

## Improving the Protection & Management of Lésio-Louna Reserve through increased monitoring against illegal activities combined with development of existing eco-tourism product.

Type of priority area

Terrestrial Protected Area

Primary objective

Management Effectiveness

Livelihoods

Target groups

Local Communities

Main activity focus

Eco-tourism

Survey/Data knowledge management

Monitoring/Patrol equipment

Duration  
01.11.2020 – 31.10.2021

Type of grant & budget  
Small Technical Grant | 94,488.26€

Location  
Republic of Congo, Central Africa

Protected & Conserved Areas  
Lésio-Louna Reserve

WDPA ID  
99862

BIOPAMA RRIS Link  
<http://rris.biopama.org/pa/99862>

### Project Lead

The Aspinall Foundation

### Description of the project:

The operational capacity of field staff and eco-guardians will be strengthened by:

- The purchase of a car that will support a significant increase in the coverage of reserve by motorized patrols to an average 2000 ha / month.
- The purchase of 10 additional camera traps to be deployed in selected areas of the reserve.
- The purchase of 3 smartphones, and 3 GPS devices to be used on patrols
- The purchase of 2 laptops, and an A3 printer to be used for data analysis and reports as well as 3 external hard drives for backup and data storage.
- Training for 12 field staff in the use of the SMART system.
- Training for 15 eco-guardians and field staff in the use of the equipment and also data collection using the SMART system.
- Additional training for 15 eco-guardians and field staff in bio-monitoring, including the use of camera traps.

The improvement in the performance and services of the ecotourism infrastructure will be achieved by:

- The purchase and installation of all the equipment required to renovate the solar energy system at the Iboubikro eco-tourism site.
- The purchase of an outboard motor to improve access to the eco-tourism site via the Lefini river.





#### Diagnostic Tools Used

RAPPAM evaluation; Parcs and reserves of Congo; Protected area management effectiveness evaluation



#### The BIOPAMA AC Objective(s) Addressed

- Enhance the management and governance of priority protected areas by addressing existing limitations
- Support local communities' initiatives aiming to enhance the livelihoods of local people whilst effectively contributing to protected areas management.



#### Priority Need Addressed

The project addresses two priority needs for the Lésio-Louna Reserve

- To protect the gorillas and the ecosystem of the reserve by strengthening the operational capacity of field staff and eco-guards in their duties against poaching and illegal actions.
- To promote and develop eco-tourism by improving the performance and services of the ecotourism infrastructure.



#### The change the project implementation will bring for the protected areas

The ability to conduct motorized patrols will enable eco-guards to regularly undertake missions covering a wider area of the reserve, and the development of field staff to using the SMART system will enable the project results to be verified and analysed on a larger scale whilst maintaining a high level of detail and accuracy. The capacity for data collection is also increased with the camera traps. These changes will significantly impact on the level of protection for the reserve and will result in an increase in the number of arrests and interruptions of illegal activities. The enhanced data collection will also increase knowledge of the range of species within the protected area.

The improvements to the eco-tourism infrastructure will enhance the visitor experience. The installation of the new solar energy system will reduce noise and pollution by an estimated 83% compared to the existing system and, together with the improved access via the Lefini river, it should lead to an increase in visitor numbers. There are 23 villages surrounding the Lésio-Louna Reserve, with over 17,000 residents, who could ultimately benefit as tourism revenue is used to support local communities and contribute to financing the protected area.

This project is financed by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States through the BIOPAMA Programme. The contents of this material are the sole responsibility of The Aspinall Foundation and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the EU nor of the OACPS.

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The project (Improving the Protection & Management of Lésio-Louna Reserve through increased monitoring against illegal activities combined with development of existing eco-tourism product) is financed by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States through the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme.

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