



**Green  
Development  
Advocates**

*For a Green Congo Basin*



**ANNUAL REPORT**

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**20  
25**

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# FOREWORD

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The year 2025 marks a turning point in Green Development Advocates' (GDA) commitment to social, environmental and climate justice in Cameroon. In a global context where biodiversity conservation is inseparable from respect for human rights, this impact report demonstrates our determination to place Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) and forest conservation at the heart of natural resource governance.

Throughout this year, our young and dynamic team has been active on several fronts: from securing the ancestral lands of the IPLC to supporting local communities affected by major so-called development projects such as the Nachtigal and Kikot dams, the Mbalam-Kribi railway and agro-

industrial plantations (CAMVERT and SOCAPALM). Our actions have not only focused on denouncing abuses, but have also prioritised the co-construction of sustainable solutions tools for engagement and participatory analysis, capacity building, legislative advocacy and the promotion of agroecology.

The successes presented in this document, whether it be the suspension of illegal logging in the Djoko Forest or the influence exerted on the new Forestry Law of 2024, are the result of a synergy between legal expertise, scientific research and traditional knowledge, combined with concerted action with other civil society organisations and certain networks and platforms.

*"Protecting biodiversity means first and foremost ensuring the effective and legal recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities."*

We would like to express our deep gratitude to our technical and financial partners, whose unwavering commitment is the driving force behind our impact on the ground and whose constant support makes these interventions possible. We also thank the administrative authorities who have opened up spaces for constructive dialogue. Finally, we salute the resilience and trust that communities have placed on us.

This report is not just a review of activities; it is a call to continue the mobilisation. At a time when pressures on the Congo Basin are intensifying, it is clearer than ever that the preservation of our forest ecosystems is intrinsically linked to social justice. Protecting biodiversity means first and foremost ensuring the effective and legal recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. As the long-standing guardians of this world heritage, they are the strongest bulwark against the degradation of our environment. Supporting their sovereignty means securing the future of our planet.

Happy reading!

***Aristide CHACGOM FOKAM***

*Coordinator*



# ABOUT GDA



## Our vision

“For a green Congo basin”



## Our mission

To contribute to the sustainable development of African tropical forests, while respecting the cultures, rights, interests, and needs of African peoples, with particular attention to Indigenous forest communities



# Key achievements

**Securing land and forest rights and recognising traditional governance systems of indigenous peoples and local communities**

**4 859**

hectares of the Djoko Community Forest protected

**8**

communities supported (Kikot Dam)

**2500**

forest tree seedlings raised in nurseries

**500 000**

FCFA revolving fund (AFRiSC-Campo), increased after one year

**500+**

Baka and Bagyeli people consulted on the Forest Law

**3000**

fruit tree seedlings planted in Campo

**200+**

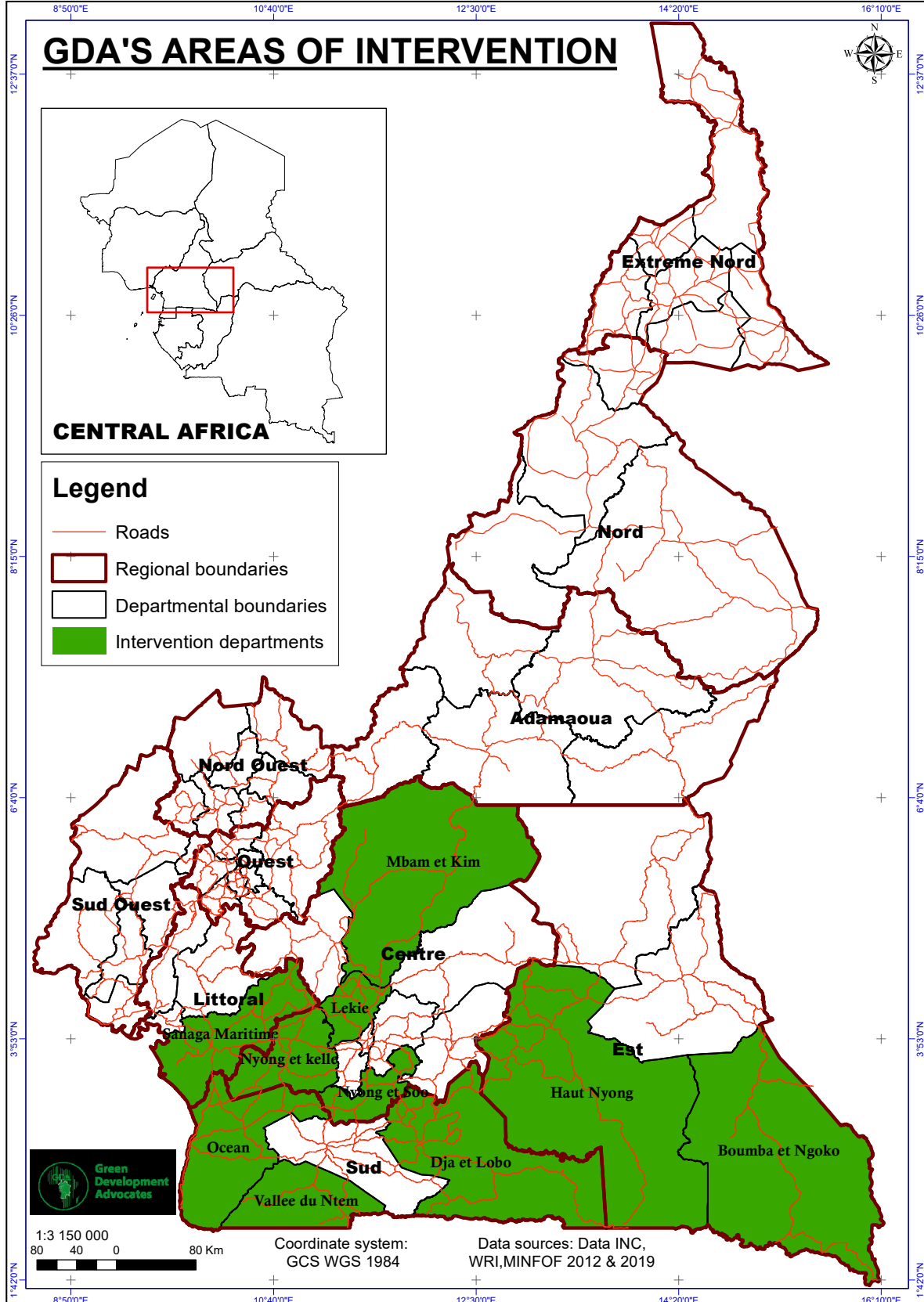
women trained and supported.

