



What has been your most successful CEPA activity during the last triennial period?

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Position/Job title and country	Executive Director, AGBO-ZEGUE – NGO, Togo
Activity/CEPA product	Raise awareness among the riparian communities in the Oti-Kéran National Park and build capacity among AVGAPs (Village Associations for Participatory Management of Protected Areas) to enhance natural resources management in the park.
Other collaborators – please list the organizations/individuals who have assisted or partnered with you	Regional Directorate for the Environment and Forest Resources, Prefectoral Directorate for the Environment and Forest Resources, Park Conservation Organization
Primary stakeholder audience for your product/ activity (e.g. decision-makers, teachers, families, journalists, etc.)	UAVGAP (Union of Village Associations for Participatory Management of Protected Areas), Traditional Leaders, women’s groups, local decision-makers, agricultural groups, NGOs and other civil society organizations, etc.
What was your key message?	The Oti-Kéran National Park is home to a tremendous wealth of resources (Ramsar Site) and to a huge variety of fauna and flora; it is imperative that these resources be protected.
When did this event take place/when was your product launched?	February to October 2006 the project took place and since then the work has continued under various projects to the present time.
Give a brief description of your product/activity	In the early 1990s and right up until 2005, it was extremely difficult to organize public events among the riparian communities of the Oti-Kéran National Park that focused on management of protected areas in general and the National Park in particular. Hostility among the riparian communities to the very existence of the park was such that a programme for the rehabilitation and re-zoning of protected areas in Togo, launched in 1997 with the support of the European Union, which used the Oti-Kéran Park as a pilot site, failed to deliver the expected results. It was against this backdrop that in February 2006 the NGO AGBO-ZEGUE, with support from IUCN Netherlands, sought to raise awareness among the riparian communities of the importance of conserving the park’s resources. During a meeting in Kokou Tamberma, one participant described the situation thus: “if you fall ill and are prescribed a medicine which fails to cure the ailment, you should not refuse other medication on the grounds that all medicines are ineffective”; this participant was of the opinion that the NGO approach was to be welcomed and encouraged as part of efforts to improve the livelihoods of the communities.
What results were you hoping to achieve with this product/activity? (e.g. behavioural change among the target group; press coverage; fundraising, etc.)	This project has resulted in greater awareness among the riparian communities of the Oti-Kéran National Park about the importance of conserving the natural resources of the park. Today, these communities have embraced the project and are keen to get involved in all the park conservation activities which they see as a means to improving their livelihoods.
What impact has been observed among the target audience as a result of this activity/product?	The groundwork carried out by the NGO to raise awareness among the riparian communities is today helping to facilitate dialogues among the forestry administration and the riparian populations in the Oti-Kéran National Park. It is also facilitating the creation of several civil society organizations and has resulted in field-based missions led by different actors, notably as part of the “project for the rationalization and strengthening of the national network of protected areas” funded by UNEP and for which the Oti-Kéran and Oti-Mandouri complex was selected as a pilot site.
Are you planning a follow-up activity/product? If yes, please provide a brief description	AGBO-ZEGUE plans to continue its work among the riparian communities in the park; a sub-regional “Territories for Conservation in West Africa” project led by IUCN West Africa and whose first phase has just been implemented should enable the NGO to continue its work. Support is expected from other partners.
Why do you believe that this was your most successful activity? What sets it apart from other activities?	This activity has been a turning point and today dialogue with the riparian communities of the Oti-Kéran National Park is no longer taboo. Thanks to the outcome of this project, dialogue about the conservation of the natural resources of the Oti-Kéran National Park is now possible among different actors in the zone.
How was your activity/project funded?	Netherlands Committee for IUCN

