



# CERCO-NEWS

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 7

AUGUST 2011

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## Hands across Africa

Education Officer Abakum Owai was invited by the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) to their annual Education Workshop held this year in Uganda. Here are his memories in his own words of his first trip ever outside Nigeria:

'The flight from Lagos through Nairobi and on to Entebbe in Uganda meant that I reached the hotel at 2am! But I was expected and welcomed, and by 8:30am I had joined the remaining delegates for a boat trip on Lake Victoria to visit the Ngamba Chimpanzee Wildlife Sanctuary.

We were conducted around the sanctuary, and lunch was also provided. The next day, the group embarked on a journey that took us four and half hour to the city of Hoima in the Southwest of Uganda. This is where all the activities for

the workshop took place over the next three days.

The workshop opened with presentations from primate sanctuaries in the Congo, Rwanda, and Cameroon. In the afternoon we took a trip to a primate conservation project conducted by a primary school in Hoima. We went on from there for a walk in their forest where I was fortunate to see the white colobus monkey, red-tailed monkey, and a troop of chimpanzees.

We visited another community where school students were using knowledge imparted to them during conservation club meetings in constructing fuel-efficient woodstoves to help reduce the rate of damage done to the forest as a result of collecting fire wood. This was of great interest to me, as we had introduced woodstoves similarly designed to Iko Esai.

We also visited another project (funded by a grant from Disney) to help reduce the impact of human activities in the forest by using the school conservation club to open a school garden where the soil was enriched by natural compost.

After this, we received presentations from all of the remaining sanctuary

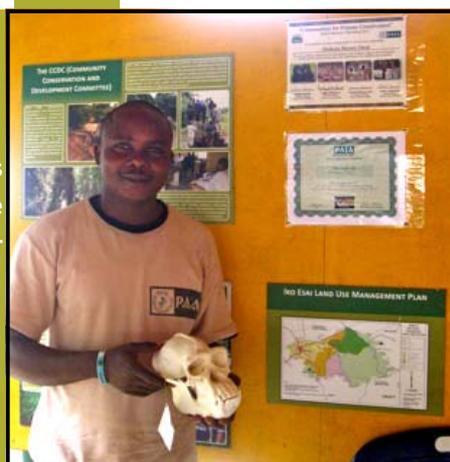
representatives, and asked questions and exchanged ideas on environmental education methods and techniques.

Representatives from Disney also taught the participants how to design pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires, as well as their analysis. We also enjoyed many examples of educational games promoting conservation. We are hoping shortly to conduct a programme using all of these techniques, supported jointly by PASA and Disney.

PASA member-sanctuaries were subdivided in regional groups. And I was nominated as the regional leader among our membership.

On the last day participants were issued a certificate of participation and successful completion of the 2011 PASA Education Workshop. Moreover, I am proud for CERCOPAN to say that I was one of three representatives who shared the best sanctuary presentation prize for this year's conference! My thanks to PASA for providing me this opportunity and to Disney and my fellow participants for providing so many useful ideas to bring to our next year's conservation educational programme in Nigeria.'

Abakum with his certificates and prize for best paper





Claire Coulson  
CERCOPAN  
Director

## From the Director

I haven't seen much of my Education Officer recently. In July he was out of State, and now last month (see our lead article) he was out of the country! These were important developmental assignments, and I know our imminent educational Outreach programme will be a much stronger offering as a result.

And it needs to be. Orphan putty-nosed guenon BenJee came to us not only desperately dehydrated, but also with a large piece of his tail cut off. I couldn't stop thinking about his suffering when he arrived. And now I can't

stop thinking about how this malicious act was just completely unnecessary. Sustainable use of the forests is at the heart of our educational message, and this incorporates a respect for nature. It certainly does not countenance random acts of cruelty to wildlife.

Our education programme also includes support for students, and we had visits from two separate universities this past month (below, and last page). We also held the third of our environmental education workshops to our neighbouring villages to

further their appreciation that 'Conservation is Good for You'.

Our 'Outreach' programme is where we visit 60 schools in the area engaging them firstly through a talk on a topical environmental theme, and then enrolling them in competitions that keep them active in researching and debating conservation topics. With that many schools on his agenda, I may not be seeing my Education Officer for quite a few months more!

*Claire*



Emmanuel at camp

## Customer satisfaction

CERCOPAN was pleased to have a 2010 graduate of the Wildlife Management Department from the University of Ibadan come out for a week-long study on the species richness of the reptiles and amphibians in the CERCOPAN core area. Emmanuel Olabode's study was funded by the Volkswagen Foundation of Germany.

Emmanuel commented: 'From all the places I have worked CERCOPAN has far exceeded my expectations. The housing accommodation, staff, fellow researchers, and the forest itself were wonderful!' One of the things he was not expecting but was impressed by was how well CERCOPAN works and

interacts with their host community of Iko Esai.

