



**Internalization of the Management
Strategy of the Buffer Zone of W-
Benin's Cross-border Biosphere
Reserve**

Final Report

Banikoara (Benin), April 8, 2010

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INTRODUCTION

An **Internalization workshop on the management strategy of the buffer zone of W-Benin's cross-border biosphere reserve** was held on Thursday, 8 April 2011 in the meeting room of the Departmental Cotton Producers' Union.

The workshop's program of activities is provided in the annex; its salient points are the following:

- Welcome address by the Mayor of Banikoara
- Introduction of participants
- Blessing by his Majesty Nansounon, Paramount Chief of Banikoara
- Workshop's opening address by the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori
- Election of bureau
- Presentation on the current conservation situation of the National W Park by the Director of the National W Park
- Constitution of three working groups
- Working commissions
- Feedback by Working groups
- Discussion on and adoption of the documents of the management strategy of the buffer zone, of recommendations on development, sightseeing, and sport hunting.
- Workshop closing address by the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori

The workshop began with a 2 hour delay and was moderated by Mr. TAMOU NANTI Boukoukénin.

After the welcome address and best wishes for a fruitful workshop by the Mayor of Banikoara, Mr. KATE Sabai, participants introduced themselves. The following persons were in attendance:

- the mayors of Banikoara (Mr. KATE Sabai), Kandi (Mr. OUEDRAOGO Ousmane Boubacar), and Karimama (Mr. MAMAN BELLO Moussa), and the representative of the mayor of Malanville who could not attend in person (Mr. DANDAKOE Inoussa);
- three honorable MPs of the National Assembly from the Department of Alibori, Mr. BIO KANSI Raoul, SOULE Sabi Moussa, and OROU YAROU Bio Bagou;
- His Majesty Nansounon, Paramount Chief of Banikoara ;
- the representative of the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori who could not attend the workshop in person ;
- the Director General of the Forests and Natural Resource Department, Mr. EL HADJ Issa Aziz;
- the representative of the Director of CENAGREF who was unable to attend ;

- the first Director of CENAGREF, Mr. BIO AGBENGA Luc;
- the Director of the National W Park, Mr. BALLO Martial;
- experts from INRAB, Professor MENSAH Guy Apollinaire, and from UAC, Mrs. SOGBOHOSSOU Etotépé;
- municipal officers in charge of agricultural promotion, or their representatives ;
- various Non Governmental Organizations officials;
- officials of various livestock or agricultural production associations ;
- Paramount chiefs of the Fulani community ;
- And ORTB and local radios operating in Banikoara.

The full attendance list may be found in Annex 2 of the document.

After all the participants introduced themselves, they were blessed by His Majesty Nansounon, Paramount Chief of Banikoara.

This was followed by the opening address read by the representative of the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori.

Then, the workshop bureau was put in place; it comprised the following four persons:

1. Chairperson, Professor MENSAH Guy Apollinaire, expert at INRAB and UAC;
2. Secretary, Mrs. ROFFI Elena, CP/RC Kandi ;
4. First Rapporteur, Mrs. SABI YO Sanni Innocent, 2nd deputy to the Mayor of Banikoara;
4. Second Rapporteur, Mr. BANI SAMBO Djobo, from ANOPER Banikoara.

The bureau conducted the workshop successfully, in accordance with the program adopted.

1. CONDUCT OF THE WORKSHOP

The chair of the bureau first thanked the participants for appointing him and three other persons to conduct the deliberations. He then reminded the participants that he would not allow any waste of time for the sake of achieving results. Consequently, he invited participants to contribute constructively to help him close the workshop at 18:00 at the latest.

He then asked the Director of the National Park to do a twenty minute presentation on the current state of the National W Park.

1.1. Presentation on the current situation of the National W Park by its Director

The Director's presentation covered the following points:

1.1.1. The W-Benin Park from 1954 to 2001

Following are some figures on the situation of the W Benin Park between 1954 and 2001:

- 70 km of track ;
- 12 rangers and hunting agents for surveillance ;
- 3 old four wheel vehicles ;
- 100 000 heads of domestic cattle within the Park ;
- 5 000 ha of farms inside the Park ;
- Overcutting;
- Intensive poaching;
- No observation of the rules and felling quotas in the hunting zones;
- Fishing with chemical products;
- Income generated by the Park: twenty million CFA F.

