture enrichment. Over 20hectars of degraded pasture was planted of Guatemala, Bracharia and Stylosantes. Grazers were equally encouraged to continue planting the pasture grass to their optimum satisfaction. The pasture enrichment activity is in a bit to reduce illegal cattle presence inside the park in search of pasture graze that is often led to confrontations between park management and grazers. We therefor had earlier organized participatory workshops to allocate pasture and farmland spaces and delimit them with visible sign posts.

Over all, 2024 activities have been summarised in the points below;



- 1) Participatory mapping in Kpouroung
- 2) Nursery management in Linte

### a) Participatory Mapping

In order to ensure consent and unanimous decision making, we had invited all actors from across our three project communities' (Yangba, Linte and Kpouroung) to join us in an effort to reduce farmer grazer conflicts and grazers park management conflicts. The search for palatable grass in the dry season by cattle grazer has often pushed them to graze their cattle inside the park and in farmers farms. Having understood that it is an issue that concerns everyone in the communities, the different actors (grazers and farmers) came out in their numbers to participatorily allocate pasture land that the project could enrich and manage to encourage grazers to take advantage of the enriched areas in the dry seasons and reduce going into farmers farms or into the park which has often let to costly conflicts and financial losses on both sides. The pictures below are the participatory mapping activities in the different villages.



*Participatory mapping in Kpouroung, Linte and Final map for Yangba*

**a) Validation meetings;** In order to ensure that the interest of everyone is considered during the allocation of pasture land and in an effort to make the allocations legal and final, our project moved towards the central administrations to present the maps allocating grazing zones and for their validation and registration into the council registers. For Linte and Kpouroung villages the validation meeting held at the Yoko city hall presided over by the mayor and bringing together the Sub Divisional officer for Yoko, delegates of Livestock and Agriculture, municipal authorities and the traditional leaders of the concerned villages and members of their traditional councils respectively and the grazer leads for the different communities alongside with their counsels of notables. After a successful presentation of the allocated pasture lands, there were comments from the audience to ascertain and correct some of the limits. The deliberations were moderated by the coordinator and supported by the cartographer. The 2 Maps allocating 6209ha and 2076 ha for Linte and Kpouroung respectively were validated and signed for filing sanctioned by a prefectorial order.

The next community was Yangba which is in Ngoro sub division. The protocols were respected same as in Yoko and the meeting held at the Ngoro city hall bringing together the various actors. The presentations ended with a question-and-answer session and the meeting was sanctions by a prefectorial order as well allocating 1715ha of land for grazers as pasture land in Yangba.



*Presentation and validation of allocated grazing zones in Ngoro and Yoko councils*

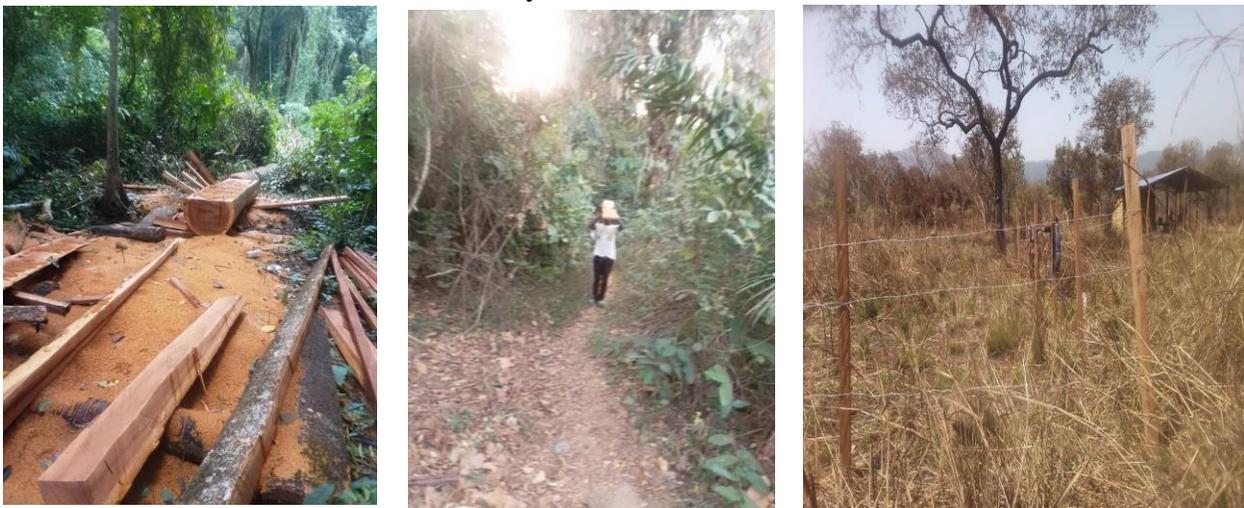
**b) Nursery management:** Upon the successful allocation of the pasture lands which have been high invaded by non-palatable grass (Bokassa grass), the next step of the project was to enrich these areas with pasture grass and trees. In this regard, two nurseries were set up after jointly in collaboration with grazers identifying local pasture grass and trees that thrive in the area to be Bracharia, Guatemala, Stylosanthes and Acasia trees. All these are wildy grazed on cattle from this are but not available. We therefore sourced for seed material with support from a Staff from the Ministry of

