



WWF Netherlands – African Parks Network
Evaluation of the Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21
TERMS OF REFERENCE
02-12-2020

Project/Programme Name(s)	African Parks Odzala – Management, Protection and Restoration of Odzala-Kokoua National Park
Project/Programme Location(s)	Republic of Congo
Project/Programme Reference Number(s)	200009 (NL); 9F201800 (Int)
Names of Project/Programme Executants (WWF Office, name of project/programme manager)	Ingeborg Mägi
Project/Programme Duration (from start year)	FY2019-FY2021
Period to Be Evaluated	January 2019 – January 2021
Potential Sites to Visit	Odzala Kokoua NP and the parks' HQ at Mbomo
Project/Programme Budget Sources and Amounts (for period to be evaluated)	€750, 000
Names of Implementing Partners (if relevant)	African Parks Network

PROJECT/PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Odzala-Kokoua National Park (OKNP) in the Congo is one of Africa's oldest national parks covering an expansive 13,500 km² area which lies in the heart of the Congo Basin, the second largest rainforest in the world after the Amazon and a WWF priority area. It covers two WWF Ecoregions: Northwestern Congolian Lowland Forests to the east and the Western Congolian Forest-Savannah Mosaic in the south. OKNP is also the larger protected area in the TRIDOM (Tri National Dja-Odzala-Minkébé), a transboundary forest covering more than 178,000 km² in Cameroon, Congo and Gabon, including WWF project Messok-Dja and Ntokou-Pikounda, and known as an important connectivity area for forest elephants.

The outstanding conservation value of Odzala-Kokoua is especially constituted by its

incredible biodiversity, with more than 4,400 plant species, over 450 bird species and 106 mammal species found in a variety of habitats (savannah, dry forest and rainforest) including 16 primate species, 3 pangolin species, hippopotamuses and also the last viable population of spotted hyenas in the Congo Basin. It is also home to emblematic species such as forest elephants (7,270) and western lowland gorillas (7,585), both priority species for WWF.

African Parks (AP) has assumed management of Odzala since the signature of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with the Ministry of Forestry Economy in 2010 (25-year agreement, renewable). The African Parks model establishes good park management by putting in place long-term agreements, funding solutions, and establishing good governance and management with a Board representing key stakeholders. With mandate, money and management in place, the work focuses on five pillars: law enforcement, community development, biodiversity conservation, tourism development, and management infrastructure. A specific component is the 3+ model that centres on community engagement, education and enterprise development while leveraging existing local initiatives and policies. Odzala 3E+ model was finalized in 2019 and has been implemented since 2020.

Cooperation between AP and WWF in this region of northern Congo, so crucial for conservation, has developed at several levels over the years and major conservation programs in the area, notably through the TRIDOM landscape approach or institutional funding (EU, UNDP, UFSW, INL). Significant progress has been made towards combatting illegal wildlife trafficking in cooperation with The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and WWF since 2018, with the establishment of active and continuous partnerships in the areas of intelligence (information sharing, training of crime units and joint investigations) and judicial follow-up (shared legal database, sensitization of judicial authorities, visits to prisons, etc.).

The Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 follows a ten-year strategic and single bridge year partnership between WWF Netherlands and African Parks Network from 2007 to 2018, in which African Parks benefitted from WWF's expertise, collaboration and financial support for a total of €7.500.000, of which a significant portion was allocated to Odzala-Kokoua. The 10-year partnership was concluded with a rigorous evaluation and provided a positive appraisal of the African Parks model to managing protected areas, including Odzala, and a recommendation to continue the partnership.

The Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 aims at achieving three main goals: stabilize and restore forest elephant populations; stabilize and restore great ape populations and decrease illegal and unsustainable harvesting of wildlife in Odzala-Kokoua. In order to reach those targets, and in line with AP model, the project's strategies and activities focus on five pillars:

- **Park Management & Infrastructure:** Decentralizing park management and security;
- **Law Enforcement:** A more comprehensive, intelligence-based and regional approach;
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Improve park and ecosystem intelligence for better protection of forest elephants and great ape populations;
- **Community Development:** Revamping dialogue, mitigating human-wildlife conflict and a new collaboration to bring in expertise;
- **Tourism & Enterprise Development:** A reconnaissance of new opportunities.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE

The consultancy assignment is to carry out a formative evaluation of the Odzala-Kokoua NP programme. The purpose of this evaluation will be to inform and shape the future collaboration between African Parks Network and WWF in the management, protection and restoration of Odzala-Kokoua National Park, Republic of the Congo.

As mentioned above, a previous evaluation was carried out in 2017, that resulted in several recommendations for the management of Odzala and the continuation of the partnership between WWF and AP:

1. APN should continue with a strong focus on law enforcement while further developing and funding its community engagement programme.
2. The community engagement programme should focus on moving towards sustainable land management within the eco-development zones, and supporting health, education and HWC management rather than emphasising “alternative livelihoods” and income generating projects.
3. Taking into account the need to first bring poaching under control in the park, APN should plan for greater cooperation with WWF and WCS to ensure conservation at the greater landscape level which will also help ensure the integrity of the park.

