



OKAPI CONSERVATION PROJECT

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT





# Project Staff

President (US) – John Lukas  
On-site Director – Rosmarie Ruf  
Accountant – Mutahinga Mumbere Eleme  
Asst. Accountant – Kambale Katsuva  
Julien  
Program Officer (US) – Lucas Meers  
Education Coordinator – M'monga Kiete

## Agroforestry

Enckoto Bameseto  
Makubuli Mwanika  
Masiyiri Mulawa  
Mpinda Tchinkunku  
Muvi Yalala  
Muhindo Muliwavyo  
Kasereka Tsongo  
Sambi Mukandilwa  
Lobo Lina  
Nadepa Awelekyalanga  
Manbgeto Bambakonda Therese

## Educators

Gomo Akya  
Kasereka Kyove  
Mumbere Kayenga  
Toliba Maseko  
Carine MAKONGA  
Roger OZANDE  
Eric SIVINA  
KAMBALE MASTAKI  
Faustin Mbuza

## Healthcare

Anzatepedanga  
Mbambu Mituho  
Mulowayi Katalayi  
Oyokudhu Alipa Franck  
Seburo BWICU Gilbert

## Infrastructure/Maintenance

Mbete Nguma  
Kababo Mutubule  
Panga Madro  
Sagbolo Yuma  
Paluku Kakule  
Mbusa Mughanda  
Muhindo Maliro  
Vusike Kiruzi  
Abdoul KIMAKIMA  
Kasereka Katsuva  
Katsuva Kaposo  
Yangunapayi Makasi  
Abdala Morisho  
Alezo

# Mission

**TO CONSERVE THE OKAPI IN THE WILD, WHILE PRESERVING THE BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF THE ITURI FOREST**

OKAPI  
CONSERVATION  
PROJECT



Okapi are peaceful, quiet and gentle and so mysterious they were not discovered by Western science until 1901. They are known by every Congolese adult and child as a symbol for their vast rainforests teeming with life. In DRC, likenesses of okapi are used to market a vast array of products.

# A Letter From John

The Okapi Conservation Project since its inception has been all about investment. We invest in the place where okapi live, invest in the communities that share the lands with okapi, invest in people that drive program success and invest in fostering a good working relationship with government officials that oversee conservation in DRC.

In 2018 amidst regional instability, our staff had to deal with unpredictable events that led to an ambush attack on an OCP vehicle where six innocent people died, the spread of the Ebola epidemic closer to the Reserve, more miners invading the Reserve and uncertainty leading up to the elections in December. Despite all the difficulties our staff and ICCN rangers faced, they were able to persevere and hold the line because your support is invested in them, the place and neighboring communities.

It is of utmost importance to me that the work we started and the progress we have made over the last 32 years continues well into the future. For that to happen, the appropriate talent and infrastructure needs to be in place so that the work can continue uninterrupted. We invest in well-built facilities and provide the logistical support so that the brave rangers can patrol the Reserve controlling illegal activities that threaten okapi habitat. To gain support, respect and cooperation of communities living inside and

around the Reserve, we invest in projects that improve their quality of life. We continued to invest in bringing on board talented young people, especially women. We also invested in the education of the three children of our educator, Kalinda, who was killed in the attack on our vehicle.

It has been, and continues to be, our strategy to invest in all the stakeholders involved in or impacted by the conservation of okapi habitat. We have seen our holistic investment approach (which is made possible by your donations and grants) pay dividends in the form of over 8,000 square miles of intact okapi habitat protected that supports a viable population of okapi and allows the Mbuti Pygmies to continue to live their traditional lifestyle deep in the forest.

Thank you for all your support,





# By the Numbers

In 2018, we made significant investments that led to advancements in protecting wildlife and supporting communities around the Okapi Wildlife Reserve. We are immensely proud of our wonderful staff and ICCN rangers and are eternally grateful for our generous donors who helped accomplish these achievements.

**50**

new ICCN rangers recruited and trained for the field.

**24,038**

kilometers were covered by ICCN rangers on patrol.

**2**

aerial surveys were done to identify new mines around the Reserve.

**3,374**

patients were treated at the Okapi Dispensary.

**sent 300**

pounds of field equipment to ICCN rangers to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

**3,000**

educational calendars were distributed to local communities throughout the region.

**1,678**

illegal miners were escorted from the Reserve by ICCN rangers.

