



Organic cocoa: key ingredient for primate and forest conservation in Ghana

Partners

Created in 2001, **Noé** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to safeguard biodiversity around the world. Noé's **Man & Nature program** aims at developing green value chains in and around Protected Areas. This program operates by providing technical and financial support to local NGOs that implement projects combining community development with biodiversity conservation.



Funded by:



Team on the ground

Noé supports the association **WAPCA (West African Primate Conservation Action)** in Ghana. Created in 2001, WAPCA aims to conserve **critically endangered primate species** in Western Africa. As of 2012, WAPCA has been working with the local communities and the **Ankasa-Tano CREMA** to preserve the Kwabre-Tanoé forest.

Yayra Glover Limited

is the pioneer licensed organic cocoa producing and buying company in Ghana. The company provides incentives, training and technical supervision to farmers willing to convert to organic. Trainings also include social and environmental aspects: benefits of organic food and sustainable agriculture, and the means to effect positive change in their own lives.

THE KWABRE-TANOÉ FOREST AND ITS EXCEPTIONAL BIODIVERSITY

Covering an area of 13,300 hectares, the Kwabre-Tanoé's transboundary tropical rainforest is home to **four amazing primates** that are on the verge of **extinction**:

- Miss Waldron's Red Colobus (*Piliocolobus waldronae*);
- White-naped Mangabey (*Cercocebus lunulatus*);
- White-thighed Colobus (*Colobus vellerosus*);
- Roloway Monkey (*Cercopithecus roloway*).

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed two of the four as **Critically Endangered** although it is considered by most that Miss Waldron's Red Colobus is sadly already extinct, as it has not been observed in the wild in over 15 years.



The Kwabre-Tanoé swamp-forest supplies numerous ecosystem services to the local communities which rely on Nature for their livelihoods, such as:



- Non-timber forest products (fruits, spices, medicinal plants, etc.) and fish;
- Water filtration and regulation (protection against floods and release of water during droughts);
- Source of natural pollinators for food crops;
- Resilience to climate change.

The fate of the Kwabre-Tanoé forest is at stake, leading local communities to become increasingly vulnerable and driving these four primates towards extinction in the wild.

MAJOR THREATS

85%

of the original cover of the Upper Guinean Rainforest has disappeared.

Deforestation is the largest threat to wildlife in this ecosystem. Logging, clearing for agriculture, mining, charcoal production and human population increases have left fragmented remnants of what was once a lush vibrant rainforest (Landscapes of West Africa, 2016).

\$0.78

is the daily average earning of a cocoa-growing household.

Cocoa growers earn less than one third of the minimal living income, set at \$2.51 by Fairtrade International (Cocoa Barometer, 2018).

25–30%

of the Ghanaian population depend on the cocoa sector.

Cocoa production is the backbone of Ghana's economy, as the sector employs up to six million people (Anthonio and Aikins, 2009).

ORGANIC COCOA AS A SOLUTION

Solutions to biodiversity loss require community-based management of natural resources and economic alternatives. Improving populations' income through green value chains allows them to adopt sustainable practices and better manage their natural resources over time.

WAPCA, in partnership with Noé and Yayra Glover Ltd., supports small cocoa farmers living on the outskirts of the Kwabre-Tanoé forest in improving their agricultural practices, to sustainably increase their yields and obtain an organic certification, while contributing to the protection of the forest.



Impact of organic cocoa

- Increased income for the farmers;
- Improved resilience of the farms to climate change;
- Reduced pressure on the forest to extract resources, leading to a better conservation;
- Green value chains contribute to a Conservation Fund used for conservation actions, such as patrols and reforestation, and strengthen the autonomy of the Ankasa-Tano CREMA.



13,300 ha of forest protected and sustainably managed by the communities;



At least **400 cocoa farmers** trained and certified organic, benefiting from an increased income;



30,000 trees planted.





How can CREMAs contribute to biodiversity conservation ?

In Ghana, since 2001, communities can organize themselves into a Community Resource Management Area (CREMA); **a community-based organization responsible for the management of natural resources**. Representatives from each community are elected and form a committee. Through the drafting and submitting of a constitution and bylaw to their local government authority, the CREMA is awarded the power to manage its natural resources.

Since 2012, WAPCA has been working with the communities surrounding the Kwabre rainforest in **establishing the Ankasa-Tano CREMA and community patrols**; several members from each community weekly patrol the forest and arrest offenders and confiscate lumber when necessary. Seized lumber and fines levied then fund the CREMA.

Four main components to a holistic approach

1. **Contribute to the development of sustainable economic sectors (certified organic cocoa)**. This green value chain will benefit the communities by increasing their income and will contribute to biodiversity conservation by decreasing anthropic pressure and contributing to the Conservation Fund.
2. **Improve biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources by:**
 - Initiating the creation of a **community-managed transborder reserve** with Ghanaian and Ivorian authorities;
 - **Strengthening the CREMA** and its community patrols;
 - **Setting up a Conservation Fund** to ensure the CREMA's financial independence;
 - **Planting trees** to restore degraded areas and delineate the forest.
3. **Support women entrepreneurship**: giving women the opportunity to improve their income and thus lift themselves out of poverty—along with their families and communities.
4. **Build the capacities of civil society** and disseminate the lessons learnt.

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