

# **FOSTERING RURAL LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION: EXPERIENCE FROM GILLI GILLI FOREST RESERVE, NIGERIA**

*By*  
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# BAP Project in GFR

GFR instituted in 1927/1935.

Located on Lat.  $5^{\circ} 55^1$  &  $6^{\circ} 09^0\text{N}$   
and Long.  $5^{\circ} 16^1$  &  $5^{\circ} 27^1\text{E}$ ; covers  
land area of  $363\text{km}^2$ .

## BAP Project Objectives:

- to improve the wellbeing of forest dependent rural poor in communities, and
- to protect and conserve fragile ecosystems and associated life forms, and
- to promote alternative livelihood activities.

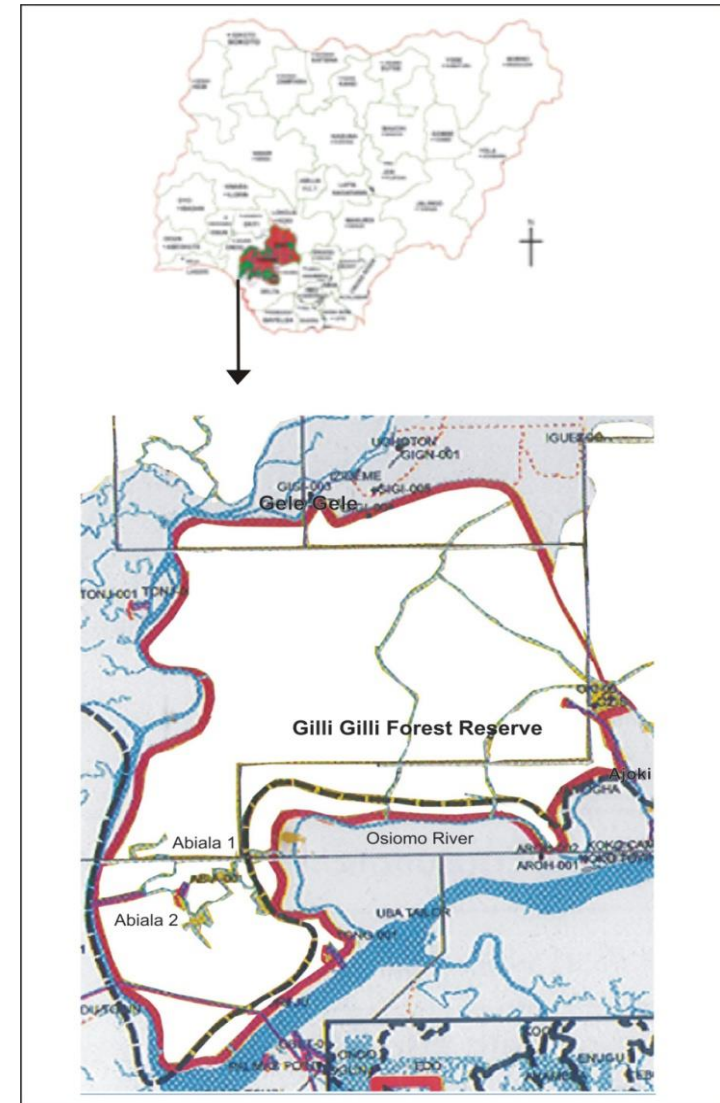


Fig. 1: Map of Nigeria (inset: Edo State); below: Gilli Gilli FR.

## Approaches

- Community-based forest management
- Biosphere model – core, buffer & transition zones
- Grassroots consultative & Forest Management committees
- Revolving small loan scheme

## Political & Socio-cultural context

- ◆ Disparate policies & laws at national, state & local levels.
- ◆ CBFM by-laws approved by State Govt.
- ◆ Weak tenure & use rights in FRs;
- ◆ Multi-ethnic communities

# IWT context project sought to address

- ✳️ Regulate harvest of timber & Non-Wood Forest Products.
- ✳️ Restrain poaching & hunting of wildlife
- ✳️ Prevent loss of endemics & trade in wildlife resources
- ✳️ Restrict harvest of forest resources in fragile ecosystems

## Flora

*Tieghemella* EN,  
*Hallea*, *Enantia*,  
*Pericopsis* EN  
*Lophira*, *Massularia*,  
*Okoubaka*, *Milicia*,  
*Pipterdeniastrum*,  
*Xylopia*, etc.

## Fauna

*African Grey Parrot*, *Black-and-White-Tailed Hornbill*, *Brush tailed Porcupine*,  
*Nile crocodile*,  
*Eagle*, *Piping Horn Bill*, *Snails*, etc.



Fig. 2: a) *Okoubaka* (b) *Tieghemelia* (c) *African Grey parrot*

# Challenges

A

B

- ▶ High poverty level
- ▶ Subsistence livelihoods: artisanal & itinerant fishing/farming practices
- ▶ Infiltration of GCC & FMC ranks by perpetrators of IWT
- ▶ Role of free riders/rent captors & their city collaborators
- ▶ Poor M & E – failure to deliver critical success factors.
- ▶ Exclusion of state government and/or its MDAs.