**69,906**

seedlings were distributed to over 2,100 farmers as part of our agroforestry program.

**16**

okapi were observed by ICCN rangers while on patrol.

**170**

poachers were arrested by ICCN rangers inside the Reserve.

**4,822**

snare traps were dismantled and removed from the Reserve.

**over 15,000**

people participated in events and learned about conservation on World Okapi Day.

# Attack on OCP Vehicle

On February 27, 2018, a truck carrying ICCN and OCP staff and citizens from Epulu was ambushed by a group of armed individuals as it entered the town of Erengeti, 200 miles east of Epulu. The truck was destroyed, six people lost their lives, and four others were seriously wounded. OCP educator, Kalinda Mubengwa died from his injuries at the hospital. The Congolese army was able to repel the attackers while ICCN rangers secured the safety of the survivors. Eastern DRC is home to multiple armed groups competing for control of the region's vast mineral resources. The attack was most likely carried out

by members of the Allied Democratic Forces, a rebel group with origins in Uganda, that is accused of killing hundreds of people over the past three years.

We are deeply sorry to all the families of those who lost their lives, and for all our Reserve staff and colleagues who lived and worked closely with those that died in the attack.

We continue to support and invest in the families of the fallen rangers and OCP staff by covering the costs of their children's school fees. And with generous support from Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Houston Zoo and Susan Tall, we were able to replace the truck to ensure our protection efforts and community programs are able to continue.



Thanks to Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Houston Zoo, Susan Tall and additional donors, we were able to quickly replace the damaged truck and pay the school fees for Kalinda's children.





ICCN Confiscation Depot to secure confiscated items from illegal activity.



The new Mambasa Complex that houses our women's group, education team and ICCN office.

## Infrastructure Improvements

Two thousand eighteen marked a significant year of investing in the infrastructure of the Okapi Wildlife Reserve. Early in the year, with the help of Fondation Segré and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, construction was completed on an immigration checkpoint and office at the Zunguluka Patrol Post, and an internet office building in Epulu to increase communication between OCP and ICCN staff members and among patrol posts around the Reserve.



Thanks to the support of a donor from the Wildlife Conservation Network, a tree nursery in the village of Wamba, just northwest of the Reserve was opened to expand the reach of our agroforestry program, filling a critical need for farmers in the area, and it is led by our first female agronome, Therese Bangbeto. We continue to invest in building capacity and providing employment in the Reserve, especially for women.

In late 2018, the Mambasa office complex was constructed, housing our educators, Mambasa women's group, Agroforestry office, and ICCN field office. The new building has increased the motivation and efficiency of the women, providing suitable storage for their materials and a space to work out of the tropical heat and rain. The office complex was so successful, word has spread to the four other Women's Groups around the Reserve, resulting in a push to secure funding to construct buildings in those areas. In December, construction on the ICCN Confiscation depot began, which was completed in early 2019. This building houses confiscated items from ICCN patrols – weapons, animal products and illegal mining and poaching equipment.

By investing in the infrastructure of the region, it not only increases the efficiency and protection of the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, but it also improves the morale of the personnel, providing additional motivation to fulfill the mission of the Reserve to protect the forest resources for the benefit of people and wildlife.



Internet Office Building to improve communication between OCP and ICCN and ranger posts around the Reserve.



# Rescued Primates Receive a Second Chance

In late summer 2018, a young chimpanzee and baboon were confiscated by ICCN rangers in Badengaido, and were brought to OCP for temporary care. We provided antibiotics and plenty of generous affection before arranging a transfer of the two animals to Lwiro Primate Sanctuary.

For several years prior to this rescue, OCP has had no primate confiscations, but with the explosive growth of the town Badengaido being used to access illegal mining camps there has been an increase in poaching activity.

Sadly, the confiscation of a single chimpanzee infant means the loss of their mother and likely the rest of the family, as chimpanzees will try and defend themselves. The young will then be sold on the black market as pets. Wildlife trade is a serious issue and if not controlled, can have disastrous effects on wildlife populations.

Thankfully for the chimpanzee and baboon, ICCN rangers discovered them in time, and we are happy to report the youngsters arrived safely at Lwiro and are now thriving after receiving proper veterinary care and meeting their new surrogate families.



Caretaker Mokonzi provided around-the-clock care, as chimp infants need affection during this critical stage in their lives.



In honor of Rosmarie Ruf, our In-Country Director, Lwiro Primate Sanctuary named the young female chimp, Rosie.