Livestock and animal husbandry to get the planting materials for the nursery. Two large nurseries were set up, one in Yanba and one in Linte (Linte nursery to cover Linte and Kpouroung planting as they are neighboring communities). Nurseries measuring 10m by 10m was set up in Linte and another measuring 5m by 10 was set up in Yangba. In June 2023. Late this year from November and December we expected to plant the different materials but unfortunately because of a long drought that set in, we were obliged to push the plating activity to March 2024 with the return of the rains.



*Acasia cutting for propagation, Stylosanthes pots and Guatemala*

- c) Construction of enclosure and hangars:** As part of our objective to sedentarize grazing within this landscape, we set out to construct an enclosure and a hut for a cattle grazer to settle in, near the areas allocated for grazing. In this regard, wood was sorted from nearby areas and other building materials bought from Bafia. An enclosure covering 4ha was fenced off with treated wood and barbed wires to keep and grace cattle in rotation in this area. A hut with metal sheet roofs was also constructed to lodge the grazer each time they shall descend to the villages for transhumance. The Ardo (Grazer lead) is the main beneficiary of this infrastructure.



*Material preparation and final infrastructure constructed*

**d) Wildlife monitoring;** In order to better guide decision making in the wildlife conservation sector, a key aspect that better informs conservation decision is research. One of Sekakoh's main objectives is research, we do carry out socioeconomic and cultural research to understand community perspectives and we also carry out wildlife life research through camera traps and drones to better orient conservation service decisions and actions. In the Mpem and Djim and during 2023 wildlife monitoring, we placed 10 camera traps to survey wildlife movements in the western part of the park. Cameras were deployed across Mpem and Djim Park and a systematic camera trapping survey of the park was implemented. To ensure sufficient coverage of the target area, a systematic sampling scheme was used by splitting the study area into a 5x5 km sampling grid. Browning Recon Force Elite HP5 camera traps were deployed in metal lock boxes to reduce theft or damage by intruders (with two held back for replacements following damage or loss). Cameras were deployed between January and December 2023, images were retrieved every sixty days and batteries replaced during same trips. This dataset provides us with wildlife abundance and threats information which when linked to patrol planning provides a more efficient monitoring and protection for the park.



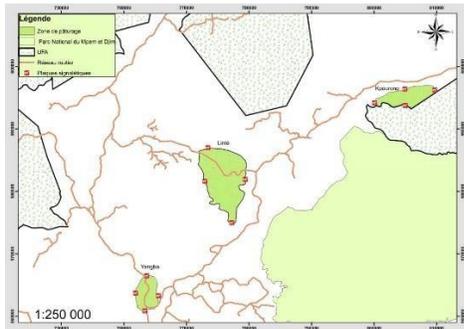
*CT coordinates inside the park, unidentified nocturnal bird, and human presence*

**e) Anti-poaching patrols;** Law enforcement through routine monthly patrols guarantees wildlife recovery over time. In the Mpem and Djim and inline with ensuring our collaboration with the conservation service, we supported 10 days patrol for 10 eco-guards between January and April and November, December. This is the dry season period with bush burnings the exposes most wildlife thereby provoking an increase in poaching and other illegal activities inside the protected area. In all, 700 man-days of patrol were deployed to comb the park of illegal activities, remove traps and arrest intruders or poachers encountered while also sending out cattle herds encountered during patrols.



