

Project Update: January 2020

As planned in the project, we were able to carry out the ethnobotanical survey in the villages surrounding the Niaouli natural forest. The results allowed us to better understand the forest management framework, the perception of the natives on the resources of this forest as well as the wishes for better participative management.

In summary, we have the following results:

- With regard to the current management of the forest, 38% of those surveyed believe that the way in which the classified forest of Niaouli is managed is very satisfactory because it will make it possible to limit the pressures of the populations and to sustainably manage this forest. 52% of respondents believe that its management is not satisfactory due to the non-involvement of the local population (they believe that they derive no profit from the forest). This justifies the importance of participatory management through income-generating activities for the population. However, 13.33% of those surveyed believe that the forest provides them with medicinal plants for the treatment of diseases, wood bundles for the manufacture of charcoal for sale and for cooking. This forest also provides them with bushmeat, snails and mushrooms.
- The existence, a few km from the center of Niaouli, of markets such as that of Sey, Attogon, Allada and Houegbo, offers possibilities for the sale of products which could come from beekeeping.
- On the question of basic knowledge in beekeeping, only one respondent said that he had trained in the field. All the other respondents are very interested in such training and affirm that there is indeed a market for the sale of beekeeping products in the area.
- The forest species cited as suitable for them are: *khaya senegalensis*, teak, acacia and perennial crops such as oil palm.

This survey allowed us to see that the population is very interested in training in beekeeping and in the production of plants.

Recommendations

- Improve the participation of the surrounding population in the management of this forest. Create generating activities for the benefit of the indigenous population via the benefits of tourist visits to the forest,
- Continue the current management of the forest and focus on restoring degraded areas.
- Initiate visits to the forest and birdwatching session for secondary school pupils and children in the locality to arouse in them commitments for the benefit of nature.

Beekeeping activities

The beekeeping training took place in the village of Niaouli with the effective participation of the natives. We have emphasised the presence of community groups to make them responsible for the day-to-day management of the hives and the monitoring of harvesting activities over time. Thus the group of women "missi mahou" and other people interested in this activity followed the training, with the desire to replicate the achievements of this training in action via our support.

The beekeeping specialist explained, with the support of a projection, the benefits of bees, their contribution to biodiversity conservation and finally useful practices to master to carry out this activity. The demonstration of wearing apiary clothes, the use of certain elements of the equipment and the setting up of hives in a real environment were done. Exchanges were made in the local language of the community for a better understanding of all the participants. We were also assisted by a well-experienced native on the issue of beekeeping who had received training in this area.



Training.