# Agroforestry

Okapi Conservation Project (OCP) has continued to invest in local farmers by providing seeds, tools, supplies, and technical guidance. The addition of the new nursery in Wamba, now run by our first female agronomer, Therese Bangbeto, has allowed us to increase the output of nitrogen-fixing trees, nut-producing trees for farmers, and trees for reforestation projects. Because of the addition of this 5th nursery in Wamba, OCP now contributes to improving food security in the communities in the northern part of the Reserve. In 2018, we were able to produce and distribute nearly 70,000 trees, far surpassing our goal of 60,000!

In DRC, International Tree Day is celebrated at the end of each year, coinciding with the last rains of the

year to provide ample watering for the young trees. Celebrations were organized around the OWR to involve students in reforestation projects at their schools. In total, 545 trees were planted with 450 individuals participating.

Schools are typically constructed by clearing an area of trees or building on abandoned gardens. Once constructed, the school sits in an open area subject to the hot sun. By reforesting the areas around schools, trees provide shade from the heat to students and faculty. The trees also provide a connection to nearby forests that act as wildlife corridors and food sources for native wildlife. More importantly, involving students in these projects teaches them the importance of conservation efforts and what they can do personally to help.

# Women's Groups

For the past 13 years, OCP has been investing in women around the Reserve with the goal of expanding our reach to empower even more women. Working with women provides an opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of conservation of natural resources to these influential members of the community.

OCP supports Women's Groups by providing resources including administrative support, sewing machines and materials, and bean and vegetable seeds for community gardens in Epulu, Mambasa, Niania, Wamba, and Mungbere. OCP staff help initiate and manage the programs that improve food security, safeguard water resources from pollution and overuse, and provide

economic opportunities to generate money to pay their children's health care costs and school fees.

World Okapi Day delivers a platform for women to speak on issues important to them and about the need to use natural resources sustainably at sport events and ceremonies taking place throughout the day.

On March 8th the villages around the Reserve celebrated International Women's Day through parades and activities that share the importance and involvement of women in each of the communities.