1.1.2. Situation of the Park from 2001 to 2008

Next are some figures on the situation of the W Benin Park from 2001 to 2008 during the intervention of ECOPAS:

- 780 480 ha of protected area, including :
 - ✓ 563 280 ha for the National W Park ;
 - ✓ 115 200 ha for the hunting zone of Djona;
 - ✓ 102 000 ha for the hunting zone of Mékrou.
- more than 50 reptile species;
- 80 mammal species ;
- 350 bird species;
- more than 500 plant species ;
- more than 100 adjacent villages ;
- 78 AVIGREF ;
- 87 agents including 49 surveillance workers (15 foresters and 42 eco-rangers);
- 3 bases and 3 reception centers;
- 800 km track of which 100 are permanent;
- 6 permanent guard posts inside the park;
- 9000 persons for EE;
- 70 million CFA F annual income (including 30% for AVIGREFs);
- A one billion CFA F iron bridge, including 100 millions from Benin's government;
- One ULM aircraft.

1.1.3. After ECOPAS, PPN-W granted a 3 million Euros support

Actions undertaken with the support of PPN-W, after ECOPAS's intervention:

- 248 km track under construction ;

- Purchase of a grader tractor;
- Purchase of a power shovel (excavator);
- Construction of 26 ponds (in progress);
- Purchase of a tipper truck (in progress) ;
- Purchase of a double cabin pick-up vehicle (in progress);
- Purchase of 4 simple pick-up vehicles (2 of which have been acquired).

1.1.4. Current problems faced by the W-Benin National Park

The problems obtaining in the periphery of the park are, among others:

- Grazing and transhumance inside the Park ;
- Poaching;
- Poisoning of carnivorous animals;
- Destruction operated by wildlife on agricultural farms (human-elephant conflicts);
- Fishing with chemical products in peripheral water reservoirs;
- Various conflicts between farmers and livestock producers as well as among agricultural farmers themselves.

The serious current problems facing the park are:

- Clearing of vast areas inside the park; examples may be found in Yaboussou, Kpbansion, Narée, Darre Grourou, Yinkoka, Pota, Nipouni, Dogo, Kpéssara, Baga and Bangada.
- Anarchic forest clearings in the Buffer Zone;
- Poaching;
- Use of pesticides.

1.1.5. Management of the Buffer Zone

The management strategy of the Buffer Zone was decided based on the work of two forums:

- The first forum took place in 2003 and came up with the following decisions :
 - ✓ Zoning :
 - The agriculture band,
 - The pharmacopeia band ; and
 - The pastoral band
 - ✓ Establishment of the following user dues :
 - Livestock producers : 500 CFA per cattle head and 250 CFA F per ovine head ;
 - Agricultural farmers: between 5 000 and 10 000 CFA F

- ✓ Specific use conditions such as :
 - Hunting forbidden inside the buffer zone ;
 - Cotton production prohibited;
 - Limitation of cleared surface areas;
 - Buffer Zone's tenure system is respected, and propriety right is granted to CENAGREF.
- The 2nd Forum was held on May 1, 2009, and it produced the following results :
 - ✓ Additions to the provisions made by the first forum ;
 - ✓ Materialization of the bands' limits;
 - ✓ Organization of sessions to inform and sensitize populations;
 - ✓ Establishment of 10 to 15 member mutual groups;
 - ✓ Inversion of the band with beekeepers who are contiguous to the central core; [**French version not clear enough**]
 - ✓ Reduction of livestock and agricultural producers' bands by 250m, each, to establish a 500 m separating corridor.

1.1.6. Implementation of the new strategy

Implementation of the new strategy requires the following actions:

- Information and sensitization ;
- Zoning ;
- Inventory of occupiers;
- Relocation of occupiers ;
- Monitoring how the buffer zone is being used.

1.1.7. Way forward

The way forward is based on the following:

- Developing sightseeing to reach 10 000 visitors, against the less than 3000 visitors recorded currently ;
- Improving the amount of income from 30 to 50% to cover the charges;
- Reinforcing social dialogue and inter-municipality initiatives among the Park's adjacent municipalities;
- The park's contribution to the local development.