Up next for Emmanuel is a Tropical Biology Association training course in Madagascar for the month of October. After then completing his mandatory year of National Youth Service in Akpabuyo he plans to focus on applying to US and UK Universities to pursue post-graduate



Lasting protection

## Weather you like it or not

Many of the Rhoko staff recently received new waterproof coats to protect them from the powerful rains at this time of year. Our previous raincoats have been victim to many seasons of wear, with replacements urgently needed now that we are in the heart of the rainy season.

Our 24/7 patrol operation suffers the most without adequate protection, since they are out in the open all the time. The coats will also be much welcomed by the research assistants as they continually take behavioural information on the monkeys and also expand their phenology

research. Finally our keepers will be able to stay dry during their daily rounds of feeding and observation.

Funding within our 2010 grant from Tusk Trust allowed us to purchase garments that will last: another of many important items that this grant has helped us with at our forest location.

# L'Entente Cordiale

We have just competed several weeks of finalising a financing agreement, and we can now at last announce the award of a substantial new grant.

The French Global Environment Facility under its Small Scale Initiatives Programme aims at enhanced conservation of the environment in Sub-Saharan Africa countries by funding local projects that will strengthen civil society capabilities.

These aims directly match our own aims in our work with Iko Esai, and our hopes to extend the conservation successes there to the neighbouring villages of Iko Ekperem, Owai and Agoi on a long-term basis.

Grants from BBC Wildlife, Prins Bernhard Natuurfonds and others previously announced, are substantially complemented by the new award, allowing a total programme for the four communities to operate. The new grant, funded through CF-UICN in

Paris, puts the final piece of the jigsaw in place for the programme, with the latest funding especially focussed on environmental education, capacity enhancement of Community Based Organisations, and Alternative Livelihoods projects. The programme allows us to:

- continue to strengthen the capacity of Iko Esai to monitor its conservation by-laws effectively through forest patrols, and excursions of the surveillance team of the Community Conservation and Development Committee (CCDC)
- continue the biodiversity and primate reintroduction research programmes in Rhoko
- establish organisations similar to the CCDC in the three neighbouring communities, and also create CERCOPAN contacts in these villages
- run alternative livelihoods programmes in the communities to reduce pressure on the community



forests - train the communities in the principles of the United Nations Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD)

A well-informed and engaged consortium of communities in the greater region, demonstrating proactive sustainable management of their forests, is an extremely attractive proposition to receive funding from the UN-REDD programme which would provide for long-term protection of the forests and their wildlife.

Thanks to UICN we will be able to help prepare four communities to engage constructively in a regional programme should REDD funding become a reality for Nigeria and this region of Cross River in particular.

The French Committee of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature administers the grant

*“A well-informed and engaged consortium of communities in the greater region, demonstrating proactive sustainable management of their forests, is an extremely attractive proposition to receive funding”*

Community forests bordering the National Park in total make up an area more than half the size of the Park itself



# Chief among Rescuers

BenJee relishing a Gummy Bear



This month saw the arrival of a new Putty-nosed Guenon, BenJee. BenJee is male putty, only 3-4 weeks old and therefore he was absolutely tiny when placed in our care.

He was initially rescued by Chief Owai, traditional ruler of our host village Iko Esai. Chief Owai saw some people with the pet monkey in the

nearby town of Ugep. He informed them of their illegal activity, confiscated the putty and contacted CERCOPAN.

Fortunately, a truck was sent out the next day to pick up the young guenon, as he was not in the best condition. At his age he should still be suckling on his mum, and he had probably not received any milk for a few days. He was looking very dehydrated

and had already lost a fair bit of body condition and was quite lethargic.

He did rapidly perk up when introduced to a bowl of warm milk and he is doing much better now. In addition, the poor little guy is missing about a third of his tail. An injury most likely caused by a machete. It is probably for the best he can't fill us in on the details of his traumatic ordeal over the last week.

## Spreading the word

CERCOPAN has been expanding our educational outreach with several communities. One of the target villages is Iko Esai's closest neighbour, Iko Ekperem. They share the same forested area with Iko Esai, but prior collaboration and outreach with them has been limited. Together with Agoi and Owai, Iko Ekperem could become a vital collaborator in the conservation of a combined expanse of community forest.

A recent grant (see previous page) has allowed us to expand our work to these communities, and one

of the first steps we have taken is an educational workshop. These workshops are critical in establishing a positive relationship and understanding between the community and CERCOPAN.

We invited representatives from all major groups, such as the Chiefs' council, women's group, hunters' group, youth council, etc. These representatives are critical in disseminating information to the community at large.

Because Iko Ekperem has a positive relationship with Iko Esai, we first had to explain CERCOPAN's

mission statement and our purpose. It was important to address our role and what Iko Ekperem should expect from CERCOPAN.

