A photograph of a chimpanzee in a lush, green forest. The chimpanzee is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right. It has dark, shaggy fur and is looking towards the right. The background is filled with dense foliage, including various green leaves and thin tree branches. The lighting is natural, suggesting a sunny day in a forest.

Habituation of chimpanzees at Loango National Park (Gabon)



Max Planck Institute
for Evolutionary Anthropology

Presented by
Gwennan GIRAUD

The habituation

- To habit individuals to human presence in order to collect proper research data on behaviour
- Risks
 - ❖ Disease transmission
 - ❖ Changes in behavioural ecology
 - Never be a « truly neutral presence »
 - ❖ Decrease of fear toward human populations (poachers, agricultural areas...)
 - ✓ Remote protected areas

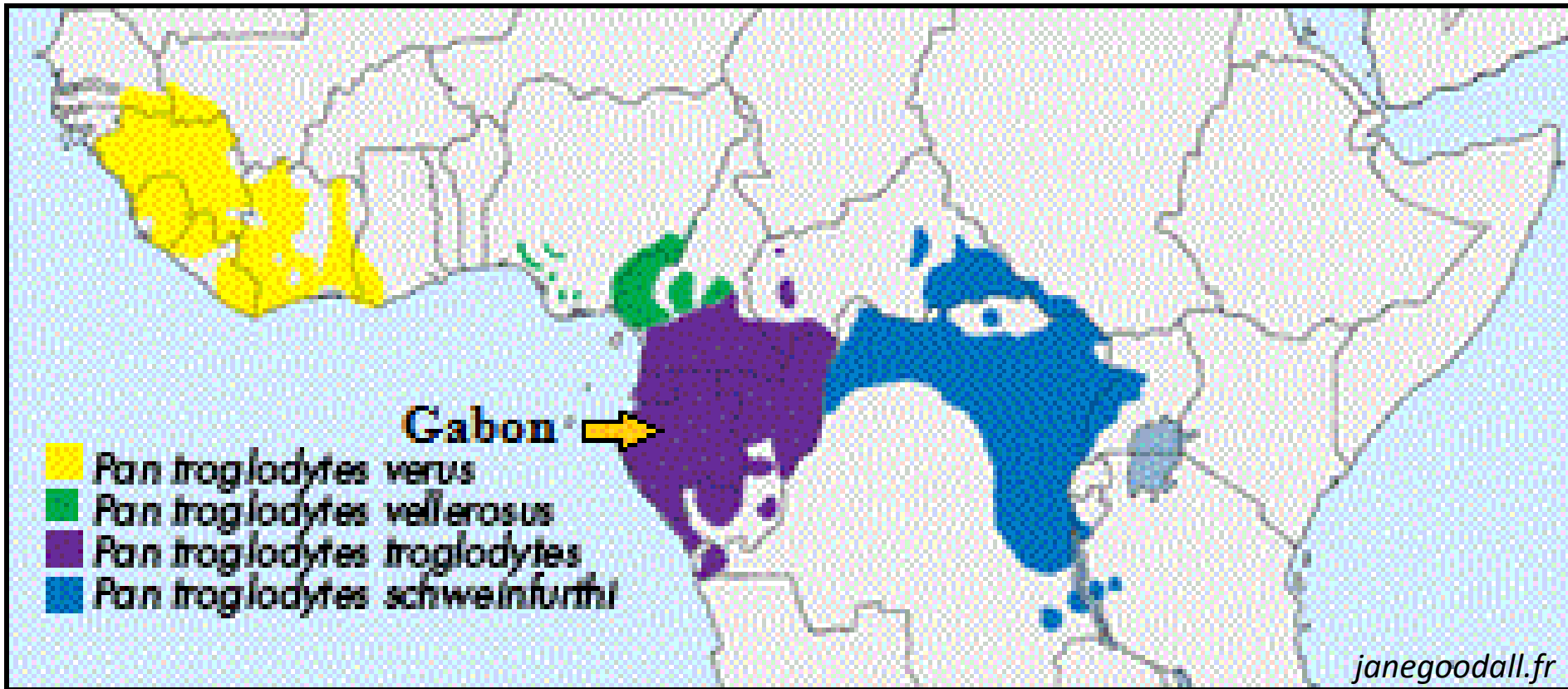


Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*)