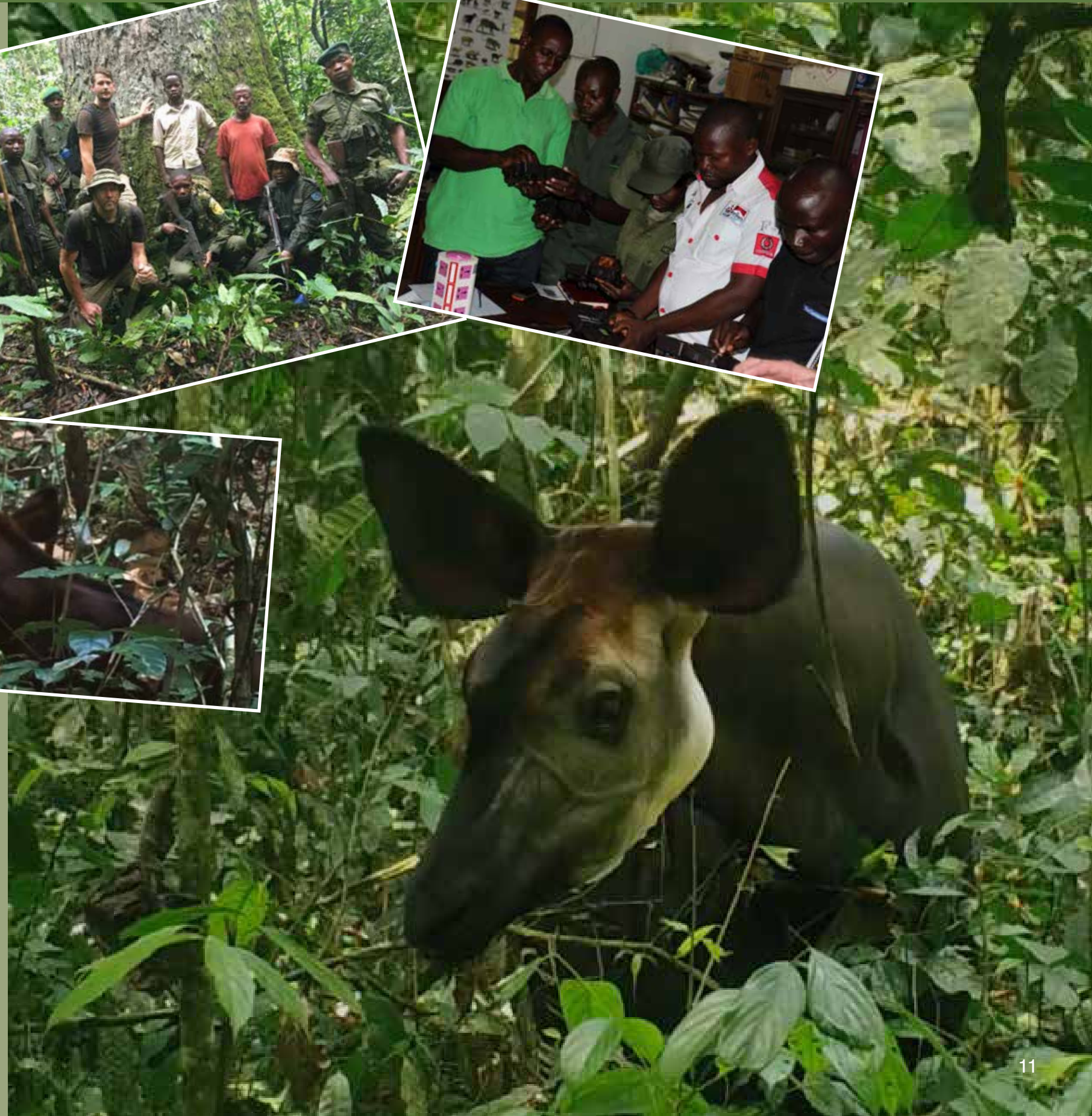


# Camera Traps

Early in 2018, OCP was hopeful to see an okapi calf on one of our camera traps after we observed a pregnant female browsing in December 2017. On February 13, 2018 our hopes were realized as the new mother and her newborn strolled across the field of view of the camera, the first-ever footage of an okapi calf in the wild.

Due to her very progressed pregnancy in the December 2017 footage, we believe she gave birth soon after passing in front of the camera. Naturally, the calf stayed hidden in the rainforest, most likely between large buttress roots, as the mother came and went to feed. After roughly two months, the calf began following the mother around, allowing us to capture this incredible footage.

You can see the characteristic mane on the back of the neck and down its back, which the calf will gradually lose as it grows older. Okapi are one of the fastest growing ungulate species, and it won't be long until this little one is full grown.





