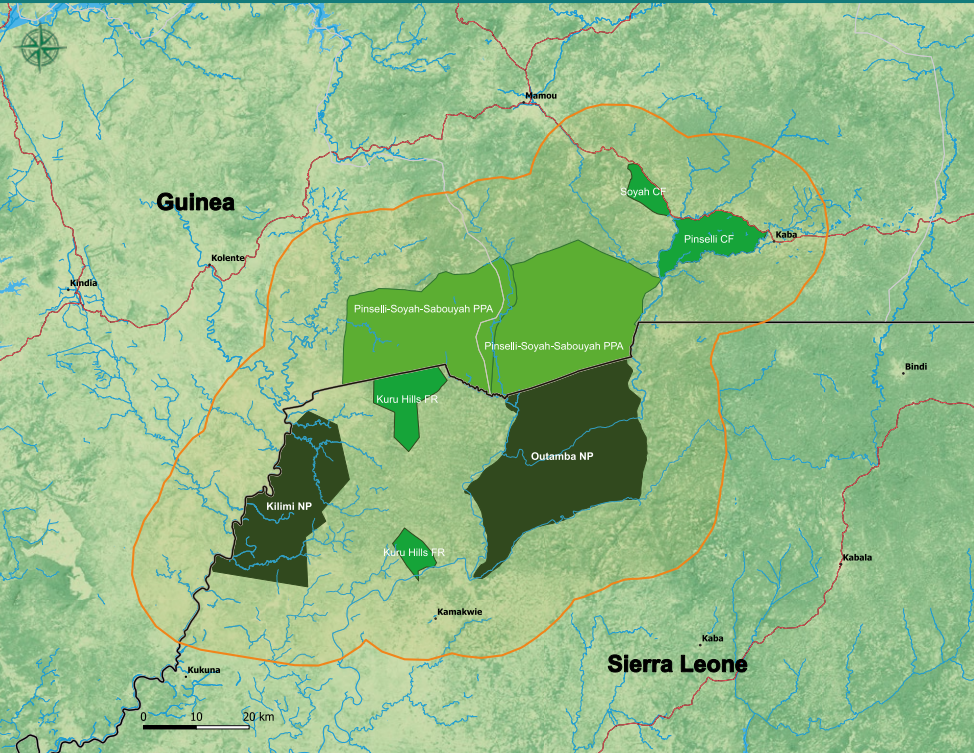
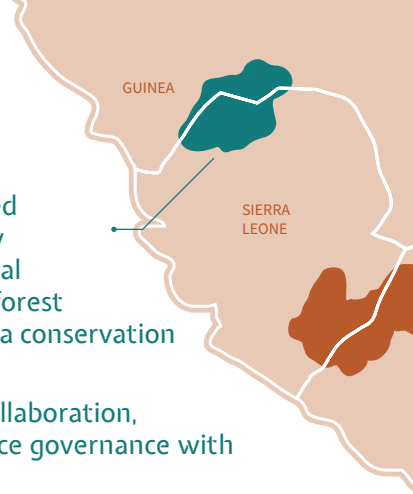




# OUTAMBA KILIMI KURU HILLS PINSELLI SOYAH (OKKPS)

The OKKPS landscape in Guinea and Sierra Leone is comprised of a wide variety of habitats; from dense rainforest to grassy savannahs, and montane grasslands, spread over an altitudinal gradient of 61 to 1134 m. The confirmed presence of African forest elephants and high densities of chimpanzees make this area a conservation priority for the subregion.

PAPFor, in support of Protected Areas and transboundary collaboration, supported government agencies in improving natural resource governance with strong local community involvement.



## Legend

- Watercourse
- Main road
- International border
- Administrative boundary

## Conservation areas

- OKKPS PAPFor Landscape
- National Park/ Classified Forest
- Nature Reserve
- Proposed Protected Area of PSS

## Protected areas

GUI	Pinselli Classified Forest	Classified Forest	120 km <sup>2</sup>
GUI	Soyah Classified Forest	Classified Forest	72,23 km <sup>2</sup>
GUI	Sabouyah Reserve	Reserve without legal status	250 km <sup>2</sup>
SL	Outamba National Park	National Park	738,15 km <sup>2</sup>
SL	Kilimi National Park	National Park	388,5 km <sup>2</sup>
SL	Kuru hills reserves	Forest Reserve	69,93 km <sup>2</sup>

## Main habitats

- Dense humid forests (1150km<sup>2</sup>)
- Open forest (772 km<sup>2</sup>)
- Shrubby savannahs (616 km<sup>2</sup>)
- Grassy savannahs (111 km<sup>2</sup>)

## Main threats

- Illegal logging
- Slash and burn agriculture
- Poaching
- Bushfires
- Mining

## Conservation targets

- The 50 species of mammals, including two critically endangered species (CR): the western chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*) and the African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*); and two endangered species (EN): the giant ground pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*) and the white-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tricuspis*). Seven species are classified as vulnerable (VU): the African golden cat, leopard, Bourlon's genet, black-bellied pangolin, sooty mangabey, and hippopotamus.
- Gallery forests and periodically flooded lowland areas that provide refuges for African forest elephants.