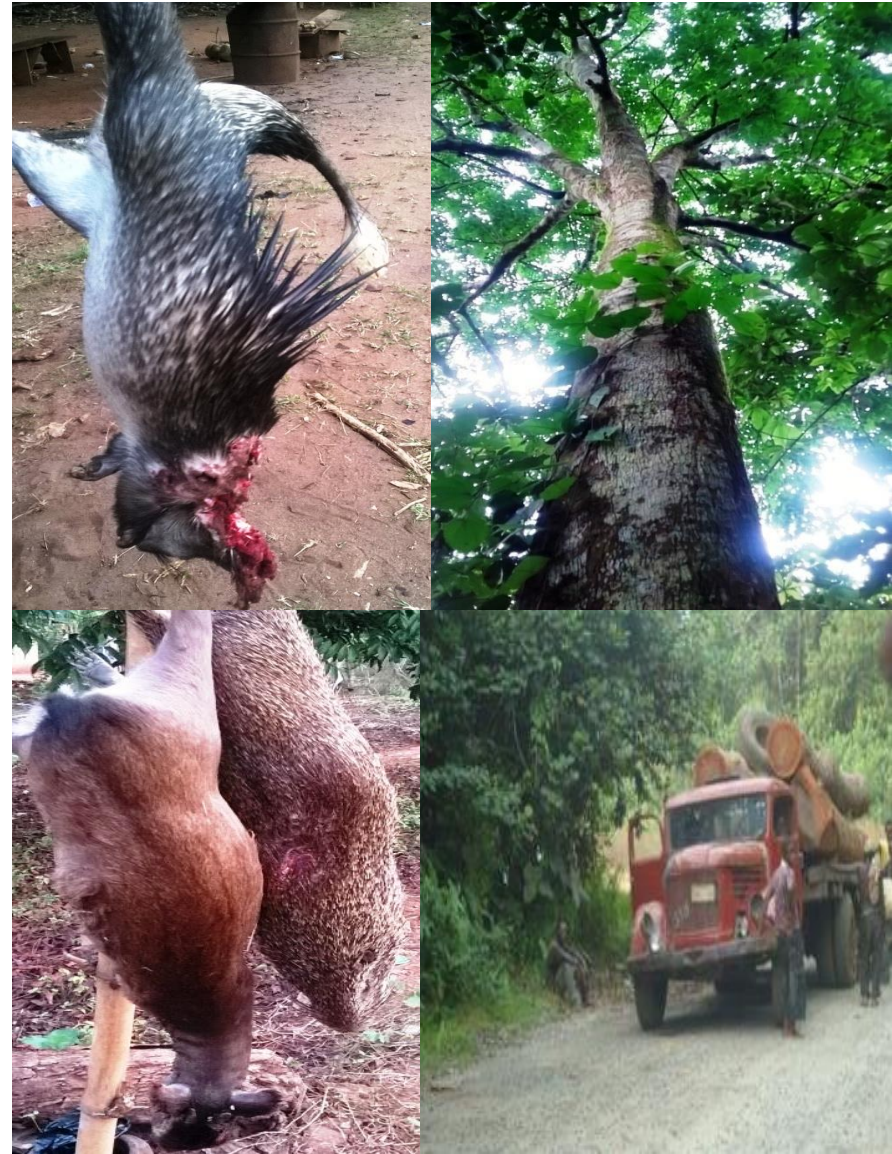


Fig 3: (A) : Log rafts in water; (B): Logs in truck

# Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) in GFR

## Community involvement: rewards & impacts

- ⊕ Small loan scheme for poor persons in communities
- ⊕ Gender dimension - Young males (17 – 40y) engaged in logging;
- ⊕ Women trade in NWFPs & live animals
- ⊕ Erosion of biodiversity & degradation of ecosystems



Fig. 4: (A) Crocodiles in captivity; (

B) Log rafts in a river

# **Key Lessons learned:**

- ❖ Goals of BAP project misunderstood
- ❖ Mistrust in GFR enclave & fringe communities.
- ❖ Role of rent seekers and free riders
- ❖ Past activities of SPDC in GFR & Niger Delta vital
- ❖ Misappropriation of project funds

# **Barrier to Success:**

- ❖ Discordant policies & laws at National, State & BAP project
  - ❖ Weak enforcement
  - ❖ Poor knowledge of rainforest ecology
  - ❖ Low status of biodiversity
- Use of MAB model– core, buffer transition zones.

# **Key lessons learned: what worked well**

 **BAP project - first multi-ethnic and multi-community based project to enhance livelihood & conserve forest biodiversity in Nigeria.**

 **Successful baseline inventory of biodiversity**

 **Successful establishment of small projects through small loans in some project communities**

# The International dimension of Illegal Wildlife Trade in Nigeria



- ✓ Policies
- ✓ Legislation
- ✓ Enforcement regime
- ✓ Relationship among MDAs
- ✓ Corridor/Courier status
- ✓ NIAP & CITES' withdrawal of recommendation to suspend Nigeria

**Figure 5 : Seized ivory tusks from Nigeria by Singapore Customs in Dec., 2015**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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- for organizing the IWT workshop
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