



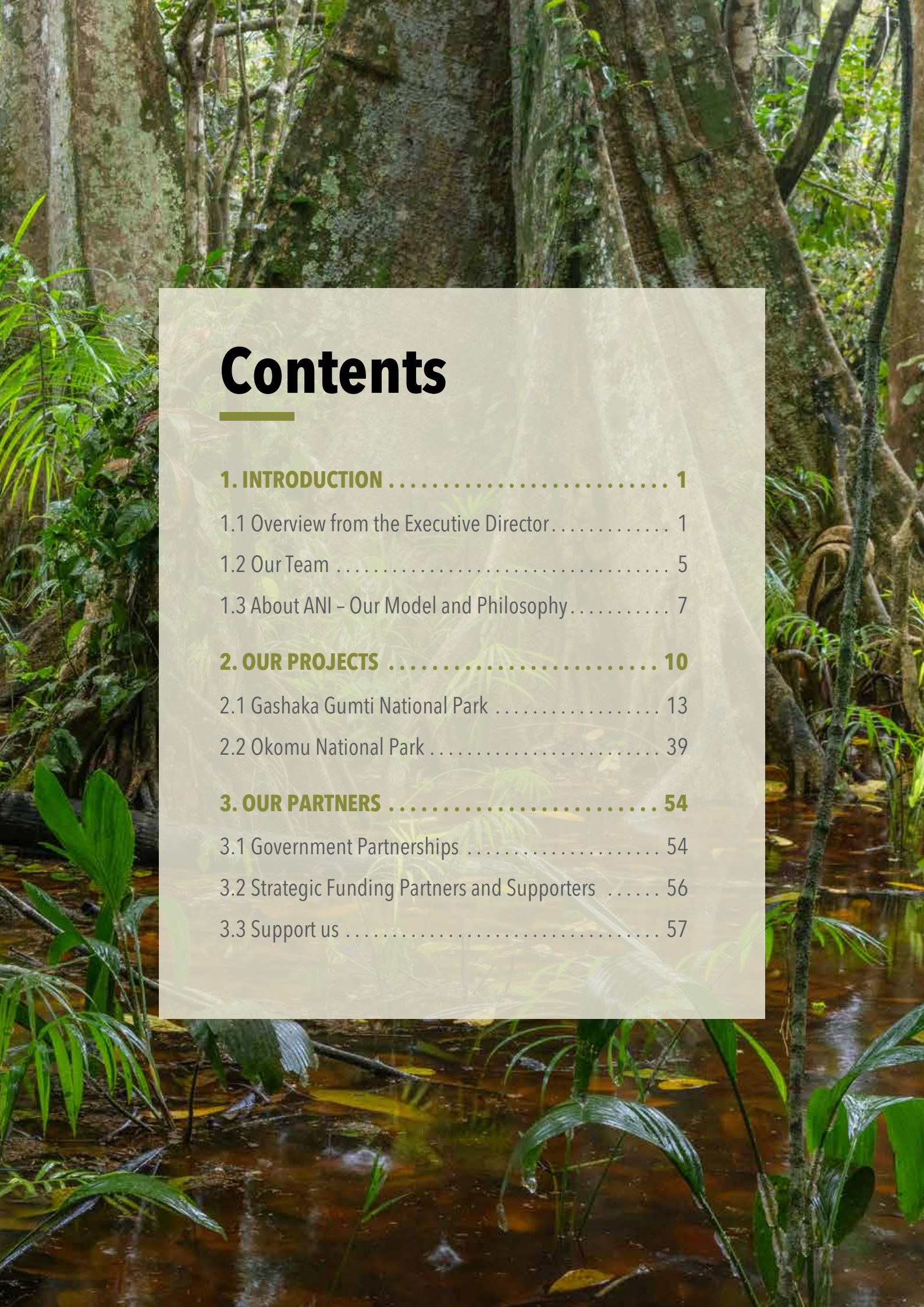
ANI

BRINGING NATURE BACK TO LIFE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025







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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2025 was a year of ups and downs for both Gashaka Gumti and Okomu National Parks. On reflection, while we continue to face some significant challenges, this year was also the year when we started to transition from being reactive in terms of bringing law and order back to the parks and towards developing strategies to tackle the root causes of these challenges.

In Gashaka Gumti National Park, illegal cattle grazing and artisanal mining are the two biggest challenges causing the degradation of this magnificent landscape. Over the year, in spite of the park's well-equipped rangers, two artisanal mines which developed a couple of years ago in the buffer zone of the park grew in size, attracting criminals from all over West Africa, resulting in a deterioration of the security for local people (armed robbery and cattle rustling) and a huge increase in bush meat poaching in the park to feed the miners. Patrols near the mines resulted in two park rangers being stabbed in July and another two being killed in an ambush on the edge of the park. This was deeply traumatic for all of us, and we continue to honour their memory while we work with the government to get both mines closed down and justice for the perpetrators of these violent acts.



Tunde Morakinyo

Executive Director, Africa Nature
Investors Foundation

This was the year we started developing strategies to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing both parks.



While mining-related incidents were a significant setback for the park, the relationship between communities and the park grows from strength to strength. ANI recruited a team of Community Liaison Officers, devoted full time to community engagement. This, along with our enterprise development, education, bee keeping, agriculture and cattle vaccination programmes have demonstrated the serious commitment the park has towards community development. The other serious challenge is illegal cattle grazing and associated forest fires from the thousands of cattle that stream into the park each dry season. In spite of all the arrests of illegal cattle herders by the park rangers, there has been little change in the numbers coming into the park and the problem seems intractable. So, this year, we commenced the development of a Fire and Grazing Management Plan to address the root causes of the problem rather than just tackling the symptoms. The aim is to develop a plan with the pastoralists to find joint landscape-wide solutions to this problem.

This was a year during which we also learned much more about Gashaka Gumti. With the opening of the new outpost in the north of the park and new ranger patrol routes, we found some of the most untouched parts of the park. We confirmed new populations of chimpanzees and the on-going presence of the Adamawa Reedbuck antelope in the south of the park (which had not been seen for many years). In May, we conducted a cultural heritage survey to investigate the evidence of previous human settlement, which is scattered right across the park in the form of discarded grinding stones, and other stone implements. Intriguingly, the survey posed many more questions than answers, showing there is still so much more to be discovered about this park.



ANI is strengthening community relations through development programmes while working with pastoralists on a Fire and Grazing Management Plan to address illegal cattle grazing and forest fires.

This is also the year in which Gashaka Gumti's visibility to international donors changed. The park became part of the EU NaturAfrica Programme which supports a network of parks across Africa. The park was also identified as one of 162 Keystone Protected Areas by the Rob Walton Foundation. We hope this will open new opportunities for the project. ANI also visited Cameroon to discuss establishing a transboundary protected area with the proposed Tchabal Mbabo and Faro National Parks.

In Okomu National Park, the year 2025 was a year of consolidation for the project. The ranger patrols have been effective at continuing to curtail the illegal logging and farm encroachment that was once rampant across most of the park. The biggest challenge facing the park remains the lack of a demarcated southern boundary and insufficient rangers or supporting infrastructure to patrol the south of the park effectively. However, during the year, we commenced the rehabilitation of an abandoned building buried under vegetation in the south of the park to convert it to a new ranger outpost. It will have a radio mast to improve patrol and radio coverage across the south of the park. We also screened 200 candidates from

the surrounding communities with the aim of increasing the ranger force by 40. These will go a long way to strengthening the law enforcement presence in Okomu National Park.

During the year, we significantly ramped up our engagement with the communities surrounding the park conducting many town hall meetings to raise awareness about the project and established over 26 conservation clubs which will increase awareness and support for Okomu National Park. The project also established Savings and Loan Groups in 6 villages along the northern boundary of the park, which are supporting enterprises focussed on the processing of cassava and plantain. We believe it is important for communities to have an economic stake from protection of the park. They should see a park that supports the local economy in improves their security.

During the year, our camera traps and SMART data collected on ranger patrols, recorded 4 groups of African forest elephants with one group having two infants. Other animals recorded included forest buffalo, white-throated guenons, red-capped mangabeys and mona monkeys confirming the park as a stronghold for these endangered animals in the south of the country. In November, an elephant calf was rescued from the Okomu oil palm plantation next to the national park. After searching for the baby elephant's mother for several days, ANI and NPS agreed that the elephant should be hand reared until it can be reintroduced back to the wild elephant herd in the park. This is a new experience for the organisation and rearing this baby elephant has been very intense requiring a team of 5 keepers and round the clock care. While this is a costly activity which was unplanned for, every forest elephant is precious since there are only an estimated 200 left in Nigeria and there has been enormous interest from the general public across the country in the survival of the infant elephant.



Besides the protection of Gashaka Gumti National Park and Okomu National Park, ANI is also working to change the policy framework for wildlife protection in Nigeria. Since 2022, ANI in partnership with the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), has supported the Federal Ministry of Environment with the development of a new Endangered Species bill. This bill has successfully scaled through several readings in the House of Assembly and is now awaiting Presidential assent. Once enacted, this will position Nigeria as a leader on the continent with some of Africa's most progressive wildlife laws.



This is also the year in which Gashaka Gumti's visibility to international donors changed. The park became part of the EU NaturAfrica Programme which supports a network of park across Africa.

