#### **Project Reporting Form**

- 1. **Project title**: Large Carnivore Initiative West and central Africa
- 2. **Project location**: Maroua, North Cameroon
- 3. **Beneficiary organization**: Leo Foundation
- **4. Contact details**: Leo Foundation, Roghorst 343, 6708 KX, Wageningen, tel 0653972498, email hans.deiongh @gmail.com

Contact person:H.H.de longh

5. Short description of project objective and activities (200 words max, please attach any supporting evidence)

The Leo Foundation, the Centre d'Etude de l'Environnement et du Développement (CEDC) in Maroua and CML of Leiden University have initiated the organization of a Large Carnivore Conference and workshop in Maroua, Cameroon during 2-4 November 2010 and the Launch of the Large Carnivore Initiative for West and central Africa on 3 November 2010 and its website (in three languages, French, English and Dutch)

During the Large Carnivore workshop on 3 and 4 November 2010 the Large carnivore Initiative for West and Central Africa (LCI-W&C AFRICA) was launched, with the following long-term objectives:

- 1) Establishment and strengthening of a network for large carnivore conservation in the region, while practising human-carnivore-conflict mitigation.
- 2) Exchange of information between partners and members of the newly established Large Carnivore Network in the region.
- 3) Launch of media campaigns for the general public and lobbying activities with governments and policy makers.

Information on is available on the following website:

http://www.largecarnivoresafrica.com/



Group photo of workshop participants in Maroua 2-4 November 2010.

#### 6. Nature conservation impact:

The launch of the website of the Large Carnivore initiative for West and Central Africa and the subsequent workshop of network partners has already had a major conservation impact in its initial weeks.

In terms of policy a first policy impact has been a number of recommendations prepared by the workshop participants (see annex 2) prepared for the Cameroonian Minister of Fauna and Forests (MINFOF), which resulted in a zero export quotum of lion trophees under CITES as from 2011. This is a very significant first impact of the LCI network and we hope to expand this initial success to other West and Central African countries.

The presentations during the workshop also illustrated that large carnivore conservation should not only incorporate aspects of carnivore ecology but should equally involve local communities, especially where improvement of mitigation measures are a necessity to limit livestock predation. It was recommended that the Large Carnivore Initiative for West and Central Africa would fully incorporated local communities in the conservation process. In this context, the progress with the implementation of the Lion Conservation Strategy for West and Central Africa has also been discussed as well as the National Lion Conservation Action plans. The aim of the strategies is to assure the sustainable conservation and management of the lion in West and Central Africa.

Another first conservation impact was the launch of the regional Lycaon Initiative for West and Central Africa during this workshop, to establish a fund specifically for supporting projects for the conservation of the African wild dog population in the region, one of the most threatened carnivores in Africa, almost extinct in West and Central Africa..

A total of three ALERTS were send out to network partners, one on the trade in lion cubs from Waza NP to Nigeria, one on a small lion population under threat in the Democratic Republic of Congo and a third on lion/livestock conflicts.

Finally preparations have been made during the workshop for a regional strategic planning workshop for African wild dog and Cheetah end January 2011 in Niamey, Niger. This will be a major initiative supported by the Leo foundation and the LCI, in collaboration with the IUCN Cat and Canid specialist groups to save the last populations of cheetah and wild dog in West Africa.

#### 7. Your contributions to local partner capability:

During a training session on 5,6 and 7 November Nadia Niomogh (Cameroonian coordinator of LCI for W&C AFRICA) received an on the job training on website management from Iris Kirsten. At the end of this training Nadia Niomogh was capable of editing the website and managing the internet forum. The Wildlife College in Garoua committed to become the African coordinator of the LCI for W&C AFRICA.

During a training session on 27 and 28 November 2010, four trackers were instructed and trained in research- and survey methods that will be used during upcoming field activities to monitor lions and other endangered large carnivores in North Cameroon. These field activities were also discussed with the local project coordinators (André Ndjida and Ambassa for Waza NP and Saleh Adam for Benoue NP). At the end of the training course, both trackers received a "Diploma Lion Guardian", underlining their important task to ensure optimal protection of lions and other large carnivores while conducting project activities.