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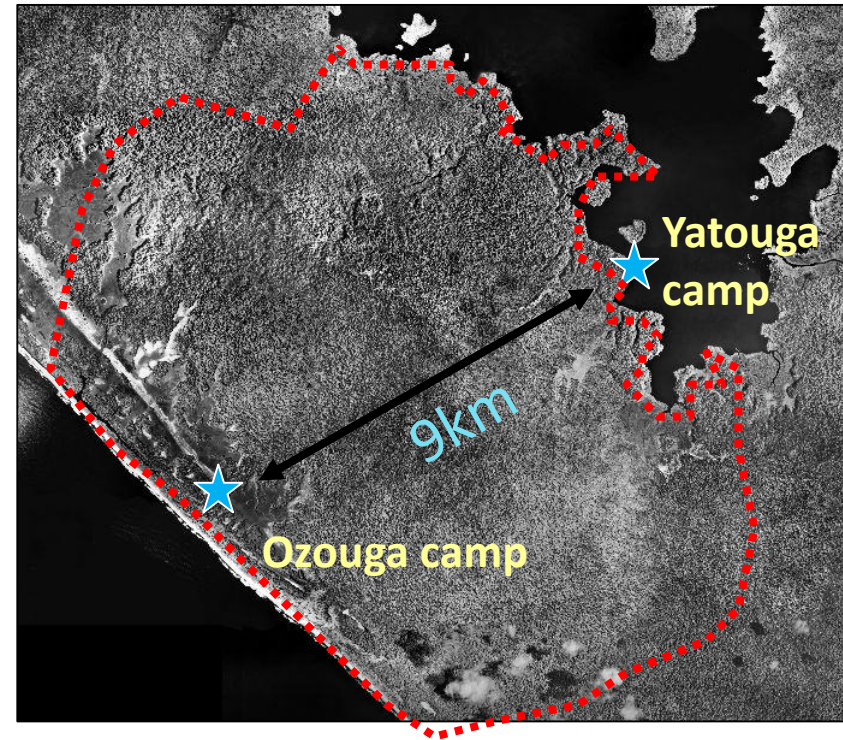
janegoodall.fr

Chimpanzees in Gabon

- 2nd most important chimpanzee population of Central Africa (*Pan troglodytes troglodytes*) in Gabon (34%), after Congo (42%)
- Between 1983 and 2000: Gabon lost half its great ape population
 - ❖ Poaching, habitat lost and degradation, disease, and climate change
- Central Chimpanzee populations remain highly vulnerable today
 - ❖ Estimated to be ~ 140,000 individuals
- Illegal to kill, capture or trade in live Chimpanzees
 - ❖ No sanctuary known