As per the discussions between WWF and APN, focus of this evaluation will be placed on evaluating:

- i) the collaboration, exchange and mutual learning between WWF, APN and WCS on the ground. This partnership has primarily focused around exchanges on intelligence and judicial information so far. Potential areas to fruitfully expand the partnership will need to be identified as part of this evaluation
- ii) Improvements, including satisfaction with and results thereof, made to the community engagement programme in Odzala-Kokoua, which has been redesigned as per the 3E+ framework since the previous evaluation.

The scope of work will be to review the implementation period from July 2018 to January 2021 (contract ends in June 2021) and assess progress made to inform the future partnership between WWF and African Parks in Odzala.

In particular, and in line with recommendations 1. and 2., this study will assess the adequacy of Odzala's 3E+ model to local issues, and determine whether its implementation is appreciated by local communities and remains to be on track, particularly through the involvement of the NGO Nature +, specialized in social forestry and participatory management. Given the conflict with part of the population of Mbomo in January 2019, which led to the temporary relocation of the park's HQ to Ouessou, an assessment will also be made of the progress made in restoring dialogue with the populations of the southern sector, and more broadly of the level of communication with the communities in the three sectors.

Particular attention will have to be paid to AP's modes of cooperation with WWF in Congo and propose relevant and practically feasible recommendations to improve this cooperation in areas where gaps are identified.

This should lead to key lessons learnt and main recommendations for the future regarding:

- i) The areas for improvement within the implementation of AP model in Odzala-Kokoua NP;
- ii) The priority areas and processes of collaboration, exchange and mutual learning between WWF and APN with respect to APN's approach to park management;
- iii) Whether the early implementation of 3E+ model has demonstrated to be fit for purpose to give shape to an inclusive approach in Odzala-Kokoua NP management and build a constituency for conservation at Odzala.

The target audience and their use of the evaluation findings are presented in the below table:

Target audience of the evaluation findings	Objectives of the evaluation regarding the target group	Actions to be considered on the level of the target audience
<i>WWF and APN teams on the ground</i>	<p><i>Assess progress made towards the achievement of the project's objective and the park's capacity to turn strategy into action</i></p> <p><i>Review of the collaboration, exchange and learning between APN and WWF</i></p>	<p><i>To enhance collaboration, exchange and learning between APN and WWF</i></p> <p><i>To promote efficient cooperation between the regional partners (WCS, WWF)</i></p> <p><i>To strategically inform and adapt management approach of APN in Odzala-Kokoua National Park</i></p>
<i>Project stakeholders and local communities</i>	<i>Review of how the program worked on the ground with existing local initiatives and stakeholders and get their feedback, and collect feedback from local communities on the interventions and their involvement and benefits</i>	<i>To voice satisfaction and/or concerns and shape their involvement in and approach to park management</i>
<i>WWF Netherlands and African Parks Network</i>	<p><i>Assess progress made towards the achievement of the project's objective and the park's capacity to turn strategy into action</i></p> <p><i>Assess whether the early implementation of the 3E+ model has demonstrated to be fit for purpose to give shape to an inclusive approach in Odzala-Kokoua NP management and build a constituency for conservation at Odzala.</i></p>	<i>To decide on the next phase of collaboration between APN and WWF-NL</i>

EVALUATION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

As the previous evaluation has comprehensively assessed the African Parks model in the Odzala context, this evaluation will be used to specifically focus on the following two main questions and their subquestions:

1. How fruitful has the collaboration between WWF, WCS and African Parks been on the ground in Odzala-Kokoua and how can it be improved?
 - a. What areas of collaboration, mutual exchanges and learning went well and why?
 - b. To what extent have WWF, WCS and APN succeeded to improve collaboration at a landscape level in previous years and why?
 - c. What areas of the collaboration can be improved or adjusted for a more impactful collaboration?
 - d. What are potentially fruitful areas for the collaboration to expand given the respective strengths and weaknesses of the actors on the ground?

2. To what extent is the revised community engagement programme in Odzala-Kokoua fit-for-purpose to give shape to an inclusive approach in Odzala-Kokoua NP management and build a constituency for conservation at Odzala.
 - a. What are the strengths and areas of improvement/adjustment for the revised community engagement programme?
 - b. What is the opinion of local stakeholders and communities on their involvement in the management, protection and restoration of Odzala-Kokoua National Park?
 - c. What could be improved with respect to working with stakeholders or inclusion of local communities according to these target groups themselves?

METHODOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

We propose a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative data, and where possible a participatory approach.

For main question 1, primary data is proposed to be sourced from a facilitated workshop or focus group discussion between key representatives from WWF, WCS, SPAC and APN. Where need be, follow-up interviews can be conducted. Secondary data can come from existing project documents and databases.