## PAPFor Programme

**Project start date:** June 2021  
**Project end date:** October 2024  
 Initiative of the WAEMU and ECOWAS Commissions funded by the 11th European Development Fund for support to conservation landscapes in West Africa.

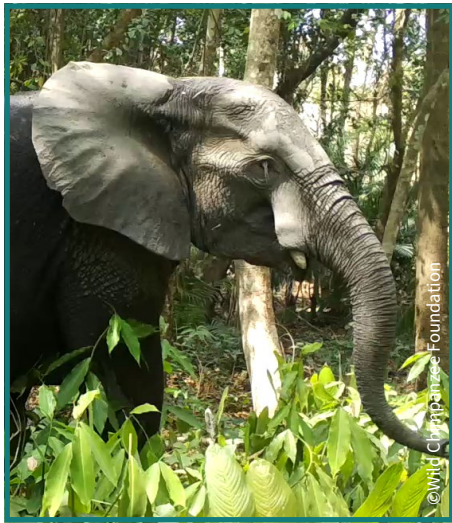
## Implementation

The PAPFor programme in the OKKPS Landscape was implemented by the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) and Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary (TCS), with field teams based in Mamou and Soyah in Guinea, and Outamba in Sierra Leone.

## Partners

**OGPRF (Office Guinéen des Parcs nationaux et Réserves de Faune) :** Management of the national network of three national parks and about twenty reserves and classified forests in Guinea  
**AGEE (Guinean Agency for Environmental Studies)**  
**NPAA (National Protected Area Authority) in Sierra Leone**

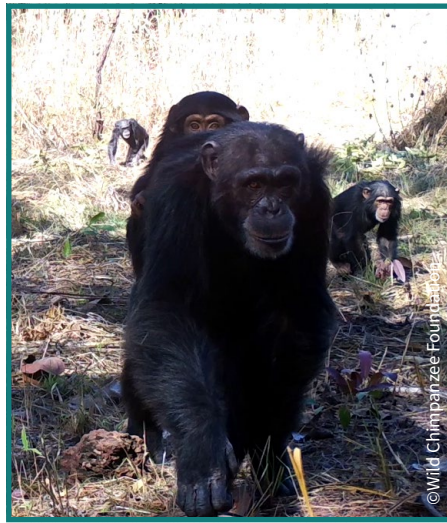
# SELECTED CONSERVATION TARGETS



## African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*)

It has recently been proven that the Pen-selli-Soyah-Sabouyah area hosts the largest elephant population in the country, which were previously unrecognised. Recent videos have shown movements of these elephants towards Sierra Leone in the Guinea-Sierra Leone migration corridor.

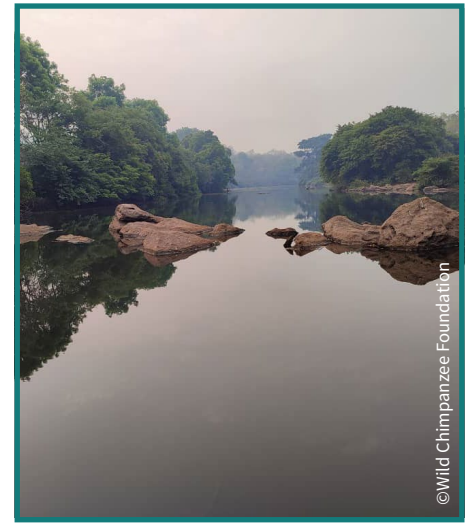
It is important to maintain the gallery forests along rivers and the periodically flooded savannahs, as they are essential to ensure the survival of the only viable elephant population in Guinea. Coordinated and cross-border conservation activities will be of great support in the safeguarding of these elephants.



## Western chimpanzee (*Pan Troglodytes verus*)

Listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN since 2016, Guinea has the largest chimpanzee population of any country in West Africa. The OKKPS landscape area is one of the hotspots identified for this species.

As the closest living relative of humans, behavioural studies have shown many similarities between us and our closest cousins. As such, humanity has a moral duty to direct efficient protective measures to ensure the survival of this ape, hence the need to strengthen the conservation status of the OKKPS landscape.



## Natural habitats of the OKKPS Landscape

With no less than 30 mammal species, 13 of which are conservation priority species, and nine species of reptiles, including one vulnerable species (African dwarf crocodile), the OKKPS landscape is an important conservation area. Key species include the western chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*), forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*), African buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), green monkey (*Chlorocebus sabaeus*), western black-and-white colobus (*Colobus polykomos*), sooty mangabey (*Cercocebus atys*) and spot-nosed monkey (*Cercopithecus petaurista*), as well as hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), black duiker (*Cephalophus niger*), African golden cat (*Caracal aurata*) and various species of genets. These habitats constitute a priority conservation area to ensure the ecosystem services that guarantee the wellbeing of both wildlife and the local communities.

