

Duyin Ehumi - New Stories

Iko Esai Community Newsletter

January to June 2007

DIN Starts Wonderful Work with Esai Women

By Tanya Conlu

It is with great pleasure that we welcome Development in Nigeria, or DIN, into Iko Esai. The much-awaited WEAVE project, introduced in 2006, started this year, setting 25 women indigenes into action. WEAVE stands for Women's Empowerment and Advancement through Vocational Education, and the project includes apiculture, or the farming of bees, *owani* (salad) cultivation, bushmango preservation and adult education. Members of the newly-formed Iko Esai Women Association (IKEWA) are excited that one of their 5 hives that CERCOPAN donated has already been colonized. Hopefully, we will have much honey in the village by 2008! The women have also learned how to grow salad in their backyards without plucking the roots or the seeds of this precious leaf.



Vincent Otu of DIN and Alice Obo with one of the beehives

While DIN has partnered with CERCOPAN for this community development work in Iko Esai, the organization is also working on the same project in neighbouring Iko Ekperem and other communities in Cross River State. Let us applaud their efforts and support our women in striving for a better economic situation through wise use of forest resources. ☐

CERCOPAN takes on Indomitable Leopards

By Mike Ekpe



It is said that "all work without faith is death". On the 18th of March, a local football match was organized between CERCOPAN staff (Rhoko Team) versus the Indomitable Leopards of Iko Esai (Village Team) at the sport field. The captain of the Indomitable Leopards Mr. Lucky Akposi said they are not undermining the Rhoko Team but they sincerely feel they have a lot to learn from our soccer since they do not know how to handle pressure. Eyewitness account said that a few minutes into the first half, the Rhoko Team played well, arousing the curiosity of the keeper from the Indomitable Leopards and scored the first goal. Tedy Oyira expressed sadness after the goal stated that his team might lose woefully if the defense is not backed up. The referee, GB Okorie, was very consistent. The match was fantastic as both teams equalized with two goals. The Rhoko Team urged for the second leg or encounter, and Amaka said they hope to beat the Indomitable Leopards soon. ☐



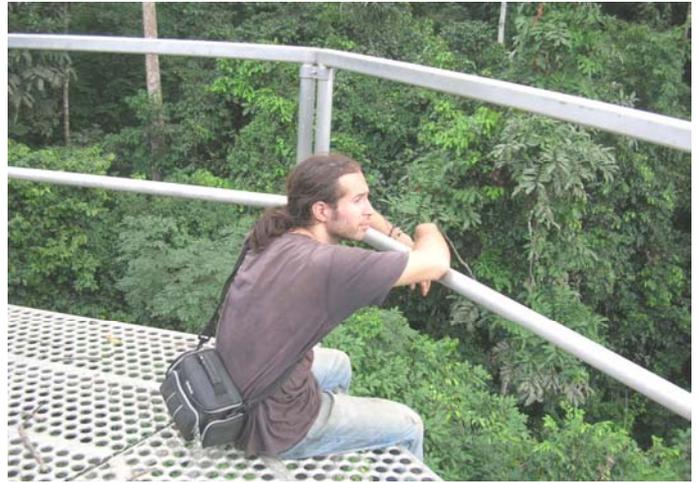
Women planting *owani* cuttings in the propagator

Hello from the New Camp Manager

By Richard Carroll

Welcome once again to the CERCOPAN Community Newsletter, and it is a special welcome from me as this will be my first edition since arriving here to work with CERCOPAN. If I could first introduce myself, I am the new Rhoko Camp Manager taking over from Heidi Roesch who has been acting Camp Manager and Research Coordinator for the previous year. I was born in the UK and lived and studied there gaining my graduate degree in Zoology. I returned to University in order to gain a Masters qualification in Environment and Development Studies, during which time I focussed on community based conservation and development projects. I have travelled in Africa before but this is my first time to visit Nigeria and West Africa. I have also worked previously as a volunteer in South America on another wildlife project; which is where I realised the importance of community involvement in successfully maintaining conservation projects.

