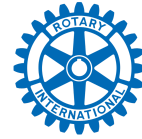




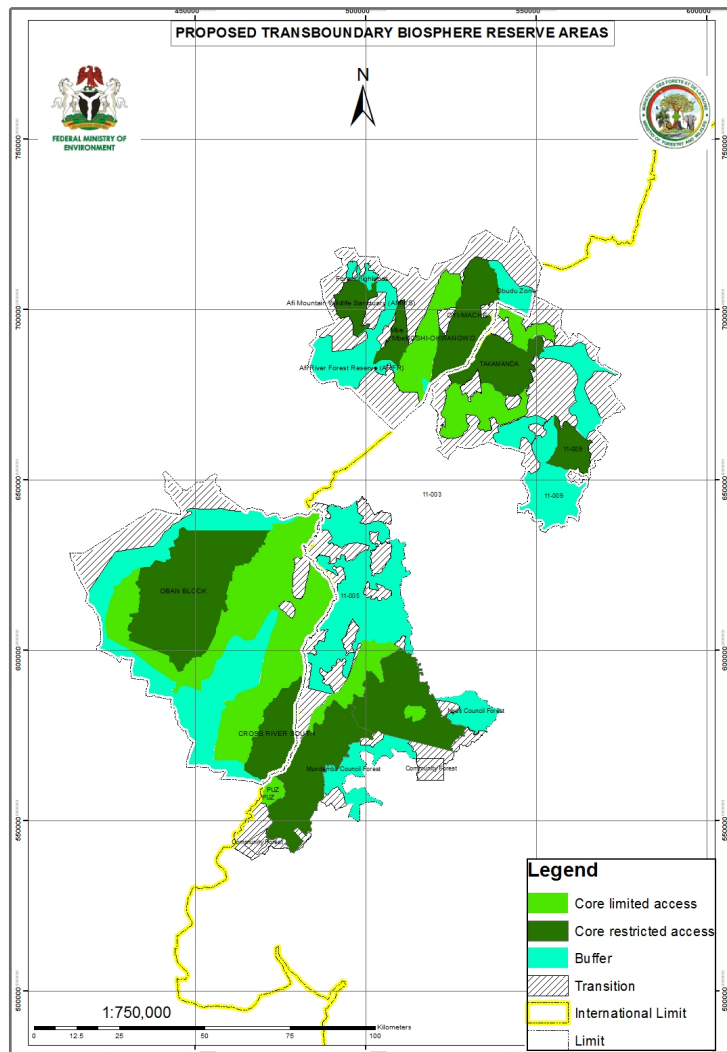
Glacier National Park
CONSERVANCY



Cross River-Korup-Takamanda Transboundary Initiative

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Cross River State (Nigeria) and SW Province (Cameroon)
Size: 5,576 sq km



Participants in coordinating the ongoing transboundary cooperation:

National Government:

- Federal Ministry of Environment (Nigeria)
- Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria and Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (Cameroon)

State Government:

- Cross River State Ministry of Climate Change and Forestry (Nigeria)
- Cross River State Forestry Commission (Nigeria)

Local Government:

- Boki Local Government (Nigeria).

Protected area administration:

- Nigeria National Parks Service and Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (Cameroon).

International NGOs:

- Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
- Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Intergovernmental organizations:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS)
- UNEP Great Apes Survival Partnership
- UNESCO Regional Office
- KfW
- Arcus Foundation (Great Apes Programme)

Community-based Organizations:

- Conservation Association of the Mbe Mountains (Nigeria)

Objectives:

1. Harmonize consultation process across the landscape and ensure cooperation agreement between the two countries is signed.
2. Ensure that landscape management is designed to maximize connectivity between sites.
3. Promote community conservation and development activities across transboundary landscape.
4. Develop integrated ecotourism across transboundary landscape including a fair and equitable benefit sharing mechanism.
5. Develop joint conservation and law enforcement strategy including joint patrols, sharing of intelligence, joint training and collaboration in prosecution of offenders.
6. Promote shared research and monitoring across transboundary landscape.
7. Raise awareness about the conservation and cultural values of transboundary landscape through a conservation education/public awareness program.

8. Develop joint capacity development program for individuals, CBOs and government partners to ensure effective participation in the process.
9. Promote sustainable management of natural resources and transboundary trade in timber and NTFPs.
10. Establish sustainable funding mechanisms to support conservation interventions across transboundary landscape.