*Patrol team camping inside the park, patrol evolution and wire traps and cartridge shells removed*

**f) Planting of Sign boards;** Boundary signs to delimit grazing zones allocated during this project were fabricated and transferred to the different zone's allocation for visibility to all and a all times. This initiative had as objective to materialize the limits of the grazing zones to avoid potential user conflicts from intruding farmers etc. Four sign boards were fabricated for each site with bold inscriptions “LIMIT OF GRAZING LAND, also written in Fulfude as « الارعي م لظقة حدود ». The metal signs were planted to the 4 edges of each of the allocated grazing zones.



*Geographic map showing sign positions, a planted sign in Kpouroung, and Yangba Signs*

**g) Reforestation and planting of pasture Grass from our nurseries May, June and July 2024 .**

During the months of May, June and July, we organized the planting of pasture grass and acacia trees seedlings from our nursery. The two project nurseries located in Linte and Yangba had been successfully managed by locals who were contracted under the project to carter for. Both Nurseries measuring 20X30 and 40X30 respectively provided the project team with over 1000 acacia seedlings and over 5000cuttings for Guatemala. Bracharia was simply broadcasted and or planted in uncountable quantities. At the end of the day, we planted 7hectars of Bacharia and Guatemala plus over 100sq m. of stylosantes in Yangba and over 15ha of same planting material in Kpouroung. These project outputs are being monitored by the community project manager along side with grazers and locals from the village.



a) Head load transportation of planting material to the Yangba site

b) Distribution of planting material at the Linte site

### III- Sekakoh in the southern part of Ebo Forest (Littoral Region)

#### I. Sekakoh with Creative Action Institute in the USA (CAI) 2024

Since 2016 Sekakoh has benefited CAI support in person and online. They are a capacity building US based charity that supports New England Biolabs Foundation (NEBLF) grantees. As Sekakoh continued conservation works in Ebo after fleeing the North West region, this was initiated since our arrival in Ebo in 2019 with PPI funds and a second New England Biolabs funding (PPI funded terrestrial mammal research, training of hunters in Bee keeping and hunters' surveys while New England initiated training and equipment of women in Mushroom farming). With CAI funds, we worked with local populations from Kopongo, Bienkok, Puntjuma, Somakek, Malo, Dikouss and Dissat where we implemented a Community Arts Practicum (CAP) on the fundamentals of food sovereignty and food security titled ***“Fostering Forest protection while supporting sustainable food production in Ebo Forest of Cameroon”***. It is worth noting that most of CAIs support are always in kind but for the CAP which had a financial package and with the objective of producing a community mural that represents our project community food systems and preferences produced by local women with the material and technical support of a professional artist contracted by CAI and Sekakoh facilitating.

In Pics 1,2,3 ; Community Artspracticum with women and painting of a Community mural in Somakek



#### II. New England Biolabs in Ebo Forest and Environs;

In an effort to advance conservation works within the very threatened Ebo forest landscape, we successfully renewed our grant with New England Biolabs Foundation for project work in Ebo to advance and engage scaling up our works which aimed at supporting hunters reduce pressure on Ebo's wildlife, this grant permitted us increase the number of beneficiary hunters who are now engaged in modern bee farming, a second set of mushroom training and as an add on, the grant also helped us organize a community awareness campaign at the Dissat palace and set up an agroforestry nursery from where economic tree seedlings are being sourced and distributed to farmers for free with some assisted planting activities led by our Ebo community manager. This Year, we noticed and over arching interest of locals for the agroforestry activity and distributed 2000 plants basically plums, cola nuts, cocoa nuts, avocado and mandarins for locals to plant inside their crop farmers in a it to fight climate change while benefiting from the trees.



*Sensitization workshop in Dissat and end of bee keeping training for hunters and 2 ladies in Malo*

III. **Agroforestry in Ebo with NEBLF through nursery creation;** The most innovative part of this grant has been the introduction of agroforestry through community nurseries for the integration of economic trees into crop farms. Locals had identified with us during consultation sessions the preferred economic trees they would integrate in their crop farms and the project community lead sourced for the seeds of Plums, cola nuts, cocoanuts, mandarin and oranges and a project nursery. Besides the purchase of agroforestry seeds, some main seedlings were secured and distributed to Elders of the Somakek palace for speedy trials. The community nursery is being managed by 4 persons randomly selected from across the project community and the nursery is situated opposite the Somakek palace. Seedlings from the nursery shall be distributed to 30 registered beneficiaries and planting shall be done with Sekakoh representatives and follow up visits shall be between the 5-14 October 2024. A total of 500 (100 of each seed type) seeds have been potted. Lastly we introduced modern pal oil processing machine in Ebo , with the first beneficiary madame Claire Ndongo, committed to refunding the cost to the project for a future passing on of the equipment to benefit another family.



