

Environmental and Biodiversity Conservation Projects in Angola

Angola has specific biodiversity wealth, making it one of the most important countries on the African continent, particularly as regards the variety of ecosystems, the endemic level of species and flora diversity. The *palanca preta gigante* (black giant sable antelope) and the *Welwitschia mirabilis* have, for a long time, been emblems of Angolan identity known the world over. They are only two examples of the very rich biological diversity in the Republic of Angola and of how living beings can be symbols of a nation.

Of the estimated over 5.000 plant species that are believed to exist in the country (without mentioning the vast flora wealth of Cabinda Province), 1.260 are endemic – making Angola the second richest country in Africa in endemic plants. The diversity of mammals is also one of the richest on the continent, with 275 recorded species. Bird resources are diversified. Angola has 872 catalogued species. About 92% of the avifauna of southern Africa occurs in Angola.

The exceptional biodiversity in Angola is due to the combination of a number of factors: the vast size of the country, its inter-tropical geographical location, the altitude variation and the biomes type. The climate diversity, coupled with equal geographical and soil variability contributed to the formation of bio-climatic zones that include from the dense tropical forest to the lack of vegetation in the desert. These different habitats are favourable for a high level biological diversity.

Habitats such as the Maiombe forest are a depositary of an enormous and rich variety of animal and plant species and are a patrimony of international value, which contributes to the smuggling of these species abroad. In these forests, there are also chimpanzees, gorillas and a wide range of mammals. There is a consensus that special protection measures should be taken to protect the region and its biodiversity. Uncontrolled bush-burning, poaching and anarchical logging have contributed negatively to the conservation of this and other important ecosystems in Angola.

To protect such important biodiversity the Government of Angola has approved in 2006 a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) which aims at incorporating measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and fair and equitable sharing of biological resources into development policies and programmes for the benefit of all Angolans. The NBSAP is divided into two major sections: The Strategy and the Action Plan.

The Strategy presents a long term vision (the Overall objective) for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Angola, as well as the justification of priority Strategy intervention areas. The Strategy and Action Plan are interconnected through Eight Strategic Areas that were defined through a process of public consultation that involved representatives of government institutions, local and traditional authorities, environmental protection institutions, the education sector, the private sector and the press. These areas include:

- Strategic Area A: Research and Information Dissemination
- Strategic Area B: Education for Sustainable Development
- Strategic Area C: Biodiversity Management in Protected Areas
- Strategic Area D: Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Components
- Strategic Area E: The Role of Communities in Biodiversity Management

- Strategic Area F: Institutional Strengthening
- Strategic Area G: Legislation and Its Implementation
- Strategic Area H: Management, Coordination and Monitoring

A number of projects have been developed and are being implemented by different institutions both governmental, scientific and non-governmental. Most of the projects described below have received funds from different sources, however these funds are not enough and require additional financial support for implementation.

1. Conservation of the Black Giant Sable in the Cangandala National Park in the Malanje Province

The Black Giant Sable is an endemic species of Angola which is endangered due to the decrease of its population as result of illegal hunting. This species is only existent in the Cangandala National Park and Luando Nature Reserve and the population is very small. In the past seven years a project has been implemented in order to save this species and recent activities included the establishment of a sanctuary, capturing animals and starting a breeding programme, training of game wardens, infra-structure rehabilitation and improving local communities conditions. A wildlife management programme is yet to be developed and re-delimitation of the park boundaries is underway.

Project description

Responsible authority: Ministry of Environment and Provincial Government of Cabinda

Partners and donors: ESSO, Catholic University of Angola, German Government

Budget: US\$ 1,300,000.00 (for 2010 to 2012), partially secured.

2. Marine Turtle Conservation Project

Marine conservation is a priority within the National Biodiversity Strategy. Due to the illegal hunting of marine turtles and eggs, the Faculty of Science has initiated in 2002 a turtle monitoring and conservation programme in the south of Luanda. This new project is aimed at contributing to the knowledge development and protection of marine turtles in the Quiçama National Park and in the Parleirinhas area. This project will include assisting the attaching season, recording the number of nests and individuals, installing GPS emitters in the turtles. A work plan for the entire Angolan will be developed based on the results of this project.

Project description

Responsible authority: Agostinho Neto University, Faculty of Sciences

Partners and donors: Marine Turtle Conservation, Oil Companies, Ministry of Environment

Budget: US\$ 585,983.00 (for 2010 to 2012), secured.

3. Quiçama National Park Conservation Programme

Quiçama National Park was established in 1957. It is operational and has a relatively sound wildlife management programme. The park is managed by the Kissama Foundation, which has been reintroducing wildlife (e.g., elephants, zebras and some antelopes), refencing the park, working with the surrounding communities and rebuilding its infrastructure. The main objective of the Kissama Foundation is to develop a fully integrated implementation framework for a partnership between the Quiçama National Park and the Quiçama tribe with the aim of conserving biodiversity

within the park and its territories, and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. The current plans include re-zoning the park. The project includes increasing the fenced area of the park, continue to support training initiatives within the Catalangombe Wildlife School and increase tourism infra-structures.

Project description

Responsible authority: Ministry of Environment

Partners and donors: World Bank, Kissama Foundation

Budget: US\$ 5,000,000.00 (for 2010 to 2014), to be secured.

4. Reintegration and Environmental Conservation Programme

The Government of Germany is supporting since 2008 an environmental programme which includes de reintegration of former combatants into the management of national park. Since 2008 over 100 game rangers and park administrators. This project also has enabled the development of field guides on mammals and documents on wildlife management. The future activities include the development of management plans for the Maiombe forest and Iona National park as well as the training of ex-combatants to be deployed in protected areas throughout the country.

Project description

Responsible authority: Department of Environmental Affairs, Gaborone, Botswana

Partners and donors: German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)

Budget: US\$ 2,500,000.00 (for 2011 and 2012), to be secured.

5. National Parks Rehabilitation and Legislation Development

Due to the long term armed conflict national parks' infrastructure was destroyed resulting in lack of adequate patrolling and wildlife protection. Since 2007 a number of national parks have benefited from some support for its rehabilitation, namely Cangandala (Malanje), Quiçama (Bengo), Bicular (Huila) and Iona (Namibe). However, a number of other important activities as described in the National Biodiversity Strategy are yet to be implemented. For this purpose the Ministry of Environment has engaged in a number of negotiations to obtain funds for the complete rehabilitation of all the national parks and nature reserves, including the provision of equipment and training.

Project description

Responsible authority: Ministry of Environment

Partners and donors: Central Government, African Development Bank, World Bank

Budget: US\$ 48,000,000.00, to be secured.