I am grateful to all those who have worked at the project previously for the work they have done to bring us to this present time. I am also especially grateful to all of you in the communities for the warm welcome you have given me since my arrival, I hope in time to be able to repay this kindness through the things we can achieve with CERCOPAN. ☐



New Rhoko Camp Manager Richard Carroll on the tree platform at the Bushmango Trail

sent a messiah in the person of the late Mr. Felix Okon Uso – our indigenous son, who brought a European Union project, commonly called Micro Project Programme in Six States (MPP6). This union succeeded in building a permanent bridge over the Ading water. The community unanimously shouted “ALLELUJAH” but nobody echoed “AMEN” because the banks of the bridge were so deep that passage across the bridge was quite impossible. At this juncture, the condition of the wooden bridge was over dangerous, detrimental and impedimental to our lives, visitors and our general progress.

God sent another messiah – Pastor Wilson E. Ankpo (Moses) alias “Eye-Opener”, who dreamed of opening a diversion to link the permanent bridge to save the lives of insiders and outsiders within the L.G.A., state and the nation. It was a work Mr. Eye-opener could not do alone. As I was intuited, it appealed to me to seek for help from CERCOPAN. Just as it happened to Saul and Ananias. God said to Ananias, “Arise and go to the street...” Acts 9V11. At that same time, while I was sitting at my veranda, behold, I saw a redeemer – Mr. Richard Carroll, Rhoko Camp Manager of CERCOPAN, whom God had sent to come for a visit at Iko, sitting just at the late Elder Peter’s veranda opposite my house. The word of the Lord which says “Seek and you will find...” Deut. 4V29 came into realization. I quickly approached the manager of Rhoko Camp and appealed to him to please send some labourers to assist in opening a diversion at Ading to link the permanent bridge. He willingly accepted. This negotiation went on within the early part of April, 2007. Two days later, he came together with Mr. Aidam Matthew and Mr. Ubi Ofem with their engine-saw and machets. Four of us surveyed the diversion, cleared and raked it completely within two days.

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A Diversion at Ading Bridge Opened

*By Pastor Wilson E. Ankpo
(Moses), Secretary General of
Esai Clan*

Natural leadership is neither picked, stolen nor bought from the market. It is gotten right from birth. Jeremiah IV5: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...”, Exodus 3V10: “Come now, therefore, and I will send you...” If leadership is said to be bought (training), it is just to concretize the natural sanctification. A sanctified and ordained leader must keep on having positive thinking, decision, and constant dreaming of what to do that will benefit not only himself/herself but the entire community.

There had been a long-time cry, suffering, heartbreak, torture and an uncertain safety over the “old wooden bridge of Ading”. This wooden bridge had for sometime past caused accidents to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Through incessant prayers by the people of Iko Esai, God

The Pastor persistently mobilised the community to join in this self-help project by filling the banks of the bridge for easy accessibility. The community accepted willingly to do the filling, and the work was done in two days by men, women, boys and girls.

Today, that cry, suffering, heartbreak, torture and accidents at the wooden bridge is now over. I still plead with the community to please co-operate once more by weeding the diversion thoroughly for accessibility to all categories of road users, to enable us now unanimously echo the ALLELUJAH with AMEN. ☐



CERCOPAN groundskeepers Ubi Ofem Otu and Matthew Aidam with Pastor Moses and Richard Carroll

Science Equipment Donated to Iko Esai Secondary School

By Mike Ekpe

A request for assistance was made by the principal of the Iko Esai community secondary school, Chief I.E. Etim, and the head of department, Mr. Aidam A. Ekpe, for a donation of laboratory science equipment. Mr. Ekpe declared that the science department lacked basic apparatus in the school laboratory to carry out experiments, and that this has been the cause for low performance of students in the West African Examination Council (WAEC). CERCOPAN obliged the request for 3 metre rules, 3 sets of slotted weights (masses), 1 standard register, 2 stop clocks, 1 potentiometre and 2 pairs of bar magnets.