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1.2 OUR TEAM

Board members



Phillip Ihenacho
Board Member and Founder



Tunde Morakinyo
Executive Director and Founder



Jide Laleye
Board Member and Founder



Abubakar Joda
Board Member



Adhiambo Odaga
Board Member



John Adeleke
Board Member

Lagos/Abuja based



Nacha Geoffrey
Country Manager



Dr. George Okeyoyin
Senior Technical Adviser



Judith Abolo-Tedi
Financial Controller



Victor Okorie
Corporate Governance and Compliance Manager

Gashaka Landscape



Quinton Rochat
Gashaka Project Manager



Samuel Meshack
Gumti Sector Manager



Jack Devlin
REDD+ Manager



Dennis Andrew
Gashaka Sector Manager



David Peter
Deputy Project Manager - Community Liaison



Emmanuel Elisha
Research Coordinator



Faith Okunorobo
Logistics and Procurement Manager



Samuel Irimiya
Human Resources Manager

Okomu Landscape



Peter Abanyam
Okomu Project Manager



Christopher Assoh
Logistics and Procurement Manager



Clifford Barnabas
Community Liaison Manager



Abubakar Mohammed
Law Enforcement Manager



Robertson Chingwenembe
Deputy Project Manager, Law Enforcement and Training



Adeoye Oyedeji
GIS and Admin Manager



Danbaba Madi
Community Liaison Manager



Stephen Wakawa
Mechanical Maintenance Manager



Godiya Gaya
Community Education Manager

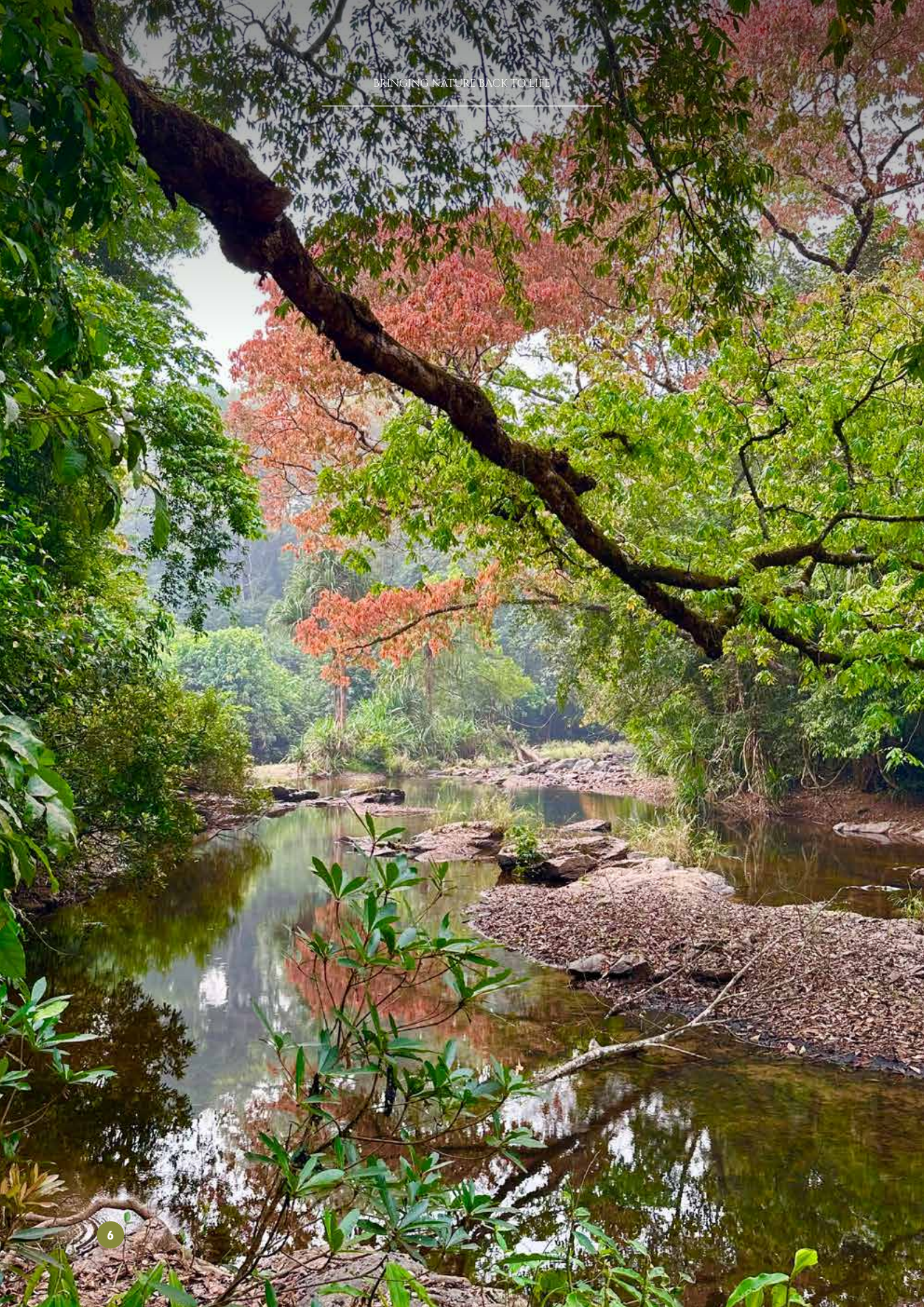


Frank Erhabor
Monitoring, Evaluation, Adaptation and Learning (MEAL) Specialist.



Bright Agu
Infrastructure Manager

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1.3 ABOUT ANI - OUR MODEL AND PHILOSOPHY

Who we are

Established in 2018, Africa Nature Investors (ANI) Foundation is an African not-for-profit organisation partnering with governments and communities to protect national parks and their landscapes with outstanding biodiversity value. ANI provides hands-on protected area management through ranger-led law enforcement, engagement and economic development of the surrounding communities delivered via long term management and partnership agreements. In Nigeria we work in Gashaka Gumti National Park and Okomu National Park.

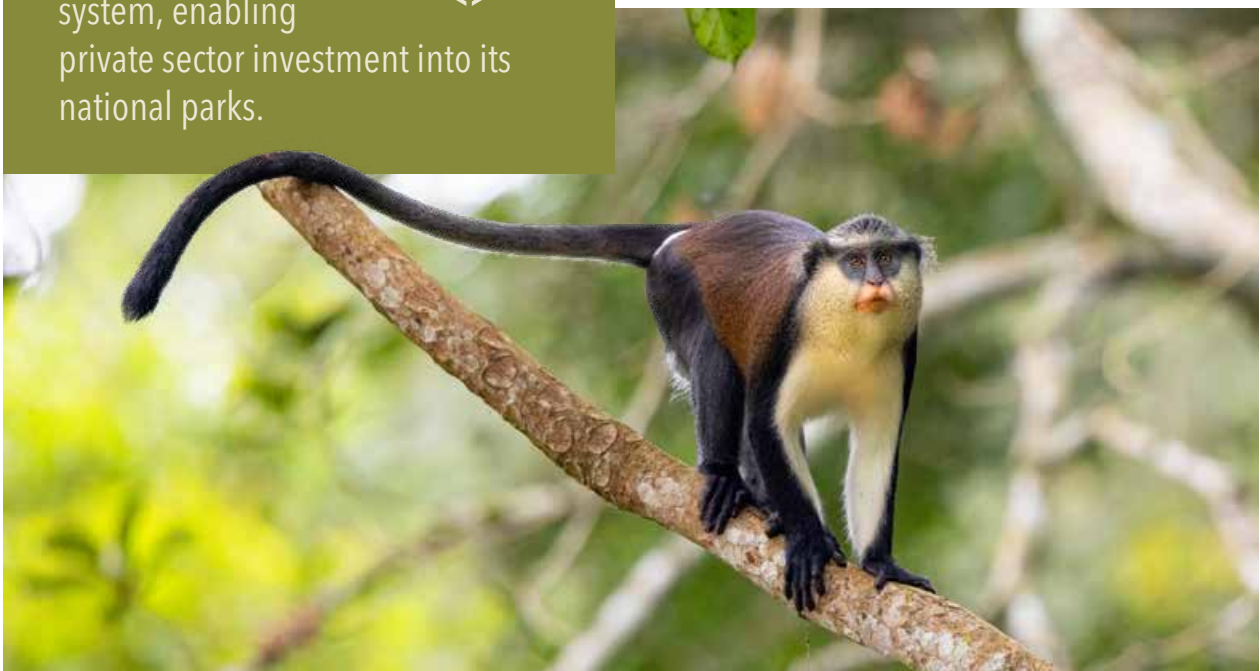
Our model

An African-led organisation: As an African-led organisation registered in Nigeria, we believe the conservation agenda in Africa should be led by African opinion leaders to be relevant to Africans. One of our key strengths as Africans is understanding how to navigate stakeholders and politics in Nigeria from community up to state and Federal Government level, to achieve meaningful results on the ground.

This collaborative management model is a first in Nigeria for the national park system, enabling private sector investment into its national parks.



Our PPP model – delegated co-management of protected areas: There is not enough money from the governments or philanthropy to prevent the biodiversity crisis facing the planet. Over 80% of protected areas in Africa are insufficiently funded. ANI believes that the private sector can provide the additional funds needed for wildlife conservation. However, a suitable governance framework is needed to de-risk their investment. It is for this very reason; we established a Public Private Partnership (PPP) co-management model for both Gashaka Gumti and Okomu National Parks. This collaborative management model is a first in Nigeria for the national park system, enabling private sector investment into its national parks.

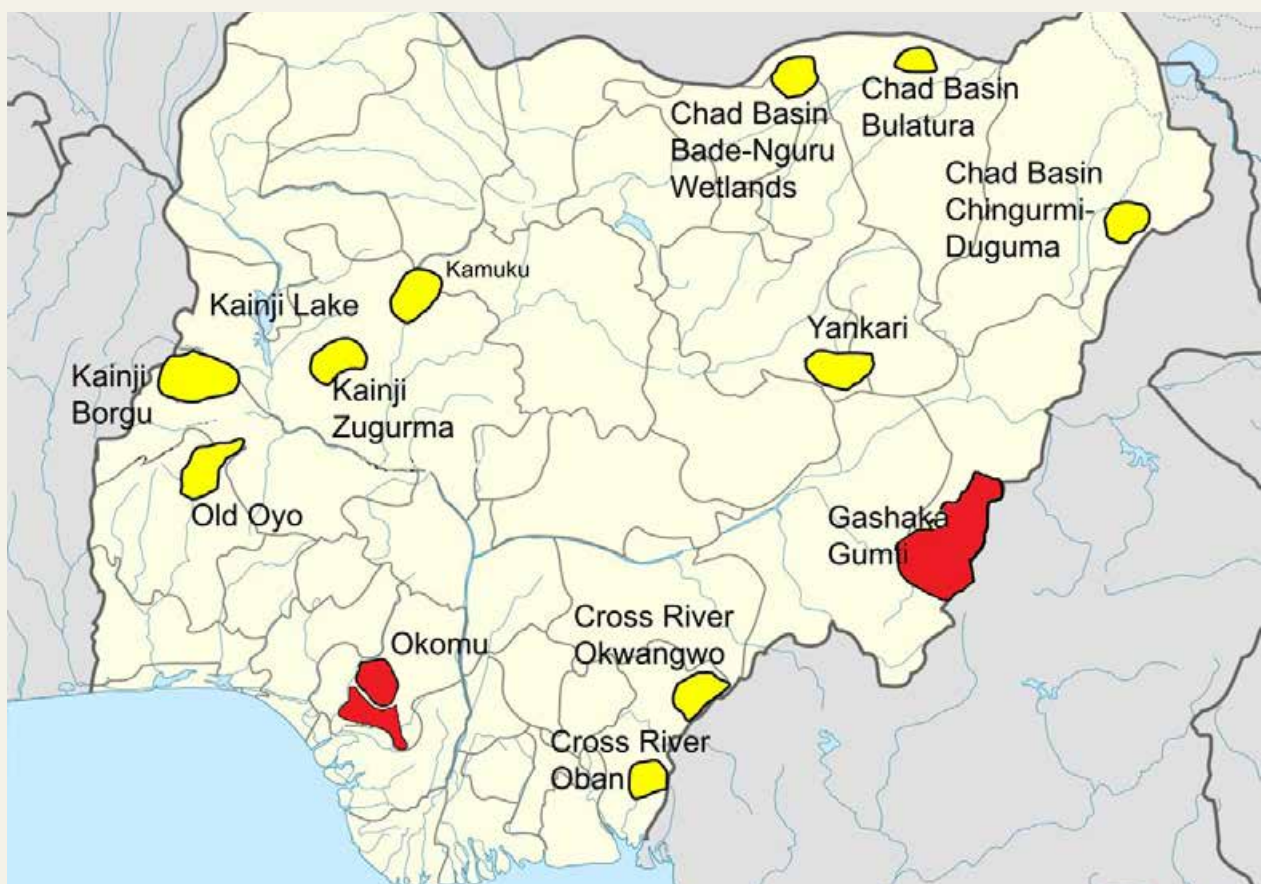


Why do we work in Nigeria?

Nigeria is one of the 10 most biodiverse countries in Africa with exceptional levels of amphibian, primate, and floral diversity. This is concentrated in the rainforest belt along the coast and the chain of mountains dividing Nigeria from Cameroon along the international border. Both Gashaka Gumti and Okomu National Park where we work are found in biodiversity hotspots in these parts of the country.

Besides the biodiversity value of the two landscapes, both are strategic to the country from a water, economic, and

security perspective. Both protect strategic watersheds of rivers that sustain the lives of millions of people downstream. The presence of well-trained, well-equipped rangers preventing illegal activities in what would otherwise be ungoverned spaces in remote parts of the country has maintained security and prevented instability that affects many similar areas across West Africa.



Our vision: ANI aims for Gashaka Gumti National Park and Okomu National Park to become the foremost eco-tourism destinations in Nigeria. We are working to rewild both parks, bring back key animal species lost from these landscapes in order to restore their ecological integrity. Furthermore, we believe that protected areas should be engines for local and regional development, generating jobs and revenue for local people and the nation. We also aim to demonstrate that the private sector has a key role to play in enabling protected areas to become financially self-sustaining, reducing the need to rely on philanthropy.



