



Characterization of the vegetation of the submontane forest of the kala massif in Cameroon

MADIPEVO Stephane Nazaire¹, WOROWOUNGA Xavier^{2*}, SEMBOLI Olivia^{2,3}, NDOTAR Michel⁴.

¹Faculty of Sciences, University of Bangui, Central African Republic

²Laboratoire d'Architecture, d'Analyse et Réactivité des Substances Naturelles (LAARSN), Faculté des Sciences, Université de Bangui, BP 908, Bangui, Central African Republic

³Laboratoire de biodiversité végétale et fongique, République Centrafricaine

⁴Ecole Normale Supérieure, University of Bangui, Central African Republic.

*Corresponding author: worowougax@yahoo.fr; worowougax@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main objective of this study conducted from January to February 2023 is to describe the spatial heterogeneity of the vegetation of the submontane forest of the Massif Kala in Cameroon through the identification and characterization of the flora and plant groups present. This study also highlights the sociological organization of the forest vegetation and contributes to broaden the phytosociological knowledge which still remains elementary on the vegetation of the forest ecosystems of the highlands of Cameroon.

Methodology and Results: The surveys are made by plots of 100 m x 25 (2500 m²) and the lists of specific sets of individuals whose diameter is greater than or equal to 1 cm, and those whose diameter at breast height (dbh) \geq 10 cm, are established. The analyses are based on data from 21 phytosociological surveys, carried out through the facies of the vegetation of the Kala massif.

Based on the partition of the records by Detrended Correspondence Analysis and an Ascending Hierarchical Classification, three plant groups were respectively individualized, characterized and classified in the higher syntaxons (class, order and alliance). This is the class of Strombosio-Parinarietea Leburn & Gilbert 1954, Erythrophleetea africana Schmitz 1963, Musango-Terminalietea Leburn & Gilbert 1954. In the forest of the Kala massif, the typology of the vegetation obeys a gradient of humidity and temperature. The anthropization and the edge effect clearly mark the biological diversity of the three plant groups. The individualized plant groups explain the spatial heterogeneity within the same plant formation of the Kala massif.

Conclusion and application of results: From the matrix of 21 readings and 211 listed species (Appendix 1), we highlighted three (3) groups of plants. based on the relative frequencies of species (Fig.3). The results obtained are effective contributions to scientific research. They serve as avenues for similar or comparative studies of the flora of the Central African Republic.

Keywords: plant group, biological diversity, spatial heterogeneity, vegetation, anthropization, Cameroon.

INTRODUCTION

After the Amazon, the Congo Basin is made up of a large forest that occupies a large area (Talbot, 1993; FAO, 1995). Cameroon's great forest contains the most diverse ecosystems (Alpert, 1993). Altitudinally, these forests are classified as low and medium altitude forests, submontane forests and montane forests (Letouzey, 1985). In Cameroon, as in many other tropical countries, the last 20 years have been marked by high rates of deforestation and forest degradation, linked to the expansion of agriculture, population growth and development activities. In general, (FAO, 1995). In the Kala massif, the area of the forest sector is in perfect decline. Indeed, the massif contains high altitude vegetation around 1000 m, a transition zone that can be described as a submontane stage (Letouzey, 1968). The altitudinal environment is a very mixed environment where various types of vegetation develop. These types of vegetation vary from one geographical area to another. In the

specific case of the Kala massif, it is interesting, within the framework of environmental planning and space management, to inventory and describe the different types of vegetation as well as the biodiversity which develops there with these types of vegetation. The central hypothesis states that the existence of plant communities reflects the spatial heterogeneity of forest vegetation according to ecological parameters (Aoudji *et al.*, 2011). The main objective of this study is to describe the spatial heterogeneity of the vegetation of the forest of the Kala massif. The specific objectives are, among other things, to identify the plant groups present and to characterize them instantly on the analysis of their specific diversity and their respective sociological organization. Indeed, plant groups constitute complexes with the value of phytocenoses which are of interest not only to foresters, but also to scientists (Bangirinama *et al.*, 2010).



Photo 1: Nephelophilic forest of Kala (Source: Madiapevo, 2023). (1st plan): Ecosystem with a fragile ecology due to the outcrops of rocks on which in places, the thin layer of soil can only support herbaceous vegetation, and a forest in the background.

METHODOLOGY

Presentation of the study site: Cameroon is located in Central Africa (1°40' and 13°05' N; 8°30' and 16°10' E) with an area of 475,000 km². It shares 4700 km with Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic and Chad. The Yaoundé massif extends from North to South and from East to West over less than one degree: 3°42' and 4°05' North latitude, 11°17' and 11°35' East longitude. The Kala massif extends from North to South and from East to West between 3°42' and 4°05' North latitude, 11°17' and 11°35' East longitude. To the south-west of the Yaoundé region, the Kala massif has an SSW-NNE orientation over 40 km in length and 35 km in width. It is located in the village Kala in the Center region of Cameroon, located in the district of Mbankomo, department of Méfou-et-Akono. It includes three high peaks over 1100 m: Mount Kala itself (1128 m); Mount Nkol nlong (1156 m); Mount Nkol mylon (1100 m). Added to this is Mount Nkol byon whose altitude does not exceed 1100 m. These hills are geographically close and are located in the southwest of the Yaoundé region in the same phytogeographical district of White (1983). The generally undulating relief is traversed by close and shallow valleys through

