

2. La Mare aux hippopotames

Geographical Coordinates 11°37'N 4°08'W

Area 19,200ha

Location About 50km north-east of the city of Bobo Dioulasso, and 275km south-west of the city of Ougadougou, south-west Burkina Faso.

Date of Ramsar Designation 27 June 1990.

Other International Designations None.

National Designations Classified Forest (Forêt classée; established in 1937).

Principal Features A freshwater lake and associated pools and marshes in the floodplain of the Volta Noire river. During wet season floods, the river and lake are linked. The vegetation of the area liable to inundation is composed of truly aquatic species such as *Pistia stratiotes*, *Eschornia natans*, *Azola* sp., *Neptunia* sp. and *Ipomea* sp.; dense thickets of *Ficus congensis*, *Canthium cornelia* etc.; and herbaceous plants such as *Vetiveria nigratana* and *Hyparrhenia rufa*. The site also includes well-developed gallery forest (composed of *Berlinia grandiflora*, *Vitex doniani* etc.), dense dry forest, and open dry forest/shrubby savannah. About 22,000 people live in six villages in the surrounding areas. The site supports a rich mammal and bird fauna. Mammals include ungulates, such as *Alcelaphus buselaphus*, *Tragelaphus scriptus*, *Loxodonta africana*, *Hippopotamus amphibius* and *Hippotragus equinus*, as well as carnivores e.g. *Panthera pardus*, *Acinonyx jubatus* and *Crocuta crocuta*. (1a,2b)

Conservation Issues No information concerning any changes to the ecological character of the site has been received.

MARE AUX HIPPOPOTAMES BIOSPHERE RESERVE

(FORMERLY MARE AUX HIPPOPOTAMES CLASSIFIED FOREST)

- 1): Date of classification: 26 March 1937 (as classified forest)
- 2): Decree No. 836 SE/
- 3): Current status: Mare aux Hippopotames Biosphere Reserve
- 4): Geographical coordinates: 11° 30'-11° 45' N, 04° 05'-04° 12' W (see map)
- 5): Area: 19,200 ha
- 6): Biogeographical situation: Sudanian savanna with annual rainfall 1,100 mm/annum and mean annual temperature 28°C.

7): Description of habitats:

The main vegetation types, from the pond outwards, are:

Aquatic and flood plain plants:

- floating species (*Pistia stratioides*, *Eschornia natans azola* sp. *Neptunia*, *Ipomea* sp.);
- a dense thicket of *Ficus congensis*, *Canthium cornelia* and other species;
- thick grass cover with *Vetiveria nigratana*, *Hyparrhenia rufa* and other species.

Forests:

- gallery forests: broad, well-developed gallery with 80-90% canopy cover at a height of 20- 25 metres: species include *Berlinia grandiflora*, *Vitex doniani*, etc...
- dry closed forest developing away from the pool on alluvial deposits watered by several small creeks. A specific feature here is the presence of species from the Guinean or South Sudanian zones such as *Chlorophora excelsa*, *Berlinia grandiflora*, *Morus mesozygia*, *Deimbollia pinnata*, *Ceiba pentandra*. Canopy height can reach 30 metres.
- open woodland:
 - Trees of approximate average height 15 metres with 50-70% (open) canopy cover including *Pterocarpus ericaceus*, *Prosopis africana*, *Daniella oliveri*, *Ostryderis stuhlmani*;
 - Small stunted shrubs, mainly Combretaceae.

Woodland savanna, consisting of an open stratum of trees (canopy cover 15-30%) and well-developed perennial grasses (basal tiller coverage 10-30%) with *Andropogon gayanus* and *Schizachyrium sanguineum*:
small single-species stands of *Isobertinia doka*;
Terminalia spp.;

Daniella oliveri and *Butyrospermum parkii*.

Shrub savanna:

Detarnin microcarpum, *Combretum lamprocarpum*, *Crossopterix febrifuga* and *Combretum crotonoides*.

Vegetation on armoured soils:

Thickets.

8): Hydrology: see map

9): Social values: Local population made up of Bobo and Dioula, with Mossi migrants. Total of 22,000 inhabitants in the 6 surrounding villages - Badema, Bala, Bossora, Fina, Sokourani and Tierako.

10): Noteworthy fauna: There are three groups of animal species in the area:
hippopotamus;
other mammals (ungulates, carnivores, rodents, etc...)
birds.

Inventories will be taken to determine the large mammal species present in the area.

Western boundary:

1. River Volta from B. to C. at the confluence of the Volta Noire (Black Volta) and the Oué River;
2. Oué River from C. to D. D. is the end of a straight line starting at E (defined below). The line E-D lies to the west at an angle of 168° with geographical north.

Southern boundary:

1. D-E is a straight line from D to E (E is located on the Dakoé River 2 kms north of the village of Sakourani)
2. E-F, a straight, west- east line 500 metres long.

Eastern boundary:

- 1.: A line running parallel to and at a constant distance of 500 metres from the Dakoé River from F to G. (G is the point of intersection between the line F-G and the Leissa River - 500 metres from the confluence of the Leissa and the Dakoé).
2. A line running parallel to and at a constant distance of 500 metres from the Leissa River from G to H. to the Satri road at Bossora. (H is located on the road 500 metres to the north of the bridge over the Leissa).
3. H-A, the Satri-Bossora road.

Article 2 The customary rights for the local population are limited to the following: collecting dead wood, picking shea nuts and kapok, fruit and edible and medicinal plants.

Article 3 Hunting in the Mare aux Hippopotames forest is prohibited.

Local people will continue to exercise their fishing rights in the forest.

Article 5 Breaches of the forest regulations occurring in the forests classified under this order will be sanctioned as provided in the Decree issued 4 July 1935

Article 6 The Lieutenant-Governor of Côte d'Ivoire shall be entrusted with the execution of this order.

Dakar, 26 March 1937

pp. The Circuit Governor-General
Governor of the Colonies
Secretary General of the Government)General