*Palm oil processing machine, nursery site for agroforestry and lady building a bee hive from local material at a bee keeping training.*

#### **IV. Sekakoh with Global Forest Watch (GFW) in Ebo;**

Sekakoh joined the Central Africa Alliance for Great Apes Conservation (AGSAC) in 2019, they are the first non-founding member to this network. It is an assemblage of 7 central African CSO's drawn from 4 countries working on the community conservation of great apes. In late 2023, Sekakoh and AGSAC submitted a joint application led by AGSAC to monitor, document and report illegal forest practices in Ebo that drive forest degradation. Same project was being implemented by Mbou Mon Tour (MMT) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. MMT is a member of AGSAC working on Bonobo conservation in Mai Dombe province. With this project, we trained and put in place 10 local forest watchers, equipped with Smart devices with the GFW forest watcher App. At the end of the project and considering findings and encounters, we set up a mixed forest management committee composed of Traditional chiefs and the local administration to monitor and sanction illegal forest practices, we equally put in place an advocacy plan to support the protection of their forest that informs the central administration of the value of the Ebo forest. By the end of this year, 5 individuals carrying out illegal forest activities (basically Timber exploitation and clearing forests for plantations) have been sanctioned with two environmental criminals paying a fine of 50,000FCFA each to the monitoring committee. This amount will be used to secure fruit tree seedlings and hire labor to reforest some degraded forest parts. We have empowered the local forest watchers to denounce illegal forest practices to the competent authorities that be which could go as far as to the Senior Divisional office for legal and appropriate sanctions.

#### **Below are Illegal Forest practices encountered in 2024**



*A Charcoal burning site inside the forest/ A freshly installed quarry at the heart of the forest.*

## CHAPTER III – EXTERNAL RELATIONS, COLLABORATION AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

### I. Collaboration with the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF),

In Cameroon, the intervention of civil society organizations in Biodiversity conservation shall be preceded by a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the supervisory Ministry MINFOF. In 2019, Sekakoh has applied for an MoU with MINFOF and the evaluation processes requires a visit to one of Sekakoh’s sites to ascertain their presence and get community consent. In this regard, a MINFOF delegation from Yaounde visited Sekakoh’s Ebo site in July 2022. Upon completion of the successful field evaluation trip, there was a second review meeting at Room 350 in the MINFOF building to re-examine the Sekakoh proposed MoU and settle on a final decision. Upon completion of the second evaluation meeting, the committee reported on a positive note to the Minister that following their findings, Sekakoh is fit to sign and MoU with the ministry. This process has stalled from the last meeting as we keep waiting for an invitation to signature even after the oral OK from the ministry following their satisfactory notes on Sekakoh’s achievements after the field trip. It is however important to mention that after the visits, Sekakoh has been registered into the register for national civil society actors working in the forest and wildlife sub sectors.



*Mixed MINFOF Sekakoh delegation at Edea/ Joint delegation at the Somakek palace.*

- I. **International Events;** The international space was not very busy this year as Sekakoh participated in one travel to Kenya for the SOS-IUCN meeting and the AGSAC General assembly held online.

The 6<sup>th</sup> ordinary General Assembly (GA) for the AGSAC held online and was coordinated by Sekakoh as they currently hold the office of Secretary General. It was a combined meeting of the General assembly and a strategic meeting to finetune the groups objectives and missions 7years after creation. It also led to the suspension of one of AGSACs members for defiant attitudes. The strategic meeting was facilitated by Well Grounded a long-term technical partner of AGSAC. The

organization of the GA and the strategic assembly was made possible thanks to the financial support of PPI-France.