ANI's approach as an African-based and led NGO is underpinned by key principles:



ANI and Human Rights

ANI recognizes the crucial role local communities play in conservation efforts. Communities reside right across the landscapes where ANI operates and we are committed to protecting their rights, lands, resources and to ensuring they benefit from conservation. It is essential conservation enhances community livelihoods, safety, and well-being. As such, human rights are an integral part of our work and are mainstreamed and operationalized across our operations. ANI ensures Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for all activities that affect community rights, lands, resources, or practices. Our engagement processes are transparent, inclusive, and carried out in culturally appropriate ways. This ensures affected groups are properly consulted, their concerns are engaged with, and that satisfactory resolutions are reached. Our partnership

agreements make provision for respecting human rights, and for avoiding negative human rights impacts. We evaluate prospective partners in terms of alignment with human rights principles, and refrain from partnering with those who fail to uphold these standards. All our staff, including all rangers and managers, are provided with human rights training to carry out their roles in human rights compliant ways. Most importantly, most of the staff come from these communities so they understand the local culture and values. A community whistle-blowing grievance mechanism has been established, through which community members, staff, and partners can make complaints. This mechanism ensures that complaints are rapidly and effectively addressed in a professional and transparent manner.

2. OUR PROJECTS

2.1 Gashaka Gumti National Park

2.2 Okomu National Park

BRINGING NATURE BACK TO LIFE

GASHAKA GUMTI NATIONAL PARK



2.1 GASHAKA GUMTI NATIONAL PARK

Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP), at 5,907 sq. km, is Nigeria's largest national Park. Located in the mountainous north-east of the country in Adamawa and Taraba States, it is contiguous with the proposed Tchabal Mbabo National Park and separated by a 5km gap from Faro National Park in Cameroon.

The park is a Key Biodiversity Area of international significance with exceptional biodiversity, including diverse flora and fauna and is a UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Site. The park hosts one of West Africa's largest populations of the endangered Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, giant and white-bellied pangolins, leopards, golden cat, forest buffalo, and the Adamawa mountain reedbuck.

There are 4 key habitat types in the park including dry wooded savanna, lowland rainforest, cloud forest and montane grassland. The last two habitats are found on a chain of mountains running through the park which are part of the "Cameroon Volcanic Line" of mountains that span from islands in the Gulf of Guinea through Mount Cameroon right through towards Lake Chad. These mountains (called an African Galapagos) contain many amphibians, birds, plants and other species found nowhere else on earth. Arguably, these montane grasslands and cloud forests are



the most important habitats in the park, because they are so rare across West and Central Africa. Notably, the park is the most important watershed for the mighty river Benue, Nigeria's second largest river, upon which millions of people depend downstream.

Unfortunately, the park is threatened by poaching, logging, artisanal mining, and forest fires (from cattle grazing) by local communities, who are primarily herders and farmers. Historically, the park had been chronically underfunded for many years with poorly trained and ill-equipped rangers unable to tackle these threats. ANI's vision for Gashaka Gumti National Park is a park that is well-protected, the foremost tourism destination in Nigeria and a catalyst for economic development of the region. We hope that the park will eventually become the core of an 11,000 sq km transboundary protected area that includes Faro National Park and the proposed Tchabal Mbabo National Park both in Cameroon.



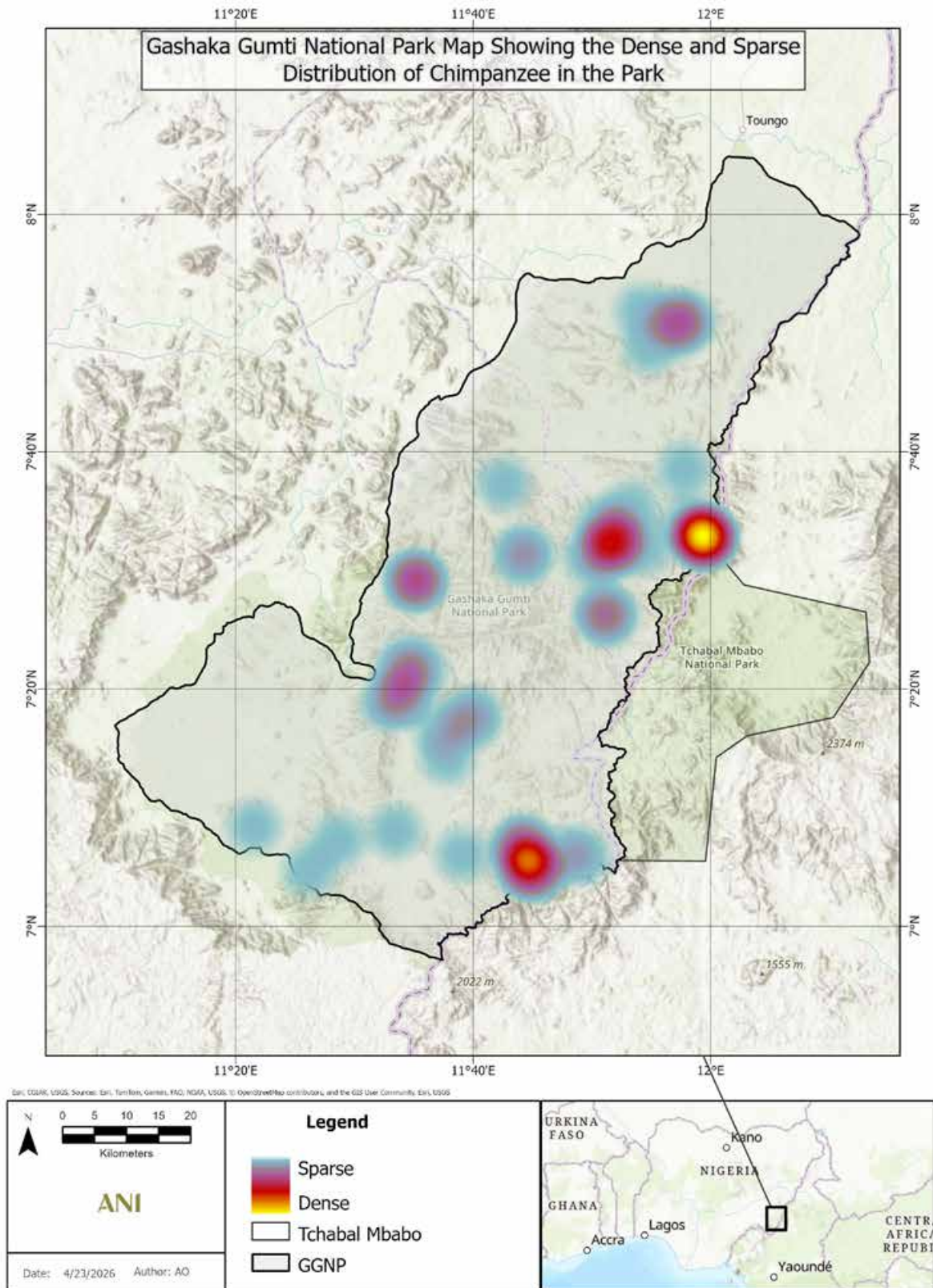
Since ANI Foundation signed a 30-year co-management Partnership Agreement with the National Park Service in 2017 (the first of its kind for a national park in Nigeria) set about improving park infrastructure and security and local community participation with over 160 well trained, and equipped rangers recruited from the local communities, we have dramatically improved security for the local communities as well as for the park. The curtailing of logging and other illegal activities has also resulted in a significant reduction in robbery and cattle rustling, making villages safer, resulting in strong community support for the project. In parallel, there has been a strong focus on community



engagement and development to build trust and to give communities an economic stake in the success of the park. This is essential because protecting Gashaka Gumti would be impossible without community buy-in and support to manage the park and the wider landscape it sits within.



THE CHIMPANZEES OF GASHAKA GUMTI NATIONAL PARK



THE CHIMPANZEES OF GASHAKA GUMTI NATIONAL PARK

This is the flagship species for GGNP. The Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee action plan of 2006, cites the GGNP chimpanzees as one of the largest remaining populations globally.

However, this has never been backed up by a scientific study. The project aims to change this and to conduct transects to come up with some more definitive population estimates.

One thing is certain; we have found that chimpanzees are more widespread across the park than was previously thought.

UCL and Chester Zoo studied the chimpanzees in the Kwano rainforest area in the centre of the park for over a decade – but they never really looked beyond this specific area. Now, through the ranger patrols, chimpanzees have been found right across

the park, including the dry woodland in the north of the park and even in unprotected mountains outside the park.

Anecdotally, chimps seem to be returning to parts of the park they previously frequented, but where they had not been seen for many years – possibly due to better protection from the ranger patrols in the park.

We plan to conduct a study on the chimps and other large mammals across the landscape stretching from the west of GGNP across the border into Tchabal Mbabo where they are also suspected to be present. If chimps can be confirmed here, this will help to push forwards the gazettment of Tchabal Mbabo as a new national park in Cameroon. We also plan to establish a longer-term research programme to understand their range, behaviour, specific threats, and how better to protect them.



1) Security, Protection, and Infrastructure

Systematic patrols by well-trained, equipped, and motivated rangers, supported by park infrastructure, technology and intelligence is the main intervention to curtail illegal activities threatening Gashaka Gumti's wildlife and ecosystems. Below are key law enforcement numbers for 2025.

Key Performance Indicators		2023	2024	2025
Law-Enforcement	NPS rangers supported by ANI	31	34	28
	No. of rangers employed full time by ANI	42	92	81
	Ranger patrol days (total for all teams)	1,128	1,779	1,748
	Ranger patrols - foot (km)	7,359	14,113	11,726
	Ranger patrols - air (km)	35,752	30,176	43,444
	Arrests made	293	704	674
	Convictions (all categories)	93	400	513
	Snares collected	74	94	341
	Firearms confiscated	19	19	33
	Chainsaws confiscated	2	12	9
	Poacher's camps destroyed	188	995	1,151
Park infrastructure	Community employment (person-days)	9,752	21,254	16,876
	Road maintenance by community (Km)	482	661.2	497.4
	New roads established by community (Km)	14	50.1	81.8



Law enforcement ranger patrols

There are 160 rangers in the Gashaka ANI Project (GAP) team all of whom undergo screening and intensive training by Conservation Outcomes – an international ranger training organisation that trains rangers right across the African continent. These rangers are deployed in teams of 6 by 4WD vehicles and an R66 helicopter, which is necessary given the sheer size of the park and its very mountainous terrain.

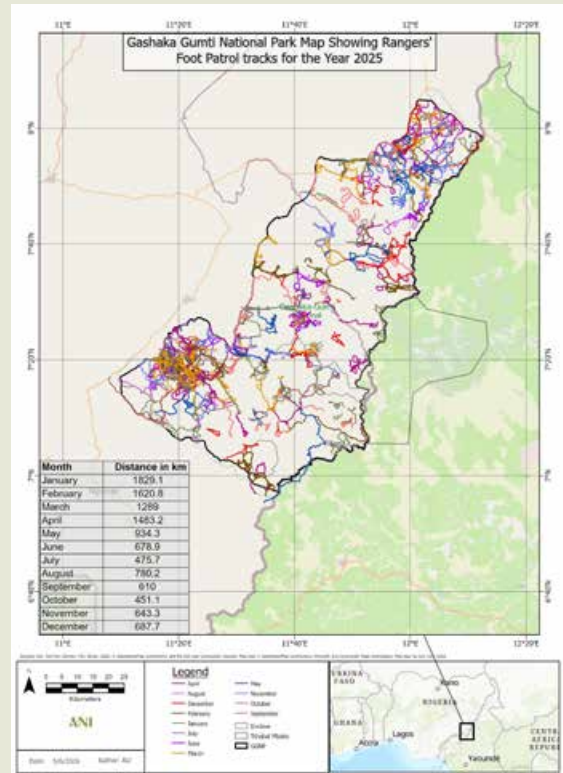
Technology amplifies the efficiency of our ranger patrols, and all teams have state-of-the-art equipment including GPS tracking units, VHF radios, and hand-held Android devices to collect SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) data. This is supported by a VHF radio system, and we have two radio masts positioned at high points in the park to provide almost 100% radio coverage across the park.

Ranger patrols have transformed the security of the park and the wider region. At a time when many parts of Nigeria and the wider region are troubled with serious security issues, we are proud of the peace and security that the rangers have brought to Gashaka Gumti National Park and to the hundreds



of thousands of people living in the area who go about their economic activities without fear of banditry or kidnapping.