The PAPFor programme in the OKKPS landscape was implemented by the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation in collaboration with Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary. Both partners worked closely with the national park services and governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone. The programme developed synergies with the USAID-funded WABILED project, and private partners such as Winning Consortium, Simandou Railway and Rio Tinto. Particular emphasis was placed on working with decentralised and deconcentrated entities in the prefectures of Mamou and Kindia in Guinea, and the districts of Koinadugu and Karene in Sierra Leone.





# THE CHALLENGES

The OKKPS landscape is also a focal point for the railway line for the largest iron ore mine in West Africa. It is also surrounded by large settlements, and national and regional road construction projects. The development of these activities will not be without negative impacts on biodiversity.

## Challenge 1: Expanding slash-and-burn agriculture

Community members' fields are usually on land where almost all the trees are felled and the vegetation is burned. This slash-and-burn method of cultivation rapidly depletes the soil of nutrients, and is not guaranteed viable beyond two years. As local communities repeatedly clear a new fields, this unfortunately leads to **deforestation and the premature desiccation of rivers**. Original fields are abandoned and it takes several decades of fallowing for the land to be usable again. In the OKKPS landscape, as the need for fertile land increases with population expansion, farmers make illegal incursions into the Soyah and Penselli Classified Forests, and into the Sabouyah Reserve in **search of new cropland**. However, these communities then settle and hunt in these forests. This accelerates the **degradation of natural habitats and the decrease in wildlife**.



## Challenge 2: Industrial mining operations

The OKKPS Landscape area is bisected by the railway line that will be used to transport minerals for export. The railway line passes through the heart of the priority area for the conservation of threatened species.

Close collaboration with the mining operators is needed to establish an agreement of mitigation activities to **reduce the negative impacts on biodiversity** (deforestation, changes in watercourse regime, fragmentation of natural habitats, and disruption of corridor connectivity).



## Challenge 3: Bushfires

In the OKKPS landscape, fires have visible negative impacts on forests and waterways. The slash-and-burn method is an ancient practice in the culture of local farmers, however, when left unchecked, fire causes damage to crops in the fields and to livestock.

The fire dynamics in the OKKPS zone are poorly studied. It is therefore essential to implement a bushfire management strategy using satellite imagery and field interventions.



# SELECTED RESULTS

## Village land management plans

With the support of participatory mapping, Village Land Management Plans have been developed for 19 forests of high conservation value. Local governance and territorial planning now enable these forests to be protected against damage caused by forest fires through an effective annual forest fire management programme, and against wildlife-related crime through monthly anti-trafficking and anti-poaching patrols.



## Protecting areas of high conservation value

In Guinea, the programme has supported a process to create the future Pinselli-Soyah-Sabouyah National Park. This is part of a mitigation strategy for the construction, in the area, of the railway planned by the Chinese company Winning Consortium Simandou and intended to link an iron ore mine in the Simandou mountains to the town of Forécariah.

In particular, 3 community consultation frameworks were organised to inform and raise awareness among local communities about the inclusive process of creating the future national park. These meetings were part of the process of obtaining free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from local communities regarding the provisional boundaries of the future park. Opinions on the fears and opportunities of the various stakeholders are collected. A WCF-OGPRNF management team is working to address these issues, and financial support from the European Union is guaranteed through the national NaturGuinée programme.

## Support for the economic development of local communities

To improve community livelihoods and promote profitable economic activities that do not harm the environment, the PAPFor programme organised community members into cooperatives known as Economic Interest Groups (EIGs) for agroecology, which includes market gardening, farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) and beekeeping.

The WCF and TCS supported communities in 14 collective fields to develop market garden crops using agroecological techniques. The surface area of these market garden sites totals 15.59 ha.

The project supported 20 FMNR fields in Guinea and Sierra Leone over a total 17.79 ha across the landscape. The fields yielded 2.68 tonnes (in Guinea) and 1.22 tonnes (Sierra Leone) of rice, and 1.8 tonnes (Guinea) and 1.13 tonnes (Sierra Leone) of groundnuts.

It also backed communities for the development of the honey value chain. The hive rate increased by 42% (Guinea) and 83% (Sierra Leone). WCF supported 17 producers to sell 2 300 litres of improved honey at a price of 57.5 million Guinean francs, or around 6 155 euros.



[www.papfor.org/-OKKPS-](http://www.papfor.org/-OKKPS-)

### Contact:

WCF: Pacifique KIZILA, Project manager, [kizila@wildchimps.org](mailto:kizila@wildchimps.org)

TCS: Bala Amarasekaran, TCS Founder, [bala@tacugama.com](mailto:bala@tacugama.com)

OGPRF: Samoura aboubacar, DG OGPRF, [aboubacarsamoura7@gmail.com](mailto:aboubacarsamoura7@gmail.com)

NPAA: Magdalene Koroma, National parks manager [d'Outamba\\_Kilimi](mailto:d'Outamba_Kilimi), [maggiekoroma@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:maggiekoroma@yahoo.co.uk)



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### Contact European Union:

Email: [delegation-sierra-leone@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:delegation-sierra-leone@eeas.europa.eu)

Website: [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sierra-leone\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sierra-leone_en)

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