For main question 2, it is proposed a suitable participatory method (e.g. interviews or focus group discussions) with community members is deployed. The evaluator should make sure of existing data and documents available, for example from the social mapping exercise that has been conducted.

Local circumstances in the Republic of Congo, Sanga and Cuvette-Ouest departments, do allow for fieldwork but consultants are requested to present their plans to avoid any and all risk related to Covid-19, for example by maintaining a safe distance during interviews. Fieldwork should preferably take place in January 2021 before the start of the rainy season.

The evaluation needs to adhere to OECD-DAC quality standards.

The main support documents the evaluator will need to consult are:

- Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 project proposal and contract;
- Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 narrative reports;
- Evaluation for WWF Netherlands and African Parks Network of Phase 4 of the Project: Development of a Sustainable Park Management Model in Africa (2007-2017);
- Odzala's long term sustainability strategy and research framework;
- Odzala's 3E + strategy;
- Odzala's five-year business plan;
- Nature + activity reports.

The key external partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries to be consulted are:

- Sous-Préfets of Mbomo, Sembe, Mokeko;
- Local development associations (Associations de Surveillance et de Développement Durable);
- Local community members ;
- Traditional authorities in Mbomo and villages;
- Local partners (SPAC, WCS, WWF);
- WWF team in Congo;

Key deliverables:

- Before the start of the field mission, an inception report presenting the evaluation methodology as well as the key objectives, activities to plan and people to meet during the field mission;
- An evaluation report including an executive summary with main findings and recommendations;
- A presentation of the findings and recommendations;
- A list and copy of all data collected.

A management response to the evaluation will be provided to WWF by African Parks Network.

PROFILE OF EVALUATOR(S)

We seek to recruit an external evaluator with experience on:

- a) Protected Area management in Central Africa (a good understanding of Public-Private Partnerships is preferable);
- b) Community engagement, sustainable development and inclusive governance in Central Africa

It is essential that the evaluator has good interview and facilitation skills, and had a proven track record of successful participatory data collection with local communities. The evaluator should also have proven experience with in the evaluation of conservation projects implemented by non-governmental organisations, as well as familiarity with all of the issues surrounding wildlife conservation and management of Protected Areas in Africa, especially the Congo basin. The consultant should also have a good overall familiarity of the context of the Republic of Congo and ideally the TRIDOM, as well as fluency in French and English.

EVALUATION PROCESS, DELIVERABLES, AND TIMELINE

This evaluation should not exceed 14 days, including a 7-day field mission at Odzala Kokoua NP. The field mission will be conducted in January 2021. The expected deliverables includes:

- Brief inception report with key methodological choices as well as final budget and planning;
- Debrief report of first findings on site with the park management team at the end of the field mission;
- Evaluation report drafted and circulated to relevant staff within 30 days after the end of the mission;
- Finalized evaluation report, within two weeks after receipt of the draft reviewed by the park management unit.

A management response will be drafted by African Parks within two weeks of receiving the final evaluation report.

BUDGET, FUNDING, AND PAYMENT TERMS

The maximum budget available for this evaluation is €6,350. African Parks will organize the transport from Brazzaville to the project site, and can organize accommodation and basic meals while on site. Applicants shall propose a detailed quotation, which may be less than €6,350 depending on the needs (air tickets etc). The quotation should include all costs

relative to this evaluation (per diems, consultation costs, accommodation, etc), except for transport from Brazzaville to the Park and accommodation on site. Please use the table below for the proposition

Item	Number	Note	Budget
Consultant days			
Flight ticket(s)			
Visa			
Other			
Total			
<i>Note, African Parks will accommodate for in-country logistics</i>			

EVALUATOR PAYMENT TERMS.			
Schedule of Payments to Team Leader	Due Date	Payment %	Total €
Submission of Evaluation Plan	December 2020	25%	€1,375
Submission of draft evaluation outputs	January 2020	50%	€2,750
Final payment on approval of evaluation outputs	February 2020	25%	€1,375
Total Payment			€5,500

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Proposals can be submitted until December 19 before 17.00h local time. Applications must include the following:

- Cover letter setting out interest in and suitability for this consultancy role against the role requirements, including a statement that there are no conflicts of interest
- Proposed methodological approach
- The daily fees and the amount of per diems

- CV(s) and evidence of expertise in conducting evaluations, including qualitative participatory approaches

Please submit applications to rh.odzala@africanparks.org for the attention of Jonas Eriksson, Park Manager. We will not be able to consider proposals that do not meet submission guidelines.

The consultancy will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- Relevant experience of consultant
- Proposed evaluation methodology
- Understanding of the Congo basin and nature conservation context
- Feasibility and value for money

Key support documents

- Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 project proposal and contract;
- Odzala-Kokoua NP programme FY19-21 narrative reports;
- Evaluation for WWF Netherlands and African Parks Network of Phase 4 of the Project: Development of a Sustainable Park Management Model in Africa (2007-2017);
- Odzala's long term sustainability strategy and research framework;
- Odzala's five-year business plan;
- Nature + activity reports;