At the end of the above presentation, the Chairperson recalled the objective and expected outcomes of the workshop. He underscored the fact the workshop's mission is amend, adopt, and validate the various documents developed in relation to the management strategy of the buffer zone, the agreements, the contracts, as well as the recommendation on development planning, sightseeing, and sport hunting.

However, noted a serious mistake in the zoning established during the 1 May 2009 forum, and insisted on the need to correct it.

1.2. Importance of modifying the zoning proposed for draft new strategy

The Chairperson observed that this workshop is a logical follow-up to the forum held on how to improve the exploitation conditions of the resources of the W Park's buffer zone, without affecting the capital and while securing the boundaries of the Park's central core, as determined on May 1, 2009 in Kandi. Indeed, a forum dedicated to organizing the exploitation of the buffer zone for economic and medicinal purposes, in the light of the pressure exerted on the Park as a result of demographic growth and the expansion of economic activities (farming, livestock production, etc.), was organized in June 2005. However, a few years later, it was noted that the different players could not tolerate each other, and guarantee equitable access to the resources. Worse, the boundaries of the Park's central core are constantly violated by actors starting farms or taking their livestock animals into the Park. On the whole, the exploitation modalities of the buffer zone, as established in June 2005, are no longer observed; and this often leads to bloody conflicts, especially with the intrusion of livestock producers from neighboring countries. Often carrying fire weapons, they force themselves into the buffer zones where they stay briefly before moving on and settling in the Park's central core for the entire season (in areas that are difficult to access by the surveillance agents). And they do so without caring to obtain any form of document neither from the official or customary authorities, nor from the officers of the National Center for the Management of Wildlife Reserves.

This situation characterized by illegal practices, permanent insecurity, and extreme pressure on the resources of the Park and its buffer zone, is the backdrop against which, in collaboration with AVIGREF, the W Park's Directorate organized this forum, with funding from the Regional Union of the W Park's AVIGREFs.

1.3. Three working groups established

Following the opening formalities, participants were split into three groups to work on three themes:

- Theme I: Reorganization and settling of the farmers of the buffer zone;
- Theme II: Management of the buffer zone (agreements on resource exploitation);
- Theme III: Partnership with DPNW, AVIGREF, adjacent municipalities, and other actors.

1.4. Working commissions

WORKING GROUP I

Theme: Reorganization and settling of the farmers of the buffer zone

After the group presented its output, the plenary made some amendments and adopted the following points:

1. Delineation of the three bands established on May 15, 2010 ;
2. The bands present as following, from the Park toward the free zone:
 - a. The aqua-culturists' band;
 - b. The livestock producers' band;
 - c. The agricultural farmers' band.
3. Any person in the buffer zone shall be displaced, excepting those who have been living there for more than 50 years;
4. All actors shall be involved in the delineation process;
5. Build enough water reservoirs in the livestock producers' band.

WORKING GROUP

Theme: Reorganization and settling of the farmers of the buffer zone.

After the bureau was set up, a list of interventions was drawn. EL HADJ BOUBE first took the floor and explained the practice of Karimama in terms of exploitation of the buffer zone. [*The last bit of the sentence in the French version is incomplete and not understandable*]

Group N°02

MANAGEMENT OF THE BUFFER ZONE

(Resource exploitation agreement)

REPORT OF GROUP 2

The group comprised 12 members, and it worked on the development of the buffer zone by livestock producers, agricultural farmers, and fish farmers.

The following articles and points were amended:

Livestock producers

Point 1: Membership card fees for the mutual must be borne by DPNW;

Point 3: Carrying of weapons or ammunition is prohibited for all;

Point 6: For cattle watering, DPNW is responsible for selecting the ponds or water points, in consultation with the mutual groups.

Point 11: Add the following: « for the purpose of development planning »

Observation: The other points remained unchanged

Agricultural farmers

Point 12: No agricultural household may possess more than 5 ha of land in the buffer zone.

Observation: The other points remained unchanged.

Fish farmers

Point 5: Add the following: « in compliance with official taxes. »

Observation: The other points remained unchanged. The list of attendance at Group 2 is attached.

