

Newsletter

December 2017



Western Chimpanzee “critically endangered”.

Chimbo’s president Annemarie Goedmakers attended a workshop in Liberia where the action plan for the conservation of the Western Chimpanzee was reviewed. This review has become all the more urgent since “our” subspecies has been downgraded to “critically endangered” on IUCN’s most recent Red List of Species. Guinea Bissau was well represented with experts not only from the Boé, but also from Cantanhez, from IBAP and DGFF. Our film showing the stone throwing behaviour of chimpanzees in Boé was much appreciated.

It is important for Chimbo to be at such events so that the international focus includes the globally important population of chimpanzees in the Boé!



Photo: Menno de Boer

Young girl saved after snake bite

On the 24th of September a large delegation of the PAIGC, the country’s leading political party, came to the Boé to visit Lugajole Hill, where independence was declared in 1973 on this date. The visit raised much enthusiasm among the population. However, it almost developed into a tragedy when a young girl, stepping aside to let the vehicles pass, was bitten by a snake. Thanks to our stock of anti-venom (probably the only one in the country), the girl survived. The parents expressed their gratitude to our team leader Thomas van Steenis whose adequate action in cooperation with Julio Djalo helped to save their daughter.

Positive feedback

External consultant Sonja Cappello executed a ROM (result oriented monitoring) on an EU-assignment to check on our progress with the COMBAC-Boé project. Sonja was positively impressed with our work, in particular about the relations of trust with people from Boé. Out of 32 indicators, we scored green on 28, orange on 4 only. And none was red!!

Sonja formulated a number of useful recommendations that we have taken to heart. She suggested that weekend trips to the Boé would be a challenging but rewarding experience for the expatriate community of the capital city of Bissau.

Sonja Cappello discussing with villagers



Strong traditions in Capebonde

It is remarkable how contacts with the outside world may change traditions. Gautham Ramachandra (MSc student Wageningen University) studied the attitudes towards sacred forests among the villagers of Béli and of Capebonde. He found that knowledge about spiritual values and adherence to traditional ceremonies are considerably less in Béli, the village where access to the outside world is (somewhat) easier than in Capebonde.

This map which he made in cooperation with inhabitants of Capebonde shows a.o. the location of sacred forests and of cashew plantations.

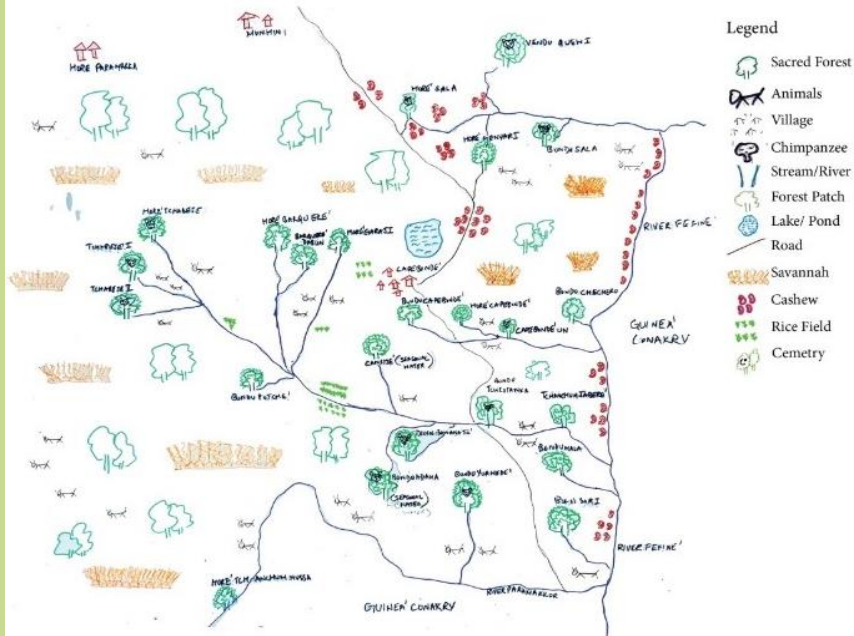


Photo: Anna Nunes van den Hoven

Forest use by Chimpanzees

Student Anna Nunes van den Hoven (MSc student Wageningen University) studied the importance of forests for chimpanzees in 3 villages well outside Boé National Park. Her results indicate that the animals tend to concentrate in forests at some distance from villages. However, in all forests studied (sacred or not, with or without permanent water source), signs of chimpanzee presence and – use were equally common. Apparently all still remaining patches of forests important to them.

To the memory of Amadu Sane

On the 29th of October 2017, the day that our son David would have celebrated his 30th anniversary, Amadu Sane passed away.

Amadu was Chimbo's first local team member. He once carried David on his back. He created the CVV's (Village Vigilance Committees) to protect the chimpanzees in the area surrounding their village. As Chimbo's ambassador he educated the population of the Boé to conserve the nature of their village lands. His integrity and honesty will remain an inspiration for us all.

Thank you, dear friend, for all you did for nature conservation and the people of the Boé.

Amadu Sane, praying in front of the rice bank in Capebonde