We take the welfare of the rangers very seriously and they undergo annual refresher training conducted by Conservation Outcomes which covers a wide range of topics including Nigerian national park law, human rights, first aid, weapons handling, orienteering and community engagement. Having engaged an international human rights specialist in 2024 to conduct a comprehensive review of all ANI policies, procedures, and processes in 2024, an important focus in 2025 was to implement all the report's recommendations including additional focused ranger training and the launching of a Community Grievance Mechanism.





Mining in the park and GGNP ranger fatalities

In spite of all the investment into law enforcement, the ranger team remains overstretched given the sheer size of the park and the threats it faces. Illegal cattle grazing across the entire landscape remains a serious challenge and a new rapidly emerging challenge is that of artisanal mining. About 2 years ago, two small artisanal mines developed in the buffer zone of the park – one in Bodel in Taraba State and another in Kila in Adamawa State. Over time, these mines expanded into the park along riverbeds. The presence of the mines resulted in a rapid deterioration in security for the local people living near these mines (mostly armed robbery and cattle rustling) and a huge increase in bush meat poaching in the park to feed the miners. Unfortunately, ranger patrols in the park near the mines resulted in two park rangers being stabbed in July 2025 and the killing of another two rangers in October, in an ambush on the edge of the park. These two events have been deeply traumatic for us as an organisation. The families have received a full payout from the ranger's pensions and life insurance, and we also supported the families with a full year of the ranger's salaries in addition to agri-processing equipment to provide sustainable livelihood. In parallel, we have strengthened the security infrastructure around both outposts in the park and are working with the state and federal government to obtain justice for the individuals who killed the rangers and to get both mines closed down.



**We remember the ultimate sacrifice made by two Gashaka Gumti
National Park rangers on 3rd October 2025**



Ranger Jim Raphael



Ranger Marvellous Jallo

There is a growing nexus across all of West Africa between rural banditry, insecurity and artisanal mining. Very often, the activities of rural bandits are funded by illegal activities including armed robbery, logging, kidnapping, etc. More recently, artisanal mining has become a major source of revenue for these bandits, and it is estimated that as much as 80% of all rural insecurity in Nigeria is linked directly or indirectly to artisanal mining. This is a new challenge that governments across Africa must wake up to. It is also a challenge that the conservation sector needs to think about strategically. Apart from being a growing problem across the world due to the growing demand for precious metals, it is a different from other rural livelihood challenges by virtue of the sums of money involved and the attendant criminality often mixed with drugs and illegal firearms.

While this is sobering news to report on, these incidents have also resulted in great learning for the project. It is clear that the ranger force is overstretched and requires greater numbers to deal with these new challenges. This will require more enabling infrastructure (accommodation, bigger helicopter, vehicles and better technology). In addition, it has spurred deeper engagement with the communities to see how we can work together collectively to address these security challenges.



2) Community Engagement and Development

Key Performance Indicators		2023	2024	2025
Community Engagement and Development	No. of CLOs/kolados (cumulative)	6	13	1
	No. of Community meetings held	727	1527	401
	No. of meetings to traditional leaders	91	85	271
	Community jobs (person-days)	9,752	21,254	16,876
	No. of Savings and Loan Groups (cumulative)	27	17	9
	No. of members of SLGs (cumulative)	740	1,280	1,550
	Total amount saved by SLG's (Naira)	51,654,527	55,737,448	106,248,020
	No. of farmers groups (cumulative)	0	32	32
	No. of farmers in farmers groups	0	600	600
	Community meetings	753	1527	401
	Pastoralist meetings held			248
	No of cattle vaccinated	44,042	63,422	10,197
	No. of beekeepers supported	0	50	50
	No. of school visits	15	107	147
	No. of children on park excursion visits	0	24	196
	No. of conservation clubs established	0	0	55

Gashaka Gumti National Park is surrounded by 70 communities mostly engaged in agriculture and pastoralism. Farming is based on slash and burn agriculture requiring fresh areas of forest to cut and burn each year in the search of fertile soil. Pastoralism involves the burning of forests and grassland to yield fresh grazing for cattle. Both progressively degrade the landscape, trapping people in a downward cycle of environmental degradation and poverty. There are few formal jobs and so many are also involved in logging, poaching, mining and illegal grazing. ANI believes it is essential to break this cycle of poverty and environmental destruction and to give communities an economic stake in the protection of the park. Gashaka Gumti National Park must act as a magnet, attracting investment into the local economy, giving communities a stake in the park's protection.



The Community Liaison Team: Over the year, the project recruited 10 Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and 4 kolados (pastoralist CLOs) to engage communities, develop trust and build partnerships with the park. While part of their role is focused on information sharing and exchange with the communities, they are also overseeing specific development projects and activities outlined below:



Agri-processing enterprise development:

Women are one of the most vulnerable groups in this part of the country. Few have independent incomes, and they have little say in public life.

ANI and NPS work with Roshan Renewables, a female-led Nigerian social enterprise to implement a Savings and Loans Groups (SLGs) scheme. In each village, Roshan brings together about 30 women into a savings group. These women are trained and encouraged to save an agreed minimum amount weekly and after 3 months, the group is given an interest free loan based on their performance. The women are supported to establish various Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with their savings and the loan, and these SMEs are trained and mentored on income management, business development,

record keeping etc. As the income of the women increases, they are encouraged to save more and receive ever larger loans. In 2022 we started with 11 SLGs (350 women). We now support over 50 SLG groups across the park with over 4,000 beneficiaries since inception. Women have established a wide range of SMEs focused on agri-processing, hair dressing, food processing and petty trading. Roshan reports that many of the SLG members who could only afford to save N200/week are now saving minimum of N2,000/week. Many women can now pay school fees and rent and build houses for the first time in their lives. The SLG programme has been so successful, it is now being expanded to include 500 young men – with many more women's groups asking to be supported.





Agriculture and bee keeping:

Agriculture employs over 70% of all the people living around the park and so it is an obvious intervention point. A partnership has been established with an NGO called Nuru Nigeria to support vegetable gardening and the goat rearing for 600 farmers. Honey is another important opportunity for farmers. There is no tradition of beekeeping in the region. Rather, honey is collected from trees in the wild and when someone finds honey in a tree, they cut the entire tree down. To stop this terribly destructive practice, the Bee keeping Association of Nigeria was engaged to introduce bee keeping to farmers and curb deforestation at the same time. To date, 50 farmers from 10 communities have been trained in modern beekeeping and in the last year they produced over 234kg of honey. We plan to identify a commercial off-taker/buyer company, to scale up this production across the landscape.



Sustainable pastoralism:

Pastoralism is the main livelihood for over 30% of the people in the landscape and it is critical to support more sustainable and lucrative animal husbandry systems. NPS and ANI are developing

a landscape-wide Fire and Grazing Plan with the pastoralists (see next section), so that cattle and farmers and wildlife can coexist in harmony. To build trust with the pastoralists, and to reduce the disease burden on both cattle and wildlife, the project worked closely with the state government and local veterinarians to conduct a free cattle vaccination programme. In 2020, over 63,000 cattle were vaccinated against bovine herpes simplex virus and tuberculosis. Besides improving the lives and income of herders, the vaccination exercise also provides data on numbers of livestock in the landscape.

In 2020, over **63,000 cattle** were vaccinated against bovine herpes simplex virus and tuberculosis





Education: This is important since education is essential to transform access to economic opportunities.

Classroom blocks: A decent learning environment is critical for education and many of the villages around the park have no school at all or a few badly dilapidated buildings to call a school. We are proud to have constructed 3 high-quality classroom blocks each in Serti, Gashaka village and Mayo Selbe in partnership with the Local Government Authorities. These provide classes for the local children on weekdays and adult education classes at weekends.

Conservation Clubs: The Education Manager commenced an environmental education programme (EEP) for primary and secondary schools around GGNP and has established conservation clubs in 55 schools, facilitating weekly meetings and providing instructional materials to participating teachers. These materials teach children about the environment, plants and animals of the park and also help to teach vital skills such as reading and writing at the same time. The clubs also provide training for teachers, most of whom knew nothing about the park.



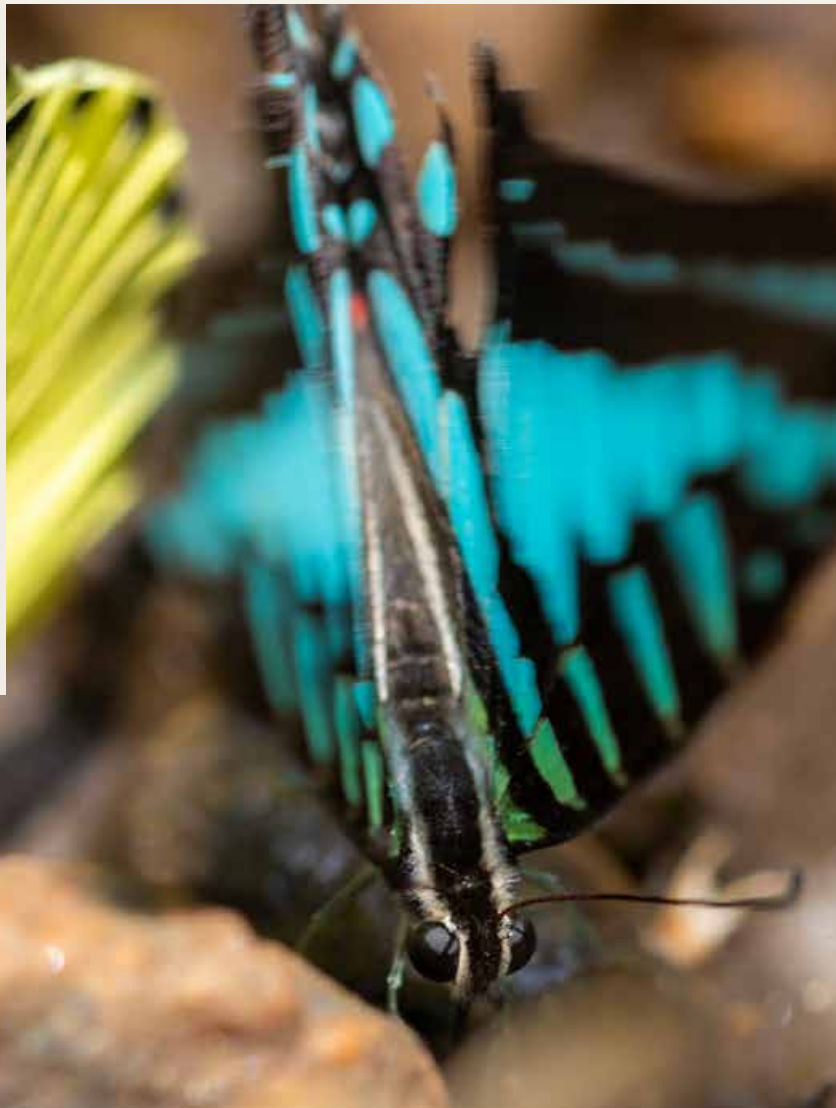
Scholarships: Working with communities and local government authorities, 44 primary school scholarships were awarded for families covering feeding, clothing and books for each child.

Park-excursions: Beyond the classroom, this year was the first time that we organized field trips into GGNP for schoolchildren living around the park. Although there are thousands of children living in villages next to the park, none of them have ever visited it. We brought 196 students from surrounding schools to camp in the park for four days, during which they hike, see wildlife, and are given educational materials to learn about the importance of protecting GGNP. It is rewarding to see these excursions inspiring children and teachers to become ambassadors for the park.



3) Biodiversity Management, Monitoring and Research

Gashaka Gumti National Park remains largely understudied despite its rich biodiversity and the importance of its ecosystems, regionally and globally. WWF, UCL and Chester Zoo conducted some research mostly focused on primates, in the 1990s and 2000s, however this stopped in 2008 due to insecurity, before the partnership between NPS and ANI in 2018. In the first few years of the project, the focus was squarely on re-establishing law and order and on gaining community support for protection of the park but now, the focus is turning towards restarting research in the park. Currently, biodiversity information on the park's ecosystems is collected from 3 sources:





Remote vegetation analysis: The GIS team assesses satellite imagery to understand the vegetation cover across the park and to assess and monitor the health of the vegetation in the park including rate of deforestation and degradation, fire occurrence and annual intensity of burning. The team is working with the Biospheric Sciences Laboratory of the National Space Agency of America (NASA) to classify the vegetation of the park based on factors including altitude and canopy cover. This is very important for the development of the park's Fire and Grazing Plan and the carbon credit project. They produce monthly and annual reports on vegetation change and fire occurrence.