Group N°02

MANAGEMENT OF THE BUFFER ZONE

(Natural resource exploitation agreement)

Three types of agreements

First: How can livestock producers and agricultural farmers collaborate?

Livestock producers

Livestock producers' agreement 13 points

1st point: Accepted. Borne by DPNW

2nd point: Yes

3rd point: Carrying of weapon or ammunition is prohibited for all;

4th point: Selection of ponds or water points must be done in collaboration with mutual groups.

Concerning the watering of the livestock, selection of water points or ponds is done by DPNW, in consultation with the mutual groups.

7th point: Yes

8th point: Yes

9th point: Yes

10th point: Yes

11th point: Yes

11th point: The management of the funds must be done in consultation with the mutual groups for development planning purposes.

12th point: Yes

13th point: Yes

Agricultural farmers

1st point: Yes

2nd point: Yes

3rd point: Yes

4th point: Yes

5th point: Yes

6th point: Yes

7th point: Yes

8th point: Yes

9th point: Yes

10th point: Yes

11th point: Yes

12th point: No agricultural household may possess more than 5 ha of land in the buffer zone

13th point: Yes

14th point: Yes

LIST OF VILLAGES AROUND 1960
IN THE FOUNOUGO ZONE

- 1- Kandèrou
- 2- Kpéssarabaga
- 3- Nipouni
- 4- Kangourou
- 5- Pota
- 6- Yinkoga
- 7-Darè
- 8- Carré
- 9- Yaboussou
- 10- Igrigou
- 11- Yabdari
- 12- Gbannin

INTHE BANIKOARA ZONE

- 1- Yambanou
- 2- Sionkpékoga
- 3- Bantran
- 4- Soudou

- 5- Tobaga
- 6- OROU DOUSSI N'krou
- 7- Guimbagou
- 8- Pontè

Group n°3

Theme: Partnership between DPNW, AVIGREF and other actors. The Partnership contract was read, and the group members proposed changes on some articles.

- 1- Contract duration is unlimited.... There must be a limit to the contract duration.
- 2- The AVIGREFs must be involved in the development “ ” damages provoked by the wildlife” of PDC [**French original not clear!**]
- 3- Get involved in the preparation of municipal development planning documents. Instead of “political support from municipalities” we should rather say “the socio-political and administrative support of municipalities.”
- 4- The AVIGREF investment funds must be placed in all adjacent villages, including those serving as transit points for the destruction of the Park.
- 5- Prior to providing support to the AVIGREF, the municipalities must receive [**object not stated in the French version**] from DPNW.

Recommendations on the issue of compensation for damages caused by wildlife.

Villages established in the W Park (Karimama) before 1954.

- Pétchinga
- Loumbou loumbou
- Gorou

1.5. Plenary: Feedback from the working groups

The outcomes of the two working groups are attached in an annex.

During the plenary debates, a number of recommendations were made to CENAGREF:

1. Rehabilitate the surveillance posts of Kaobagou and Monsey.
2. Restore order among CENAGREF's field workers who tend to get involved in abusive money extortions. Put an end to impunity.
3. Establish a clear distinction between the role of trackers and that of AVIGREF members, because most trackers tend to behave in ways that are not helpful to the Park's officials. And some AVIGREF officials also to illegally take up the roles of trackers and rangers.
4. Systematical dismiss and prosecute any AVIGREF official caught extorting money or acting as an accomplice in such dealings in the field.

5. Systematically dismiss any tracker who becomes notorious in such dishonest dealings.
6. Formally forbid cattle being taken into the Park, whatever the reason invoked. This recommendation was addressed to the Rougas (Fulani chiefs) and other opinion leaders under this category of users in the buffer zone.
7. The (official and customary) local authorities must help CENAGREF to control the infiltration of non adjacent populations into the buffer zone and the Park.
8. Determine the borders of the buffer zone and materialize them in all the localities adjacent to the Park.

2. DISCUSSION ON AND ADOPTION OF THE DOCUMENTS ON THE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES OF THE BUFFER ZONE, AND THE RECOMMENDATION ON DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, SIGHTSEEING, AND SPORT HUNTING

- Produce a quarterly report on the situation of the environment of the W Park and of the buffer zone.
- Publish the data findings in all media available;
- Create other environmental protection and development associations.

3. CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP BY THE PREFECT OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF BORGOU/ALBORI

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Work agenda of the Internalization workshop on the management strategy of the buffer zone of W-Benin's Cross-border Biosphere Reserve

Internalization Workshop on the management strategy of the zone buffer zone (Banikoara, April 8, 2010)

Day 1: April 7, 2010

From 5:00 PM onward: Reception and accommodation of guests at Kandi or Banikoara (participant allowed to choose which)

Day 2: April 8, 2010

9:00 -9:15 Welcome addresses by the Mayor of Banikoara

9:15 – 9:20 Introduction of participants

9:20 – 9:25 Blessing by His Majesty Nansounon, Paramount Chief of Banikoara

9:25 – 9:45 Opening address by the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori.

9:40 – 9:45 Appointment of bureau

9:45 – 10:00 Presentation of the current conservation situation of the National W Park, by the Director of the National W Park.

10: 00 – 10:15 Creation of three working groups based on the following themes:

- Reorganization and settling of farmers in the buffer zone;
- Management of the buffer zone (resource exploitation agreements)
- Partnership between DPNW, AVIGREF, adjacent Municipalities, and other players.

10:15 – 12: 15 Work in commissions

12:15 – 2:30 PM Lunch

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM Continuation and end of work in commissions

3:00 – 3:30 PM Feedback by working groups

3:30 – 4: 45 PM. Discussion on and adoption of the documents on the management strategy of the buffer zone, and the recommendation on development planning, sightseeing, and sport hunting.

4:45 – 5:00 PM Closing of workshop by the Prefect of the Departments of Borgou/Alibori

From 5:00 PM Back to Banikoara or Kandi for the night (depending on participants' choice)

Day 3: April 9, 2010

7:00 to 8: 00 AM Departure of participants

Annex 2. List of participants to the Internalization workshop on the management strategy of the buffer zone of W-Benin's Cross-border Biosphere Reserve

N°	Name and first name	Structure
01	ODJO O. Daniel	SDLP Municipality of Banikoara
02	TOHIDE Narcisse Togbédjé	Head of Section Karimama
03	OROU G. Yaya	Secretary, CA Goumori
04	KPAKOSSOUNON Alimi Yao	Secretary, CA Banikoara
05	BANI Bédari	Agricultural farmer
06	DOUKOUA Yorou	Agricultural farmer
07	LAPASSO Pierre	Agricultural farmer
08	SANNI Bio Yô	Agricultural farmer
09	OROU YERIMA Orou Soumé	Agricultural farmer
10	OMOROU Sambo	Agricultural farmer
11	ALFARI Yaya	Agricultural farmer
12	YAKPASSOU Gérémié	Agricultural farmer
13	MADOUYOU Sambo	Agricultural farmer
14	TOUNDOH Cadnel	RC - Ecotourism
15	CHEVILLOT Julien Chomier Fanny	CENAGREF / W
16	SANNO Abdoubak	CENAGREF
17	SABI ASSOUMA Bani	R.C.
18	ROUGA Dotia Bouraïma	Fulani Chief , Banikoara
19	BOUBE Oumarou	Agricultural farmer
20	BANI SAMBO Djobo	ANOPER Banikoara
21	MOUSSA Nouhoum	Municipal Councilor, Malanville
22	MANZA Nourou-Dine	Secretary General, Municipality of Kèrou
23	BOUBE Tidjani	Agricultural farmer
24	ALI Abdouramane	Agricultural farmer
25	AMADOU Boubacar	UDOPER
26	ALTINE Boubé	Trader
27	BOUBE Séïdou	Agricultural farmer
28	ABOUBACAR Mahamadou	UCOPER - Malanville
29	TOUNDO Sabi Sinigui	CA Ounet
30	DOTIA Salifou	Livestock producer
31	SEIDOU Diallo	Agricultural farmer
32	SOULE Soumana	Agricultural farmer
33	BIO GADO Bio Kassim	CA Soroko
34	OROU MOUGOU B. Kina	Chairperson, AVIGREF - Founougo
35	BIO KPO Tairou	Secretary, AVIGREF - Igrigou
36	SABI YO Bio Bio	Chairperson, AVIGREF - Igrigou
37	AMADOU Issiaka	Chairperson, AVIGREF - Zone KANDI
38	BANI Labo	Chairperson, AVIGREF - Zone Malanville
39	MAHAME Assouma	Chairperson, AVIGREF - Banikoara
40	BAGRI Théodore	Zone Secretary