During the workshop a large number of students from the University of Maroua and the University of Dschang participated in the different sessions, which also had a significant learning effect for these young academics.



The Waza project team after the award ceremony. From left to right: Ambassa, Barbara Croes, Amadé Ali, Abba Boukar, André Ndjida



The warden of Benoue NP, Mr SALEH, Adam, delivers the lion guardian diploma to Mr Bobbo Lamine and Mr Aoudou Oumarou.

### 8. Leverage: how did this project stimulate larger efforts towards the objective? (financial and otherwise, e.g. policy)

The long term objectives have been translated to the following short term objectives:

- To expand the LCI-W&C AFRICA with new partners and members during an initial phase of two years.
- To exchange information on large carnivore conservation between partners and members through the website, through e-mail communication and through the organisation of annual workshops in the region.
- To prepare media campaigns for the general public in the region in order to create awareness on the need for large carnivore conservation and ecosystem restoration.
- To initiate lobbying campaigns with politicians and government to find support for large carnivore conservation and ecosystem restoration in the region.

In terms of partners the leverage of the project is significant. The LCI-W&C AFRICA network is a collaboration between the Leo Foundation, the Netherlands, the IUCN Cat, Hyena and Canid specialist groups, SPOTS (the Netherlands), the Regional Lion Network in West- and Central Africa (ROCAL), the African Lion Working Group (South Africa), Panthera Foundation, Painted Dog Conservation (Zimbabwe), the Wildlife College in Garoua (Cameroon), the Centre of Environment and Development Studies (CEDC) of the University of Dschang (Cameroon), the Laboratoire Ecologique of the University of Abomey (Benin), Department of Nature Conservation Tshwane University (South Africa) and the Institute of Environmental Sciences of Leiden University (Netherlands).

In terms of policy a first policy impact has been a number of recommendations (see annex 2) prepared for the Cameroonian Minister of Fauna and Forests (MINFOF), which resulted in a zero export quotum of lion trophees under CITES as from 2011.

The project has just started and is now on its way to raise funds to appoint a full time African coordinator of the LCI-W&C AFRICA: presently the network is managed by two part time coordinators, Nadia Niomogh at the Wildlife College in Garoua and Iris Kirsten of the Leo Foundation. These part time coordinators manage the website, an intenet forum and send out regular Alerts on Large carnivore conservation in the region. It is still to early to identify major problems in implementation and the main challenge is now continued fundraising and increasing the number of members and partners of the network.

# 9. Did educational and/or communication activities take place as part of this project? How would you rate their effectiveness? (please share any materials with Prince Bernhard Fund for Nature)

The website was successfully launched and experienced 106 visits from 19 countries during the first days after its launch. Visitor numbers will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

During the launch local press was invited and there was a broadcast on national television channel of Cameroon and several newspapers reported about the workshop and the launch. As can been seen in

the map below, most website visits in the region came from Cameroon, Guinea, Benin and Burkina Faso. Other visits were made from Europe (Netherlands, France, Spain, UK, Italy, Poland and Norway) and North America (USA and Canada).

As mentioned the network is presently managed by two part time coordinators, Nadia Niomogh at the Wildlife College in Garoua and Iris Kirsten of the Leo Foundation. It is the intention during 2011 to doa major fundraising campaign to be able to appoint a full time African coordinator of the network.

The Regional Strategic Planning workshop for the conservation of African Wild dogs and cheetah in West and central Africa, scheduled in Niamey end January 2011, will be an important milestone for the Leo foundation.

#### ANNEX I WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO MINISTER MINFOF

#### **Recommendations**

from wildlife conservation professionals from Cameroon, Nigeria, Benin, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, USA, UK, Germany, and the Netherlands to the Cameroon Minister of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), via the Governor of the Far North Region of Cameroon

These recommendations follow:

The international workshop under the theme: *Managing human-carnivore conflicts – the way forward*, which focused on the management of large carnivore populations in Africa, with special reference to carnivores in Waza N.P. and the Bénoué Ecosystem (Bénoué, Faro, Bouba-Ndjidda NPs, and surrounding hunting zones).