Values and importance: the initiative is built around three well-established national parks that together safeguard the region's heartland: the Oban and Okwangwo divisions of Cross River National Park in Nigeria, and the Korup and Takamanda national parks in Cameroon. The transboundary region formed part of one of the lowland rainforest refugia during the last glacial period and as a result is now a center of endemism and diversity, particularly for reptiles, fish, amphibians and birds. The region is particularly important as a hotspot of primate diversity and endemism, notably the Cross River gorilla *Gorilla gorilla diehli*, Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes ellioti*, Preuss's guenon *Allochrocebus preussi*, Preuss's red colobus *Procolobus preussi* and the drill *Mandrillus leucophaeus*.

Aspects of transboundary cooperation: currently focused on joint anti-poaching patrols to reduce levels of hunting in the transboundary region as well as proposals for the creation of a transboundary world heritage site and/or transboundary biosphere reserve in the area. WCS has also developed a transboundary radio drama series entitled 'My Gorilla My Community' broadcast weekly to the region and designed to promote behavior change through entertainment-education.

Stage in the process: The Cross River-Korup-Takamanda Transboundary Initiative is still at the feasibility stage, with nominations for Transboundary World Heritage Site and Transboundary Biosphere Reserves currently being drafted for submission to UNSECO.

Official Protected Area Designation: Cross River National Park (Nigeria), Korup National Park and Takamanda National Park (Cameroon). Currently working towards designation as a UNESCO Transboundary World Heritage Site and/or UNESCO Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

The Catalyst: The catalyst for the recent initiative was the presence of the iconic flagship species, and Africa's most endangered ape, the Cross River gorilla *Gorilla gorilla diehli*. To protect this critically endangered species it was quickly realized that a landscape approach was required between Nigeria and Cameroon, protecting corridors linking nine isolated sub-groups across a transboundary region of some 12,000 km². This landscape approach was pioneered by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and others on both sides of the border, and was later extended to include other important biodiversity areas in the region such as Korup National Park and the Oban Division of Cross River National Park (outside of the Cross River gorilla range). It was also increasingly recognized that greater levels of political support generated by the transboundary conservation process, and growing

international recognition of the importance of the area, could help to protect the area from competing interests such as commercial agriculture and superhighways etc.

History: Transboundary collaboration in the region was first promoted by WWF but lost momentum when WWF pulled out of Nigeria in 1999. The transboundary initiative was renewed by WCS in 2008 who had earlier established a conservation project either side of the border, focusing on the critically endangered Cross River gorilla. With support from international donors (EU, KfW, DfID, USFWS and the Arcus Foundation) these NGOs provided the required scientific and technical information to develop the initiative, with the leadership role gradually taken over by national government institutions. A strong political will has developed in both countries for the transboundary process and a number of deeply committed individuals are also involved.

There are of course a number of challenges or constraints that are currently faced by this transboundary initiative including: delays with the signing of the MOU between the two countries; communication challenges and administrative hurdles. To date the initiative has largely relied upon NGOs for facilitating the process as well as donors such as KfW and the Arcus Foundation for funding.

The Governance and Management Structures

- **Cooperative relationship:** currently an informal ad hoc relationship only without any legal agreement between them.
- **Legal basis for cooperation:** Legal basis for the cooperation not yet concluded. A draft MOU has been produced between the two countries but has not yet been signed.
- **Governance structure:** Transboundary activities decided at annual transboundary meeting for all stakeholders involving government, NGOs, donors and local community representatives. A transboundary working group has also been established.
- **Cooperative management arrangement:** includes annual transboundary workshop; joint law enforcement patrols; development of IUCN species action plans; planning for joint world heritage site / biosphere reserve status.

Results

- Levels of hunting have declined across the landscape due to improved training of rangers, better equipment, as well as the improved motivation and supervision of rangers.
- Levels of collaboration and trust have improved dramatically as a result of annual strategic planning workshops between the two countries, there is now a strong foundation upon which to build a successful transboundary conservation initiative.

- Sharing of information across the border has improved levels of protection and has made a number of arrests possible.
- With the standardized use of SMART across the landscape the monitoring of law enforcement efforts and key species is now fully coordinated and compatible.
- There is greater awareness of the importance of the transboundary landscape and of the need to work collaboratively.
- Building consensus from the bottom up, there is now strong political support for the transboundary process.
- The initiative is 'sustained' by a small number of committed individuals, strong government support, donor funds from KfW and the Arcus Foundation, and the involvement of international NGOs to facilitate the process.

Lessons Learned: It has taken some years to establish full trust between protected area authorities in Nigeria and Cameroon, regular annual stakeholder meetings between the two countries were key to building this trust and establishing strong personal relationships. Support from NGOs proved to be essential as the main catalyst and coordinating mechanism for the transboundary process, as well as donor funding. But most important of all was the involvement of relevant government agencies and the development of a strong political consensus moving forward.

For More Information

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Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla 2014–2019 http://www.primatesg.org/cross_river_gorilla_ap/

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