During the presentation of equipment by myself on behalf of CERCOPAN, CERCOPAN/VSO volunteer Tanya Conlu reaffirmed that CERCOPAN would always support education activities at all levels, and urged the school authorities to send proposals to the Community Conservation and Development Committee (CCDC) in future for assistance. In a good will message, the principal, on behalf of the school, thanked CERCOPAN for the gesture and



A Report from the Mangabeys

*By Akposi Esira
Abalum, Research Assistant*

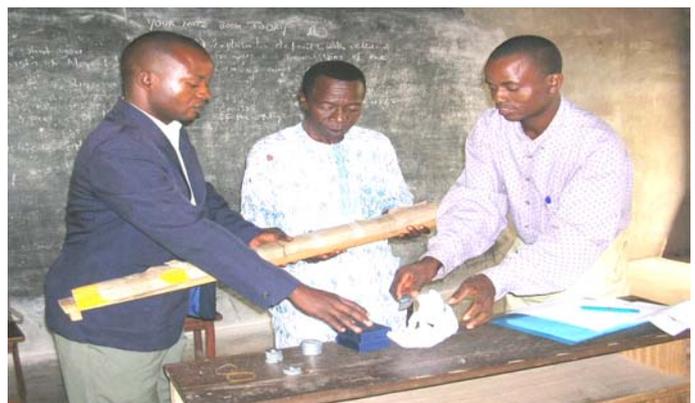
From experience, since ever CERCOPAN returned a group of Red-capped mangabeys into their forest home in Iko Esai Rhoko Camp, they have been ensured of a safe environment, well protected from hunters.

CERCOPAN returned a group of twelve mangabeys on December 1st 2003 and a second group of six in January 2004. With its rehabilitation program, CERCOPAN has been able to have thirty-seven mangabeys survive, including the new born baby. You may think they can produce many, yes, due to their environment, but they are endangered because their pregnancy lasts six months and they nurse their babies for two years. So we should help CERCOPAN to protect them and other endangered species as well.

You cannot find mangabeys nearby unless you cross to the Cross River National Park area and even here they are very scarce. But in CERCOPAN you can get mangabeys nearby. They have been friendly to everyone, they form a good social structure and they also give respect to their dominant one, like Clyde as the dominant male and Odudu as the dominant female, mostly when they are feeding.

So we should stop deforestation and killing endangered species because they are getting finished. ☐

assured the organisation that the items will be put to judicious use. Vice principal Elder Robbert O. Nkang, in a vote of thanks, solicited his support toward CERCOPAN's goals and charged Mr. Ekpe to use the equipment for the effective learning of the students. ☐



3 Mr. Mike Ekpe hands over science equipment

Monkey Business: Never a Dull Day

By Eno Okikpo, Head Primate Keeper

The life of a CERCOPAN primate keeper is never boring, in fact, it is impossible to predict what situations may arise to challenge and test them on a daily basis. As Head Primate Keeper, Eno takes time out to tell us:

The keepers have been very good friends to all the monkeys in CERCOPAN, but how has this been achieved? With regards to the Red-capped mangabeys in the forest enclosure, the keepers have been able to copy and understand their behaviour to win their trust. Keepers spend a great deal of time taking scan observations, or noting the behaviour of a group of monkeys and their social interactions over a period of time. By learning how they behave, and of course by feeding the monkeys everyday, the keepers have become good friends with all the monkeys.

The Great Escape.

Let me also tell you about the Mona guenons. We have three groups of Monas in separate tunnels of the satellite cage. All the monkeys have names and the keepers know the individual monkeys by their name, their likeness, and their character. Nko is the wise one among the females who tests the keepers and tries to escape. Etimbuk, an adult male, and Osumba, another female, also likes trying to escape.