which flow small streams. The Kala massif, like the entire area covered by the so-called Congolese forest in Cameroon (Letouzey, 1968) is located on the Precambrian plateau. All of the forests in this massif are made up of two-mica or biotite-only brecciated gneiss (Champetier, 1959). The climate is of the subequatorial type with an equatorial tendency, western subtype with a short accentuated dry season (Schnell, 1970). Precipitation is quite abundant with an annual average of 1800 mm. The annual average temperature is 23.8°C. The forest is of the submontane type of the order of Garcinietalia (Noumi, 1998). In Kala, the presence of cocoa plantations, food crops, the current fire regime and the illegal harvesting of natural plant resources testify to human activities on the slopes of the Kala massif. Under these conditions, the area of the forest sector decreases and their biodiversity continues to erode (Nzigidahera, 2009). Livestock farming remains traditional where the animals live in free grazing in nature, to which is added poultry farming of a purely economic nature. In 1965, the Kala village had 285 inhabitants, mainly of the Ewondo ethnic group. In 2018, the number rose to 309 inhabitants.

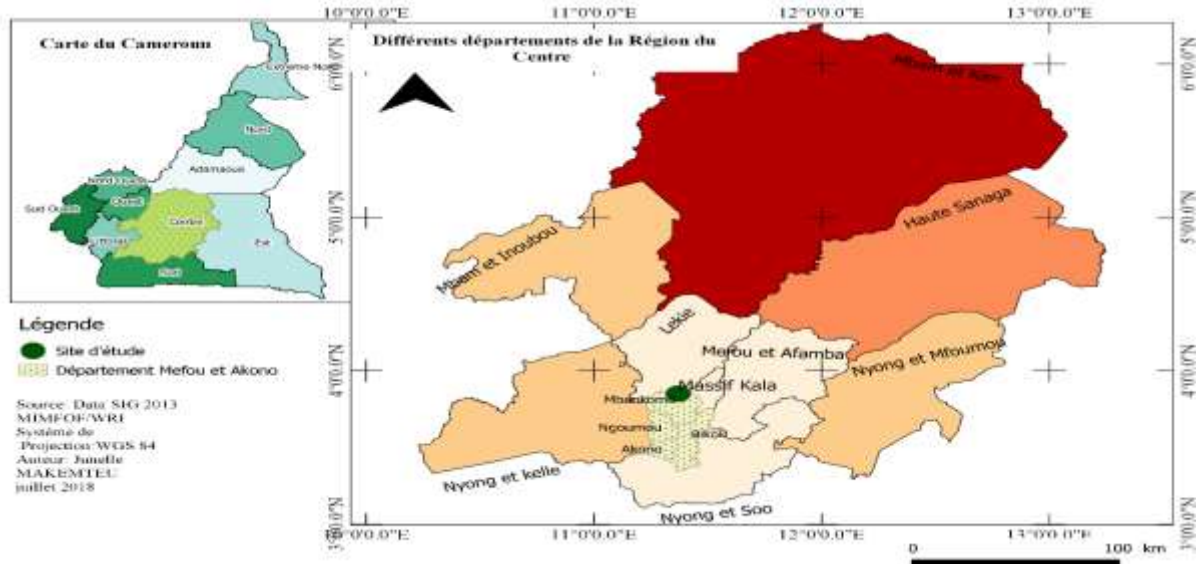


Fig.2: Map of the geographical location of the study site.

Sampling method: In the context of this study, the technique used for the botanical inventories was the Lejoly plot sampling method (1995). This method, considered suitable, made it possible to delimit the sampling areas and to make a rapid qualitative and quantitative description of the flora. It also made it possible to collect the maximum amount of spatial information without measurement constraints. The inventories were made in 21 rectangular plots 100 m long and 25 m wide. These strips constituted the sample plots of 2500 m² (0.25 ha). That is a total of 5.25 ha. A 100 m long path was drawn inside each plot. On either side of the layon, trees with dbh (diameter at breast height) ≥ 10 cm were counted over a distance of 12.5 m. Shrubs (dbh < 10 cm) were surveyed on sub-plots of 12.5 x 10 m² area along the traced path. The scientific determination of the species was carried out using the criteria defined by Normand (1964). For the three (3) forests, the identification of the plant groups constituting the vegetation was made thanks to the ecosociological groups distinguished in tropical Africa (Schnell, 1952; Lebrun and Gilbert, 1954) and according to the CEPS classification system (Delpech, 2006). Only classes, orders and alliances are retained in this work.