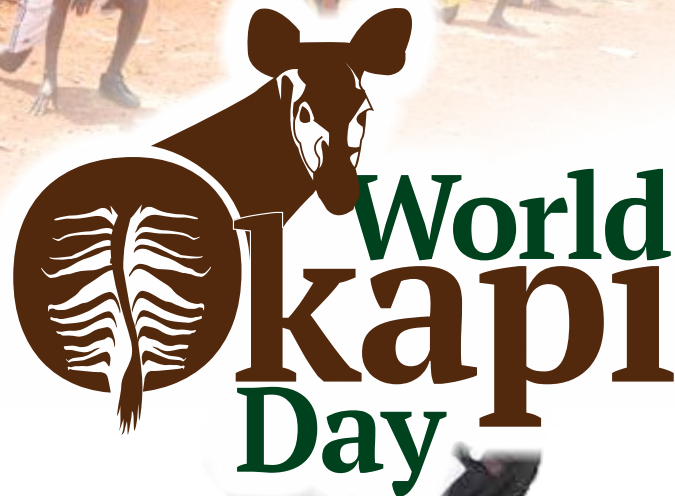
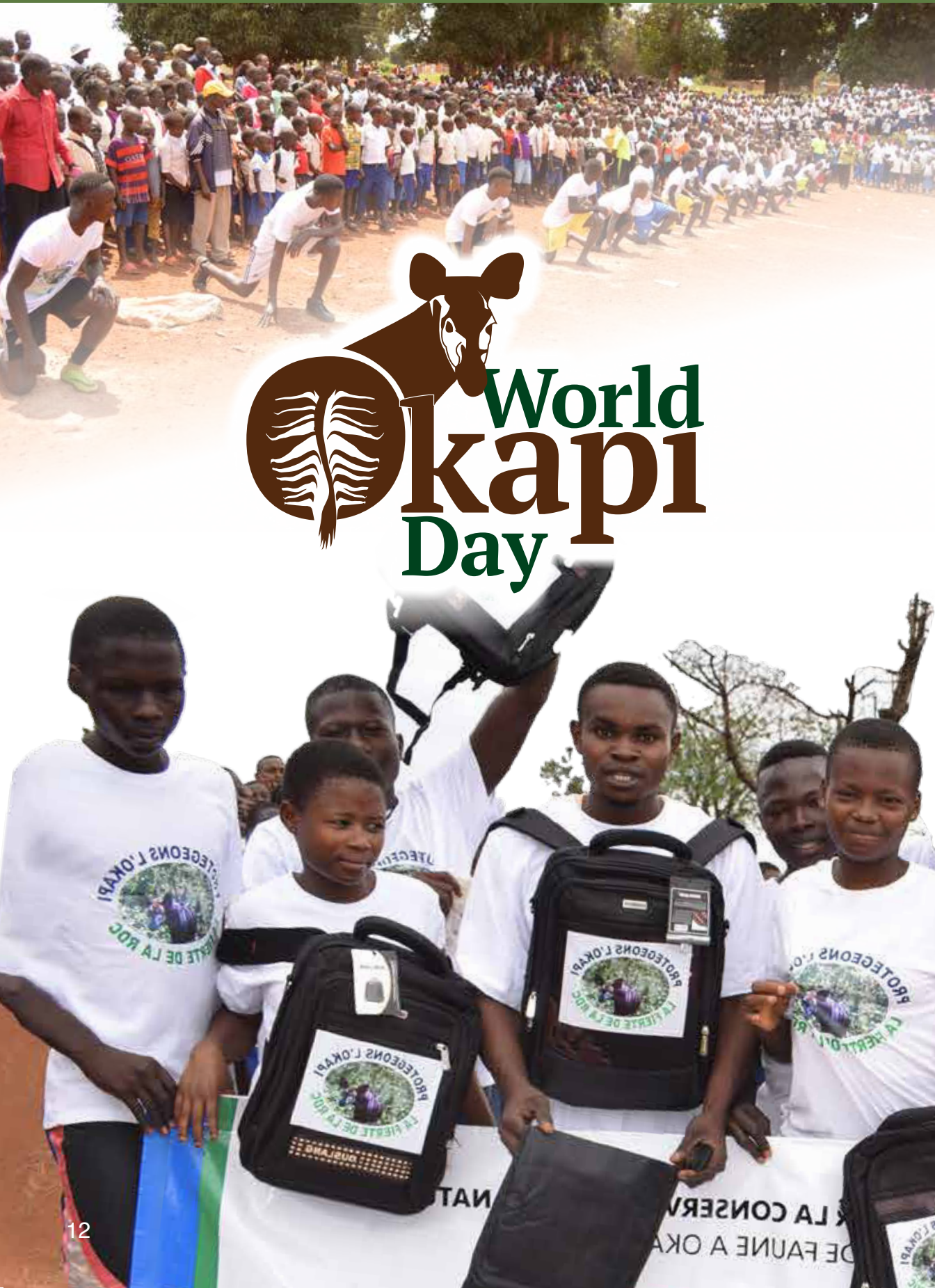
# World Okapi Day

In 2018, OCP increased the reach of World Okapi Day by including women's groups in the activities. Celebrations were held in Epulu, Mambasa, Mungbere and Watsa, and our approach has always been to engage local communities, and World Okapi Day creates community wide excitement for forest protection.

This year, safety and travel conditions were a major concern, so races were shortened to sprints instead of 5-kilometer runs. The winners of the races had their school fees covered for a semester and all participants received backpacks and t-shirts.

Celebrations begin with community parades, followed by OCP educators speaking on the need to protect the forest to help conserve okapi. As the day progresses, audiences gather for the student races and soccer games. Thanks to the World Okapi Day events, an estimated 15,000 children and adults were exposed to our message of environmental stewardship.

These celebrations were only possible because of the support from Saint Louis Zoo, Tanganyika Wildlife Park, Zoo Antwerpen and ZooTampa at Lowry Park.