N°	Name and first name	Structure
41	BAGNAN Maman Bello	UR-AVIGREF
42	BAROGA Samounou	Agricultural farmer
43	IDRISSOU Boubé	Tracker
44	TAMOU Ganiki	Member, AVRIGREF
45	KORA Miti	Delegate, Pampime
46	BELCO Moussa	Delegate, Founougo
47	MOUSSA	Delegate, Gomparou
48	SOMBARAGUI Issiako	Delegate, Founougo A
49	ZIME Orou Yanro	CA Founougo
50	TOKO N'Douro Alou	CA Kokey
51	OROU BERE Issiako	Councilor
52	ZAKARI Ousséni	CA Gomparou
53	EL-HADJ ISSA Azizou	DGFRN
54	ROFFI Elena	CP/RC
55	MENSAH Guy Apollinaire	Expert/INRAB et UAC
56	BIO BOUGO Bio Jean	First deputy to the Mayor, Banikoara
57	BIO SAMMO B. Alfred	CA Kokiborou
58	AROUNA Zibo	Radio Banikoara
59	FANOU Serge	Radio Banikoara
60	SOGBHOSSOU A. Etotépé	Expert/FSA/UAC
61	KATE Sabai	Mayor of Banikoara
62	BIO KANSI Raoul	Member of Parliament, National Assembly
63	MAMAN BELLO Moussa	Mayor of Karimama
64	OUEDRAOGO Ousmane Boubacar	Mayor of Kandi
65	KEGAMONRE Dramane	Radio Banikoara
66	DANDAKOE Inoussa	Representative of the Mayor of Malanville
67	BIO AGBENGA Luc	MAEP
68	TAMOU NANTI Boukoukénin	CENAGREF/ W Park's Periphery Officer
69	SABI YO Sanni Innocent	2 nd Deputy to the Mayor of Banikoara
70	BALLO Martial	CENAGREF / Director of National W Park
71	OROU YAROU Bio Bagou	Member of Parliament, National Assembly
72	BARASOUNON Joel	Municipality, Banikoara
73	MAMA D. Abdoulaye	Primary education
74	BAGRI Gounou Yô	CA Toura
75	OROU YERIMA Tèpkèrègou	Eco-ranger
76	ADJIBI Nassirou	Eco-ranger
77	FONGNONHOU Hermann	Head of sector Banikoara / CENAGREF
78	ISSIFOU Soulémame	Driver
79	MAMA Issa	Driver
80	KONNIN Antoine	Driver
81	BANI TARO Bani	Driver
82	BANGRE Boukari	Driver
83	ALASSANE Dissou	Driver
84	KAO Antoine	Driver
85	ZIME Idrissou	Driver

N°	Name and first name	Structure
86	BOUKARI Aladji	Driver
87	MOUSSA Amadou	Driver
88	BANI Cabo	UR-AVIGREF
89	ABDOULAYE Mohamed	C/SS DPNW
90	AMADOU Sambo Poulo	Fulani Paramount Chief, Karimama
91	SOULE Sabi Moussa	Member of Parliament, National Assembly
92	KORA Yintou	GDC
93	GOUNOU T.	GDC
94	OROU TOUNDO Aboubakari	GDC
95	CHABI W. José	GDC
96	GBAGUIDI A. R. Roméo	GDC
97	GOGAN Claude	Driver
98	BAH OROU Ali Dibagaré	UR-AVIGREF
99	DEGUENONVO Guy	CENAGREF / DPNW
100	MOUSSA Belco	Village chief, Founougo
101	ASSOUMA Alidou	Village chief, Founougo
102	ABOU Bio Manga	Agricultural farmer
103	MADJOU Sobadjo	Agricultural farmer
104	KPESSARA Sabi Danguéré	Delegate, Kandèrou
105	SABI SOGO Bani	Former delegate, Kandèrou
106	SANNI YÔ Banidjo	Delegate Sampèto
107	SABI YO Sabi Bari	Former delegate, Sampèto