Data analysis methods: The determination of the plant groups was made by Detrended Correspondence Analysis (DCA) and an Ascending Hierarchical Classification (CHA) with the MVSP 3.22 software (Multi-Variate Statistical Package). This technique provides us with a dendrogram discriminating plant groups. Several indices of a use are used to highlight the specific diversity of plant groups. These specific mathematical models are among others:

- Sorensen's similarity index (1948) was used to measure the resemblance of the three identified plant groups. This index is given by the following formula (1):

$$K = (2c / a + b) \times 100$$

where c is the number of species common to the two groups compared, a and b are the numbers of species in group (1) and group (2).

- The Margalef index (Rmg) (Magurran, 2004) was used to compare the specific diversity of plant communities. This index is obtained by the following formula (2):

$$Rmg = S - 1 / \ln(N)$$

where S is the species richness and N is the number of individuals

- The Shannon, Weaver (1949) (ISH) diversity index is expressed as a function of the

proportions of each species in bits. Formula (3) is as follows:

$$ISH = \sum (Ni / N \log_2 Ni / N)$$

where N_i is the number of individuals of species i and N the number of individuals of the species present.

• Simpson's Index (1949) expresses the probability that two individuals taken at random from the stand under study belong to the same species. Formula (4) is as follows:

$$D' = \sum (Ni / N)^2$$

This index expresses the sum of the proportions of all the species listed.

The Pielou (1966) evenness index makes it possible to account for the distribution of species in the sample. This index is obtained by the following formula (5):

$$R = H/H_{\max}$$

where H corresponds to the observed diversity and H_{\max} corresponds to the maximum diversity.

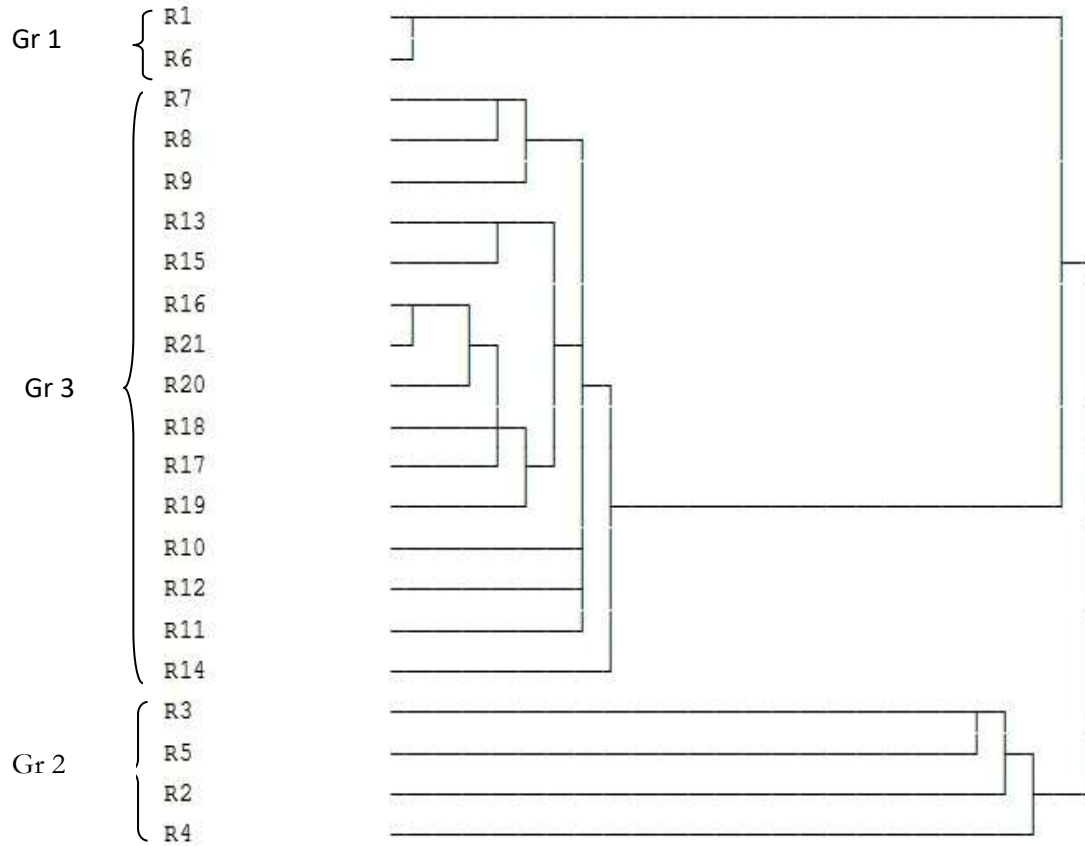
RESULTS

Characterization of plant groups in the forest of the Kala massif

Determination of plant groups: Starting from the matrix of 21 readings and 211 listed species (Appendix 1), three (3) plant groups were highlighted on the basis of the relative frequencies of the species (Fig.3). The level of similarity of 23 considered for the definition of these groupings made it possible to obtain the maximum possible. The criterion of the stratification of the readings and the field

observations guided the determination of the vegetation zone corresponding to each of the 3 individualized groups:

- Group 1 of the surveys corresponds to the submontane forest on the steep slope (Gr 1);
- Group 2 of the surveys corresponds to the forest at low and medium altitudes rising in the submontane stage (Gr 2);
- Group 3 of the surveys corresponds to the submontane forest on the steep slope (Gr 3).



