

## Message of optimism into 2019

Yes! it can be frustrating, when vivid memories of the multi-donor, multi-million Korup project (1988 -2002) come flashing with all its successes, some of which were difficult to still see after a few years following its closure.

Yes! it can be frustrating when the multi-million PSMNR-SWR (2006 - present) with some successes too, can surely find it hard to say with a high degree of certainty what has become of our wildlife and the people in communities after close to 2 years of civil unrest and armed conflict in the Korup region.

Yes! It can be frustrating when wildlife law enforcement, co-management and education efforts have all come to a stand still for over 2 years running as a result of the insecurity with no clear end in sight.

Yes! It can be discouraging when such avoidable political challenges add up to our current challenges of funding limits, poaching, habitat loss and the impending impacts of climate change.

At KRCS we have known it was never going to be easy preserving our rich biodiversity and ensuring a better future for our forest dependent communities but we are positive and we know by working together selflessly it is POSSIBLE.

With genuine collective will and resolve to work together as equal partners, using holistic bottom-up approaches (including governance) that deliver on mutual respect, understanding, empathy, transparency, accountability and trust at all level and focusing not just on wildlife but also on the effective rights based participation and wellbeing of the local people who bear the conservation burden but more often tend to reap the least benefits...

...Until we local people too are able and are proud to call the Korup National Park "OURS" and take ownership of its management risks and benefits, only then can we make lasting progress in minimizing the impacts of our above mentioned challenges and for that common good, we pledge our total commitment and openness for synergies.

The support we had so far from local to external partners is indicative of the deep interest we all have on our forest, its wildlife and people. This, coupled with the willingness of our people to cooperate over the years against all odds, is a clear sign of hope and optimism for us to win back their trust and start working towards lasting progress in 2019.

...and together in good faith, we can !

*(Thanks and happy new year from the editorial team)*

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### Funding:



**Quiz: Critically endangered primate in Korup? 1st 3 respondents win a prize!!**

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## Welcome Back !

As we say goodbye to a tumultuous 2018 and hopefully embrace 2019, we want to welcome back all our well-wishers and readers of SOMBO Newsletter after a long break. KRCS has some good news no matter the crisis that has hit our area of intervention. Our membership has been rising slowly even in this difficult times. With members coming from 20/32 villages around Korup National Park (KNP) alone and now from Banyang Mbo Wildlife Sanctuary (BMWS) and Mount Cameroon National Park (MCNP), from all walks of life including hunters, graduates and traditional rulers, nature lovers, teachers and farmers. From a local to regional support base with more capacity to boost our grassroots actions.

Even more importantly, thanks to our community focused model and culture of *transparency, accountability and team work*, we have recorded great achievements and an increasing partnership and donor base which is key to sustaining our grassroots actions for people and wildlife in a changing climate. Apart from the Program for Sustainable Management of Natural resources (PSMNR-SWR) that has stood firmly behind our resolve, support from IUCN-PPI, Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), WWF-EFN, Born Free Foundation, Cornell University, North Carolina University, Rotary Club of Peace River & Government of Alberta, Canada has been crucial, for which we remain thankful.

### Join or Support Us

**in Saving Korup's rich biodiversity; Our natural heritage !**



### Grassroots Action For People and Wildlife

### Killer Facts

- Korup has one of the highest species of primates in Africa.
- High rate of poaching threatens the survival of species in Korup.
- The crisis in the region is bound to have significant negative impacts on our wildlife and local people.
- Climate change is real and may worsen above impacts if we don't learn new ways to adapt and increase our resilience and that of the forest on which we depend.

Join our Climate Sensitive Protected Areas Management (CLISPAM) initiative.

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**SOMBO—DRILL**

## Bitter-sweet 2018 in Retrospect

What a roller coaster year 2018 was. Full of "wow" moments for our young organization but yet full of obstacles towards our plans.

Taken off with an unmatched resolve and energy from our team, the year was truly pregnant with lots to do, hopes for success in many areas but most importantly hope for return of peace in our region after a bloody 2017. Overall, our bitter-sweet moments have been as follows;

- ◆ Capitalizing on success in wildlife monitoring for the PSMNR-SWR in previous years, our teams braved the odds to complete Camera trapping surveys in KNP, BMWS and MCNP ending in June 2018.
- ◆ We secured 3 grants to fund our projects on local capacity building, grass root actions for nature based climate adaptation; CLISPAM and tackling threats to endangered species in KNP worth over 65000 USD.
- ◆ Thanks to our community centered model, KRCS teams have been the only conservation teams that have had access to some villages of KNP and BMWS in 2018 amidst the armed conflicts in the regions.
- ◆ Unfortunately we have not been able to implement most of our exciting planned project activities especially around insecurity hotspots.
- ◆ Nevertheless, we have decided not to give up from where ever we seek refuge, trying to stay safe as we have embarked on a capacity building drive.
- ◆ Our Coordinator (Mr. Nelson Betobe) honorably handed the baton of command to the able Mr. Mosaki Emmanuel recently.



Kids use wildlife viewers in villages

*"From where ever team members have sought refuge in order to stay safe, we have done the little we can for the benefit of wildlife and people, with a greater resolve to build as much local capacity as possible"*



KRCS roadmap introductory workshop in KNP

The new, young and energetic top management of KNP service (Mr. Tabe Derick) demonstrated the same resolve to work with stakeholders to preserve our rich biodiversity. Even as most of his resolve was jeopardized by the crisis in the region the following achievements must be reported;



PAMETT organized by KRCS in Limbe; 65/100 score.



Seven (7) years (2011-17) of camera trapping surveys data were finally analyzed with results revealing 10 of the target terrestrial mammals species seem stable including the drill while the status of others including the chimpanzee and elephants remain unknown (Kelly & Orume, 2018)\*.

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## Building Capacity of Local People; Our only hope in times of crisis.

Our interventions especially in remote areas of KNP have been slowed down or rendered impossible as a result of the crises. Nevertheless we have embarked on capacity building of local people from our target communities while hoping for calm to return to the area. Our major capacity building initiatives have targeted youths, farmers, hunters and women to provide alternative nature based livelihood skills for CLISPAM and minimizing threats as follows;



Seed propagation and nursery management that has led to establishment of a demonstration multipurpose NTFP nursery in Mundemba



Bee keeping and honey making as a livelihood activity in Buea with start-up funding and basic equipment provided



Wildlife monitoring methods and conservation projects proposal writing in MCNP and Limbe



Training of women in handicraft as an income generating activity for 2 months in Kumba