**1000**

delegates from the Congo Basin at the ICCA World Congress



# GDA's Areas of Intervention





## Djoko Community Forest

*"We wish to preserve this forest so that we can... live according to our traditions."*

*— André Ekanga, Chief of Se'eh, statements collected by Le Messenger, Wednesday, April 2, 2025, page 8*



GDA contributed to the suspension of a timber logging permit granted to a logging company in the Djoko community forest. This occurred following a campaign denouncing the illegal logging of the Djoko Forest on the one hand, and highlighting the socio-cultural importance of the forest for the Baka people of Se'eh and Assoumindelé on the other. The actions taken attracted the attention of the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, who instructed that a consultation be organised between the Baka communities of Se'eh and Assoumindelé and the Regional Delegate of MINFOF for the Eastern Region to hear their views on their forest.

Covering an area of **4,859 hectares**, the Djoko community forest was allocated to the Baka of Se'eh and Assoumindelé II as compensation for the creation of the Ngoyla Reserve, to enable them to practise their cultural and traditional activities. This forest, which is vital to the survival of the Baka, is now threatened by the combined pressure of mining, local elites and neighbouring populations, which is undermining this compensation area and jeopardising the rights and way of life of these indigenous peoples.

*"Admittedly, the presidents of the management committees are Baka, but in reality, influential actors operating behind the scenes are driving this situation... Others are the ones who truly benefit from it."*

*— Wilfried Kwpalla, Mayor of Ngoyla, statements collected by Le Messenger, Wednesday, April 2, 2025, page 8*

## Support for the implementation of the memorandum of understanding between ASBABUK and MINFOF



GDA works to strengthen the leadership of the members of the Sanguia Baka Buma'a Kpode Association (ASBABUK), which signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) in 2023 to facilitate access for the Baka indigenous peoples to their ancestral sites located in the Lobéké, Boumba-Bek and Nki national parks, the Ngoyla Wildlife Reserve and their surrounding areas.

In addition, GDA facilitated the organisation of a multi-stakeholder workshop to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU). During this workshop, participants were informed of the progress made (such as the reduction of conflicts between eco-guards and local communities) and the remaining challenges (in particular, restricted access to Hunting Interest Zones – ZIC). Recommendations were made and an action plan adopted.

Building on this experience, GDA is seen as a major player and partner of ASBABUK in the implementation of the MoU, capable of influencing similar processes, particularly around the Dja Faunal Reserve and Campo National Park.

# Support to communities impacted by infrastructural projects



## Kikot Hydroelectric dam

Drawing on strategies and lessons learned from communities affected by the construction of the Nachtigal hydroelectric dam, GDA is supporting eight (8) communities (**Tombi, Kikot, Ossébé, Nkong-Mango, Mbébé, Binoum, Ndomdjengué, Ntol**) likely to be affected by the Kikot hydroelectric dam.

First, we informed them of the potential negative impacts of the project in their localities and supported them in producing eight participatory maps highlighting their land use areas and the habitats and sacred sites that will be affected by the project. The maps highlighted the partial materialisation of the project's impact area as set out in the Declaration of Public Utility (DUP).

Secondly, we analysed the management of the company's complaint mechanism in line with Principle 31 of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The analysis identified several shortcomings, including the lack of acknowledgement of complaints submitted to suggestion boxes and the fact that communities were unaware of the timeframes for processing complaints.

The use of data collected in the field, including maps produced, facilitated the organisation of a **tripartite dialogue** bringing together the company, 24 administrative authorities and 21 representatives of the affected communities. More than just a meeting, this process transformed the communities' stance: by firmly presenting their grievances and fears, they strengthened their leadership and confidence.

Today, communities are better informed about the environmental and socio-economic issues at stake in the project and are fully committed and equipped to defend their rights.



*“ What will be the fate of the village of Binoum? We depend on non-timber forest products that we harvest along the Sanaga River, and we also have our hippopotamus site. Will our grandchildren still be able to know these animals? Will we continue to have access to our lands and forests? How will we live when you build your dam? ”*

***A woman during the dialogue***



During the discussions, the company acknowledged the limitations of its complaint mechanism and undertook to revise it on the basis of the recommendations made in the analysis. It undertook consultations in the communities and presented a revised version of the mechanism that takes into account GDA's recommendations.