The Large Carnivore Initiative West & Central Africa, aimed at conserving regional carnivore populations (<a href="http://www.largecarnivoresafrica.com">http://www.largecarnivoresafrica.com</a>) was launched during the conference. With the launch of the Large Carnivore Initiative for W and C Africa, the workshop recommends to all Ministers responsible for Fauna management in the region of W and C Africa to join the initiative for enhanced conservation of threatened carnivores in the region, as ambassadors for healthy ecosystems. A first step to be taken will be the development of strategy and action plans for the most threatened carnivores; lion, cheetah, wild dog, and striped and spotted hyena.

The conference and workshop were held at CEDC in Maroua, on 2, 3 and 4 November 2010, and attended by about 40 wildlife professionals and carnivore experts from Cameroon together with about 20 carnivore experts from Africa and Europe, as well as representatives of the wildlife authorities of Kenya, Nigeria, and Benin. The list of participants at both events is in the Annex 1 to this document.

The meetings assessed recent results from CEDC scientists and protected area managers from Cameroon and elsewhere, and developed the following conclusions:

### 1. Importance of Cameroon national parks system to western African carnivore conservation

Lions are regionally endangered in western Africa, having recently disappeared from Ivory Coast, Ghana, and a large part of Nigeria (Henschel *et al.*, 2010)<sup>1</sup>. The lion population in the Bénoué Ecosystem in Cameroon is one of only two or three remaining viable lion populations in western Africa (from Cameroon westward). The only other confirmed important population is in the Pendjari/W-Complex of Niger and Benin. **The lion population of Cameroon's North Region is therefore of critical conservation value for western Africa.** 

The African wild dog and cheetah are critically endangered in the western African region with fewer than 200 individuals of both species remaining. The results of recent carnivore surveys in the Bénoué Ecosystem illustrate that African wild dog and cheetah populations are functionally extinct in Cameroon (Croes et al., 2010). Viable African wild dog populations possibly remain in Senegal, the Pendjari/W-Complex, and in Guinea-Conakry, subject to confirmation. Important cheetah

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Annex for publications and reports

populations possibly remain in the Pendjari/W-Complex and Niger, also subject to confirmation.

There is insufficient regional data to assess the status of the leopard in western Africa. It is considered Near-threatened in Africa (IUCN, 2010)<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, the regional status of spotted and striped hyena (Near-threatened; IUCN, 2010) is insufficiently known, but there are strong indications that the populations are under pressure by trade and retaliatory killing, trapping and poisoning. Spotted and striped hyenas still occur in the Waza N.P. The Bénoué Ecosystem supports regionally important leopard and spotted hyena populations.

#### 2. Threats to carnivores in Cameroon

#### Waza N.P.

The Waza N.P. currently holds fewer than 20 adult lions (Tumenta *et al.*, 2010). At least six Waza lions were killed by poachers and herders between 2007 and 2010 (De Iongh *et al.*, 2009). A large problem is posed by livestock incursions into the park, as these trigger human-lion conflicts and retaliatory killing by herders (Bauer, 2003). Wild herbivore prey has significantly declined due to intense poaching pressure. Frequent and intense use of waterholes inside the park threatens lions and wildlife in general (Buij *et al.*, 2009). As lions regularly travel up to 15 km from the park boundaries, livestock predation and lion poaching also occurs outside the park. Recent studies illustrate low genetic diversity in the Waza lion population, suggesting risk of inbreeding depression (Visser, 2010). **Based on these results and continued threats, the Waza lion population is considered to be on the verge of extinction.** Spotted and striped hyena occur in low but unknown numbers in the Waza N.P. and surrounding areas and are equally threatened by indiscriminate retaliatory killing following livestock predation.