One may ask, how do the keepers get the monkey back into the tunnel enclosures if they do escape? There are choices to make, and a keeper must judge a situation and act in the best way depending on the circumstance. For example, on the 20th of February this year, there was an escape, and it was Nko the wise Mona! I had to contact the management while keeping an eye on the monkey,



Nko the escape artist

but also, I had to keep my distance and remain calm. It is important not to panic. This is the first response, and the second is not to stand between the monkey and the fence. It is important not to run after the monkey or scare it; instead, I had to use my knowledge to anticipate what the monkey will



do. Most importantly, the monkey should not be fed outside, as food is the only way to get Nko back into her tunnel.

Within the satellite area, we have a wild Mona visitor who stays there. This wild Mona first came with two females on 16th September last year to visit the CERCOPAN Monas. The two females stopped visiting but the male never left the satellite area, as he had made this his new home. Nko spent some time with the wild Mona on her escape, but I eventually managed to tempt her back to her tunnel using food and once inside, sealed her way out again. Nko was thankfully home without injury or any bad incident.

Code Green.

This is our emergency call on the radio to mean that a tree has fallen on the Mangabey enclosure fence. The keepers were challenged this year by their first Code Green ever on March 30th. In fact, after the serious storms the trees had fallen on the wire mesh and broken the enclosure. The mesh was damaged and so were the electric wires and part of the bridge. Thanks be to God that the Mangabeys who live inside the enclosure didn't escape. I also thank the research assistants, security, patrol and groundskeepers who supported the keepers in cutting the tree from the fence and repairing the wire.

Manga-babies.

Bravo! I therefore say bravo to the Mangabeys of the enclosure who gave birth to babies. We have five Mangabey babies born inside the enclosure this year. Originally, there were only 18 Mangabeys brought from Calabar and now we have 36.

New Home.

I wish to thank our keepers Mary Eyo and Akposi Esira who look after our monkeys and help in

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Iko Es-Science

Our research team is growing as important and exciting projects are being carried out here in our local forests. Research assistant Ayitu and new recruit Etan tell us a little about their experiences with CERCOPAN's research work.

By Etan Akpor Egbe



Primate conservation has become a concern to the human race, especially to CERCOPAN, because of its consequences.

I am a son of Iko Esai and have been a teacher in the community secondary school after my O level/NCE requirement on Geography/Environmental Education studies. Now I am a research assistant in CERCOPAN in Rhoko Camp and have been observing the mona monkey July, Nko and Bebe for one month.

With the needs and brighter posterity, phonological studies have been carried out to know the types of fruits, flowers, trees and leaves that the monkeys feed on.

This project has enabled me to have it in mind to carry out advocacy about our rainforest. Cont.....

...From Monkey Business

feeding. I also wish to thank Deputy Director Claire Coulson, Rhoko Camp Manager Richard Carroll, Heidi Roesch, Dr. Uche Anyaorah, Sagan Friant, the keepers and the research assistants who have joined to move a group of Monas to a new forest cage in the Core Area in preparation for future release. This move took place on the 7th of June from 9:50 to 11:20 am. This group of monkeys are happy living in the forest and their behaviour is being sampled to show that they are the ones who will be released to the wild and go back to their natural home. ☐



Mangabey baby born in Rhoko enclosure

.....The release of these monas is important to West Africa, and to Iko Esai in particular. When they leave the release enclosure, this group of monkeys will no longer be in captivity and will be back to their original rainforest zone throughout their life expectancy. ☐

By Ayitu Obeten Eku



The Iko Esai forest, particularly the CERCOPAN Core Area, is where our research takes place. The Core Area attracts students, organisations and local communities, such as the University of Calabar and foreign researchers.

I am a 27-year old research assistant in CERCOPAN and a native of Agoi Ibami in Yakurr L.G.A. Before CERCOPAN I was a staff of Pamol Nigeria Limited in the Agoi Ibami rubber estate.