However, the implementation of this mechanism is still pending.

The administrative authorities present welcomed and encouraged GDA's work and committed to ensuring that the rights of the communities are respected in the implementation of the project.

Recognising its shortcomings on human rights issues, the company approached the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (UNCHRD-CA) for assistance. GDA, recognised as an actor working in the area with proven expertise, was therefore asked by the Centre to provide support in developing a human rights due diligence framework for the implementation of the Kikot-Mbébé hydroelectric dam.



## Natchigal Hydroelectric dam

Since 2019, GDA has been supporting communities affected by the Natchigal hydroelectric dam, which led to the signing of a final agreement in May 2024 to settle grievances raised in a complaint filed with the independent accountability mechanisms of some banks financing the project.

Despite the signing of the agreement, participatory monitoring revealed critical flaws, including misunderstandings about certain terms contained in the agreement (compensation for loss of livelihoods was unclear,

details on how certain agreed actions were to be implemented, the study carried out by a consulting firm did not take into account aspects agreed upon during mediation), as well as failure to meet deadlines for the implementation of certain activities.

Based on these findings, representatives referred the matter to the various accountability mechanisms (Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO), Dispute Resolution Service (DRS), and Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM)) of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to report the breaches observed. The mechanisms responded quickly, advising the communities to refer the matter to the mediators so that they could hold the company accountable. This mobilisation demonstrates the growing strength of local leadership in demanding justice and transparency.

The environmental and social impacts of the Nachtigal dam clearly illustrate the limitations of the safeguard policies of international financial institutions, including the AfDB. Consequently, in collaboration with WoMin African Alliance, a campaign is currently ongoing to demand reparations and review the AfDB's safeguard policies.

Beyond that, the work on the Nachtigal case led the dispute resolution mechanisms involved to develop a new working approach. In order to facilitate cooperation and effectively address the issues raised in the Nachtigal case, the three mechanisms agreed to collaborate under a memorandum of understanding. This is the first agreement of its kind in a joint complaint process. Under this memorandum of understanding, they have committed to applying the principles of the mechanism deemed most practical and appropriate to the case.

Inspired by this approach, the World Bank is currently reviewing and updating its accountability framework to allow for closer coordination with counterpart mechanisms of other development banks involved in the same projects and to ensure that the most appropriate procedural principles are applied in joint cases.

*"The Mediation enabled us to secure the recognition and rehabilitation of our sacred site in the village of Ndji. During the initial studies, this site had not been identified. Yet, located within the dam's footprint, it was destroyed without any compensation measures. This issue was brought to mediation, which led to a favorable outcome. The company ultimately acknowledged the existence of Ndji's sacred site and, in response to the communities' requests, committed to building a water museum as a form of compensation." His Majesty Ekoudi Ahanda Joseph, Chief of the village of Ndji*



## Revitalisation of the ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples

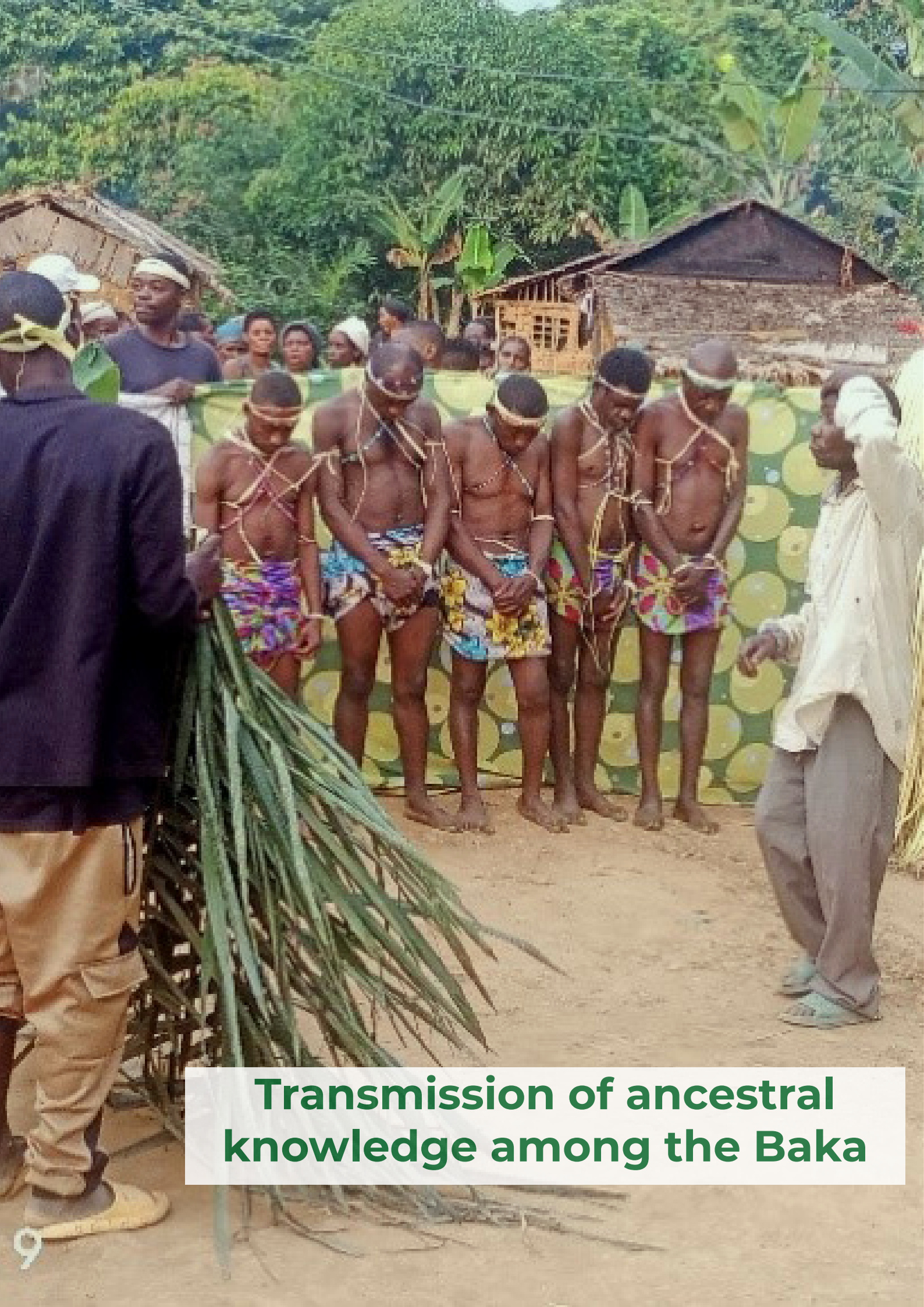
Some traditional knowledge and practices of the Bagyeli, including the holders of such knowledge, have begun to be identified. This follows numerous exchanges in eight Bagyeli communities in Akom II in the Ocean Division, Southern Region.