Legend: R is the readings corresponding to the forest, Gr represents the group of surveys corresponding to the forest.

Fig.3: Arrangement of the three (3) individualized groupings of the Kala forest on a dendrogram

Ecological determinism of individualized plant groups: The spatial distribution of the individualized groupings is represented on the plan (Fig.4). The first two axes of the DCA express the gradients of the ecological

parameters. The ecological significance of the two axes is explained by field observations, the stratification of surveys and the ecology of characteristic species.

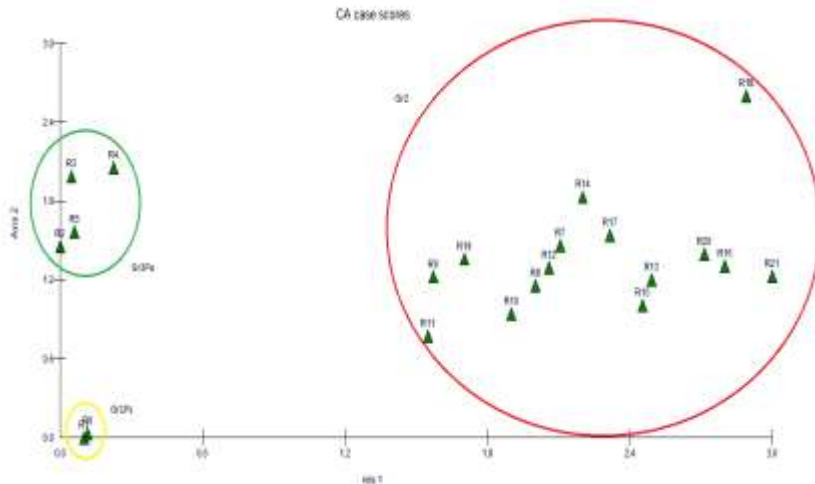


Fig.4.: Representation of the distribution of plant groups in the plane of axes 1 and 2 of the DCA. Axis 1 represents the increasing gradient of anthropization while axis 2 expresses the increasing gradient of humidity.

In the present case, no reading is placed on the negative side of axis 1 (on the abscissa), relative to the less disturbed core of the forest. On the positive side of this same axis, the statements forming group 1 (virgin forest with *Aulacocalyx caudata*), group 2 (wooded savannah meadow of Nkol nlong and forest-plantation edges) corresponding to the areas more degraded by forest activities are distributed. Human resources, agriculture, illicit resource extraction and fire, group 3 (vegetation on the tops of hills) corresponding to areas moderately disturbed by human activities. Obviously, axis 1 expresses an increasing gradient of disturbances of anthropic origin exerted from the forest towards its peripheral zones. On the ordinate, on the negative side of axis 2, are positioned 2 statements from group 3 (R3 and R4) and 5 statements from group 2 (R16, R17, R18, R20, R21) corresponding to the dry areas of the forest. On the other hand, on the positive side of this axis are the elevations forming groupings 1 and certain elevations of groupings 2 and 3. Grouping 1 corresponds to the nephelophilic forest. Axis 2 represents an increasing gradient of atmospheric humidity,

from that provided in the valleys incised by tributaries of the large Akomo, Ngobo, Nkadip and Yegue rivers towards the zone of mist and clouds which represents the upper part (from 1400 m to 1800-2000 m) of the Guineo-Congolese submontane forest. These mists and clouds begin in the Yaoundé area at an altitude of 1000 m (Letouzey, 1985).

Biological diversity of plant communities: Values for species richness and other indices of diversity and evenness are provided in Table I.) is more diverse than the other two. For this group, the value of the Margalef index is higher ($Rmg = 23.86$) compared to those of the other groups. Grouping 2 corresponding to the zone which presents various stages of degradation of the zone of the virgin forest is less diversified because it presents a lower value of the Margalef index ($Rmg = 9.50$). The values of the Pielou index are greater than 0.5 for groups 2 and 3. This means that, in the two groups, the species share the ecological niches relatively equitably. The Pielou equitability value of group 1 is less than 0.5. The virgin forest on steep slope does not share the ecological niche with the other 2 groupings.

Table 1: Biodiversity indices of plant communities in the Kala forest

Groupings	Number of readings	S	H	R _{mg}	R
Group 1	2	111	2.43	15.21	0.36
Group 2	15	54	4.89	9.50	0.85
Group 3	4	191	4.70	23.86	0.62

S: Specific richness; H: Shannon-Weaver diversity index; R_{mg}: Margalef diversity index; R: Piélou equity index

The degree of similarity between the three plant groups compared two by two by Sorensen's similarity index is shown in Table 2. The floristic affinity between the 3 groups is greater than 50 between groups 1 and 2, less

than 50% between group 3 and 1, then 3 and 2. In these latter cases, the Sorensen indices show that each individualized group constitutes a unit relatively distinct from the others.