SMART data collection: North Carolina Zoo established a SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) data-collection platform for the park in 2023 specially tailored to collect signs of illegal human activity in the park (logging, hunting, etc.) and also signs of animals (chimpanzee calls, antelope footprints, monkey sightings, etc.). Each ranger team has a handheld Android device onto which they load this data, take pictures and record the GPS location. This data is uploaded onto Earth Ranger, to see spatially across the park all the places where rangers have encountered chimpanzees, for example or come across hunter cartridges. This provides information on the distribution of wildlife, threat levels across the park, etc.



Camera trap deployment and analysis: During the year, the project deployed 120 camera traps across the park in a stratified grid formation in 4 locations representative of different habitat types (savanna, lowland rainforest, montane grassland and cloud forest). ANI signed an MoU with Panthera and they came to Gashaka to train the research team on camera trap deployment. They are now helping to analyse the data from the imagery that has been retrieved.

The previous WWF management plan for GGNP from 2006 pointed out under-collecting in all the key taxa for the park and stated that "a proper survey would undoubtedly add many more species". In the coming year, targeted surveys will be commissioned on large mammals, small mammals and bats, birds and freshwater fish.





Biodiversity Management

So far, the main biodiversity management measure has been ranger patrols to curtail illegal logging, fire, farm encroachment and illegal cattle grazing/fires. However, ANI is now starting to plan two proactive activities:

Fire and Grazing management: Unsustainable grazing and its associated fires are the biggest threat facing GGNP. Our satellite imagery analysis has confirmed that it is the most extensive influence on the habitat and animals across the park with grazing related fires affecting over 70% of its area at times.

With security deteriorating across Nigeria and as grazing land in the wider landscape gets taken over for agriculture, pastoralists are increasingly being pushed into Gashaka Gumti where they come into conflict with rangers. The result is conflict with farmers in the park's buffer zone and over-grazing, soil erosion and associated forest fires as the herders set fire to the grassland within the park to stimulate fresh grass re-growth for their cows (almost all fires in the park come from grazing). Fire is an important component of wooded grasslands of the park and many of the plants in the park actually require fire for reproduction. However, fires more than once every 2 years become damaging and kill the regeneration of trees.



Our satellite imagery analysis has confirmed that it is the most extensive influence on the habitat and animals across the park with grazing related fires affecting over 70% of its area at times.



Thousands of cattle in the park compete with ungulates needed to maintain the natural balance between savanna woodland and forest (and its associated biodiversity). Worse still, the cattle bring in disease – and in the 1980s, there was a rinderpest outbreak which wiped out most of the ungulates (causing a crash in the carnivore population). Over-hunting and over-grazing from cattle have never allowed the wildlife to recover. The over-grazing also causes sheet erosion across large parts of the park and the spread of invasive exotic weeds (such as *Chromolaena odorata* and

Calopogonium mucunoides) which makes the vegetation even more flammable in the dry season.

While grazing and fire is a threat to the park, it can also be an opportunity. It is possible for cattle to be grazed in a manner that mimics the way buffalo, elephant and eland would have grazed the park. Fire can also be managed as controlled burns to encourage forest re-growth or more open grassland areas.

ANI and NPS have commenced the development of a Fire and Grazing plan for the wider landscape that includes the national park. This is a bottom-up plan co-created with the pastoralists and farmers in the landscape so that sustainable farming, sustainable pastoralism and wildlife can co-exist in harmony. Such a plan will resolve conflicts between farmers and herders and would also be good for biodiversity. ANI and NPS also plan to generate carbon credits to pay for the long-term protection of the park – and managing the vegetation cover of the park as well as its biodiversity is central to the generation of credits.

The project has vaccinated cows across the landscape over the last 3 years to start to build trust with the pastoralist community and have conducted a detailed stakeholder analysis to understand the composition of the nomadic and semi-nomadic cattle herding community. We are conducting carrying capacity studies within and outside the park to understand how many cows could be permitted to remain within the enclaves (the demarcated areas within the park that permit human habitation) and we are working with the herders and farmer to identify alternative grazing areas outside the park where excess herds could be moved to. In both locations, the herders would be supported to manage their cattle with access to water, veterinary medicine, improved fodder, etc. We will also develop land use plans for all the buffer zone areas outside the park to ensure there is no longer conflict between farmers and herders – which is one of the reasons why cattle get pushed into the park. These support measures will be coupled with stronger penalties for illegal grazing in the park.



This PLAN is critical to the future of GGNP. If successful, this will enable us to bring down the numbers of cattle in the park, giving space for the wildlife to recover.

Reintroduction of missing species (rewilding):

Unfortunately, several charismatic species have become extinct from the landscape, some as recently and 20 years ago. These include lion, elephant, giant eland, giraffe and African wild dog. ANI plans to reintroduce these to Gashaka Gumti National Park principally because they are essential for the integrity and function of the ecosystem but also because they will greatly enhance the tourism potential of the park. We are planning a study to assess the feasibility of bringing some of these from nearby countries (such as Cameroon) making sure there is full community consultation in the process and strict accordance with IUCN guidelines. Of utmost importance will be making sure that any re-introduced animals are the right genetic sub-species for the region, ensuring habitat suitability and also being able to provide adequate levels of ranger protection. We are also mindful of how the re-introduced species will need to co-exist with humans in the landscape.



THE CATS OF GASAHAKA GUMTI NATIONAL PARK

Leopards are the apex predator in Gashaka Gumti National Park. For years since we began protecting the park in 2018, we had wondered if leopards were still present and only had a few rumours from villages in the north of the park that they still existed in the park. Then in 2024, after conducting ranger patrols in the north of the park from the newly established Gumti Outpost, we encountered leopards and later obtained camera trap footage showing a mother leopard and her adolescent offspring. This was all the more surprising because we had assumed that the north of the park was too heavily affected by cattle grazing to support significant wildlife.

In 2025, we established a partnership with Panthera, an organisation devoted to the conservation of cats across the world, and they have started to support us with research on the cats in GGNP.

After this, we deployed the next set of camera traps across the park and found no sign of leopards anywhere. Then at the end of 2025, we decided to mount camera traps along a newly opened internal park road in the south and got pictures of another leopard!

Interestingly, these pictures were of a large male leopard whose tail is crooked. Panthera commented that the crooked tail could be a genetic defect, but it is also possible that the leopard's tail got broken in a fight with a bush pig. Apparently, this happens often when leopards hunt bush pigs.



African golden cats are medium sized (about the size of a dog) and are only found in the rainforest belt of Africa. Due to their extremely reclusive habits, little is known about them. The presence of African golden cats in Gashaka Gumti has been known about since the 1990s and 2000s. This is the only confirmed location for them in Nigeria.

We have been able to obtain camera trap imagery of these very elusive cats every year around Kwano in the centre of the park and even in the highlands that mark the eastern boundary of the park with Cameroon.

From the camera trap pictures, it is clear that there is a stable reproducing population in the park. We have recorded various pictures of two or more cats, which is very unusual for a solitary species indicating pictures of mating pairs.

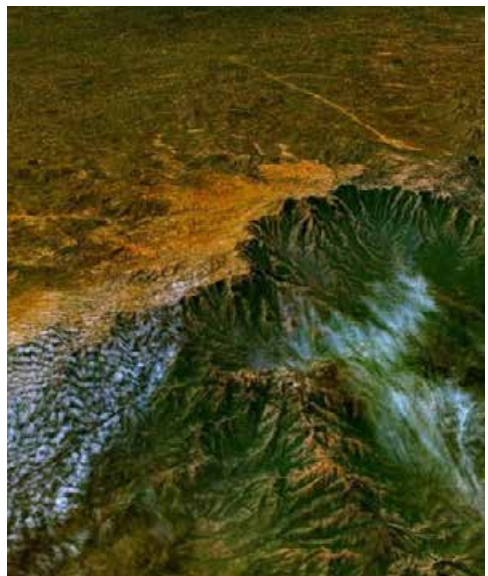


4. Nigeria-Cameroon Transboundary Conservation

The entire eastern boundary of Gashaka Gumti National Park runs along the international border with Cameroon. On the other side of the border are Faro National Park and the proposed Tchabal Mbabo National Park in Cameroon. For many years, there has been a proposal to manage all 3 areas as one contiguous 11,000 sq km transboundary protected area. This is because many animals cross back and forth across the international boundary, as do people in both directions. Protecting Tchabal Mbabo is important because it shares a long border with Gashaka Gumti and contains one of the largest expanses of montane forest in west/central Africa (along with GGNP) with many birds, amphibians and other montane species found nowhere else. Faro is important since it contains a reservoir of animals that could repopulate GGNP including elephants, lions, giraffes and giant eland. There is a 5 km gap between Gashaka Gumti and Faro National Park in Cameroon.

On the 24th of April 2024, Nigeria and Cameroon signed a Cooperation Framework Agreement on Transboundary Protected Areas and Sustainable Management of Forest and Wildlife Resources. ANI played a leading role in facilitating the transboundary meetings, which led to the agreement's signing.

In July, we visited the government in Cameroon and various NGO and donor stakeholders to discuss the establishment of a transboundary protected area linking Gashaka Gumti National Park with Faro National Park and the proposed Tchabal Mbabo National Park in Cameroon.



5. Sustainable Conservation Financing

Right from the outset, ANI has been determined to make the protection of Gashaka Gumti financially viable. It is essential that the park should have diversified income streams with a substantial part of its operating costs coming from the private sector, so it no longer relies on philanthropy or insufficient government funding. The two private sector opportunities under development for Gashaka Gumti National Park are eco-tourism and carbon credits.



Eco-tourism: Despite being Nigeria's largest national park, Gashaka Gumti is largely unknown, even by Nigerians. With improvement in security due to ranger patrols, we are investigating the feasibility of tourism for the park focusing on the domestic Nigerian middle-class market. We will also target specialist adventure tourists interested in bird watching and sport fishing, besides generating local employment opportunities, and generating revenue to government and income to protect the park. It is important for Nigerians to experience the wonders of nature in their own country and to change hearts and minds of Nigerians about wild places and wildlife. We are in the closing stages of seeing an eco-tourism concession issued for the park by the Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE) and NPS which could see 4-5 low-volume, high-end, eco-tourism lodges in the park and two higher volume, low-cost tourism facilities aimed at students and the general public.





Carbon Credit finance: Protecting the forests in Gashaka Gumti National Park by managing fire and grazing which degrades the landscape will enable the sequestration of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. ANI and NPS are developing a carbon credit project that aims to fund the ongoing protection of the national park and is a key part of ANI's vision to make the protection of GGNP self-sustaining financially. In 2022 we established a partnership with Africa Carbon Partners (ACP) as our project developers and have been carrying out various activities as part of the extensive feasibility studies required.



Carbon PDD: Value for Nature has almost finalised Carbon Project Design Document (PDD). This identifies the potential for a carbon project, the proposed intervention strategies and associated theory of change, and key activities to be carried out. This is based on a detailed analysis of satellite imagery on biomass changes and fire frequency and severity conducted by our GIS team and the National Space Agency (NASA) coupled with ground-based carbon stock surveys from 200 plots across the park, completed by the University of Ibadan. The Nigeria Montane Forest Project (NMFP) also conducted a study to assess the regeneration potential of montane forest ecosystems in GGNP. The PDD has been submitted to VERRA and is now undergoing verification.

Climate Change, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) PDD: In parallel, we are developing the CCB document with support from The Landscapes and Livelihoods Group (TLLG), who are overseeing the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process with communities and the development of benefit sharing mechanisms. We are also working with specialists from the African Lion Conservation Ltd. and Conservation Academy to develop a Fire and Grazing Management Plan. This will form the basis for negotiating land-use management plans with all the communities living around the park since it is their activities that will manage the carbon in the landscape and from which they will get a share of the revenue from carbon credits.