The exchanges conducted in various Bagyeli communities in Akom II have highlighted a significant erosion of these peoples' traditional ecological knowledge. Among the causes mentioned are the presence of large projects limiting access to the forest, the lack of interest among young people, other religious practices, external influences, and uncertainty among communities about how to initiate a process of cultural restoration.

As a result of these discussions, the Bagyeli have become more aware of this situation and have agreed to be supported in the revitalisation of their traditional knowledge.

Each village identified its 'cultural champions', responsible for leading revitalisation efforts, who took part in an exchange and learning trip to Zoulabot–Mintom during Libandi (a forum for meeting and revitalising Baka culture).

Following this trip, the Bagyeli people reaffirmed their commitment to revitalising their traditional knowledge.



**Transmission of ancestral knowledge among the Baka**

# Agro-industry versus local communities

*"We have received support from several organizations in the struggle we are leading against SOCAPALM, without much progress. But GDA only arrived recently, and we truly feel that someone is finally holding our hand," said an AFRISE official (Secretary General).*



# Advocacy for the reclamation of ancestral lands and living spaces

GDA supported and accompanied the communities living near SOCAPALM Édéa (Ferme Suisse) in various advocacy actions aimed at amplifying the communities' voices in their demands for their living spaces.

Thanks to the joint actions of the communities and GDA, the demands were relayed by the media. GDA also published an [analysis note](#) highlighting the illegalities in the allocation of land to the company.

Thanks to this report, GDA alerted decision-makers to the worrying situation in Apouh and its surroundings. Among the authorities contacted, the Ministry of Territorial Administration responded by inviting us to a meeting to provide clarification and details on the content of the analysis note.

Deeply concerned about the situation, the ministry organised a joint visit by the relevant sectoral ministries to find a lasting solution to the problems faced by the communities.

# Participatory and sustainable management of forests and other natural resources



## The revitalisation of Community Forests

Over the past year, GDA has stepped up its efforts with community forest management groups in the southern region. Our teams have been deployed in the Djoum district (Dja-et-Lobo division), specifically within the Nkolenyeng community and with members of COVIMOF in Mbalmayo. Discussions focused on the difficulties encountered in managing these community forests and on identifying concrete actions for ecological restoration and improving livelihoods. The communities reaffirmed a shared vision for the conservation of their forest and expressed their desire for support in restoring degraded areas.

These strategic discussions aim to strengthen local governance and secure the sustainable management of these forest areas by the populations responsible for them. This community commitment marks a decisive step towards a management model in which ecosystem restoration becomes the driving force for improving the living conditions of the populations.

At COVIMOF specifically comprising of 8 villages, we supported the revision of the simple management plan and initiated the process of setting up a nursery for approximately 2,500 plants and seedlings of forest species (moabi, njansang, bitter kola ayous, fraké, wengué, ebony, bubinga) with high environmental, social, economic and cultural value.



# Conversion of forests to other types of land use

## Monitoring of the Camvert Project

Since 2019, GDA has been campaigning against the conversion of 60,000 hectares of forest into oil palm monoculture around the Campo Ma'an National Park. After securing a reduction in this area to 39,923 hectares, GDA continued to monitor the implementation of agro-industrial activities in the area.

We facilitated several discussions with traditional chiefs and community leaders in the Campo area to discuss the terms of reference for the implementation of the Camvert agro-industrial project. For many, it was the first time they had seen the terms of reference and they found that these documents were poorly drafted, very vague and lacking in real content. The discussions also focused on the various benefits/revenue from the exploitation of forests and land in Campo.