After introductions, our community education officer, Michael Ekpe, began to inform them on forest ecology, the importance of primates and the new proposed by-laws.

These by-laws include agreements to manage the forest sustainably by banning the hunting of primates, no poisoning of streams and not allowing illegal logging. The group was very curious and stated that they learned several new things and fully supported the by-laws.

We hope the groups will meet with their representatives and inform them about the workshop and the proposed by-laws. In the near future we hope to sign by-laws showing their official support of forest conservation.

Mike (centre) expounding on sustainability



# Home improvements

Our Rhoko forest site has 4 eco-tourism lodges, as well as staff accommodation. As the site is located in the heart of the rainforest, with its damp weather, storms, and termites, all of the infrastructure requires considerable maintenance each year, and we have just finished this year's round with great results.

In the past there were 5 accommodation huts located at main camp. Unfortunately, two of the huts have been condemned this year, which has left us seriously short of homes. A request has been made for funds to help rectify this problem by supporting the construction of four new

sheds in 2011 - 2012.

Two of the remaining huts have now been given new high-quality long span aluminium rooves under Tusk Trust's grant this year. This will increase their longevity by protecting the wooden structures from the elements. A third hut had repairs made to the roof, and the kitchen which collapsed last year was entirely rebuilt and re-roofed.

The three living huts were all thoroughly renovated as well, with rotten wood and posts replaced, new mosquito netting installed, and all of the wood treated with preservative. Each hut was given a roof extension that covers the steps in. Being exposed to the rain previously we have been forced to



replace these annually.

The huts are now in excellent shape for the volunteers arriving newly next month who will make Rhoko their home for the next 1-2 years: look out for news on their arrival in the next edition!

**Pristine accommodation ready for the imminent arrival of our new Rhoko Manager**

***"As the site is located in the heart of the rainforest, with its damp weather, storms, and termites, all of the infrastructure requires considerable maintenance each year"***

# The future of conservation

Students from CRUTECH (the Cross River University of Technology) recently visited Rhoko Camp for an educational programme and practical experience. We have hosted annual workshops for CRUTECH over many years now. These students were interested in wildlife management and care, and this makes Rhoko an ideal place for them to learn.

They had recently spent time in Cross River National Park and they relished the opportunity to compare and contrast the conservation approaches of the Nigerian Federal Government and a Non-Governmental Organization.

Our education officer, Michael Ekpe, lectured on primate behaviour and conservation. The students

then accompanied our Research Assistants on phenology, and learned to identify different types of plants, understand about their flowering periods, and observe the staff feeding the monkeys.

Following this, our Community Conservation Manager BenJee Cascio provided lectures on conservation approaches, community development, and conservation management. The students also received lectures from Ph.D student Carrie Vath about primate conservation, forest ecology and conservation strategies.

The students had several sessions where they were asked to think critically and problem solve for real life conservation issues such as involvement of local communities, enforcement of

conservation laws and education strategies. The students gained valuable knowledge and experience while at Rhoko Camp and this opportunity allowed CERCOPAN to continue our environmental conservation educational



programme and further strengthen our relationship with local universities.

**Our CRUTECH guests at Rhoko main camp**

## WANT TO BE A PART OF IT?

- Stay in touch with our on-going programme by bookmarking our home page <http://www.cercopan.org/> and our Blog site <http://cercopan.wildlifedirect.org/> and joining our Facebook fan page <http://www.facebook.com/cercopan/>
- Volunteer for CERCOPAN in either Nigeria or the UK. We offer a range of different programmes so there is something for everyone! Visit our website volunteer section for further details.
- Help CERCOPAN attain corporate funding. If you work for a corporate sponsor who may be interested in funding CERCOPAN please contact [claire.coulson@cercopan.org](mailto:claire.coulson@cercopan.org)
- Undertake a sponsored event to raise funds for CERCOPAN. Use the Fundraising Pack on our web site to help you.
- Make a cash donation to CERCOPAN via our website...every little helps!
- Buy a gift for friends or family from the Good Gifts Catalogue ([www.goodgifts.org](http://www.goodgifts.org)). You can buy a month's supply of fruit for growing CERCOPAN orphan monkeys - called in the catalogue 'A-peeling Monkeys' for only £20! The price of the gift is passed on to CERCOPAN. So, it is an excellent way of solving your gift problems, and supporting our work! Alternatively visit the CERCOPAN gift shop on our website today.
- Donate useful goods and equipment such as building and fencing materials, veterinary medicines, old laptop computers etc. or services such as printing, blood testing and architectural design.

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Design & Layout by Claire Coulson; Written by Claire Coulson, Graham Brown, BenJee Cascio, Carrie Vath, Amy Baxter, Abakum Owai  
Edited by Claire Coulson