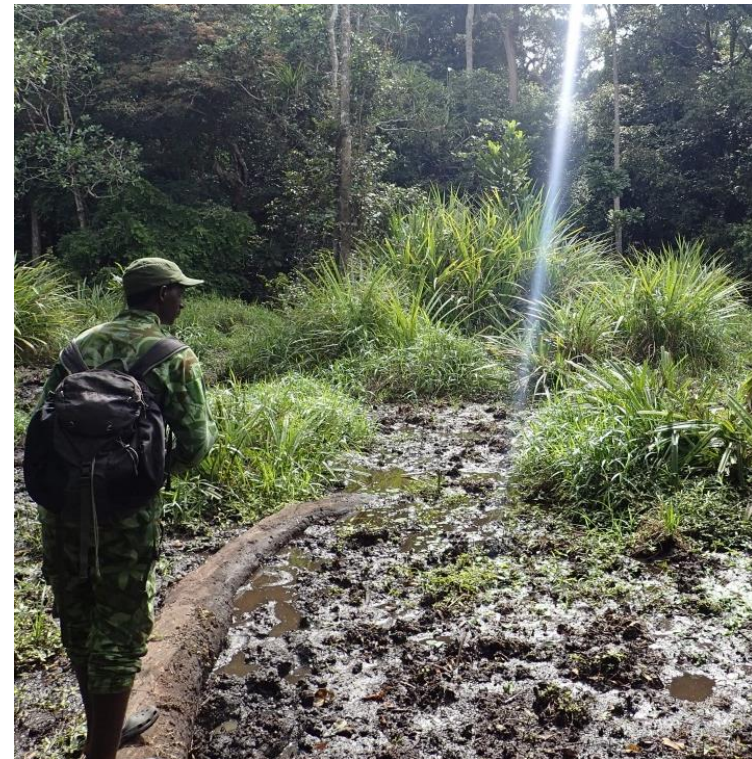
The project



- Beginning of the Project in 2005
- Habituation of chimpanzees and gorillas
- Since 2014 separation of the project in two parts
- Beginning of ecotourism on gorillas in 2015

Objectives of the project

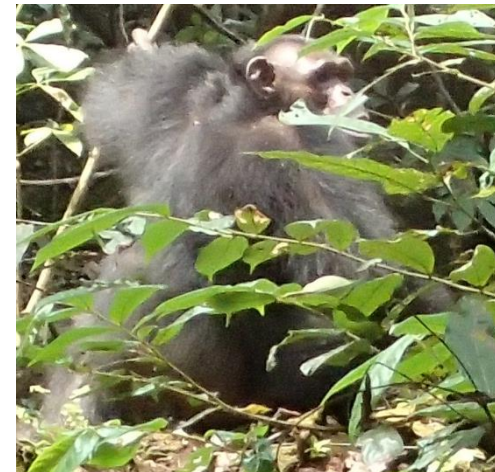
- Habituation for future studies on chimpanzees
- Costal environment and variety of habitats: few studies in such areas
 - ❖ Central Chimpanzees are found predominantly in moist lowland tropical forests and swamp forests
 - ❖ Loango : coastal forest, savannah, open mature forest, close mature forest, secondary forest up to swamps and permanent and seasonal lagoon



Objectives of the project

- Home range size:
 - ❖ In Goualougo, Republic of Congo: 13.7–25.6 km² (Morgan 2007)
 - ❖ In Loango, Gabon: Can reach 45 km² (Arandjelovic *et al.*, 2011): biggest ever reported

- Conservation preoccupation
 - ❖ Research for better protection concerns
 - ❖ Public sensibilisation (tourists...)