#### **Bénoué Ecosystem**

No current ecosystem-wide population data exist for large carnivores in the Bénoué Ecosystem. This is particularly true for the hunting zones or ZICs. Recent carnivore surveys found a substantially lower abundance of lions in the hunting zones when compared to the NPs (De Jager, 2006; Aboudou *et al.*, 2008). The density of several ungulates (buffalo, roan, kob, hartebeest) is substantially lower in the hunting zones than in the NPs (Omondi *et al.*, 2008). Current hunting quota for large carnivores and the majority of other species (including ungulates) is not based on any scientific investigation or recommendation while **lions are seriously at risk of becoming extirpated due to unsustainable high trophy hunting off-takes.** Herbivore populations are further compromised by poaching in the NPs and hunting zones. Research shows that illegal killing of African wild dog in hunting zones has probably contributed to a large degree to their disappearance from the Bénoué Ecosystem. In 2008, proof was obtained of the illegal killing of a leopard in the Bénoué Ecosystem.

#### 3. Proposed actions to conserve the remaining large carnivore populations in Cameroon

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> IUCN 2010. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2010.4. <<u>www.iucnredlist.org</u>>. Downloaded on **7 November 2010**.

We recommend the following urgent measures to stop the continuous decline of large carnivores and their prey in the Waza N.P.:

- Increase efforts to immediately halt all illegal intrusions into the park with immediate effect:
- Use military force, whenever necessary, to exclude all cattle and illegal activities with immediate effect and at monthly intervals until the park has recovered (at least a period of five years);
- Implement administrative procedures to open permanent park roads early in the season necessary to support regular anti-poaching patrols (at least 4/week) from November 2010; this will enable conservation to increase the road network each year and not repeat the same roads year-in and year-out;
- Supply additional vehicles, bikes, bicycles, weapons and emergency funds for maintenance, and other equipment for frequent anti-poaching patrols;
- Train park rangers at appropriate training institutions to improve law enforcement.

We recommend the following urgent measures to stop the continuous decline of large carnivores and their prey in the Bénoué Ecosystem:

- Development of a new hunting quota allocation system based on sustainable offtake for all species;
- A three year moratorium on the hunting of lions until the quota system has been reviewed in the context of recent scientific data and ensure that all quotas are issued on the basis of independent scientific evidence of viable presence;
- Review all prey quotas in the context of game counts and evidence of effective anti-poaching by ZIC management;
- Introduce system of hunting zone retraction as a sanction for negligent management practices and non-compliance by professional hunters to quotas set, national laws, and decrees;
- Ensure that laws pertinent to the national park become incorporated into the hunting zones and that each zone is monitored for non-compliance; i.e. hunts are accompanied by MINFOF hunt monitors, paid by the hunters;
- Faithful implementation of park management plans by filling all the duty posts provided for therein.

#### ANNEX II. References:

- 1. Participants list Jubilee and Farewell Conference and carnivore workshop, CEDC, Maroua, 2-4 Nov 2010.
- 2. Aboudou, M., Croes, B.M., Buij, R. 2008. Suivi des carnivores par camera-trapping et par traces dans le parc national de Boubandjida et de sa periphérie. Rapport de fin d'étude post-académique en gestion des aires protégées et de la faune, Ecole de Faune Garoua.
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- 4. Buij, R., Croes, B., Mohammadou, B., Ndjomaha, C., Ziebe, R., Halilou, M., Mvondo-Awono, J.P. 2009. Waza Action Plan Recommendation from a workshop held at Waza, 24-25 September 2009.
- 5. Croes, B.M., Rasmussen, G., De Iongh, H.H. 2010. Status of Painted dog *Lycaon pictus* in the Bénoué Ecosystem, North Cameroon. Final report of the WWF-NL funded project July 2007–June 2010.
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- 8. Henschel, P., Azani, D., Burton, C., Malanda, G., Saidu, Y., Sam, M., Hunter, L. 2010. Lion status update from five range countries in West and Central Africa. *Cat News* 52:34-39.
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- 11. Visser, H. 2010. The genetics of lions (*Panthera leo*) in Cameroon: population structure and threats. Masters thesis at the Institute of Biology, Leiden/DNA markerpoint.

ANNEX III. Participants list Jubilee and Farewell Conference and Large Carnivore Workshop, CEDC, Maroua, 2-4 Nov 2010.