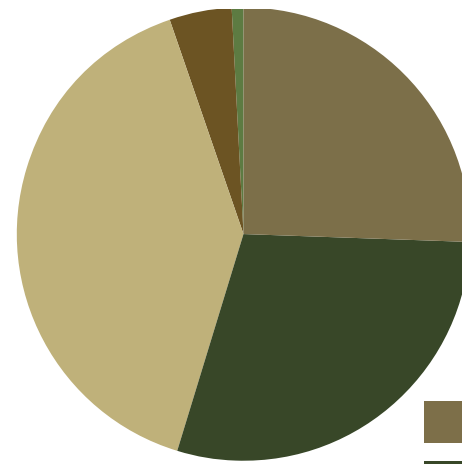


# Where are we located?



The Okapi Conservation Project works in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (OWR) in the northeastern sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Covering nearly 14,000 square kilometers and encompassing one fifth of the Ituri Forest, the OWR was established in 1992, declared a World Heritage Site in 1996 and supports the largest populations of okapi, chimpanzees and forest elephants in DRC. In addition to the many species of plants and animals, the OWR is also home to the indigenous Mbuti Pygmies, a population of hunter-gatherers that share the forest with the endangered okapi.

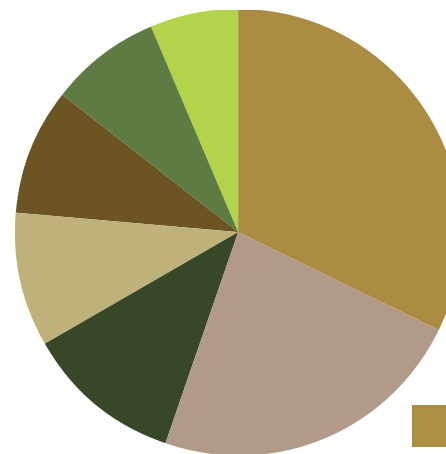
# 2018 Financials



## Revenue

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Individuals          | \$247,731 |
| Zoo Support          | \$280,287 |
| Grants               | \$383,420 |
| CARPE                | \$42,357  |
| Miscellaneous Income | \$7,963   |

\$961,758



## Expenses

|                            |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| ICCN Support               | \$309,855 |
| OCP Epulu Operations       | \$221,340 |
| Conservation Education     | \$110,277 |
| Community Assistance       | \$92,037  |
| Infrastructure Improvement | \$60,203  |
| Healthcare                 | \$77,111  |
| US/Nairobi                 | \$88,300  |

\$959,123



# Donors

## Zoos and Related Institutions

AAZK - Greater Orlando  
Antwerp Zoo  
Berlin Zoo  
Bioparc de Doue la Fontaine  
Blank Park Zoo  
Brookfield Zoo  
Chester Zoo  
Cheyenne Mountain Zoo  
Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden  
Cologne Zoo  
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium  
Copenhagen Zoo  
Dallas Zoo  
Detriot Zoo  
Disney's Animal Kingdom  
Dublin Zoo  
Dvur Kralove Zoo  
Fort Worth Zoo  
Great Plains Zoo  
Houston Zoo  
Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens  
Lisbon Zoo  
Los Angeles Zoo  
Nashville Zoo  
National Zoo of South Africa  
Northwest Zoopath  
Oklahoma City Zoo  
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo  
Parco Zoo Falconara  
Potawatomi Zoo  
Roosevelt Park Zoo  
Rotterdam Zoo  
Sacramento Zoo  
Safari West  
Saint Louis Zoo  
San Antonio Zoo  
San Diego Zoo Global  
Sedgwick County Zoo  
Stichting Wildlife

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo  
Tanganyika Wildlife Park  
The Maryland Zoo at Baltimore  
Ueno Zoo  
White Oak Conservation  
Wilhelma Zoo  
Wroclaw Zoo  
Wroclaw Zoo Foundation DODO  
Yokohama's ZOORASIA  
Zoo Basel  
Zoo Leipzig  
Zoo Miami  
Zoo Wuppertal  
ZooParc de Beauval

## Foundations and Grant Organizations

Amazon Smile  
Bass Family Foundation  
Booster Funds  
CGMK Foundation  
Disney EARS to You  
Disney Matching Gift Program  
Fondation Segré  
Global Giving  
Google Match Gift Program  
Hogg/Baily Charitable Fund  
Intel Corporation Match Gift Program  
KfW - German Forest Biodiversity Conservation Project  
M.Piuze Foundation  
Network For Good  
Okapi Partners  
Pepsico Foundation  
Tape Technologies  
Teespring, Inc  
The Discovery School  
The George and Mary Rabb Charitable Fund  
Tusk Trust  
UNESCO  
USAID-CARPE  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
Walt Disney Company

Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign  
Wendy Obernauer Foundation  
Wildlife Conservation Global  
Wildlife Conservation Network  
Wildlife Conservation Society  
Workday Matching Gift Program

## Individual Donors

**\$10,000+**

Hixon, Joseph M  
Norvig, Kristan and Peter

**\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Anonymous  
Marano, Lizbeth & Mel Bochner  
Tall, Susan

**\$2,000 - \$4,999**

Chan, Beverly  
Dar, Adrienne  
Ekstrand, Rikard  
Karnos, Kristine  
Pell, William  
Posner, David  
Schauer, Louis F.  
Anonymous

**\$1,000 - \$1,999**

Berryman, Alec  
Dortort, Fred  
Field, Alexander  
Goldfarb, Bruce  
Hansink, Kimberly  
Herrold, Edmund & Ellen Yamaguchi  
Langston, Angela  
Lidell, Michael  
Spector, Bev & Ken Lipson  
Tabor-Beck, Linda  
Woods, Gerald

**\$500 - \$999**

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Berg, Judith  
Caulfield, Sean  
Cermak, Iri

Citino, Scott  
Donaghy, Melanie  
Dorion, Dorothy  
Ellis, Susie  
Farkas, Sandra  
Geske, Matthew  
Hackett, Michael  
Johnson, Kim  
Junhold, Joerg  
Lukas, John & Vanessa  
Lundberg, Shane  
Mabbett, Trent  
Major, Andrew & Gemma  
Mccarthy, Margaret  
Mekarska, Anna  
Mujsce, Carol  
Parker, Marjorie  
Schwimmer, Lawrence  
Vergara, Hugh  
Wildt, David

**\$250 - \$499**

Barongi, Rick & Diane Ledder  
Brunner, Dacia  
Byrne, Bridget A  
Catlin Tubbs  
Ewald, Andrea & Stephan Meyer-Ewald  
Flocken, Jeffrey  
Friedel, Sarah & Roger  
Geneson, Nina  
Geyer, Kellie  
Henery, Paula Ivey  
Knowles, John  
Kobialka, William  
Loizeaux, Christine  
Papen, Roland  
Perkins, Mara & Robert  
Petric, Ann  
Plosser, Charles & Janet  
Rapp, Steven  
Reardon, Maureen & Denis  
Stauffer, Alice, T. Reams & T. Hagler  
Thompson, Lawrence  
Tucker, Lisa & Douglas  
Williams, Andrew & Rebecca Christoffel  
Witherspoon, Pamela  
Zych, Noah & Ariel



## \$100 - \$249

Adams, James  
Baumayer, Anthony  
Bell, Sally  
Bosco, Robert  
Bugman, Nancy Gee  
Decoto, Cheri  
Delmanowski, Susan  
Differding, Amy  
Elsenberger, Jacob  
Eyring, Kim  
Farley, Kristopher  
Freedom, Mercury & Rea  
Gelvin, Bruce  
Gerlach, Caroline  
Goff, Katherine  
Gray, Caroline  
Green, Michael & Anne  
Gross, Adam  
Gruen MD, Melissa  
Hanson, Michelle  
Hayhurst, Marcie  
Heminway, John  
Holt, James  
House, Josiah  
Johnson, Michael  
Laughbaum, Margaret  
Leigh Jacques, Sam  
Lemon, Peter  
Leskiw, Tricia  
Lovett, Andrew  
Maloney, Laura  
Mangum, Nancy  
Martin, Claire  
Martin, Vance  
Mather, Tim  
Norris, Richard  
Palmans, Ann  
Pharoah, Jeremy  
Poe, Jerry  
Poole, Andrew  
Riley, Morrison  
Robinson, Philip  
Rose, Heidi

Rouff, Jacqueline  
Searight, Jane  
Singh, Harcharan  
Sivek, Marcia  
Spain, Catherine  
Stewart, Sarah  
Stoddard, Rochelle  
Tjugito, Rani  
Van de Mark, Donald  
Warren, Trina  
Wierda, Eelco  
Worth, Bob & Margaret  
McCarthy  
Wright, Amy

