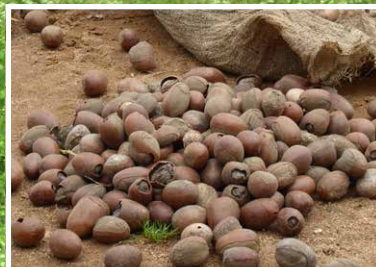


# DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC VALUE CHAINS PROVIDING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO BIODIVERSITY

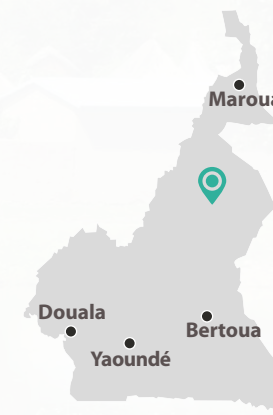
Many flagship species of African savannas seek refuge in the Bénoué Park. Despite its protection, the preserved biodiversity is vulnerable to many pressures, including the inflow of refugees fleeing regional conflicts. Thus, the human factor must be placed at the center of the land use planning in order to guarantee the sustainability of local development models.

In the northern region, the shea tree is abundant both in the chemically intensive cotton growing systems, in the National Park and in the periphery, in systems that combine food crops and small-scale animal husbandry. The value chain needs to be set up from scratch, because in the absence of market opportunities, it must unfortunately be noted that the inhabitants sometimes prefer to cut down shea trees to make charcoal. The beekeeping activity is traditional in the area but concerns only very small volumes, exclusively for self-consumption. However, the local demand for honey is important and beekeeping could represent an additional source of income favorable to biodiversity.



CAMEROON

Full cost : **215,000 euros**  
Duration : **3 years**  
Start : **april 2020**

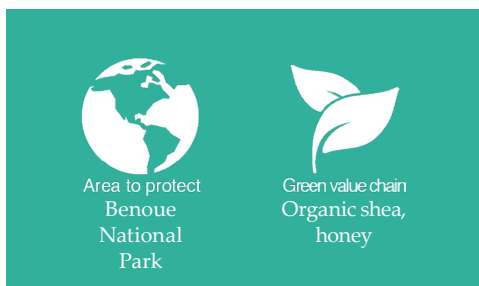


A project implemented by :



And supported by :





## The site and its biodiversity

In Northern Cameroon, among three National Parks, the Bénoué Park is one of the oldest protected areas of the country.

At the foot of the Adomaoua Plateau, the 180 000-ha park is declared «Biosphere Reserve» by UNESCO and hosts many mammal species classified as «Vulnerable» by the IUCN, including the African savanna elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), and the Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*).

## Major issues

The influx of refugee populations has resulted in a great increase in the local population, of which 68% live below the poverty line, making Northern Cameroon the region with the highest poverty rate in the country.

With low incomes, communities living near the park are all the more tempted to draw resources from the reserves.

Connectivity between the park and hunting areas is increasingly compromised by the important arrival of pastoralists in search of farmland on the west side of the Park.

Their installation leads to illegal logging in the corridors, associated with the sale of wood or charcoal.

In addition, poaching of small and big game has become ubiquitous in this region; leading to a worrying decrease in animal populations.

## Committed partners

Created in 2003, the association **CERAF-Nord (Centre des Ressources Agroforestières, forestières et de formation continue du Nord)** aims to promote sustainable development based on the effective participation of rural and urban communities.

In recent years, CERAF has supported local civil society organizations in ecological restoration, training, and technical assistance to projects.

The Association **CAMGEW (Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch)** intervenes since 2012 with beekeepers on the organization and training in honey and beeswax production.

Its objective is to protect ecosystems by developing the beekeeping sector. Thanks to its support, the Oku cooperative already produces about forty tons of honey annually in the region, including about ten tons under the PGI «white honey from Oku».

Building on this success, CAMGEW will support the communities targeted by the Project in honey production.

## The project and the prospects for change

This project is part of a broader work on the territorial governance of Protected Areas in Northern Cameroon.

While the hunting sector is losing momentum and demographics are still soaring, it is important to integrate the economic development of green value-chains into regional planning in the periphery of the Bénoué National Park

The project will support the development of NTFP value chains around the Bénoué Park.

The Partner, CERAF, will focus in particular on shea, by supporting women's groups in the collection and processing of organic shea nuts.

CAMGEW will provide technical support to CERAF for the development of a honey value chain.

The project will focus on improving the quality of the processed products and their marketing in order to ensure stable incomes for the communities.

Noé, CERAF and CAMGEW will continue their approach of strengthening the capacities of local communities, promoting women empowerment, and conserving biodiversity, particularly through the development and implementation of sustainable resource management plans.