My research is basically on trees, primate groups (guenons), and their behaviour. From these behavioural studies, a potential release group has been chosen. The studies also let me know the differences between behaviour of guenons in captivity and those in the wild. Fruits, flowers and leaves studies have also been carried out in the release area where a grid system has been cut out first for the studies. Our research since June 2007 has shown the flowering and fruiting pattern of trees in the grid system from samples in the release area. This is to identify which fruits, leaves and flowers the monkeys feed on.

In the last issue of this newsletter, we talked about monkeys going back to the bush, and since then much preparation has been done. The Forestry Commission, the Ecotourism Board and the C.R.S. Veterinary doctor, Dr. Bassey, visited on the 9th of May to provide government permission and to report on the release project. On June 7th, three mona guenons – July, Nko and Bebe – were moved from their cage to the release enclosure. Tracking collars and telemetry equipment are ready for the research assistants to use to track the guenons anywhere they shall be found.

The project is to conserve, maintain, protect and manage our biodiversity for posterity. ☐



Accommodation Improvement for All (Monkey and Staff)

By Obio Owai Obio, Asst. Operations Manager

CERCOPAN as a non-governmental organisation has been aiming at primate rehabilitation. The aim of keeping monkeys in CERCOPAN is not to give them domestic training, but to return them back to their natural home, the forest. Although these monkeys are living in Rhoko, their freedom is still limited because living in a cage or enclosure is equal to exposing the animals to captivity. For the fact that these animals need to be free from captivity and be returned to their natural home, I was mandated to build a preliminary home for them, a release cage, to give them another step forward to nature. The building was constructed with chain link mesh wire and wood and the animals are living in it already, ready to be released to the wild. In their period of stay in this release cage, the animals will learn to jump from one branch of a tree to another. I will never fail to express thanks to the entire management team for providing the necessary materials needed for



The release enclosure inside the Rhoko Core Area

building the new accommodation for the monkeys. Another accommodation improvement was done in the CERCOPAN staff quarters located in Okoyong Village. Previously, staff have been requesting cementing of the floor. This request resulted from the fact that the staff quarters are always damp during rainy season. To meet the staff at their point of need, bags of cement were arranged for, thanks to Lynne Baker. The floor of five rooms in the staff quarters were cemented after arranging sand and stones. I wish to express appreciation to the late Mr. Joseph Ayang who was hired to do the job. CERCOPAN is very happy with his good service and skills. On this note I wish to state that Rhoko Camp staff are living happily in the staff quarters. ☐



Jo Ayang with CERCOPAN groundskeepers cementing floors at the staff quarters

Camp Update

By Richard Carroll



It has been an extremely busy time since I arrived in February, around this time we said goodbye to a former manager in the shape of Darryl Birch. Darryl has spent a great deal of time in the community and achieved much in his time here. He is now safely back in the UK having completed an overland journey on his motorbike through Northern Africa. We were also without our village based 'Sustainable Livelihoods' volunteer Tanya Conlu as she returned home to the Phillipines for a few months. We are happy to have her back in Iko Esai now where she is continuing to work in creating new and diverse opportunities for community members. We have also said goodbye to Heidi Roesch, our Research Coordinator and acting Camp Manager. Heidi arrived in July 2006 and has tackled the challenges of both roles with determination; she leaves us to pursue further opportunities in wildlife research and has expressed a desire to return to Nigeria if the chance arises.

CERCOPAN continues to bring students from near and far to the area; we have welcomed students from UNICAL (Nigeria) and Sagan Friant from Oxford Brookes University (UK) conducting their Masters thesis research projects. We continue to pursue closer links with universities within and outside of Nigeria so that students the world over can visit and appreciate the forests being preserved by our communities.

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CERCOPAN staff and friends at Heidi Roesch's send-off at the Education Centre

Exciting developments are on the way in the form of our plan to reintroduce a small group of Mona Guenon monkeys to their natural home of the forest. This differs from our previous project, bringing the Red Capped Mangabeys to live in the forest enclosure, by way of the fact that these mona monkeys will be living totally free outside of any cage or enclosure. Our research team of locally selected staff from the surrounding communities have been trained in radio signal tracking and will follow the released monkeys to observe their progress. If successful, this release project of mona monkeys will be the first of its kind achieved in West Africa and will serve to mark out this area and the surrounding communities as some of the most progressive thinking and acting on the continent. We are currently in the final stages of obtaining permission from the relevant government departments to proceed with this reintroduction.

