Project Update: June 2019

Introduction

The forests are one of the last refuges for many species of animals, plants and fungi. But they have long been threatened by human actions such as agriculture, logging etc. and also climate change. By these threats, more than 27,000 species disappear each year. This loss of biodiversity is irreversible and many species can continue to disappear if we don't work to sensitize the actors of forest degradation. The second phase of our project goes in this direction.

Its main purpose is to : (1) sensitise the local populations about the use of wild fungi in the forests ; and (2) reforest already degraded areas in forests to restore fungal habitats.

Methodology

Young plants of *Isoberlinia doka* Craib & Stapf and *Berlinia grandiflora* (Vahl) Hutch are produced to reforest degraded areas. Once the 2000 plants were produced due to 1000 plants of *I. doka* and 1000 plants of *B. grandiflora*.

Degraded areas were selected with the help of forest officers. Thus the degraded areas of the Bassila Forest Reserve, Kota gallery forest, Wari-Maro and Mount Kouffé Forest Reserve, previously identified have been reforested.

Once this stage is over, the villages near the forests have been selected for sensitisation. Sensitisation sessions were organised with a variable number of people depending on the size of each village. In all 234 persons have been sensitised (60 in the village of Kota, 48 in the village wari-Maro, 47 in the village Bassila center, 37 in Manigri region and 42 in the village Igbere).

Results

Tree symbiotic nurseries and reforestation activities

A nursery of two symbiotic tree species (*I. doka* and *B. grandiflora*), trees identified as partners of fungal species, *Cantharellus solidus* De Kesel, Yorou & Buyck, *Lactifluus luteopus* (Verbeken) Verbeken, *Amanita xanthogala* Bas and *Russula pellucida* (Gooss.-Font. & R. Heim) Buyck, in danger, notified in our first report has been established. The young plants were maintained in nurseries before being reforested in the natural forests with the help of the local population, according to the images below.

Top: EcM tree nursery installation. Bottom: Young plants of *Berlinia grandifolia*

Young plants of *Isoberlinia doka*

Some sites degraded in the different forests have been identified and reforested as indicated by the following photos:

Left : Identification of degraded sites. Right : The different photos below show reforestation activities in the forest.








Sensitisation of the local population on the benefits of wild mushrooms

The sensitisation took place in the villages near the targeted forests in this project. Here are the images showing the awareness activities:

Left: The presenters. Right: Poster used for the sensitization

Sensitized populations

Group picture

Acknowledgement
We are grateful to Rufford Foundation.

We thank also the staff of the Laboratory of Ecology, Botany and plant Biology of Parakou University and the communities of Bassila, Kota, wari-maro and Manigri, for welcoming the awareness actions. In addition we thank the collaborators such as TCHAN Kassim, BONI Soumeymane and DRAMANI Ramdan for their effort in the part of this project.