*AGSAC General Assembly holding in Pont Noire/ An interview to a TV station based in PontNoire given by the Head of PROGRAM member of AGSAC from Gabon*

**Participation at the APS Congress in Potchefstroom South Africa September 2024;** As a member of the African Primatological society, this year's congress was in South Africa. Unfortunately, after the compiling the required papers for a visa application to south Africa was turned down by the consular service at the South African Embassy to Cameroon. Sekakoh however successfully participated through an online presentation that was presented in Break out room 07B.



*Sekakoh's participation at the APS congress was online September 27 of 2024*

**Staff capacity building;** In line with our policy of staff capacity building, a staff of Sekakoh had completed the training on Canope, Canope is a multi-dimensional leadership training program that was co-led by Maliasili and Well Grounded and delivered to African CSOs to reinforce their leadership skills. The course that ran for over 8 months had as work packages, -Self leadership, Team Leadership and Community Leadership. The last cohort held in Congo Brazzaville in December this year.



Leadership training cohort in Brazzaville Congo.



CANOPÉE end of training attestation

**Elaboration of a Sekakoh Strategy Plan(SP);**

After almost 10 years of existence in conservation business and working without a clearly defined strategy, the Sekakoh team have learnt enough lessons from colleagues and partners organizations of shared objectives. It was against this back drop that the Board of Directors decided to redefine the objectives of the organization and with technical and financial support from PPI, the exercise for the elaboration of a 10 years SP was completed. The entire team brainstormed and redefined the organizations **Mission, Vision and Objectives**. The new strategy plan shall run from 2025-2034, a 10 years duration with triennial evaluation work sessions previewed.

At the end of the SP workshop, for main objectives were set out for Sekakoh (See above) and a monitoring and evaluation log frame that captured identified activities was also elaborated.

***Below are session pictures during the elaboration process.***



## CHAPTER IV – PROJECTS AND FUNDERS\_2024

### I- Projects and funders

In 2024, Sekakoh realized a number of projects financed by different funders in different areas as shown in the table below.

| <b>Funders</b>                              | <b>Project title</b>   | <b>Status</b> |
|---|--|---------------|
| PPI-6, IUCN-FC                              | Conservation of Biodiversity through the sedentarization of grazers  | Ongoing       |
| Bristol Zoology Society (BZS) /SOS-IUCN-AWI | Safeguarding the heart of Kordofan Giraffe territory in the north of Cameroon: a law enforcement and monitoring approach   | Completed     |
| New England Bio Labs Foundation (NEBLF)     | Advancing community-driven conservation of the Ebo Forest reserve; an important site for the conservation of Africa's most endangered wildlife species   | Ongoing       |
| GFW   | Community mapping and advocacy for Sustainable Forest Management in the Bolobo Territory in RDC and the EBO Forest in Cameroon   | Completed     |
| Creative Action Institute (CAI)             | Community Arts Practicum (CAP) on the fundamentals of food sovereignty and food security and our CAP was titled <b><i>“Fostering Forest protection while supporting sustainable food production in Ebo Forest of Cameroon”</i></b> . | Completed     |
| AGSAC                                       | Institutional support and capacity building for member organizations   | Ongoing       |
| Global Green Grants                         | Faciliter la gestion communautaire des espaces et des ressources par conciliation des intérêts au tour de Park National de Mpem et Djim.   | Ongoing       |

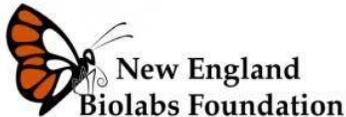
## II- Acknowledgements



**Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF)** has been very supportive to Sekakoh this year, Sekakoh has been registered as a Technical and Financial partner of the Ministry of Forestry and wildlife. Sekakoh remains grateful to the Head of Cooperation Dr. Hamman Adama and the staff of the Cooperation unit especially Madame Tabot Justin.

We thank Mr. Zobo Achile R., The conservator of the Mpem and Djim National Park and his team for their endless support to our works on this site.

We also thank Mr. Aminou the New Benue Conservator and Achile Mengameya Goue his predecessor for all their support to our works in and around Benue.



We also thank the New Enlang Biolabs Foundation for the renewed supporting that has help move our work in Ebo to high geights and have more lasting impactsour works in Ebo



We thank the **Bristol Zoological society** for continuing their support toSekakoh and continued collaboration in the Benoue National Park.