One of the most challenging times facing those of us at camp occurred at the end of March, when heavy storms and high winds caused devastation in the form of many fallen trees. Some of these trees merely blocked our routes but others fell directly onto buildings and facilities around the Rhoko Camp. This has meant that we have spent the months since those storms repairing the infrastructure and renovating the grounds here. The greatest challenge was the fact that 4 trees fell onto the Mangabey Enclosure fencing leaving open the potential for escapes. Despite this being the first occurrence of its type since the enclosure was constructed the staff performed very well under pressure, raising the alarm and working together to carry out emergency repairs. The management would like to congratulate all those involved for their efforts in restoring camp to a fully working and secure condition in a short period of time.

Other work has been carried out in renovating our visitor accommodation so that we can attract more tourists to the area. This is something we predict will increase in the near future with the increased exposure CERCOPAN has recently experienced in the Nigerian media. Events such as the World Environment Day Rally in June and the presentation display CERCOPAN mounted at the opening of Tinapa in Calabar, were widely reported in newspapers, television and radio. We have also hosted visitors from a variety of organisations who have written accounts and posted videos or photos of the project and the village on the internet. In this way reaching a wider audience and spreading our stories all over the world.

In addition to this we are pursuing closer links with other NGO's working in the area and cooperating to bring more initiatives and opportunities for development to the local village communities. Some of these projects are already underway and we hope to provide more as the year progresses.

CERCOPAN continues to work towards the goal of sustainable development, aiming to preserve the forest environment that we all live alongside and at the same time attract interest and investment from outside to further provide opportunities for development in these our communities. We must always bear in mind that the forests and wildlife that we depend on now should be maintained in such a way that they will be available for the next generation, our children and their children in turn. The world is realising that these natural assets are fast disappearing through misuse and overuse and for many communities it is already too late to regain what they have lost. We still have time to avoid this scenario and take responsibility for managing our resources in a sustainable manner. We envision this process to be a partnership between CERCOPAN and the community working together in making this dream a reality. ☐



Heidi Roesch with staff fixing the Mangabey enclosure



Education Updates

By Mike Ekpe

A literate society is more likely to appreciate the aesthetics of a natural environment. Attitudinal change is an evolutionary process and may not come at once, but with time. CERCOPAN upholds education both formal and informal as the fundamental aspect of a successful conservation program.

Early this year I visited the conservation clubs set up by CERCOPAN in six secondary schools of Iko Esai, Ekperem, Agoi-Ibami, Owai, Ifumkpa and Uyanga to evaluate, facilitate and strengthen their activities and to address the various conservation issues they raised which include erosion control, waste management, hunting of endangered species, and deforestation. The good side of the visit was to boost the commitment of the coordinators and urge them to draw up plans for their various activities as a priority to achieving their goals. A workshop would be organized separately for the club coordinators before the end of this year. This is going to be strategically planned to ensure that environmental awareness is being promoted through environmental education.

In February to March, CERCOPAN organised an essay competition for rural and urban secondary schools with approval from the Ministry of Education, CRS, on the topic: "Wildlife in my place, yesterday, today and tomorrow." The programme was declared open by CERCOPAN Deputy Director Claire Coulson and flagged off by Senior Education Officer Jerry Akparawa and myself as his assistant. The programme featured lecture presentations on wildlife particularly primates, their classification, and factors affecting their survival. Four students were selected from each school to write the essay. A total of 41 secondary schools in six local government areas of Yakkur, Akamkpa, Odukpani, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South and Akpabuyo participated. All written essays were collated and submitted to the vice chancellor of the University of Calabar, who diligently set up a panel of judges for the essay contest. The judges were Prof. M.E. Inyang-Abia, Prof. S.J. Umoh, Dr. Ogogo, and Mrs. Patience O.O. Ebam. These were the results submitted by the panel on the 5th of June at the U.J. Esuene Sports Stadium during the World Environment Day rally:

