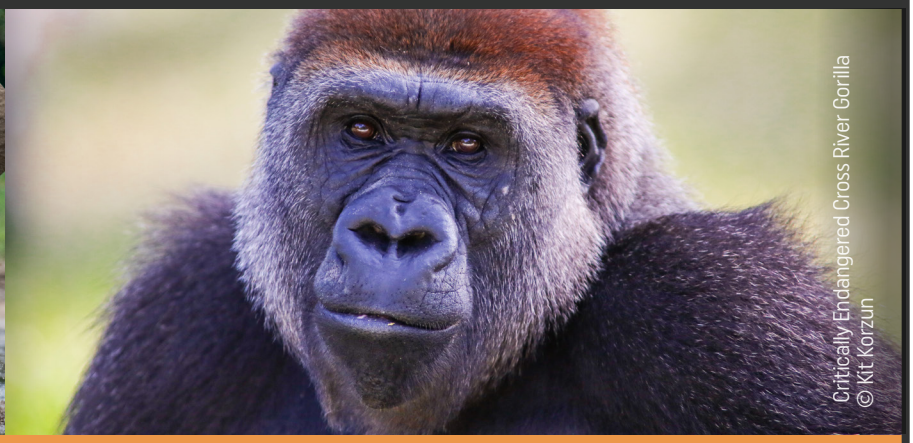
PROPOSED PROJECT
CAMEROON

Help Protect 20% of the World's Remaining Cross River Gorillas

Mone River National Park


Critically Endangered African Forest Elephant
© ANDREYGUDKOV


Critically Endangered Cross River Gorilla
© Kit Korzun

PROJECT ACRES	PROJECT COST	COST PER ACRE	CO_2e STORED
113,431	**$1,602,760**	**$14.13**	**24,827,592 mT**

A remote rainforest in southwestern Cameroon is a global stronghold for the Critically Endangered Cross River Gorilla, the rarest subspecies of great ape, and one of the most endangered primates in the world. This species has an estimated fewer than 250 mature individuals surviving in the wild. The Mone River Forest Reserve (MRFR) is home to 40 to 60 individuals—at least 20% of the species' remaining global population—living there in an area of nearly pristine rainforest.

This proposed national park of dense, lowland rainforest near the Nigerian border is remote and more than 70% intact, but it is threatened by illegal logging and poaching as well as imminent plans for logging concessions. Southwestern Cameroon is an area of socio-political instability that has suffered 10 years of armed unrest, resulting in sharp declines in species populations in some areas.

We now have the opportunity to work with an established Rainforest Trust partner, AJEMALEBU SELF HELP (AJESH) to secure permanent protection for 113,431 acres of the Mone River Forest Reserve by supporting its transition to the formally gazetted Mone River National Park. We seek $1,602,760 for the project, to be implemented by AJESH in collaboration with Cameroon's Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife. Formal legal designation, participatory zoning, and a co-management framework involving government and local communities are key to the project's success.

Protect surviving members of iconic African mammal populations

In addition to protecting a significant population of Cross River Gorilla, the project area remains one of the few regional refuges for the Critically Endangered African Forest Elephant, whose population has dropped to only 100 individuals in the entire Takamanda-Mone-Tofala connected landscape (Takamanda National Park, Mone River Forest Reserve, and Tofala Hill Wildlife Sanctuary).

KEY SPECIES | Cross River Gorilla (CR), African Forest Elephant (CR), Drill (EN)


Endangered Drill © Vronja Photon

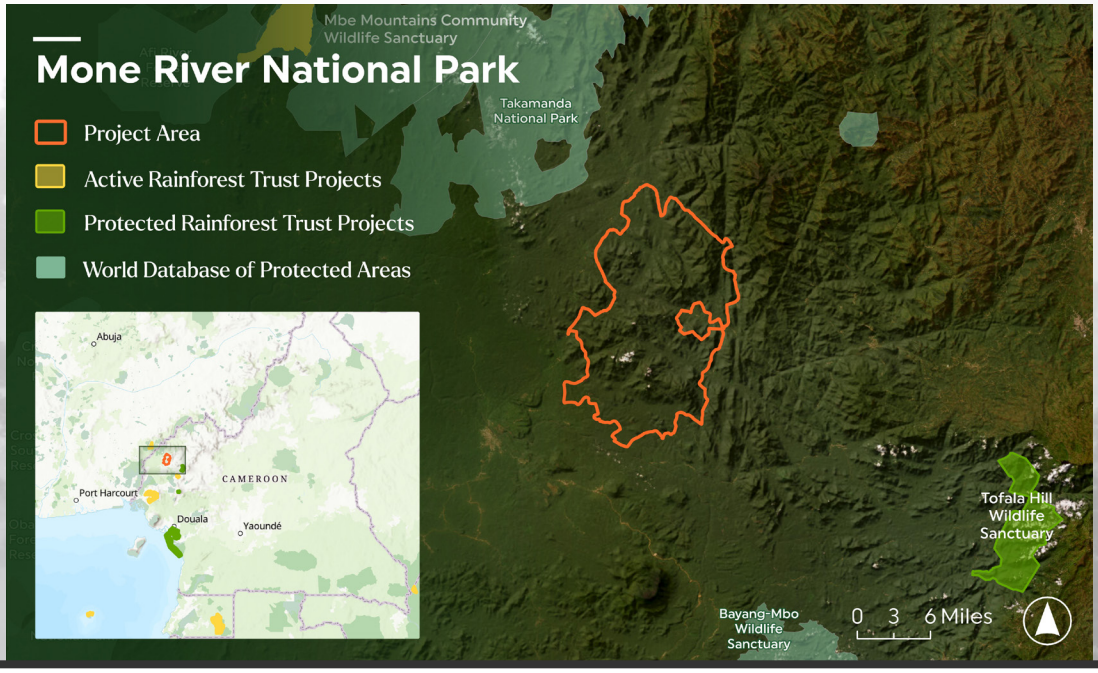
The project area also offers critical habitat for the Endangered Drill, which faces potential local extinction in Cameroon outside national parks due to hunting and habitat loss. Their total population in Cameroon, Nigeria, and Equatorial Guinea is estimated to be less than 5,000 individuals after declining 50-70% over the past 30 years. The region is also home to the Endangered Nigeria-Cameroon Chimpanzee, a subspecies also declining due to habitat destruction from slash-and-burn agriculture, with only 300 to 600 individuals surviving in the wider region.