At the same time as these discussions, the people of Campo organised a “demonstration” to express their frustration with the situation in their district, which is facing numerous problems despite the presence of businesses on their territory. In response to this outcry, the Senior Divisional Officer of the Ocean Division organised a tripartite meeting to find a solution to the various problems raised by the communities of Campo. Among other resolutions, this meeting resulted in the creation of an ad hoc committee tasked with revising the terms of reference in order to better regulate the commitments of companies and respond more effectively to the expectations of the local populations. This resolution marks a decisive step towards a fairer redistribution of profits and greater consideration of the social and environmental rights of local populations.



In addition, another [analysis note](#) on the illegalities surrounding Camvert's installation in Campo was produced and published. The information contained in these documents has helped to strengthen the knowledge of community chiefs and leaders on forest and land exploitation. Now better informed, they have moved from being spectators to taking a proactive approach by officially calling on the authorities to demand greater transparency and visibility in land and forest management in Campo.



In Campo, the communities have spoken out through images, through photographic reports produced by themselves, they have documented the profound changes in their territory in the face of the arrival of large-scale projects. This visual advocacy has highlighted the devastating impact of forest conversion on their socio-economic fabric and their environment. By sharing these poignant images with the residents of the district and local authorities, the communities raised collective awareness of the socio-cultural and ecological upheavals underway. This approach of “testimony through images” not only reinforces the credibility of local demands, but also irrefutably illustrates the urgent need for management that is more respectful of rights and ecosystems.

# Monitoring the Plaine Centrale project

With the facilitation of GDA, the IFI Monitoring Group platform and the Pygmy Concerted Action Research Network (RACOPY) organised discussion missions in the area earmarked for the Plaine Centrale project, which plans to eventually convert one million hectares of forest land into agro-industry, spread across the Centre and Adamawa regions.

Thanks to this action, some communities are beginning to understand the potential impacts of this project on themselves, the environment and biodiversity. Alert letters have been drafted and sent to the relevant ministerial departments (MINADER, MINEPDED, MINEPAT) and to potential technical and financial partners (AfDB, World Bank, FAO) of the Plaine Centrale project, in order to present concerns and grievances regarding the environment, biodiversity and community rights.

The AfDB responded by stating that it understood the concerns and grievances raised. However, it gave assurances that answers would be provided in the environmental and social impact assessment and related plans. In addition, MINEPDED invited the platform to take part in public hearings to present the environmental and social impact assessment in the various localities targeted by the project.

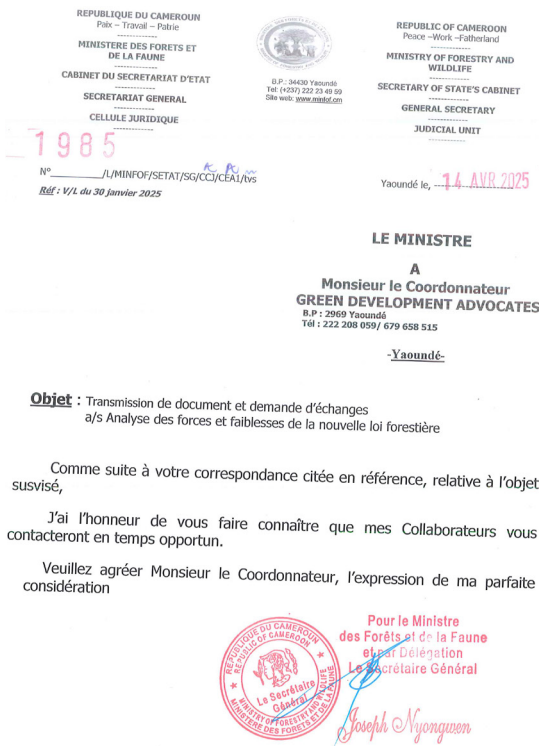


**Consultation of the Baka on the  
2024 Forest Law**

# Influence of policies and laws



## Support for the development of implementing regulations for the forestry law



On 24 July 2024, Law No. 2024/008 on forestry and wildlife management in Cameroon was promulgated, following a lengthy revision process that began in 2008. From the outset, GDA played an active role through analysis notes and proposals aimed at strengthening the rights of local and indigenous communities.

Following the enactment of this law and in preparation for the drafting of implementing regulations, we conducted a [critical review](#) of the law, which was forwarded to MINFOF. MINFOF acknowledged receipt of our document in a letter and informed us that its staff would contact us in due course.

As part of our ongoing involvement in drafting the implementing decree, we have mobilised civil society and indigenous communities to put forward proposals for the drafting of implementing decrees for the 2024 forestry law.

Through the Pygmy Concerted Action Research Network (RACOPY), more than 500 Baka and Bagyeli people were consulted in the TRIDOM, TNS, Campo and Akom II areas in order to gather their views with a view to incorporating their interests into the implementing decree currently being prepared. The consultations focused in particular on community protected areas, ritual hunting, community hunting territories, human-wildlife conflicts and benefit sharing. The document containing the proposals and the views of the Indigenous Peoples was shared with MINFOF.

During discussions in the field, the [simplified guide](#) on the rights granted to IPLCs under Law No. 2024/008 was used to inform not only communities, but also CSOs and park conservation services in TRIDOM, TNS and Océan division. This enabled the wider dissemination of legal information that was previously difficult to access, promoting a better understanding and appropriation of the rights granted to IPLCs by all stakeholders.