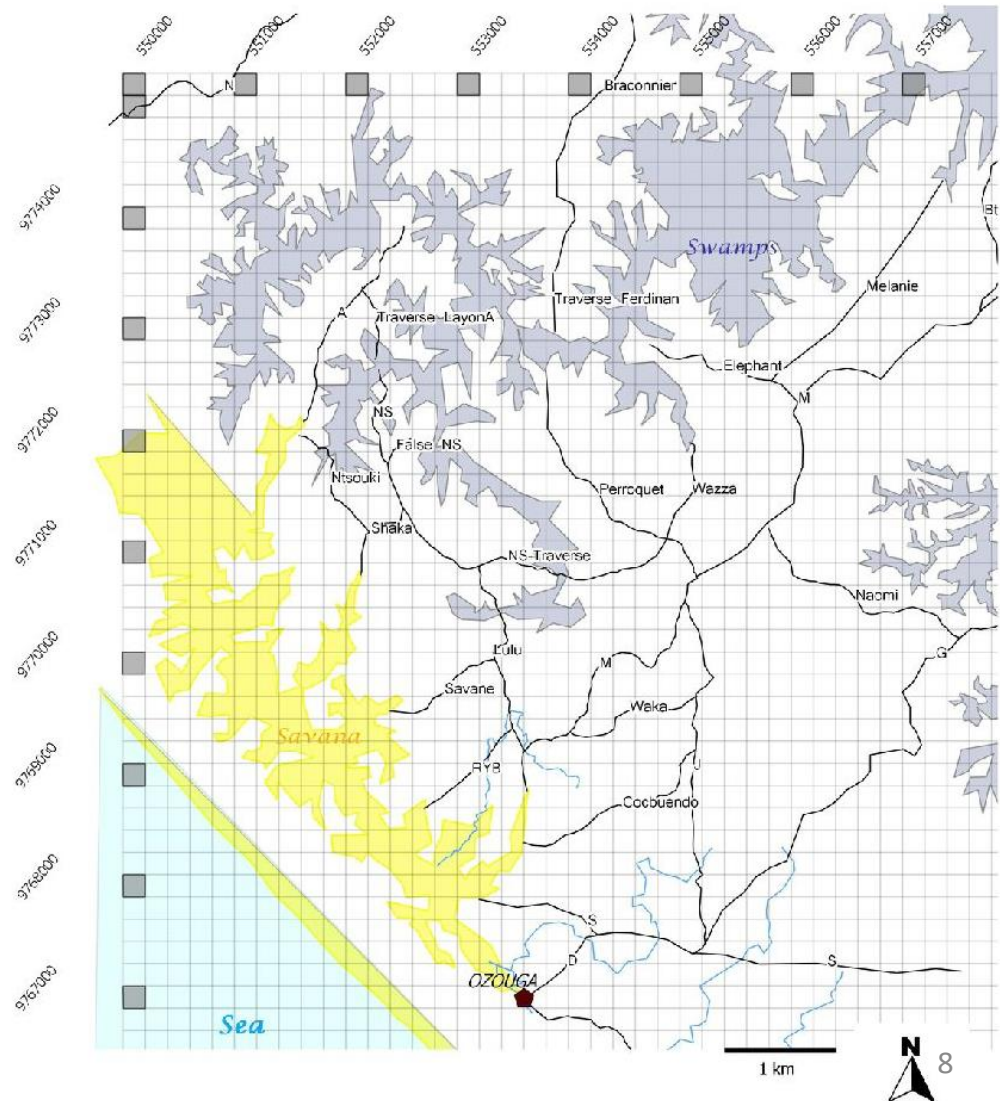


- Welcome tourists on the camp to talk about the project **only**

Rekambo community

Ozouga Study Site Loango National Park

- Close to Yatouga Camp (Gorillas habituation team)
- Surrounded by at least 3 chimpanzee communities
- Estimated at 60 individuals (bigger community) on 45km² Including 12 adult males and 19 adult females
 - ❖ Currently 5 males and 4 females are habituated to human presence



Chimpanzee diet and seed bank

- More than 100 fruits, flowers and leaves eaten
- Meat: monkeys, termites...



Myrianthus sp



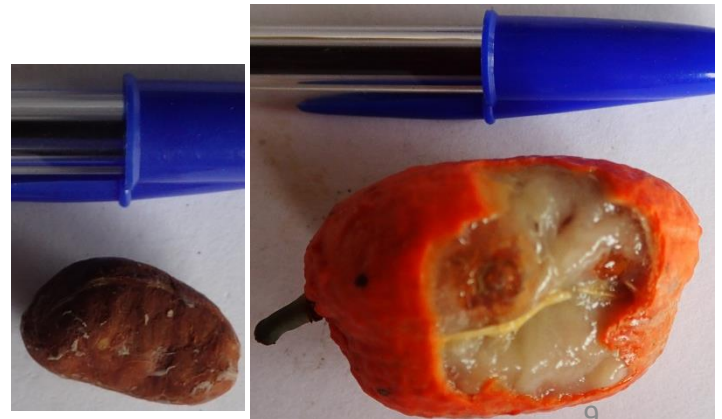
Harungana sp



Wedge of *Dichapetalum sp*



Ficus sp



Salacia shrub sp

Data collected during my mission

Identification by camera trap and pictures



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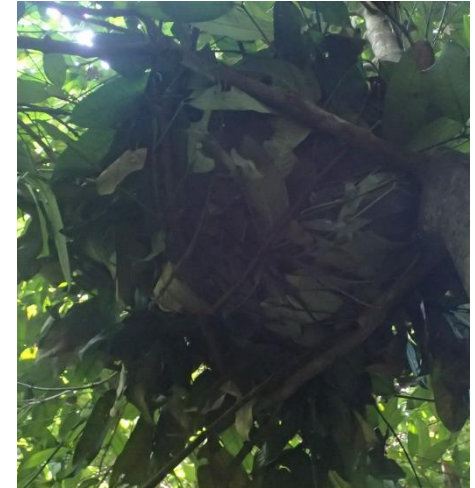
Data collected during my mission

