



# ODZALA-KOKOUA

NATIONAL PARK  
REPUBLIC OF CONGO

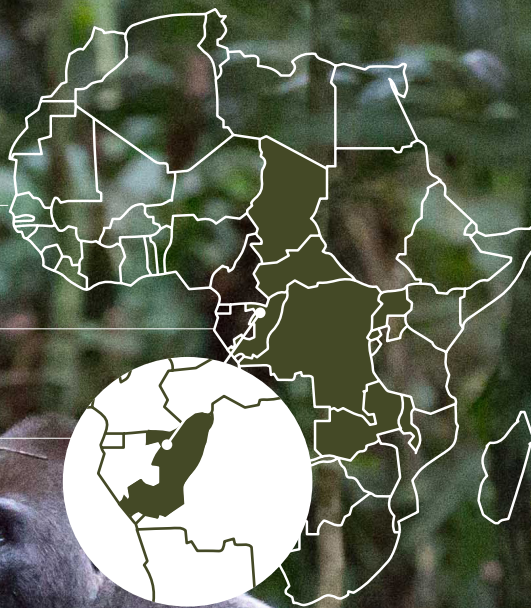
AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2010

Odzala-Kokoua totals 13,500 km<sup>2</sup>

Partner: Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development



22,000 gorillas confirmed in 2012 survey  
Over 106 eco-guards employed



## The Story of Odzala-Kokoua

is situated in the heart of the second largest tropical rainforest in the world, second only to the Amazon, and it harbours some of the rarest and most enigmatic species on the planet. The park is home to the Critically Endangered western lowland gorilla, forest elephant, at least 444 bird species, and an almost unparalleled floral diversity. For years the park was under-resourced, largely unpatrolled, and plagued by rampant poaching. African Parks entered in to partnership with the Congolese government to address these challenges, assuming management of the park in 2010.



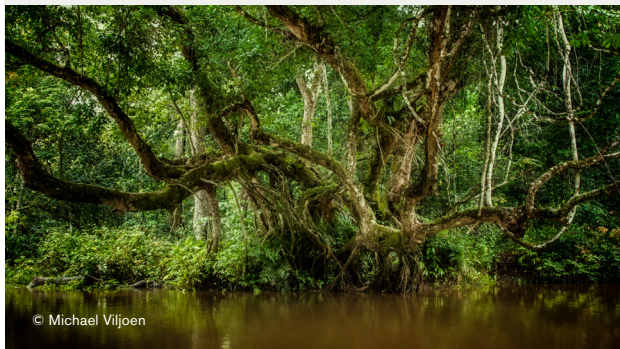
Parc National  
**ODZALA-KOKOUA**  
République du Congo

## The Challenge

Due to the park's extensive size and to lack of infrastructure, ivory and bushmeat poaching have remained largely unchallenged in its remote and unpatrolled areas. Given the delicate ecological balance of rainforest systems, the depletion of one species can be detrimental for many others – both fauna and flora alike. Having benefitted very little from the park's existence, the local communities' maintain a historically negative perception of the park's natural value.

1935 → 2016

Established in 1935, Odzala is one of Africa's oldest national parks



## The Solution

New rangers were recruited, trained and deployed throughout the park to regain control of the many baies (open forest clearing), which have become bases for illegal hunters. These patrols will additionally boost tourism appeal through habituating the park's wildlife to human presence. Consistent community engagement and inclusion in park activities is highlighting the park as a potential asset for local communities.

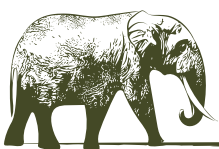


## Highlights

- The “poacher to protector” programme, which permits poachers to become rangers in exchange for their firearm and full disclosure, has led to 56 confiscated firearms and improved park intelligence.
- A gorilla habituation programme is being implemented to improve tourism for local communities.
- Over 100 jobs have been created within park management.
- Since 2012, 5% of commercial revenue has gone into a Community Fund channeling US\$82,000 in support of local projects.
- In six months of establishing a mobile health clinic, 400 people in 39 villages around the park.

## Next Steps

- 1 Provide new income streams for local communities, including planting 40,000 cocoa saplings outside of the park in rehabilitated cocoa fields.
- 2 Following formal training from agricultural experts, communities are planting trees that are expected to start bearing fruit in two to three years.
- 3 Continue the gorilla habituation at multiple sites within the park to aid in tourism to deliver needed local benefits.
- 4 Survey transects to evaluate wildlife population trends in order to better protect them.
- 5 Implement a tourism development plan to increase tourist numbers and revenue.



African Parks is a non-profit conservation organisation that takes on direct responsibility for the rehabilitation and long-term management of national parks and protected areas, in partnership with governments and local communities. We currently manage 10 parks in seven countries – CAR, Chad, Republic of Congo, DRC, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia - with a combined area of six million hectares. Our goal by 2020 is to have 20 parks, and 10 million hectares, under management