1st: Oyeaba Mika Edim from Edgerly Memorial
2nd: Molay Francesca Modey from Hillcrest High School

3rd: Cathrine Emmanuel Okon from Federal Government Girls College



Students at the World Environment Day parade

Between January and June 2007 we are glad to have welcomed sixteen thousand seventy-six (16,076) visitors in Calabar and Rhoko. Hence the quality of any given society is determined by the quality of the available resources and the form of human interaction in that society. My special thanks to Iko Esai community for supporting CERCOPAN's conservation efforts and I do believe that our good working relationship and continual trust will continue for a better future and expected end. The forest is our life and to save our lives we must protect the foundation of our existence. ☐



Wildlife and the Conservation Club in Ifumkpa Community

By Esira Elijah A., Club Coordinator, COSSI Ifumkpa

It has been one and a half year since CERCOPAN inaugurated the Conservation Club in Community Secondary School Ifumkpa, led by Jerry Akparawa and Mike Ekpe from the CERCOPAN education unit.

In fact, the level of wildlife in the rainforest of Ifumkpa Community is a big pity. Today, the community lacks species like cedar, ebony, iroko, pangolin, python, monkeys, elephants and also aquatic organisms. The club has seriously effected some positive behavioural changes in the minds of the destroyers. Club members have worked tremendously in collaboration with CERCOPAN education officers and CRNP staff in educating the community. Dramas have been organized against indiscriminate cutting of trees (deforestation), unsustainable fishing and exploitation of non-timber resources, and uncontrolled farming activities to the advantage of the outsiders.

To change the behaviour of men is not an easy task, but this article should endeavor to change you. Because our fragile flora and fauna (plants and animals) resources are depleted and

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annihilated badly, invariably, our future generations are in jeopardy. Do not trade monkeys or endangered wildlife; this is against the law in the Decree No. 11 of 1985.

Let us put all hands on desk to ensure we protect our rainforest and maintain its natural standard to the advantage of our posterity yet unborn.

Finally, if we join hands together we will achieve our set goals. Big bravo to CERCOPAN management and staff for incorporating the school conservation club into the itinerary of events at the world environment day celebration on the 5th of June. Thanks to Education Officer Mr. Mike Ekpe for strengthening the club in my school through constant visits and facilitation of the club's activities to achieving their goals. ☐

A New Way of 'Chopping' Cassava

By Tanya Conlu

Women in Iko Esai learn how to bake cassava cake with *panya* using their local firewood kitchen. Volunteer Tanya Conlu teaches the women that an oven can be fashioned out of a big pot filled with a layer of sand or rocks, with fire under and charcoal on top. A smaller pot or tins containing the cake mixture can then be put inside to bake. This way, cassava will be more than just garri and fufu and hence a new way of chopping (eating) cassava.



Women slicing cassava cake for everyone to share

CERCOPAN

"Pride to Ayo Nation"

*By Okom Esira, Retired Principal
Park Ranger (CRNP)*



CERCOPAN, which has a camp located at Rhoko axis of Iko Esai protected rainforest is truly a pride to Ayo Nation in general because of the biodiversity of the area and the environmental and tourism programmes put in place to boost the economy of Ayo citizens.