Table 2: Sørensen similarity values (in %) between pairs of plant groups in the Kala forest

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Group 1	100		
Group 2	60.3%	100	
Group 3	40.2%	39.3%	100

Identification of ecosociological groups: In the forest of the Kala massif, the classification of plant groups in the higher syntaxa gives 3 classes, three orders and three alliances:

- Class of *Strombosio-Parinarietea* Lebrun & Gilbert 1954, from equatorial rainforests; Order of *Garcinietales* Noumi 1998, Alliance of *Garcinion* Noumi 1998; represented by group 1. Its edition is the north-eastern slope of Nkol byon, with steep slopes, carrying a virgin

forest with *Aulacocalyx caudata*. The edition is rich in hygromesothermal species such as *Allanblackia gabonensis*, *Aulacocalyx caudata*, *Aulacocalyx jasmifolia*, *Aulacocalyx taboltii*, *Cola verticillata*, *Garcinia mannii*, *Garcinia smeathmannii*, *Lepalea mayombensis*, *Myrianthus libericus* and *Santiria trimera*. The edition is also penetrated by hygro-oligothermal species with *Carapa grandiflora*, *Memecylon polyanthemos*.



Fig.5: Group of submontane rain forest.

A: forest undergrowth; B: stilt roots at the summit of Mount Kala; C: slice of *Allanblackia gabonensis*, brittle, reddish on the outside and yellow on the inside, exuding a yellow latex.

- Class of *Erythrophleetea africana* Schmitz 1963, from the Guineo-Sudano-Zambézian tropical forests; Ordre of

Julbernardio-Brachystegietales spiciformis Schmitz 1988, Alliance of *Bierlinio-Marquesion* Lebrun & Gilbert 1954,

characterizing the whole open forest dominated by *Brachystegia* and *Uapaca* tree species with *Erythrophleum ivorense*, *Paraberlinia bifoliolata* (*Julbernarda pellegriniana*), *Tetraberlinia bifoliolata* (*Julbernardia bifoliolata*). The class is represented by cluster 2. Its edition is the

summit of Nkol nlong (or hill covered with grassy meadow in the local language). In this site, Mr. Mesmer (a Swiss national) built a hut, as one of the eloquent signs of the phases of alteration, corresponding to regressive series which lead to grassy savannah formations or dotted with residual shrubs (Fig.6).

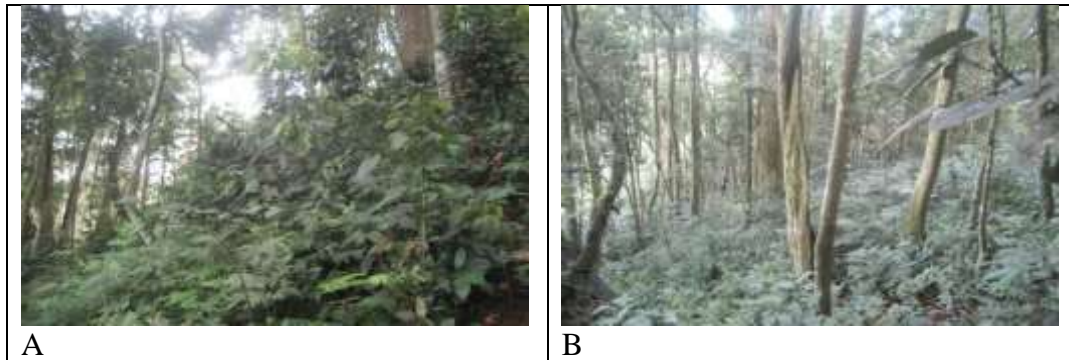


Fig.6: Nkol nlong thinned (trophophilic) forest.

In the background in A and B, phases of alteration, corresponding to regressive series which lead to the grassy savannah formation dotted with residual shrubs.

- Class of *Musango-terminalietea* Lebrun & Gilbert 1954, forests of the Guineo-Malagasy liaison group, with very wide Sudano-Zambézian penetration; Order of

Musangetalia Lebrun and Gilbert 1954, Alliance of *Caloncobo-Tremion* Lebrun and Gilbert 1954. The class is represented by grouping 3 of the summit forests of Nkol byon, Kala and Nkol mylon. The class is dominated by species like *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Albizia adianthifolia*, *Elaeis guineensis*, *Nauclea latifolia*, *Nauclea diderrichi* (Fig.7).