We thank especially Dr. Sam Penny and Dr. Caspian Johnson for all the support

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We also Thanks the GGF funds for accepting our proposal to advance our community resource management proposal to advance our conservation works around the Mpem and Djim park

**GLOBAL  
FOREST  
WATCH**

We thank Global Forest Watch for supporting the training and putting in place of forest watchers in Ebo forest. Forest monitoring shall go beyond the project duration.



We thank PPI-IUCN FC for continuously supporting our works in the Mpem and Djim National Park that aims at reducing pressure on the park's resources.



We thank the AGSAC for its role in sourcing for funds to support field operations for member organizations as well as identify needs of individual organizations and source for means and partners for capacity reinforcement.

We thank all our field staff Ndengue David Antoine, Salou Mvetou and Nguy Janvier Tchard in Mbam and Kim, Lisuk Louis in Ebo, Djuidje Suzanne in the Benoue National Park, Bakam Elionore at the centre of financial management, Vuwesu Hopes A. at the wildlife data office and Chia John from the Kom Wum Forest reserve.

### **III - Next Steps (Going Forwards);**

#### **a. Ebo**

*Its proximity to Douala, Cameroons economic capital and most populated city of the country exerts an increasing pressure on the forest and its resources which needs addressing in collaboration with the resident local communities as they have been guardians of the natural resources over time.*

- Scale up our actions and engage to reach other new forest dependent communities,
- Reforest degraded wildlife habitats with local and economic trees,
- Organize sports and sociocultural events to promote conservation,
- Build a field base in Ebo receive and lodge partners, students and tourists,
- Implement community participatory mapping and produce land use maps,
- Initiate specie specific research for complete assessments
- Initiate zero deforestation agriculture and promote agroforestry from community nurseries,
- Initiate small scale plantations for cocoa and palm oil production with improved seeds,
- Introduce processing machines for local palm oil processing to support women,
- Support the lone health establishments with didactic materials (beds, shelves, counters etc),

- Support educational establishment with equipment,
- Set up and apiary planted with bee loving flowers as a demonstration site for our bee keeping trainees
- Expand the fight against human wildlife conflicts and reduce retaliatory killings
- Expand community benefits and beneficiaries' revenue from IGAs.

**b. For Mpem and Djim;**

*This Park is facing increasing pressure from neighbouring communities whose populations have witnessed increase's part from the anglophone crises induced migrants and also others coming in for natural resources.*

- Initiate a robust wildlife monitoring covering all the park and produce a checklist,
- Support community development as identified with locals during surveys (water points, school facilities, bridges etc),
- Introduce and expand number of beneficiaries for our Income Generating Activities (IGA),
- Study and map out the migratory tracks of the Great Apes population and the African forest elephants present in the park,
- Support anti-poaching patrols and punch operations,
- Reforest degraded grazing lands and other degraded forest parts,
- Introduce agroforestry for locals,
- Expand number of project communities to reach new disadvantaged communities,
- Introduce Eco-tourism.

**c. For the Benue National Park**

*Bénoué National Park (BeNP) is one of Africa's Key Landscapes for Conservation (KLC) in the EU's 2015 'Larger than Elephants' strategy. It is home to 23 ungulate species, including the Critically Endangered sub-species of giraffe: the Kordofan giraffe. Numbering <2,000 in the wild, the larger Bénoué landscape represents one of its few remaining strongholds. However, the park is being rapidly degraded by the activities of illegal gold miners, charcoal production, illegal hunting and encroachment from cattle herders*

- Introduce more poverty alleviation activities through training and equipment on IGAs (agroforestry, market gardening and sustainable NTFP collection and processing technics)
- Provide more water sources for communities and school establishments (community developments),
- Renovate and equip schools (roof, walls, black boards, benches and didactic materials)
- Train Ecoguards on drone use in patrols
- Support routine patrols and targeted punch operations
- Continue wildlife monitoring and infrastructure development.

**Over all;**

*Sekakoh is a legit Cameroonian CSO, while supporting conservation initiatives across the targeted sites we also keep an eye on our team wellbeing, ensure quality staffing and wellness while supporting staff capacity building.*

*We equally aim to secure own working materials, equipment and working space to promote institutional resilience.*

*An immense thanks to all our partners and future partners to be for supporting us towards achieving this mission.*

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***Ntui the 10.01.2025***

The Coordinator



NYUGHA Denis