At the same time, GDA, in collaboration with SAILD and FLAG, mobilised some fifteen Cameroonian CSOs and various experts to prepare civil society to participate in the national CSO consultation on the implementing decree organised by MINFOF.

The proposals were presented and discussed at a workshop organised by MINFOF on 26 and 27 September 2025. The process of monitoring the drafting of the implementing texts will continue in 2026 to ensure that the texts under preparation take into account the concerns of IPLCs.



## **Support for the implementation of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)**

On 31 May 2023, the European Union adopted Regulation 2023/1115 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and related products associated with deforestation and forest degradation. This regulation concerns cocoa and coffee in particular.

GDA, in collaboration with Synergie Nationale des Paysans et Riverains du Cameroun (SYNAPARCAM), organised several information meetings with small producers and cooperatives in Cameroon's production areas to inform them about the European regulation. Local producers were then directly informed and made aware of the new European obligations, which will enable them to adapt their practices to remain compliant with the international market.

We also reviewed and made proposals for improving the national reference manual for sustainable cocoa production and marketing. These actions have strengthened the capacity of smallholders to establish sustainable production chains, engage in policy dialogues, and collaborate effectively to address challenges and seize opportunities related to the EUDR.



## Promotion of Agroecology

## Support for the development of regenerative activities

GDA has strengthened agroecological and conservation practices in several indigenous and forest-dependent communities by supporting the transition to sustainable agricultural systems that reduce pressure on forests. Through community assessments conducted in seven villages in the Akom II district, GDA identified agriculture as the most critical livelihood activity and worked with producers to initiate a shift towards more environmentally friendly practices.

During the 2025 agricultural season, Eight (8) villages (**Assoumindélé, Limabé, Assock, Makamkouma, Se'eh, Zoulabout, Odoumou, and Akom**) have benefited agroecological start-up inputs, including seeds, hoes, pickaxes (miner's tool), machetes and files. This support enabled them to set up agroecological demonstration farms, aligned with seasonal calendars developed during community consultations.

To strengthen resilience to climate change, GDA has supported communities in Campo in creating high value-added village nurseries. This ambitious programme has enabled the planting of 1,500 avocado trees and 1,500 safou trees, which have been directly integrated into local agroforestry systems. Beyond simple planting, this initiative aims to secure food sovereignty for local populations while restoring degraded forest cover. By diversifying their crops with resilient fruit species, the communities of Campo are transforming their fields into veritable barriers against climate change, while generating new sources of sustainable income.





In the Batchenga and Ntui area, we also facilitated capacity-building for women from the Association of Dynamic Women Living Together Affected by the Sanaga Centre Projects (AVEFD RIP) on the production of biological inputs, including insect repellents, fungicides, and organic fertilizers.

These interventions have led to significant changes: communities have begun to adopt soil-friendly farming techniques; slash-and-burn agriculture has declined; and indigenous producers have acquired practical knowledge that now strengthens their resilience to climate shocks. Furthermore, the visibility of these community farms has enabled local leaders to participate with greater confidence in national and international dialogues on climate justice and sustainable land use.

GDA also supported the women of Association des Femmes Riveraine Un Seul Cœur-Campo (AF RiSC-Campo) affected by the CAMVERT project and other industrial extractive projects in organizing the third edition of their seed fair, held under the theme: “Women and Youth: Key Actors of Agroecology in Campo.”

The fair brought together more than 300 participants, including women farmers, youth, exhibitors, and community members, and served as a platform to promote agroecological practices while highlighting local seeds and agricultural products from smallholder farming. Beyond strengthening women’s skills, confidence, and market access, the fair yielded concrete results: women gained visibility and recognition from local authorities.

This development marks a significant shift from local initiatives toward broader institutional recognition, opening new opportunities for learning, networking, and market access for women producers engaged in agroecology.

## **Support with the establishment of a rotating fund within AFRiSC-Campo**

To support the women of the AFRiSC-Campo association, GDA, with the support of its partners, established a revolving fund of 500,000 CFA francs in 2024. Through consultations within the association, we worked with the women to identify the weaknesses and shortcomings that other fund initiatives in the area had experienced, which prevented them from taking root. To this end, through their own initiatives, the women defined the framework and conditions for establishing a revolving fund within their association. Similarly, they participated in a capacity-building session on setting up and managing microprojects, enabling them to develop business plans that would facilitate the fund's effective management and better identify suitable microprojects to support. Furthermore, they developed strategies to strengthen their fund by contributing money earned when certain members travel outside the district (at least 5,000 CFA francs) and by developing profitable side businesses (the production and sale of essential oils, non-timber forest product-based soaps, liquid soaps, balms, etc.). All these efforts have helped increase their revolving fund and support several women in their activities, such as fish smoking, chicken sales, livestock farming, and small-scale trading, which have enabled them to send their children to school and improve their living conditions. Similarly, managing this fund has enabled the women to enhance their leadership skills and their ability to identify and manage microprojects tailored to their context and conducive to their personal growth. In just one year, they have nearly doubled their revolving fund.

# Participation in international and national meetings and events

In 2025, Green Development Advocates (GDA) was actively engaged in key policy spaces at the national, regional and international levels to ensure that the voices, rights and priorities of indigenous and forest-dependent communities in Cameroon and the Congo Basin were taken into account in decisions relating to climate change, forest governance, land tenure and sustainable development. These engagements strengthened collective advocacy, influenced policy debates and contributed to more inclusive and human rights-based outcomes.