- Time of beginning and ending of each visual contact
- How did we find them ?
 - Vocalisations
 - Fruits sounds
 - Just seen during walk...
- How did we lose them ?
 - During we followed them
 - We let them go
 - They ran away

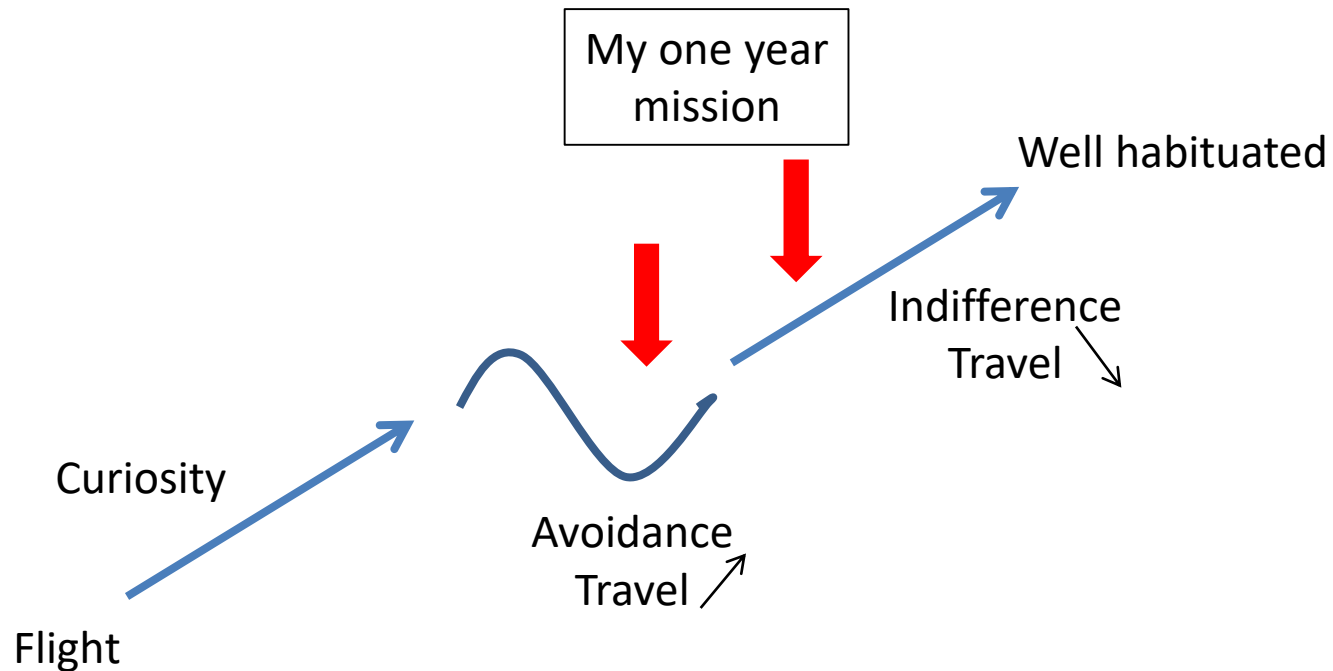


Data collected during my mission

- Distance and degree of vocalisations heard
 - ❖ Found or not found
- Age, number and high of nests found
- Genetic project
 - ❖ Hair et faecal samples collected
 - ❖ Genetic, pathogens, hormones
- Evolution of the data collect with the habituation progress



Evolution of habituation



- Progression due to chimpanzee reactions but also to the effectiveness of the habituation team
- Between 5 to 15 years to habituate a chimpanzee population
- Today the project is running since 12 years: few minutes to more than 11 hours !

Tool use



Binga Binga nest eaten by chimpanzees



Binga Binga tool



Tool use





Merci de votre attention