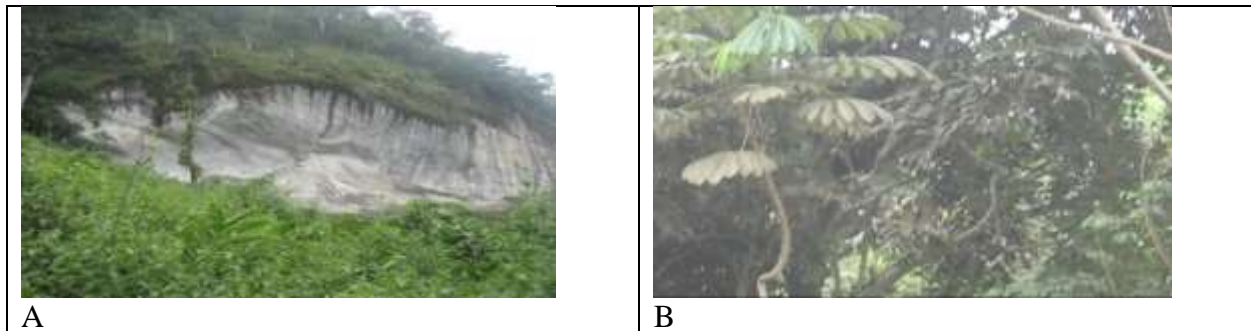


Fig.7: Secondary forest resulting from the degradation of the submontane ombrophile forest.

A) Forest regrowth with *Costusafer* and *Chromolaena odorata* (Asteraceae); (B) Secondary forest showing a foot of *Chlorophora excelsa* in the foreground.

DISCUSSION

The study of plant groups is a fundamental source of important basic data for the conservation, development and sustainable management of natural ecosystems. But

frequently, in some cases, the ecological interpretation of the identified groups may seem meticulous (Bangirinama *et al.*, 2010; Hakizimana *et al.*, 2012). The individual plant

groups in the Kala forest explain the spatial heterogeneity of this forest ecosystem. The analysis of this spatial heterogeneity shows that the Kala forest is subdivided into three floristically distinct zones:

- the core of the forest remained virgin, is on a slope and dominated by species of small trees like *Aulacocalyx preussii*, *Garcinia mannii*, *Garcinia smeathmannii*, *Aulacocalyx caudata* and *Aulacocalyx jasmiflora* (group 1);
- the degraded part of the forest is the summit of Nkol nlong, nephelophilous, where low and medium altitude trees dominate, those of mountain or sub-mintagnard species (group 2). The open, undiversified, ubiquitous forest is dominated by *Allanblackia*, *Brachystegia*, *Erythrophleum*, *Garcinia*, *Gilbertiodendron*, *Uapaca*;
- the formations of the summits of Kala, Nkol byon, Nkol mylon, surrounded by cocoa plantations, plantations and orchards which rise to 800 - 1000 m in altitude, form group 3 where *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Anthocleista schweinfurtii*, *Myrianthus arboreus* dominate. The organization of the Kala forest is manifested in the horizontal plane by a more or less marked heterogeneity, such as the open forest zone alternating with zones covered with more or less dense forest cores, and an agglomerated-type distribution, individuals. This characteristic, confirmed by the low values of the Sorensen index for groups 1 and 3 and groups 2 and 3 and a value well above 50% for groups 1 and 2 (Table 2) had already been underlined by the studies on the humid intertropical forests carried out by Oldeman (1990), Hakizimana *et al.*, 2012. The values of the Pielou evenness index show that the species of the three plant groups do not share ecological niches equitably. Group 2 and 3 have high values compared to group 1 with a lower value; 0.36. (Gillet, 2000). Considering the factors of the ecological determinism (the gradient of humidity and that of anthropization), we note that groups 1 and 2 are floristically close, on the one hand, and

that, on the other hand, groups 2 and 3 are floristically close (Fig. 3 and 4). The strong floristic similarity between the identified plant groups (group 1 and 2) is confirmed by the high value of the Sorensen similarity index. This suggests that the spatial heterogeneity of facies observed in the Kala forest is either linked to any ecological gradient, or could be explained by the history of localized degradation of the forest. In the dense Kala forest, the floristic diversity depends on the landscape unit considered. We consider that the central core of the less disturbed forest (cluster 1) represents the average species diversification (Table 1). It is rich in forest species such as *Allanblackia gabonensis*, *Coelocaryon preussii*, *Dacryodes macrophylla*, *Guarea thompsonii*, *Leplaea mayombensis*, *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Ricinodendron heudelotii*, *Strombosia grandifolia*, and *Trilepisium madagascariensis*. These species ensure the development of a significant lower tree stratum consisting of *Aulacocalyx jasmiflora*, *Aulacocalyx talbotii*, *Coffea brevipes*, *Garcinia smeathmannii*, *Myrianthus arboreus*, *Rauwolfia macrophylla*, *Tabernaemontana crassa*. The zone of forest alteration phases (group 2) is less diversified. We observe that its vegetation keeps the same bottom of the floristic procession and a core of common species. Similar conclusions were made by Nzigidahera (2000). The secondary education group is the most diversified. This order of increasing diversity was expected. Indeed, some authors (Burel and Baudry, 1999) affirm that, up to a certain threshold, disturbances increase the diversity of an ecosystem. In addition, these authors indicate that disturbances are intense in edge zones which tend to diversify. The edge effect therefore induces a change in facies by promoting both the heterogeneous development of certain forest species and heliophilous species, ruderal species, segetal species, adapted to various disturbances linked to trampling, water stress