The plan is being conducted in partnership with the National Park Service and the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC), whose endorsement and buy-in is essential. The plan is to eventually sign a long-term offtake agreement with a private sector entity and this revenue to go towards protecting the park and providing revenue for government and the local communities.

Planned Activities for Gashaka Gumti National Park in 2026

In the coming year, key activities will include:

Security, protection, and infrastructure:

- Construction of the proposed new Mayo Kam Outpost in the Gashaka Sector of the park.
- Continue construction, maintain park roads and expand the road network in Gumti Sector.
- Purchase additional patrol vehicles and expand the ranger communications system to include all rangers in the Gumti Sector.
- Carry out refresher/patrol leaders training for all rangers.
- Close down the Kila illegal mine and other mines in the park.

Community Engagement and Development:

- Expand the SLG programme to include young men, and upgrade women's SLGs into cooperatives.
- Roll out the collaborative fire and grazing management plans for the park and surrounding communities and commence the implementation of pilot activities.
- Expand farmer support with agroforestry and farmer partnerships with a commercial off taker.
- Further build up the education programme (scholarships and school infrastructure improvements).
- Scale up and commercialize honey and shea butter processing activities working with businesses.

Biodiversity, Management, monitoring and research:

- Expand the camera trap deployment and analysis programme.
- Commence construction of research facilities and accommodation.
- Conduct study to assess regeneration potential of montane forests.
- Commence research on chimpanzees, pangolins and other large mammals.

Transboundary Activities:

- Conduct trips to Cameroon to secure government mandate, agree roadmap for Tchabal Mbabo gazettelement and scoping field reconnaissance of Tchabal Mbabo.
- Develop discussions with Faro National Park regarding a wildlife corridor and coordination of protection/ community engagement activities.

Eco-tourism and Carbon Credits:

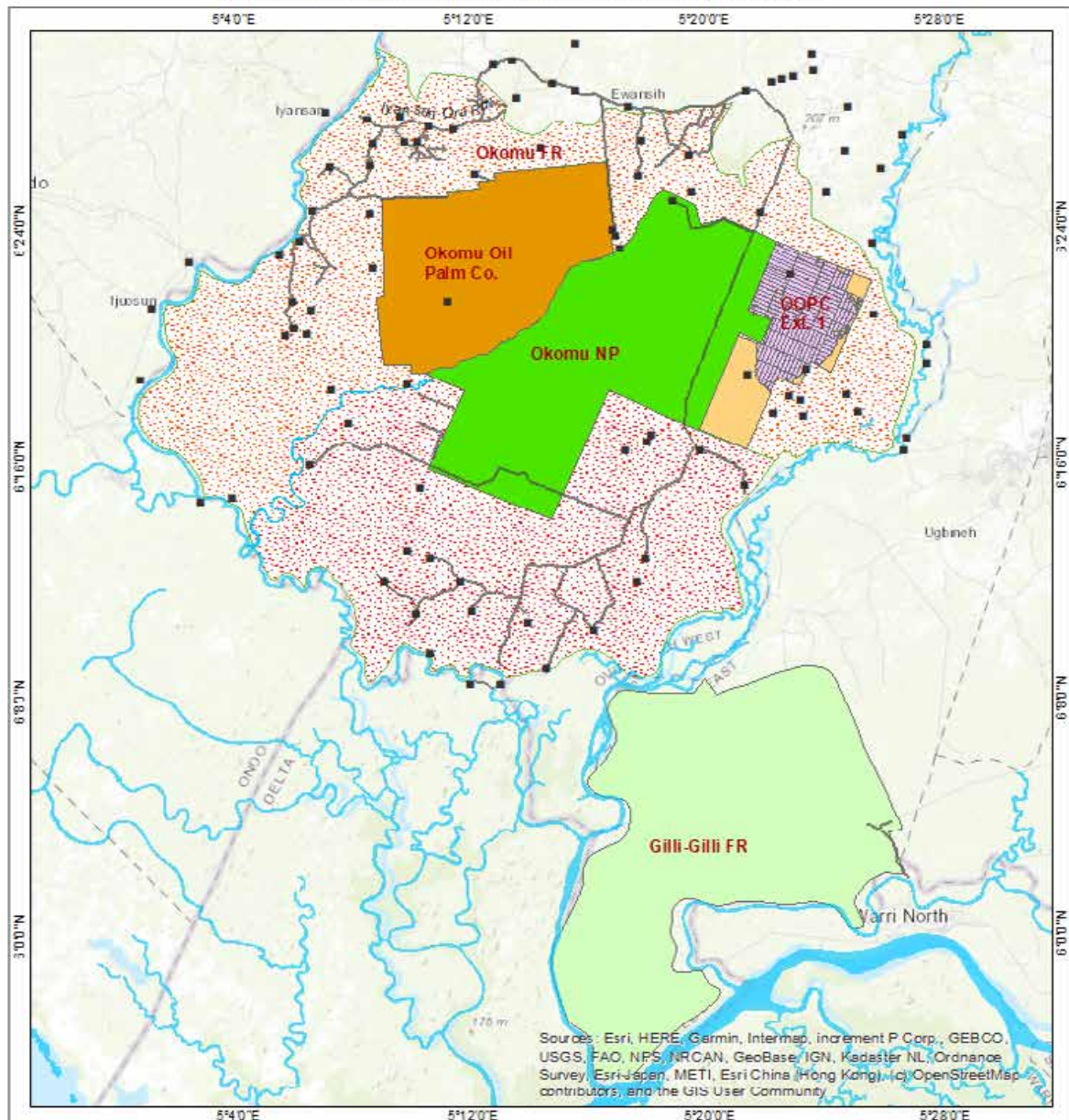
- Sign BPE/NPS eco-tourism concession agreement and initiate construction of 1st eco-lodge.
- Develop student's park wilderness trails and infrastructure and increase children's excursions.
- Conduct cultural heritage study and submit UNESCO World Heritage Site Tentative listing.
- Complete carbon PDD, register the project with VERRA and begin the validation process.
- Begin Measurement, Reporting, and Verification to ensure high-quality carbon credits.
- Commence the community CCB/FPIC process including benefit-sharing mechanism discussions with communities and government.

BRINGING NATURE BACK TO LIFE

OKOMU NATIONAL PARK



Okomu National Park and Okomu Forest Reserve Map



Legend

- Settlements
- Roads
- Waterbody
- Okomu Ext 1 Plots
- unplanted Area
- Okomu Oil Palm Co.
- Okomu NP Boundary
- Gilli-Gilli Forest Reserve
- Okomu Forest Reserve

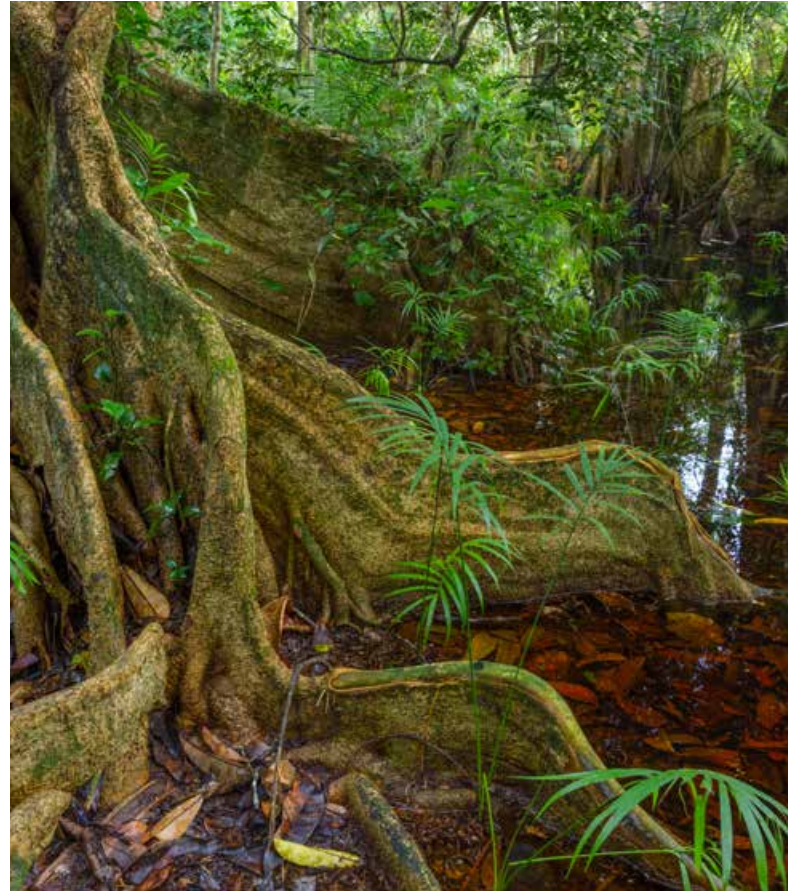
0 2 4 8 12 16 Kilometers



ANI

2.2 OKOMU NATIONAL PARK

Okomu National Park (ONP) is one of Nigeria's most important remaining lowland rainforests, and it harbours one of the country's last viable populations of African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*). The African forest elephant *Loxodonta cyclotis* is listed by IUCN as Critically Endangered. Also, ONP holds the largest population of the endangered white-throated guenon in Nigeria, along with other important species such as white-bellied pangolin, forest buffalo, red-capped mangabey and other unique animals and plants. The park falls within the lower Guinean rainforest, that was once found across all of southern Nigeria stretching from Nigeria's western border with the Republic of Benin, and further south through the Niger Delta and across to the western bank of the Cross River. Today, sadly, practically ALL of this unique rainforest is gone. It has been entirely cleared from south-western Nigeria and the forest that still remains in the Niger Delta is less biodiverse swamp and mangrove forest (see the map in Annex 2 that illustrates this). So Okomu is by far, the MOST important remaining refuge for the unique assemblage of plants and animals that make up the lower Guinean rainforest.



The park covers roughly 202 km² and is surrounded by the larger Okomu Forest Reserve. The elephant population in Okomu is estimated at 30–40 individuals and represents one of Nigeria's last breeding populations. The survival of these elephants depends on securing the park, important wildlife corridors and adjacent habitats from poaching, illegal logging, agricultural encroachment and other forms of habitat degradation.

Since signing a 30-year partnership agreement with the Nigeria National Park Service in 2022, ANI Foundation has invested significantly in strengthening the protection of the park. Sixty-six (66) rangers have been recruited from the local communities. They have been trained, equipped and deployed, resulting in a dramatic increase in law-enforcement presence and the arrest and prosecution of 162 offenders involved in illegal activities over the past three years. These efforts have drastically reduced illegal logging, farm encroachment and poaching across the park, demonstrating that sustained protection can deliver both immediate and long-term conservation gains.