N°	Name, first name	INSTITUTIONS	Email or telephone
1	MAHAMAT, Habibou	DR MINFOF EN, Cameroon	mahamathabibou@yahoo.fr +237 99 94 73 74
2	BAKKER, Saskia*	Netherlands Embassy, Cameroon	saskia.bakker@minbuza.nl, YAO- CDP@minbuza.nl
3	SOGBOHOSSOU, Etotepe	CML et LEA, Benin	etotepe@yahoo.com
4	AMBASSA	Waza NP/MINFOF, Cameroon	+237 75473788
5	VRIELING, Klaas	Univ. of Leiden, Netherlands	k.vrieling@biology.leidenuniv.nl
6	DURANT, Sarah	ZSL, United Kingdom	sdurant@wcs.org
7	FOMETHE, Anaclet*	Recteur Univ Dschang, Cameroon	+237 96 29 93 34
8	MPOAME, Mbida*	DAAC Université Dschang, Cameroon	+237 96 29 93 36
9	MANJELI, Yacouba*	Univ. Dschang/Doyen FASA, Cameroon	+237 77 58 16 46
10	TENONFO, Maurice*	Université DSCHANG, Cameroon	+237 96 57 83 69
11	NTOUPKA, Mama	IRAD Forêt, Cameroon	+237 77 82 46 66
12	NJIEMOUN, Aboubakar	IRAD Forêt, Cameroon	+237 95 18 61 26
13	KIRSTEN, Iris	Leo Foundation, Netherlands	<u>iriskirsten@hotmail.com</u>
14	FOTSING, Eric	CEDC, Cameroon	efotsing@gmail.com +237 99 86 06 55
15	BERTOLA, Laura	CML, Leiden Univ., Netherlands	laura.bertola@gmail.com
16	TIOMOKO, Djafarou	Pendjari NP, Benin	<u>directeur@pendjari.net</u> <u>djafarou.tiomoko@pendjari.net</u> +229 97 28 62 37
17	RASMUSSEN, Gregory	Painted Dog Conservation, Zimbabwe	greg@painteddog.org
18	KAMENI, Eric Désiré	CEDC, Cameroon	<u>ericokameni@gmail.com</u> +237 94 59 99 22
19	HALILOU MOUSTAPHA S. Maj	Lamidat de Petté, Cameroon	+237 99 87 41 67
20	DIDJATOU	DR MINFOF, Cameroon	daidaididjatou@yahoo.fr +237 74 57 86 32
21	CROES, Barbara	CML, Leiden Univ., Netherlands CEDC, Cameroon	<pre>croes.barbara@gmail.com +237 75 32 71 93</pre>
22	BUIJ, Ralph	CML, Leiden Univ., Netherlands CEDC, Cameroon	<u>ralph.buij@gmail.com</u> +237 94 55 62 04
23	MVONDO-AWONO, Jean Pierre	CEDC, Cameroon	jpmvondoa@yahoo.fr +237 77 63 63 55
24	NJOMAHA, Charles	CEDC, Cameroon	njomaha_charles@yahoo.fr +237 77 79 31 54
25	ZIEBE, Roland	CML, Netherlands /CEDC, Cameroon	zieberoland@yahoo.fr +237 99 31 45 06
26	TUMENTA, Pricelia	CML, Netherlands/Univ. of Dschang, Cameroon	tumentap@yahoo.com 00 237 74 55 23 20
27	MOHAMADOU, Bachirou	CEDC, Cameroon	bachiroumoh@yahoo.fr +237 75 32 90 98
28	JIRMO, Tuqa	KWS, Kenya	<u>tjirmo@yahoo.com</u>
29	DE IONGH, Hans	CML, Netherlands	iongh@cml.leidenuniv.nl hans.deiongh@gmail.com +31 65 39 72 498
30	PERSOON, Gerard	Leiden University, Netherlands	persoonga@fsw.leidenuniv.nl
31	WIT, Piet	CEM - IUCN, Netherlands	wit@syzygy.nl +31 639 434 636
32	JIAGHO, Remi	IUCN, Cameroon	remi.jiagho@iucn.org