## At the global level

At COP30 in Belém, Brazil

GDA emerged as the voice of indigenous peoples and local communities in Cameroon and the Congo Basin who are dependent on forests. GDA advocated for direct access to climate finance for frontline communities and ensured that community experiences, knowledge and demands were visible in global climate negotiations. This participation marked an important step in bringing local realities and global political processes closer together, while strengthening the role of indigenous peoples and local communities as key actors in climate action.

At the global level, GDA took part in the First World Congress of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities of Forest Basins, held in Brazzaville from 26 to 30 May 2025. This congress brought together **1,000 delegates from the Congo Basin**, the Amazon, South-East Asia and Mesoamerica. GDA's participation contributed to the development of common demands set out in the Brazzaville Declaration ahead of COP30, and strengthened solidarity among forest-dependent communities worldwide by placing the territorial rights of indigenous peoples and forest protection priorities at the heart of international climate discussions.



## At the regional level,

GDA participated in a Congo Basin climate workshop held in Douala (14-15 May 2025), bringing together more than 25 environmental and climate actors from Cameroon, Gabon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo. This workshop identified common climate priorities and developed a shared roadmap ahead of COP30. This process strengthened regional coordination and ensured that the concerns of the Congo Basin and community-led solutions were consolidated and strategically positioned in global climate negotiations.

GDA was also involved in continental policy processes during the African Development Bank (AfDB) Annual Meetings, held in Abidjan from 26 to 30 May 2025. Through the mobilisation of civil society, GDA contributed to advocacy for people-centred development, transparent governance, just energy transitions and equitable investments. This participation strengthened civil society pressure on the AfDB to align its financing with social justice, environmental sustainability and community needs.

GDA also contributed to continental dynamics for climate and energy justice by participating in the African Continental Forum on Mega-Dams and the Climate Crisis. Alongside more than 130 civil society and indigenous leaders, GDA supported a strong declaration calling for respect for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), corporate accountability, fair compensation and a transition to community-based renewable energy. This collective action strengthened resistance to destructive infrastructure projects and consolidated advocacy for fair, decentralised and community-led energy alternatives.

GDA also expanded its political influence by participating in the forum on Aligning Investment Policy Frameworks with Climate and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), held in Accra, Ghana, from 6 to 9 October 2025 in prelude to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) in March 2026 in Yaounde - Cameroon. This forum brought together participants from 12 West African countries and international partners to address inequalities in climate finance and investment regimes. GDA contributed to the discussions that led to the Accra Declaration, reinforcing the call for fair, climate-resilient and Africa-led investment models.

## At the national level

GDA played an active role in the National Workshop on Strategic Perspectives for Community Forestry in Cameroon, held in Ebolowa on 16–17 September 2025. Through this platform, GDA contributed to discussions on the achievements, challenges and future directions of community forestry. The workshop helped shape emerging strategic directions aimed at strengthening community forest governance, livelihoods and biodiversity conservation.

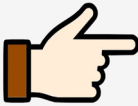
In addition to its ongoing work in advocacy, forest governance and community empowerment, GDA commemorated several international days in 2025, including World Ocean Day, International Day of Tropical Forests, of Indigenous Peoples, World Environment Day, World Biodiversity Day, World Bee Day, International Labour Day and Earth Day. These events provided opportunities to raise awareness, strengthen community engagement, and highlight global issues such as cultural resilience, plastic pollution, biodiversity conservation, and the rights and livelihoods of indigenous peoples. Beyond its work in the field, GDA transformed the 2025 international calendar into a powerful advocacy tool.

Several visits, exchanges, learning and sharing sessions were organised in 2025 between women from communities affected by large-scale extractive projects in Cameroon and women from other West and Central African countries experiencing similar situations in their own territories.

At least 200 women from these communities took part in these meetings to learn about the situation in other areas and benefit from capacity building on solidarity, leadership, advocacy, their rights and women's empowerment. These exchanges made it possible to capture best practices and lessons learned. Drawing on successes from other areas, these women are now equipped to replicate strategies for resistance and sustainable management within their own territories. This transfer of skills has also strengthened their community resilience in the face of the expansion of all these large-scale projects. These spaces also helped to build the self-confidence, courage and solidarity of women from communities fighting against the negative impacts of large-scale projects.



## GDA's strategic positioning as a fiscal sponsor



### Significant contribution to the development of the Environmental and Climate Justice Fund in the Congo Basin

GDA contributed, as a fiscal sponsor and member of the implementation committee, to the Environmental and Climate Justice Fund in the Congo Basin (ECJ-Fund). The ECJ-Fund is the first fund led by indigenous peoples in the Congo Basin dedicated to directly financing community initiatives in the field of environmental and climate justice. Its governance and grant-making model is rooted in local realities, culturally relevant and tailored to indigenous peoples and local communities.

This fund aims to restore and sustainably manage forests, conserve biodiversity and improve livelihoods in a sustainable manner. It responds to the observation that, despite their central role, CSOs and indigenous organisations have limited resources and face restrictive funding mechanisms.