and human activities (Harper *et al.*, 2005). Plant group 2 has the lowest value of the Margalef diversity index (IDM) (9.50) (Table 1), although this includes 15 records from the interior of the forest. On the other hand, plant group 3, which includes four peripheral statements, has an IDM value (23.86), higher than for plant group 1 (IDM = 15.21) which includes 2 statements from the interior of the forest. We can therefore conclude that, for this forest, the overall floristic composition is not significantly affected by the edge effect (Harper *et al.*, 2005). The plant groups identified in the Kala forest can be linked to those already described by other authors. The grouping of *Aulacocalyx* spp., *Garcinia* spp., and *Albizia gummifera*, *Allanblackia gabonensis*, *Leplaea mayombensis*, encountered on the northeast slope of Nkol byon is similar to that described on the summits of the Nkolobot hills of the Mbam minkom massif by Noumi (1998) and the one encountered in the Kouoghap gallery forest of the Batoufam village by Makemteu and Noumi (2015). Finally, the dominance of species of *Brachystegia* (*Brachystegia laurenti*),

CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

This study made it possible to identify and characterize the plant groups forming the vegetation of the forest of the Kala massif. The floristic inventory made in this massif has identified 211 species belonging to 154 genera and 46 different families. Among these species, 210 have been determined at the specific level, 1 at the generic level. The individualization of the plant groups on the basis of the partition of the statements by Detrended Correspondence Analysis (DCA) and an Ascending Hierarchical Classification (CHA) gave three groups which, classified in the higher syntaxes are:

- Class *Strombosio-Parinarietea* Lebrun & Gilbert 1954, equatorial rainforests; with *Allanblackia gabonensis*, *Leplaea mayombensis*, *Pycnanthus angolensis*,

Distemonanthus benthamianus, *Gilbertiodendron brachystegioides*, *Paraberlinia bifoliolata*, *Tetraberlinia bifoliolata* and *Uapaca togoensis* as well as *Pycnanthus angolensis* accompanied by *Spathodea campanulata* represent respectively the tropophilic and periguinean identity of the forest at the summit of Nkol nlong of the Kala massif. The group with *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Albizia adianthifolia* and that with *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Anthocleista schweinfurthii* and *Treculia africana*, individualized in the zone at the edge of the forest of the Kala massif are to be compared to the secondary formations described on the summit of the Minloua inseberg by Noumi (2010). These descriptions and names corroborate the conclusions of the studies carried out by Malaisse (1968) and Lewalle (1972). In addition, the presence of species like *Albizia adianthifolia*, *Elaeis guineensis*, *Myrianthus arboreus* and pyrophyte species like *Combretum* sp. are eloquent signs of the imprint of human action (trampling, agriculture, livestock, fishing) and the secondaryization of Kala forests.

Strombosio parinarietea, in the tree layer, *Cola verticillata*, *tabernaemontana crassa*, *Garcinia smeathmannii*, *Garcinia mannii*, *Aulacocalyx jasminiflora*, *Aulacocalyx talbotii* in the shrub layer;

- Class of *Erythrophleetea africana* Schmitz 1963, from the Guineo-Sudano-Zambézian tropical forests, with a representative at the top of the Nkol nlong hill, characterized by species poverty marking this degraded forest, the whole of which is dominated by tree species of *Brachystegia* and *Uapaca* with *Erythrophleum ivorense*, *Paraberlinia bifoliolata* (*Julbernardia pellegriniana*), *Tetraberlinia bifoliolata* (*Julbernardia bifoliolata*);
- Class of *Musango-terminalietea* Lebrun & Gilbert 1954, forests of the Guineo-

Malagasy liaison group, with very wide Sudano-Zambézian penetration, the class is dominated by species such as *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Albizia adianthifolia*, *Elaeis guineensis*, *Nauclea latifolia*, *Nauclea diderrichii*.

In relation to the results obtained, it emerges from research perspectives that should be undertaken in the near future. These include, in particular:

- analysis, through diachronic observations, of the dynamic relationships in

time and space between the plant groups that have been defined within the vegetation of the forest;

- analysis of life traits and ecology of the main tree species in the two forests;
- the study of natural regeneration mechanisms, mortality, growth and recruitment of tree species to better understand the dynamics of natural renewal of the Kala forest.

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Annex 1: Phytosociological presentation of the floristic list of the Kala massif forest, with sequences of the 21 surveys carried out and phytosociological syntaxa