33	MUSYOKI, Charles	KWS, Kenya	cmusyoki@kws.go.ke
34	TARLA NCHEMBI, Francis	Garoua Wildlife School, Cameroon	<u>Tarla.francisnchembi3@gmail.com</u> +237 99 89 02 25 et +237 77 75 40 53
35	TSAGUE, Louis	Garoua Wildlife School, Cameroon	<u>tsaguel@yahoo.fr</u> +237 99 86 96 38
36	MADI ALI	Université de Maroua/ISS Université de Dschang/FASA, Cameroon	<u>Madi838@yahoo.fr</u> +237 96 37 01 67 et +237 22 62 05 53
37	WEESIE, Peter	Univ. of Groningen, Netherlands	<u>p.d.m.weesie@rug.nl</u> +315 03 63 22 56
38	HENSCHEL, Philipp	Panthera, United States	phenschel@panthera.org +241 07 95 52 40
39	SALEH, Adam	Parc National Bénoué/MINFOF, Cameroon	salehadamwaza@yahoo.fr
40	SAIDU, Yohanna	National Park Service Head Quarter-ABUJA, Nigeria	<u>yohannasaidu@yahoo.com</u> +234 80 69 37 22 30
41	WASSOUNI	MINEP, Cameroon	Wassouni amadou@yahoo.fr +237 99 75 14 84
42	KOLYANG, Pr	ISS MAROUA, Cameroon	+237 77 82 12 12
43	MAHAMAT, Aboukar	ACEEN, Cameroon	+237 77 29 99 88
44	KOISSOU, Jean	DR MINFOF EN, Cameroon	+237 96 02 88 81
45	STEDE, Norbert	Syndicat de Tourisme, Cameroon	norbertstede@yahoo.fr +237 99 85 50 47
46	TCHAMBA, Martin*	Université Dschang, Cameroon	mtchamba@yahoo.fr
47	GNYONKEU, Vincent	Enviro-Protect, Cameroon	gnyonkeu25@yahoo.fr
48	BRIDGET, Alice Kelly	Univ. Berkeley, United States	<u>abk@berkeley.edv</u>
49	TIKELA, Pagoré	DR MINADER EN, Cameroon	pagoretikela@yahoo.fr +237 99 85 57 90
50	NJIDDA, André	Conserv. Parc National de Waza, Cameroon	andrendjidda@yahoo.fr +237 99 70 20 37
51	FUNSTON, Paul	Tshwane Univ., South Africa	funstonpj@tut.ac.za
52	KARI, Saidou	CARPA, Cameroon	saidoukari@yahoo.fr +237 99 24 06 31
53	KARI, Oumarou	CARPA, Cameroon	+237 99 09 83 93
54	DJODDA, Jacques	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	<u>djodda@yahoo.fr</u> +237 74 85 51 28
55	CHAMI, Aristide	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	<u>chami2aris@yahoo.fr</u> +237 74 17 18 54
56	VOUGAT, Ngom Ronald R.B.	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	romsonbey@yahoo.fr +237 75 09 22 14
57	KOUYEM TCHINDA, Guy F.	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	<u>fran6 84@yahoo.fr</u> +237 76 23 55 48
58	IBRAHIM, Kelly Adamou	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	<u>ikellyadam@yahoo.co.uk</u> +237 77 69 40 17
59	LOULEO, Jean	Université de Maroua/ISS, Cameroon	louleoj@yahoo.fr +237 77 70 25 33
60	YAKOUBA, Blama	Université Ngaoundéré, Cameroon	<u>blakoube@yahoo.fr</u> +237 74 76 71 83

<sup>\*</sup> Present only during the Jubilee and Farewell Conference, 2 Nov 2010 \* Seulement présent à la conférence jubilaire, 2 Nov 2010

Date: 27/12/2010 Place:Wageningen Signature:

Please return your evaluation form by email to: info@prinsbernhardnatuurfonds.nl

Hardcopy materials can be sent to:

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