## Support for the implementation of the project “Securing and sustainably managing land and forests for Indigenous peoples and local communities” (SEGPACL) »

As part of a strategic partnership, GDA is acting as fiscal sponsor to the indigenous organisations Bagyeli Cultural Development Association (BACUDA) and ASBABUK in the implementation of the project “Securing and sustainable management of land and forests for indigenous peoples and local communities (SEGPACL)”. This project is being implemented in the Campo Ma’an National Park and forest areas on the coast in the south, and in Lobéké, Nki, Boumba Bek and the Ngoyla Wildlife Reserve in East of Cameroon. With financial support from the Tenure Facility, the project aims to strengthen and guarantee the land and forest use and management rights of indigenous peoples and local communities around protected areas and other forest areas in the southern and eastern regions of Cameroon, where the Bagyeli, Bakola and Baka peoples live.

# Training and Capacity Building

## Strengthening the capacities of rural women



In response to the chronic underrepresentation of women in forest and land governance decision-making spaces despite being the most affected by deforestation, GDA, with the support of WoMin, implemented an intensive 18-month training cycle. Entitled “Women Learning Liberation” (WLL), this program supported 10 community women from four distinct

areas affected by large-scale projects. The curriculum, based on principles of popular education, covered cross-cutting themes such as leadership, self-confidence, mechanisms of extractivism, combating violence, and knowledge transmission. Through this training, these women are no longer mere spectators. They have become true activists for environmental justice. Now capable of carrying a collective and structured voice, they actively participate in roundtables and consultation processes, where they raise issues specific to women.

## Training for Community Tenure Lawyers

In 2024, GDA, in collaboration with COMAID, launched the Community Tenure Lawyers (CTLs) project, aimed at training 10 young lawyers (5 men and 5 women) to provide free legal assistance to IPLCs.

Their deployment in 2025 enabled the documentation of several cases of land grabbing, improved the implementation of institutional agreements and strengthened the legal capacities of partner CSOs. Some CTLs were recruited by their host organisations.

# Generation of data and knowledge

Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Climate Change Resilience in Africa: Innovative Agroforestry Integrating People, Trees, Crops, and Livestock (GALILEO)”

African food systems face a number of interrelated challenges, including food and nutritional security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss. These challenges are particularly acute in the semi-arid regions of sub-Saharan Africa, where agricultural productivity is below the global average, with increasingly long dry seasons and recurring extreme weather events that threaten the livelihoods of rural populations. In the face of these challenges, agroforestry, the intentional integration of trees, crops, and/or livestock into agricultural systems, presents a unique opportunity to support the productivity, resilience, and sustainability of food systems. It is in this context that IRAD, CIRAD, QPL, IRD, INRAe, UoB, WU, KU, FiBL, NTD, MHV, NCRC, ISRA, CSE, CNCR, UG, GDA, ICIPE, and CRIG are involved in the project “Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Climate Change Resilience in Africa: Innovative Agroforestry Integrating People, Trees, Crops, and Livestock (GALILEO)”.



The objective is to promote agroforestry as a lever for significantly improving agricultural and household performance, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation, and for enhancing biodiversity. It draws on eight living laboratories (LL) located in the semi-arid regions of Senegal and Kenya and in the humid but drought-prone regions of Ghana and Cameroon. In Cameroon, it aims to stimulate debate on agroforestry policies based on the “Farm 2 Policies” approach implemented in two living laboratories (Loum-Tombel and Ntui-Bokito) in Cameroon.

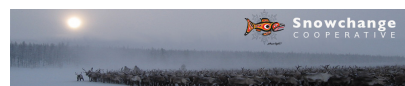
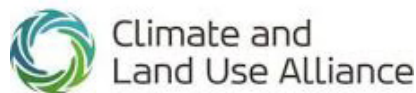
## The “Applied Research in Ecology and Social Sciences in Support of the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems” Program (RESSAC)

Green Development Advocates (GDA), in collaboration with Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the University of Yaoundé 1, is implementing the project “The Political Economy of Land Grabbing and Conversion of Forest Lands by Elites in the Congo Basin: A Comparative Study of Cameroon, Gabon, and the Congo” as part of the RESSAC project funded by the European Union. The overall objective is to analyse the process of forest land grabbing by national elites in Cameroon and Gabon, in order to determine its legal, socio-economic, and environmental impacts. This research is being conducted in Cameroon, Gabon, and Congo—two countries within the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) region where land acquisitions are particularly dynamic.

“Strengthening the involvement of CSOs and IPLCs for greater accountability and transparency in climate policies and programs in Cameroon”: Green Accountability

GDA, in partnership with the Service d’Appui aux Initiatives Locales de Développement (SAILD) and the Forest Legality Advisory Group (FLAG), is implementing the project **“Strengthening the involvement of CSOs and IPLCs for greater accountability and transparency in climate policies and programs in Cameroon.”** This project has helped improve the knowledge of key stakeholders on climate processes and identify gaps in their participation, while proposing avenues for improvement. To consolidate the actions undertaken and turn them into guiding frameworks for mobilizing CSOs and IPLCs, a **“strategy for the involvement of these actors in climate policies and projects”** has been developed, along with an action plan to be implemented by CSO members of REPAC. In addition, a digital platform called the **“Climate Change Action Portal (CCAP)”** (<https://www.ccapinitiative.org>) has been developed to facilitate the monitoring of climate action. Its objective is to centralize information on climate projects carried out by various stakeholders and to assess their level of accountability and transparency.

# They trusted us





# GDA TEAM



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