Following federal government policy on tourism enhancement and resource control and Cross River State government plans in developing tourism in the State, then Ayo Nation should support CERCOPAN to obtain her goals. Since CERCOPAN will commence the release of monkeys back to the forest then communities in Ayo Nation should come out with a by-law banning hunting of monkeys. The ban should not only end in Iko Esai since monkeys travel some kilometers daily in search for food. Ayo vigilant group should be formed to keep surveillance against hunting, trading, eating and keeping of monkeys as pets within Ayo villages thereby complementing Decree II of 1985 of Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I am, out of happiness, to plead with Ayo Nation to see the need in implementing the DOs and DON'Ts of CERCOPAN because it is the first organization in West Africa to release mona guenons back to their natural heritage for future generations. And indeed, happening in Rhoko forest of Iko Esai, this project will surely attract international bodies in primate conservation. No Ayo citizen irrespective of his designation in poaching business should hunt in or around the buffer zone axis of Rhoko Camp especially neighboring communities of Rhoko, that is, Iko Esai, Owai and Ifumkpa. Ayo Nation should know that there are many benefits in conserving monkeys than hunting them for lesser money now.

The youth should equally wake up in supporting CERCOPAN because through my personal assessment of conservation NGOs in the State, it ranks the best due to its life-span programme and matrix management technique being put in place to showcase to the entire world the primates in Ayo Nation, which has resulted to AYO appearing in the tourism map of West African sub-region. Truly CERCOPAN is a pride to Ayo Nation.

LONG LIVE MONKEYS,
LONG LIVE CERCOPAN,
LONG LIVE AYO NATION! ☐

Staff and Volunteer Updates

By Heather MacIntosh

Claire Coulson has settled in to the Deputy Director post for the past 6 months. She has implemented quite a few changes covering areas such as work practices, equipment and fundraising and more are in the pipeline. She has been working hard familiarising herself with the work involved and trying to improve on the good work which has been done before.

Heather MacIntosh is looking after four new babies at the moment, two Red-Eared, one Putty Nose and one Mona. One other Mona has already graduated from her care into a group of four other Mona Guenons. Heather has taken on the role as office administrator and much of her time is dealing with the day to day running of the office and accounts.

Give a Man a Fish

By Richard Carroll

In closing this edition of the community newsletter I would like to offer a few thoughts for consideration on the nature of our, that is to say CERCOPAN's, relationship with you the members of our surrounding communities. It is something which I am obviously drawn to assess on a regular if not daily basis as part of my work here. I can truthfully say that I have been impressed with the level of understanding and commitment exhibited to pursuing the ideals of conservation and sustainability. The existence of conservation clubs in our schools is a credit to the area and demonstrates how these communities are looking to the future and how the youth are taking responsibility for the world they will inherit.

The essence of sustainable development was summed up in a report for the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. This is that development should meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. In other words that we should not use all of our resources for ourselves leaving nothing for our children. It aims to combat what has been termed 'The Tragedy of the Commons' which refers to the motivation of some people to consume as much of a resource as possible themselves for fear that others will do the same. They wish to maximise their own benefit even if it means that the resource will become exhausted or finished. This is the action of a selfish and irresponsible society and can only lead to the social and financial collapse of an area over time.

As has been reported in this newsletter CERCOPAN is committed to providing opportunities for just such sustainable development projects. We will continue to work alongside people in the community in bringing these projects to bear fruit. Sometimes this will be directly through CERCOPAN and sometimes in collaboration with other NGOs who bring their own areas of expertise into the villages.

It is essential, however, to remember that this is a partnership between CERCOPAN and the community.

'God helps those who help themselves' it is said and this refers to the commitment required from participants in bringing success from projects. CERCOPAN can facilitate opportunities but it is up to the community members to commit themselves in taking full advantage of these opportunities when they arise. Sometimes there is a temptation for people to wait for things to come to them, rather than to seek out and investigate fully what is on offer if only they would make a personal effort to achieve it.

For our part CERCOPAN will endeavour to encourage the kind of project which will allow people to maintain both sustainable livelihoods and a healthy environment in their own right. Providing material things is only of short term benefit, but training and education can lead to real long term gains. It is this that we hope to attract and offer over time in recognition of the commitment that the community has made to the conservation of its natural resources.

"Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach him how to fish and he will eat forever" ☐

Photos contributed by staff and volunteers of CERCOPAN

EDITORS

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