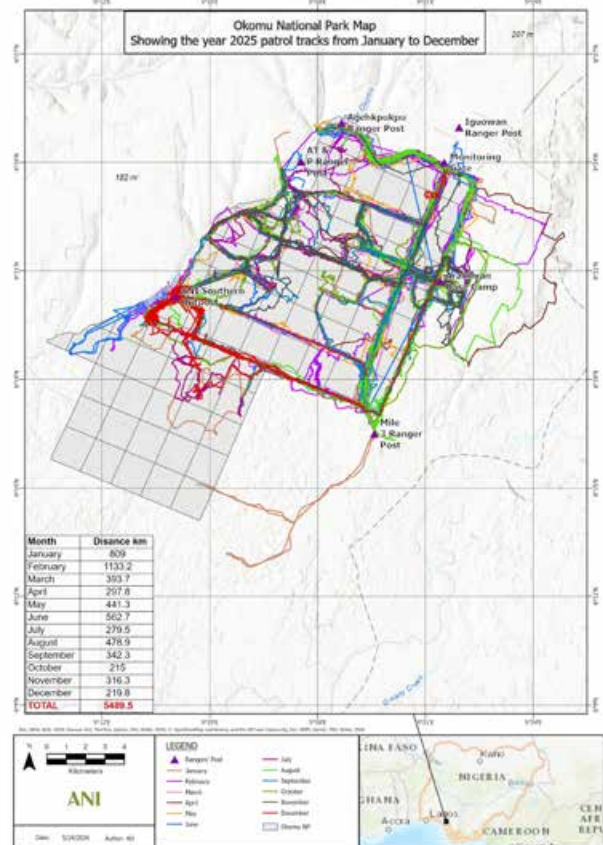
Activities in Numbers and comparison with the previous years:

	2023	2024	2025
Ranger patrol days	186	379	430
Ranger patrols-foot (km)	2,713	4,982	5,490
Approximate area of the park secured	51%	76.2%	78.3%
Arrests made	48	56	58
Wire snares collected	150	209	156
Illegal camps destroyed	35	25	3
Shotguns confiscated	8	4	2
Logging lorries confiscated	11	3	4
Chainsaws confiscated	10	2	4
Motorcycles confiscated	10	4	0
Bushmeat confiscated (kg)	64	19	26
Expended cartridges collected	310	298	241
No. of school visits	17	86	66
No. of conservation clubs created (cumulative)	0	20	26
No. of local employment (person-days).	2,460	13,500	12,282
No. of Savings and Loan Groups (cumulative)	6	6	9
Amount of savings made by SLGs (Naira)	NA	11,000,000	21,200,000
Value of loans provided by SLGs (Naira)	NA	5,300,000	10,000,000
No. of community meetings	24	50	69



1) Security, Protection, and Infrastructure

Law enforcement ranger patrols: Over the past year, ranger patrols across the park have mostly eliminated the rampant illegal logging that was destroying the park before the NPS-ANI partnership in Okomu. In addition, the security situation across the Okomu landscape has significantly improved in 2025 due to the patrols of the rangers. This has resulted in even stronger local support for the park because communities can go about their economic activities without fear of insecurity. We work collaboratively with the Nigerian Army, Police, Marine Police, state security agencies and local communities to deal with security challenges in the forest and waterways. Strategic deployment of ranger patrols is informed by intelligence gathered from a network of information sources and feedback from daily operations. Nevertheless, challenges still remain. The park's 28 active patrol rangers are overstretched, and illegal logging and farm encroachment still continue in the southern sector of the park due to the un-demarcated southern boundary. Farm encroachment is also an issue along the northern boundary along the highway to Udo. Poaching is still a challenge across the entire park. The map shows patrol coverage across the park in 2025.

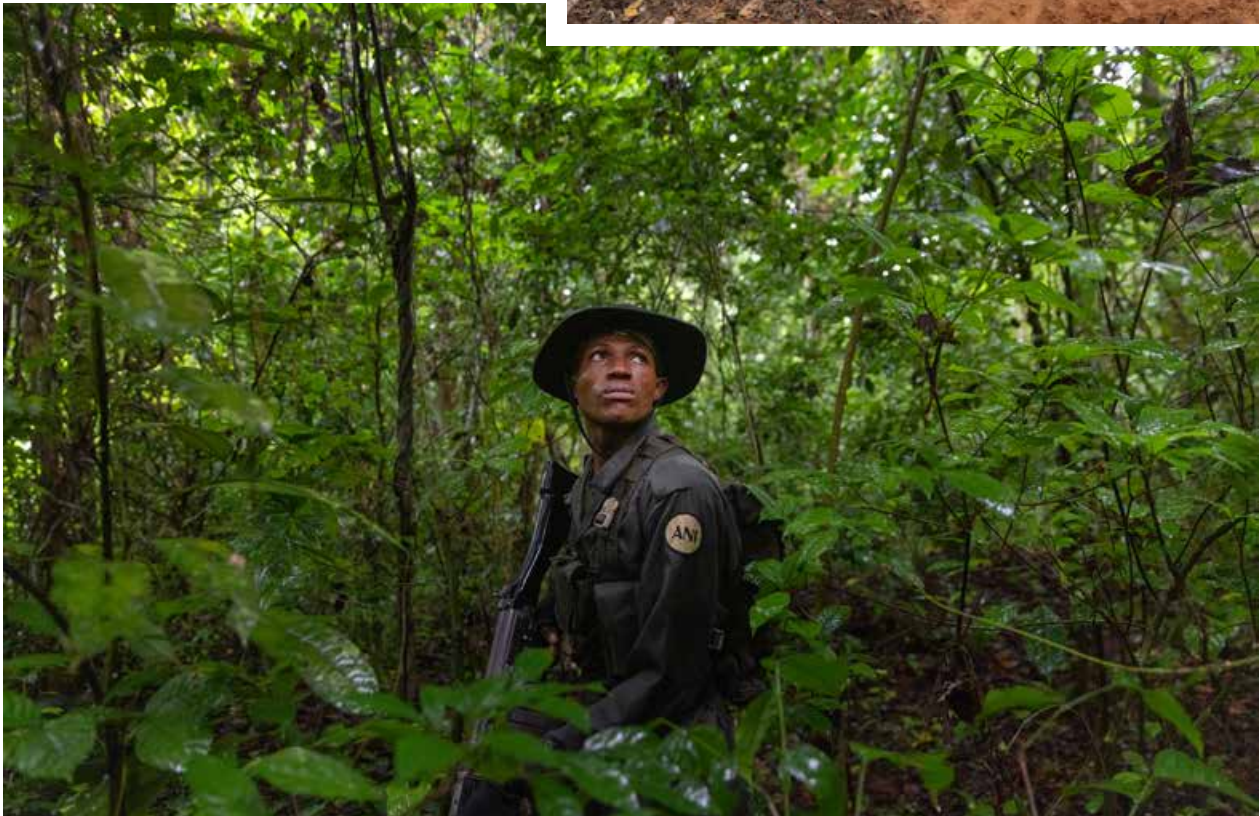




In the last quarter of 2025, we commenced a two-week screening process aimed at identifying suitable candidates to be recruited into the ranger force in 2026. The exercise attracted over 200 candidates from communities surrounding Okomu National Park, across Ovia Local Government Area and from the wider Niger Delta. While 78 candidates passed preliminary screening, a further and more rigorous screening brought the numbers to 40 candidates. These will commence a Basic Field Ranger training course led by the world-class ranger training organisation, Conservation Outcomes, in February of 2026. We are confident that recruiting an additional 40 rangers will further strengthen protection of the park and security for its surrounding communities.



Park infrastructure: The most significant achievement of the year was the completion of two 4-bedroom guest houses for management and visiting consultants at the ANI Arakhuan Outpost. We also expanded a 2.2km track leading to the outpost into a motorable road giving the outpost two vehicle exits rather than just a single road. A significant challenge for the park has been the absence of enabling infrastructure to facilitate ranger patrols into the southern sector of the park, which still faces significant illegal logging and farm encroachment. In 2024, our ranger patrols discovered an abandoned building on the western edge of the park. It is perfectly situated to enable patrols along the Okomu River – a major route for loggers into the park, and across the park's southern sector. We have commenced rehabilitation of the abandoned building into a new ranger outpost. Over 2026, we plan to complete its construction, and to install a 250ft VHF radio mast along with a 5kva solar system. We also plan to construct an internal park road to enable rapid ranger deployments to this poorly patrolled part of the park.





2) Community Engagement and Development

Okomu National Park is located on the southern edge of Edo State, north of the Niger Delta. Communities in this part of Nigeria are marginalised due to their distance from urban areas and government, and much work is needed to gain their trust and support for conservation. The northern part of the landscape is dominated by the Bini people who are chiefly farmers. The southern part of the landscape is inhabited mostly the Ijaw people who are mainly engaged in fishing. However, there are many migrant farmers in small hamlets in the surrounding Okomu Forest Reserve from other parts of Nigeria including Urhobo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Tiv, and Hausa. Most of these settlements are poor with few formal employment opportunities. Rural roads are mostly unpassable in the wet season; few have electricity or running water. School are in poor condition or absent and few have functioning health facilities.

Community engagement: Community engagement is an important aspect of ANI's work as it allows local communities to understand our project, interact, support, and communicate their expectations. The project has 3 Community Liaison staff devoted fulltime to community engagement. Their role is to communicate information to the all the communities around the park about the project, to build trust and to gather information on their development challenges and expectations. They also oversee the development activities described below.



Environmental Education: We completed a total of 66 school visits across 27 schools for conservation awareness and raising future conservation ambassadors. A total of 6 new Conservation Clubs were established in addition to the 20 existing and now with a membership of 909 school children (352 male and 557 female). Also, we conducted 17 guided field trips for 272 school children (male = 106, female = 166, providing firsthand experience on nature conservation, climate change science, and ecological restoration.



Savings and Loans Groups: Supporting community enterprise is at the core of our work. Our partner, Roshan Renewables (a female-led social enterprise) establishes Savings and Loan Groups (SLGs) and over the years, the SLGs have continued to grow, moving from 6 to 9 and a membership now at 270 people. When we started the SLG in the communities, there was lack of trust between the members, so they did not agree to loan out the savings for over six month. The savings was kept untouched. However, with continuous engagement, the members eventually agreed and developed trust amongst them. We are very proud to be able to support the development of such social cohesion amongst members. These SLGs support local women and youth to start small businesses and improve their farms. Some focus on garri processing, cassava farming, and kiosk openings. At the end of December 2025, we commenced the construction of two semi-automated cassava processing centres at Ugolo and Iguowan communities. This project is targeted serving more than 1,000 people within and around this communities, making processing easy, subsidised and improving household incomes.



At completion, groups will receive training and support to link up with markets. The main aim of this scheme is to give communities a tangible benefit from helping to protect the park.

A key part of our engagement is to ensure that communities understand this livelihood support is being given to them as incentives for their ongoing support in helping to protect the park. They can do this by providing the rangers with intelligence on illegal activities and stopping their communities from engaging in activities that could degrade the park. It is in effect, a social contract to help protect the park. In November 2025, the Leventis Foundation visited the project and pledged continued support for sustaining and expanding these SLGs.

Roshan Renewables has expanded Savings and Loan Groups (SLGs) from **6 to 9**, reaching **270 members** and supporting women and youth in small businesses and farming.



3) Biodiversity, Habitat and Wildlife Management

Okomu National Park contains one of three remaining populations of the critically endangered African forest elephant in Nigeria. It is also home to the endangered white-bellied pangolin, red-capped mangabey, white-throated guenons, and a diversity of important bird and plant species. It is estimated that the elephant population of the park is about 30-40 individuals (tbc). If our protection of this population is successful, a time will come when the park at 202 square km will be too small. There is also an opportunity to establish a forest corridor connecting the park with a new elephant habitat to the south in the Niger Delta. However, for this connectivity to be possible, there is an urgent need to demarcate the southern boundary of the park and replant the highly degraded areas affected by illegal logging and farm encroachment.



Southern Boundary Demarcation: The southern boundary of the park has remained un-demarcated for many decades. Over the past three years, we have continued to engage with all relevant stakeholders including the Edo State Government and approval for demarcation was given by the Governor in 2024. However, it is a delicate matter especially for individuals who have encroached into the park to accept for demarcation to be carried out. This year, we held various meetings focused on resolving this. A first step will be to identify all the individuals affected and to assess their fixed assets. We will continue to build trust and engage with these communities as we move forward into 2026.



Tree Planting in Degraded Areas of the Park: In 2025, we established a nursery for indigenous rainforest trees at the ANI Arakhuan Outpost, raising a total of 2,700 seedlings from 3 different species. The seedlings will be planted in degraded areas of the park identified through satellite imagery.