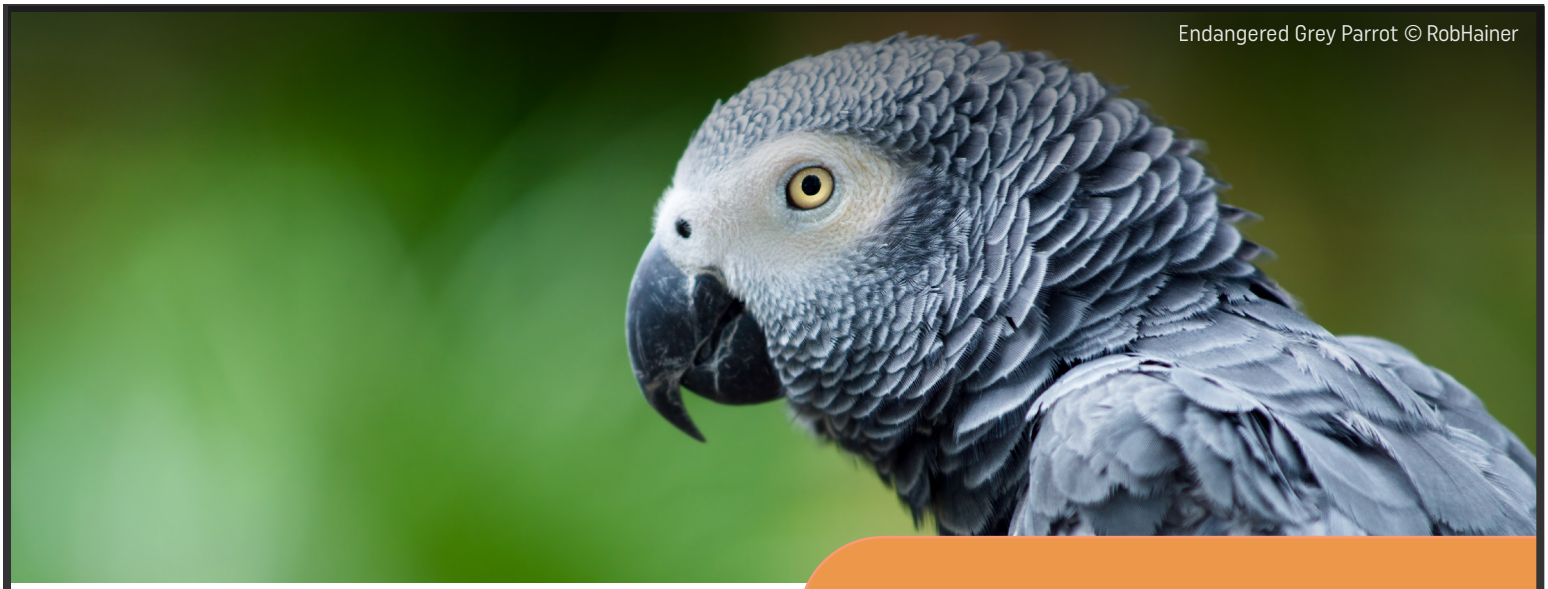
This ecosystem also harbors the Endangered Grey Parrot and the Vulnerable Leopard, whose active presence as an apex predator indicates a robust and healthy prey base despite ongoing threats. Numerous rare timber species also demonstrate the area's importance as a biodiversity hotspot.

Bring permanent protection to a vital ecological corridor

The Mone River project area is a vital link in the protected Takamanda-Mone-Tofala ecological corridor in Cameroon. This habitat connectivity ensures that wide-ranging species like elephants and gorillas can transit safely across international borders, which is fundamental to their long-term viability. The intact altitudinal gradient rises from 328 feet to nearly 3,280 feet, making it important for climate change resilience by facilitating vertical species migration.

Commercial access and all industrial activities, specifically timber, mining, and oil exploitation and hunting of any kind, will be prohibited in the new national park. Some customary subsistence farming and resource collection will be respected in limited-access zones. Community members will





Endangered Grey Parrot © RobHainer

participate in activities like boundary delimitation, surveillance, bio-monitoring, sustainable tourism, and climate-smart farming to enhance livelihood opportunities.

The landscape offers important climate value through carbon sequestration and hydrological services. The Mone River watershed supports downstream communities and sustains regional biodiversity and local agriculture.

Cameroon is committed to achieving its 30x30 goals, and 20% of its marine and terrestrial area is already designated as Protected Areas. New initiatives focus on major marine and ocean pledges, forest restoration and climate action, and transitioning toward people-centered conservation.

PROJECT PARTNER

AJESH (AJEMALEBU SELF HELP)

AJESH has nearly twenty years of community-centered conservation experience in Cameroon, including an ongoing collaboration with Rainforest Trust on the Rumpi Rata National Park project. They support the government through their proven legal and management conservation expertise and their experience navigating the volatile socio-political environment.



Vulnerable Leopard © Simoneemanphotography

Rainforest Trust • P.O. Box 841, Warrenton, VA 20188
(800) 456-4930 • RainforestTrust.org

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