## \$1 - \$99

Abaja, Merle  
Adams, Carissa  
Allen, Katherine  
Allen, Veleta  
Alva, Jessica  
Anderson, Keishia  
Andrews, Angela  
Anonymous  
Armstrong, Elizabeth  
Artemis, Artemis  
Battiste, Ari & Kati  
Bell, Edward  
Besocke, Kate  
Bevington, Douglas  
Birch, Tanya & Peter  
Birkhoff, Justin  
Boone, Abby  
Brewer, Benjamin  
Bronwen, Ellis  
Calderon, Yolanda & Gary  
Kilbourn  
Calhoun, Austin  
Centlivre, Molly  
Chen, Wenjie  
Claus, Wendy  
Coastes, Heather  
Cobey, John  
Cole, Stacie  
Collomb, Jean-Gael &  
Maria DiGiano

Coulon, Patrick  
Davalos, Ximena  
Doong, Jennifer  
Ellis, Lucy  
Enders, Maurice  
Face, Valerie  
faelli, marina  
Finley, Mark  
Foley, Victoria  
Fouk, John  
Gama, Taciana  
Grap, Christopher  
Gray, Anne  
Green, Anne  
Gruen MD, Liss  
Harrington, Christina  
Harris, Diana  
Hezaveh, Nick  
Hillmer, Barbara  
Hopp, Susan  
Huerta, Johnny  
Husbands, Judy  
Hutchens, Cindy  
Irvine, Georgeanne  
Ishiwada, Kenji  
Jacobs, Jason  
Jasdanwala, Dyami  
Johnson, Alexa  
Johnson, James  
Johnson, Kari  
Jordan, Joshua  
Keelen, Kevin  
Kendall, Nancy  
Kershaw, Cheryl & Terry  
Khepri, Brian & Tatum  
Johnson  
Kirchoff, Bruce  
Knox, Jillian  
Koach, Jessica  
Koch, Karin  
Kopperud, Gail  
Lampen, Ulrick  
Lane, Helena  
Ledet, Veronica  
Lemon, Peter  
Levin, Charles

Lomas, Frank  
Lovett, Andrew  
Martin, Fran & Jim  
Growden  
Martinez, Marie  
Masselink, Joe  
Matingly, Madeline  
Matumoto, Yoshiki  
Mayes, Dalton  
Mazzoni, Kimbeley  
McAteer, Bora  
McDonald, Laura  
McGinnis, Megan  
Meers, Lucas  
Miller, Michael  
Moreno, Sandra  
Musser, Susan  
Navratil, Sharon  
Nelson, Kimber  
Newman, Alyssa  
Nycum, Alyssa  
Orton, Lisa  
Papageorgiou, Sophia  
Parker, Keri & Paul  
Pieper  
Petronaci, Lauren  
Phillips, Susan  
Pollitt, Nigel  
Prefontaine, Lynne  
Purcell, Jason  
Raghunath, Raja  
Reardon, Caitlin  
Reed, Lisa  
Reid, Bonnie  
Riazian, Maryam  
Richie, Michael  
Riehle, Michelle  
Roche, John  
Rodriguez, Mauricio  
Ruck, Robin  
Sadoulet, Valerie  
Salas, Jesus  
Satek, Patricia  
Sayers, Brian  
Schaffer, Amanda

Schmidt, Kirk  
Schwedock, Gary  
Schmieding, Lasse  
Sellers, Haley  
Shin, Jee  
Smith, Kaci  
Sobalvarro, Stephanie  
Sparkman, Stuart  
Spear, Chaim  
Spear, Gillian  
Specht, Jonathan  
Spires, Jefferson  
Stein, Sandra  
Stievater, Rebecca  
Stone, sarah  
Stuckmann, Sonja  
Sullivan, Samantha  
Takeya, Junko  
Thibodeau, Chris  
Thirlby, Tom  
Torres, Loreta  
Tovar, Kathleen  
Tubbs, Catlin  
Tucker, Maria  
Veitz, Stephanie  
Warren, Tina  
Watkins, Heather  
Weittekemper, Anne  
Wellman, Sarah  
Whitby, Melissa  
Wilde, Celia  
Williams, Sarah &  
Samuel  
Wong, Kimberly  
Wood, Bryce  
Woojin, Yoo  
Ziemke, Patrick  
Zubiate, Monique  
Zuckerman, Andrea  
Zuckerwise, Dr. Avram



In September, the Okapi Conservation Project was awarded the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' William G. Conway Award for International Conservation for our 30 years of work protecting the endangered okapi and its habitat in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thank you AZA!



We'd like to thank WCN for providing longstanding support, guidance and fundraising opportunities.



