

# **EXTREM EVENTS - MATTHIAS JESCHKE e.K.** **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**



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## **SPECIAL SCOUT TOUR TO GABON**

Extrem Events goes Africa...

Join us...

Dear World Travelers,

Without any wish to exaggerate, I was very delighted to have the opportunity to reconnoiter on behalf of Extrem Events an African country which is unfamiliar to most people but which has long been – and still is – highly stable: Gabon.

A place / a country which few people go to, and certainly not to the areas which we saw, and not with the contact we had now made :-)).

Gabon has never had a civil war or any conflicts of that kind. Due to the country's close relationship with France and its former colonial status, there are also about 10,000 French soldiers in the country. Lufthansa flies to Libreville several times a week. The recommended vaccinations are uncomplicated. The country is known as "the Switzerland of Black Africa" and as one of the last ecological paradises in the world with a per capita income five times higher than that of the emerging nation Morocco (crude oil, wood, manganese, iron ore, commodities). Otherwise it is wilderness, wildlife, adventure, pure experience.

Varying statistics point to a literacy rate of up to 95%, attendance at school is compulsory. Most people in Gabon are Christians or animists, 5% are Muslims.

For those interested, further information can be found at:

[www.gabon-nature.com](http://www.gabon-nature.com)

[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/01-Nodes\\_Uebersichtsseiten/Gabon\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/01-Nodes_Uebersichtsseiten/Gabon_node.html)

<http://www.pygmies.org/>

During the highly successful journey from 1 to 11 October 2011, we were on the road with 5 vehicles belonging to our contact person (Mercedes, VW Touareg, Lexus GX, Jeep Grand Cherokee and Toyota Landcruiser). Some of the vehicles were provided, among other things, with winches, cartop tents, marquees and camping equipment. All vehicles were fully air-conditioned and technically in perfect condition.

Throughout the journey we were accompanied by a very reliable 6 person team from Gabon, consisting of our contact person, helpers, security people and guides, who in all cases were from the regions we were travelling to and were experienced in the local dialects.

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We explored the capital Libreville, savannas far from human habitations, remote mountain areas, the jungle with extensive bamboo forests, and the Atlantic coastline with mangrove lagoons, steppes, dirt roads and tracks.

Whenever possible during our 10-day journey, we spent the nights in hotels or lodges (some of first class standard), and when necessary – or so wished – in camps complete with campfire romanticism. As always, Extrem Events provided top communication between the vehicles via radio, accompanied the preparations and the expedition itself with top medical supervision, provided satellite telephones, a satellite e-mail system, information to the German Embassies, and many other things besides.

Gabon has a total of only 800 kilometers of asphalted roads, in a land that is about half the size of Germany. The 1.6 million inhabitants are divided into approx. 1 million in the main city Libreville as well as the two other big cities Port-Gentil and Franceville; the rest of the population being spread over the rest of the country!! This makes Gabon one of the most sparsely populated countries in Africa, with the largest number of trees and natural parks and nature reserves.

As a special cultural highlight intended to improve the process of understanding, we visited, among other things, a pygmy village in a remote part of the jungle and experienced uplifting moments of cultural exchange on coming into closer contact with the tradition and culture of this indigenous people.

A further interesting venue in the itinerary was the village Sette Cama on the Atlantic coast, which we reached by boat. From here we walked along a coastal stretch of the Luango National Park with its extraordinary variety of different animals. We reached the mooring point by crossing two rivers with very simple ferries and driving along kilometers of deserted and unspoilt beaches.

An unusually memorable even was our stopover in Lambaréné, where we visited the Albert Schweitzer Hospital. We were impressed by its history and by the remarkable work which had been done there, and which is still being done today – these were the reactions of our group.

The final part of the journey was a stopover at the “Pointe Denis” with Caribbean-like beach conditions on the shore of the Komo estuary facing Libreville.

The journey took place during the ideal period between the main and shorter rainy seasons. During this time the temperatures were around 25-30 degrees, which was very agreeable for a visit to one of the African states with the greatest diversity of animal species and the largest number of nature reservations, and among other things also with a large population of elephants and gorillas.

Kind regards and... I am looking forward to the next journey to this wonderful country.

Yours, Matthias Jeschke