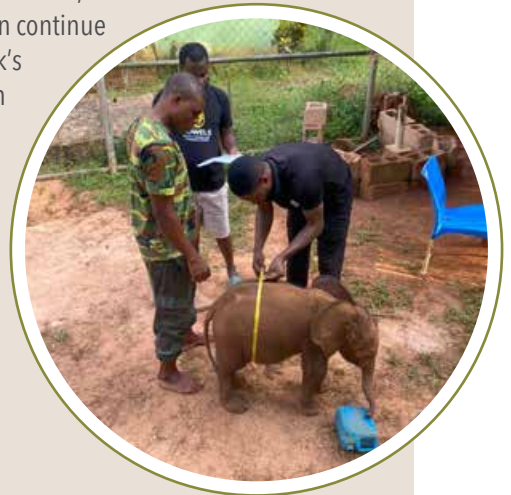


Elephant rehabilitation: At the end of November 2025, a male baby elephant was found wandering in the oil palm plantation next to Okomu National Park. Upon receiving the alert, ANI Foundation, in collaboration with the National Park Service (NPS) and Okomu Oil Palm Company Plc. (OOPC), moved quickly to bring the infant elephant to the park's Arakhuan Outpost. We immediately contacted the Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), and they put us in touch with Liz O'Brien, an elephant rescue specialist, based in Zambia. With Liz's support via WhatsApp, we frantically scrambled to look for powdered milk, oats, coconut oil and baby formula to feed the elephant and identified 2 rangers to give it 24-hour care and contact. Orphaned baby elephants are notoriously difficult to raise and need constant contact to survive the trauma of losing their mothers. Over the next 4 days, as the park rangers and OOPC's eco-guards searched the dense forests of park to try to locate the elephant's mother with little success, ANI and NPS agreed that to raise the elephant with the aim of reuniting it with the wild herd one day.

Over the last few months, a dedicated team of 5 keepers, 2 vets from OOPC, and Liz, have overseen the feeding of the elephant every three hours. In the first few weeks, the baby elephant almost died three times, from infections, but thanks to the vet's timely interventions (sometimes in the middle of the night), the elephant pulled through. It was only after its condition had stabilized, that the park rangers voted to name the baby elephant, "Agbaibor", this is an Edo name which means brave.

Mindful of the fact that Agbaibor's long-term survival depends on his ability to live and survive in the wild, the team of keepers, who effectively act as the elephant's mother, have minimised his contact with other humans. Over the next 18 months, the plan is to move Agbaibor, to an enclosure deep inside in the park where he will live alongside his 5 keepers and 4 rangers for the next 18 months. The baby elephant will continue to be fed milk and baby formula but over time, this will gradually be replaced by forest leaves that will form its diet in the wild. Eventually, the enclosure's gates will be left open to give Agbaibor, the opportunity to rejoin the wild elephant population of Okomu National Park.

African forest elephants are critically endangered, with fewer than 100 believed to remain in Nigeria, so every individual elephant is precious. By keeping Agbaibor in the Okomu National Park, the rescued elephant can continue to be part of the park's breeding population (estimated to be about 40 forest elephants). We hope Agbaibor will not just be a survivor but a father to the next generation of Okomu's forest elephants.





4) Monitoring, Research and Publicity

Research and monitoring data is essential for effective park management and protection. Our monitoring programme involves the daily collection of wildlife and human activity data using the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) and camera traps deployed at strategic locations in the park. During the reporting period, we recorded different groups of elephants and buffalo, birds, primates and other taxa.



Elephant monitoring in Okomu National Park: We monitor elephants in the park through camera traps and SMART-based ranger patrols daily, in both the wet and dry seasons. This has provided us with information on elephant individuals/groups, habitat use, and movement patterns within the park.

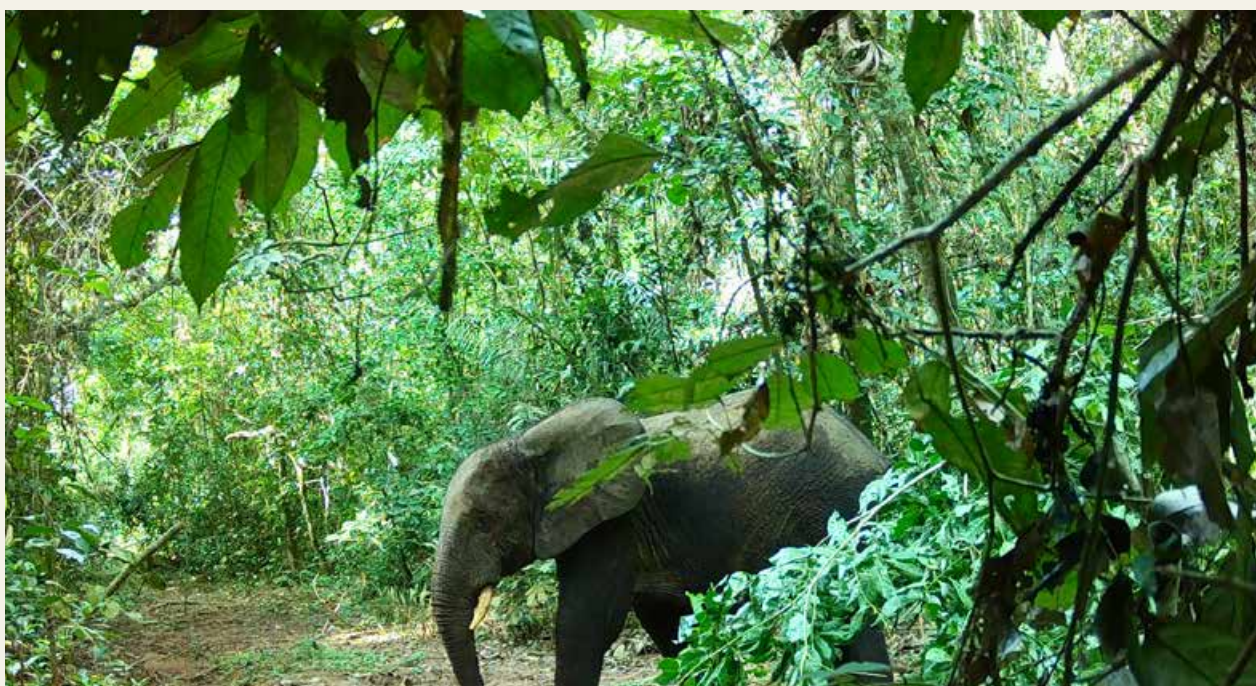
Twenty-six (26) elephants were captured by four camera traps deployed from March 2025 to July 2025. In addition to captures, a group of elephants (about 6 individuals) consisting of 3 adults and 3 juveniles was sighted on the 18th of March, around a lake. This brings the total number of elephants encountered from March to July 2025 to 32 at an encounter rate of about 6 elephants per month during the wet season. The highest number of captures was 15 (9 adults and 6 calves) in April, and no capture in March except for the 6 individuals encountered opportunistically during camera deployment.

Out of the 32 elephants, 13 were juveniles, including an infant, while 19 were adults. The records of 13 juveniles, including an infant suggests

a good reproduction rate and provides evidence that the protection of Okomu National Park is working. It is important to note that none of Okomu's elephants are tagged, therefore it is possible that the same individuals might have been recorded more than once. Therefore, our records of elephants encountered might not accurately reflect their population, but rather a reflection of the frequency of encounters. We plan to conduct a more rigorous assessment of the elephant populations using an IUCN approved methodology.

The data we are collecting will help us to better understand the ecology of the Okomu elephants and to evaluate our conservation efforts regarding their protection. From our encounters, observation of elephant dung, and camera traps, we know the Okomu elephants are concentrated in the centre of the park and especially frequent the various lakes and seasonally flooded areas. This is not surprising as water is important for elephants and water-logged areas tend to be the most intact areas of the park.





5) Sustainable Conservation Financing

Making conservation economically viable is critical for its long-term sustainability and protected areas must be economically relevant both to local people and to national governments. We are determined that all the necessary activities required to protect the Okomu landscape should at some point be funded by income from private sector financed ventures rather than having to rely upon philanthropy. It is also important to have a diversified set of income streams to protect against political and economic instability. For Okomu, the private sector opportunities we are developing are carbon credit finance and eco-tourism. In partnership with African Carbon Partners (ACP), we are conducting a pre-feasibility assessment on the potential of carbon credits from replanting the degraded parts of Okomu National Park.

Planned Activities for 2026

In the coming year, key activities will include:

Security, protection, and infrastructure:

- Construction of the additional ranger facilities at Arakhuan, southern outpost and central outpost.
- Continue construction of internal park jeep tracks from Arakhuan to central outpost and onwards to southern outpost and purchase additional patrol vehicle.
- Carry out refresher/patrol leaders training for all rangers.

Community Engagement and Development:

- Expand SLG programme to include young men, and upgrade women's SLGs into cooperatives.
- Develop farmer support with agroforestry and farmer partnerships with commercial off taker/buyer company.
- Further build up on education programme (scholarships and school infrastructure improvements).

Biodiversity, habitat and wildlife management

- Replanting of degraded parts of the park.

Monitoring, Research and Publicity

- Expand camera trap deployment and analysis programme.
- Commence research on elephants and other large mammals.
- Move infant elephant to forest boma.
- Construct student hostel by park entry monitoring gate.

Sustainable conservation financing: Carbon Credits:

- Conduct pre-feasibility study into carbon potential of Okomu National Park..

3. OUR PARTNERS

3.1 GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

National Park Service and Federal Ministry of Environment: Nigeria's national parks face tremendous challenges due to chronic under funding compared to those in East and Southern Africa for example. ANI believes, with significant investment and management, the country's parks will become economic assets for the nation, generating employment for thousands of people and providing revenue to the government. This is in addition to providing critical ecosystem services. We salute the National Park Service (NPS) and the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv) for having the foresight to sign the Partnership Agreements with ANI for Gashaka Gumti National Park and Okomu National Park. These agreements have enabled us to unlock significant finance and technical expertise to protect and develop these parks. We look forward to many more years of fruitful collaboration as we work together to make these two parks into models for the rest of Africa to emulate.



Taraba State, Adamawa State and Edo State Governments: The communities living around the national parks live on land under the jurisdiction of state governments. A critical part of our work involves supporting the communities who have a stake in the protection of these parks. Already we work closely with the states on various issues of mutual interest, particularly security. We signed an MoU with Edo State in 2022 and Taraba State in 2025 to work together on tourism, education, SMEs, agriculture and pastoralism.



Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE): ANI is working closely with the National Park Service and Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE) on an eco-tourism concession in Gashaka Gumti National Park, which will be the first in Nigeria. We are excited at the prospect of changing the hearts and minds of Nigerians towards their national parks and being a pilot for other national parks in Nigeria to learn from.

National Council for Climate Change (NCCC): ANI signed an MoU with NCCC in November 2022 for the development of carbon projects in Gashaka Gumti and Okomu National Parks. ANI is proud to be working alongside NCCC in the development of some of Nigeria's first forest carbon projects. Our aspiration is for long-term finance for the protection of these parks, as well as sustainable income for the surrounding communities and for government.

Federal Ministry of Livestock: This new ministry was created in July 2024, as part of Nigeria's efforts to transform and modernise Nigeria's livestock sector. Given the important influence pastoralists have in the Gashaka Gumti landscape, we look forward to piloting new and innovative approaches together with the Ministry.



Ministry of Defence, the army and other security agencies: In both the Gashaka Gumti and Okomu national parks, the rangers play a key role in helping to maintain security in the regions surrounding the parks. We salute the fruitful collaboration we have enjoyed with the Ministry of Defence, the army and other security agencies at all levels in curtailing kidnapping, cattle rustling, banditry and mining related insecurity that threatens the livelihoods of the people living in and around both national parks.



3.2 STRATEGIC FUNDING PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We thank our partners, our host communities, and donors for making our work possible. Together, we are making Africa's nature more resilient and helping local communities achieve tangible benefits from conservation.



3.3 SUPPORT US

ANI is a leading organisation in protected area management in Nigeria. When you donate to ANI, you are helping to protect some of the last wildernesses in West Africa and changing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who depend on these iconic landscapes and their wildlife. Through our work we will transform the way West Africans view and value protected areas because they will see them as places that generate jobs and contribute to the national economy – and as importantly – will strengthen their sense of wonder at the beauty of nature in the world. Whatever you give to support our work is gratefully received, and makes a difference in the field. If you would like to find out more, please visit our website: www.africanatureinvestors.org.





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