Families	TB	TP	Stage	UP	TF	TD	Species	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	R 6	R 7	R 8	R 9	R 10	R 11	R 12	R 13	R 14	R 15	R 16	R 17	R 18	R 19	R 20	R 21	Grand total
<i>Strombosio-Parinarietea Lebrun & Gilbert 1954</i>																													
<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Msph	At	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Ballo	<i>Alchornea floribunda</i> Müll. Arg.	2	3	11		3	2																21
<i>Annonaceae</i>	Mgph	G	Bm/Sm	Str	Macro	Sarco	<i>Anonidium mannii</i> (Oliv.) Engl. et Diels.		24	22	5	19	10		1		2		1	2		3	6	6	1	6	6	5	119
<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Mcph	G	Bm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Antidesma laciniatum</i> Müll. Arg.	5			1		2																8
<i>Meliaceae</i>	Mcph	Aam	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Ballo	<i>Carapa procera</i> DC.	5		6	1	11	5		1					1		1	2	1			1	3	38
<i>Samydaceae</i>	Mcph	At	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Ballo	<i>Casearia barteri</i> Jacq.	4	1		3	1	4										1						14
<i>Sterculiaceae</i>	Nnph	G	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Cola attiensis</i> var. <i>bordardii</i> (Pellegr.) N. Halle	6	6	14	37	25	6																94
<i>Burseraceae</i>	Msph	G	Bm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Dacryodes macrophylla</i> (Oliv.) Lam	18	5	6	1		18				1				1								50
<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Mcph	G	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Massularia acuminata</i> (K. Schum.) Hoyle	9	3	3		4	9																28
<i>Ochnaceae</i>	Mcph	Bg	Bm	Str	Macro	Sarco	<i>Campylospermum elongatum</i> (Oliv.) Vahl Tiegh	16					2																18
<i>Violaceae</i>	Nnph	G	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Ballo	<i>Rinorea oblongifolia</i> (C.h. Wright) Marg. ex chipp		1	8	2																		11
<i>Olacaceae</i>	Msph	G-Sz	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Strombosia grandifolia</i> Hook. f. ex Benth.	17	13	9		16	17																72
<i>Olacaceae</i>	Msph	Cg	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Strombosiopsis tetrandra</i> Eng.	9					9																18
<i>Olacaceae</i>	Mcph	G	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Strombosia pustulata</i> Oliv.	8		3	6		8																25
<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Nnph	Cg	Bm/Sm	Str	Macro	Sarco	<i>Schumanniphyton magnificum</i> Harms			1	10																		11
<i>Moraceae</i>	Mcph	G-Sz	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Sloetiopsisusambarensis</i> Engler		8																				8
<i>Myristicaceae</i>	Mcph	Cg	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Sarco	<i>Staudtia kamerunensis</i> Warb.	9	2		16	7	9				2									1			46
<i>Meliaceae</i>	Mcph	Cg	Bm/Sm	Str	Méso	Ballo	<i>Trichilia rubescens</i> Oliv.	1	1	5		3	1																11
<i>Piptadeniastro-Celtidetalia Lebrun & Gilbert 1954</i>																													
<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Msph	G	Bm	Pip	Méso	Pogo	<i>Alstonia boonei</i> De Willd.		3	1	5	14																	23
<i>Moraceae</i>	Mcph	G	Bm	Pip	Méso	Sarco	<i>Antiaris toxicaria</i> Lesch.	1	1			5	1																8
<i>Moraceae</i>	Msph	G	Bm	Pip	Méso	Sarco	<i>Antiaris welwitschii</i> Lesch.		3										1						1		1		6
<i>Sapotaceae</i>	Msph	G	Bm	Pip	Méso	Ballo	<i>Blighia welwitschii</i> (Hiern) Radlk.				1	3				2		1											7
<i>Bombacaceae</i>	Msph	G	Bm	Pip	Méso	Ballo	<i>Bombax buonopozense</i> P. Beauv.			3	2																		5

Abbreviations used.

Biological Forms (FB)	Phytogeographic types (TP)	Types of Diaspores (TD)	Types of leaf size (TF)
UC : Upright Chamaephyte	Am: Afro-Malagasy	Ballo : Ballochore	Lepto : Leptophyll
PC : Prostrate Chamaephyte	At: Afro-tropical	Baro : Baroque	Macro : Macrophyll
BG : Bulbous Geophyte	Cg : Centro-Guineo-Congolese	Desmo : Desmochore	Méso : Mesophyll
RG : Rhizomatous Geophyte	Cosmo : Cosmopolitan	Pleo : Pleochorus	Micro : Microphyll
TG : Tuberous Geophyte	G : Omni- or subomni-Guineo-Congolese	Pogo : Pogonochorus	Nano : Nanophyll
O-EP : Optional Epiphyte	G-Sz : Guineo-Sudano-Zambezián		Ptero : Pterochore
CH : Cespitose Hemicryptophyte	Pal : Paleotropical		Sarco : Sarcochorus
CH : Crawling Hemicryptophyte	Pan : Pantropical		Sclero : Sclerochore
RH : Rosette hemicryptophyte	The average recovery is calculated according to the formula $R_m = \frac{\sum R}{n}$ where n is the number of readings The values related to the recovery (table 6) are obtained by adding the average recoveries of each species. Relative recoveries are calculated with the following average percentage : + = 0,5 % ; 1= 3 % ; 2 =15 % ; 3 = 37,5 % ; 4 = 62,5 % ; 5 = 87		
McpH : Microphanerophyte			
Mg : Megageophyte			
MspH : Mesophanerophyte			
NnpH : Nanophanerophyte			
FrPh : Sufurtescent phanerophyte			
CPh : Climbing phanerophyte			
HPh : Herbaceous Phanerophyte			
ETh : Erect Therophyte			