

## **Project Update: February 2019**

Next to extensive literature search regarding the topic, the following activities have been implemented:

### **Assessment of local people's knowledge about culturally promising agroforestry trees for revegetation of the area**

Semi-structured interviews have been performed in the areas adjacent to the biosphere reserve of Pendjari in Benin. This assessment has been done with men and women of major socio-linguistic groups (Waama, Peul and Ditammari) within four of the previously mentioned areas we will survey: Dassari, Nagasseka, Sepounga, and Pouri. In each zone, 30 informants of both sexes and of major socio-linguistic groups have been interviewed. Interviews combined free listing based on locally known species. The list generated by those informants included: *Adansonia digitata*, *Hyphaene thebaica*, *Borassus aethiopum*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, *Vitellaria paradoxa* and *Daniellia oliveri*.

### **Investigation of rapid multiplication strategy for the most promising/culturally important agroforestry trees and production at high scale (half being fruit producing and half being woody species)**

Based on the preliminary literature search and personal fieldwork, a multiplication strategy for those species has been gathered or tested. For almost all species the best regeneration technique is based on the seed germination but through breaking dormancy with seeds. Pre-treatments consisted of scarification, hot water and cold water for 2 days.

### **Identification of progressive countrymen/women for negotiation of lands and plantation of culturally important and locally adapted trees in the area**

Currently, land issue is very recurrent in the areas due to loss of soils fertility and practice of extensive agriculture. Most landowners in the areas practice agroforestry systems which allows them already to keep some fruit producing or medicinally important species in the field. This constitutes in their knowledge an important land part already devoted to agriculture. Women are not allowed to possess lands and inherit it even elder than men in the family. However, they constitute an important component of those involved in traditional agriculture in the region. As such, negotiation did not really yield something really important with countrywomen even some men promised not to let the land entirely for restoration based on identified species but rather introduce some seedlings in the agroforestry systems.

### **Production of revegetation practical guide/manual for local practitioners and authorities**

Some practical guides/manuals exist in the literature and have been exploited for experimental testing in the field. Meanwhile, other manuals are being developed in French and will be shared soon with actors.

Below some relevant photos of the fieldwork:



*Adansonia digitata* seedlings



Agroforestry systems in the study area



*Khaya senegalensis* seedlings in the nursery



Pots preparation in the nursery