SPREP Field Trip to GOOPA on 1st September 2012

(Environment and Economic Development Department, North Province)

1) Historical Overview on the natural heritage conservation project in Goopa:

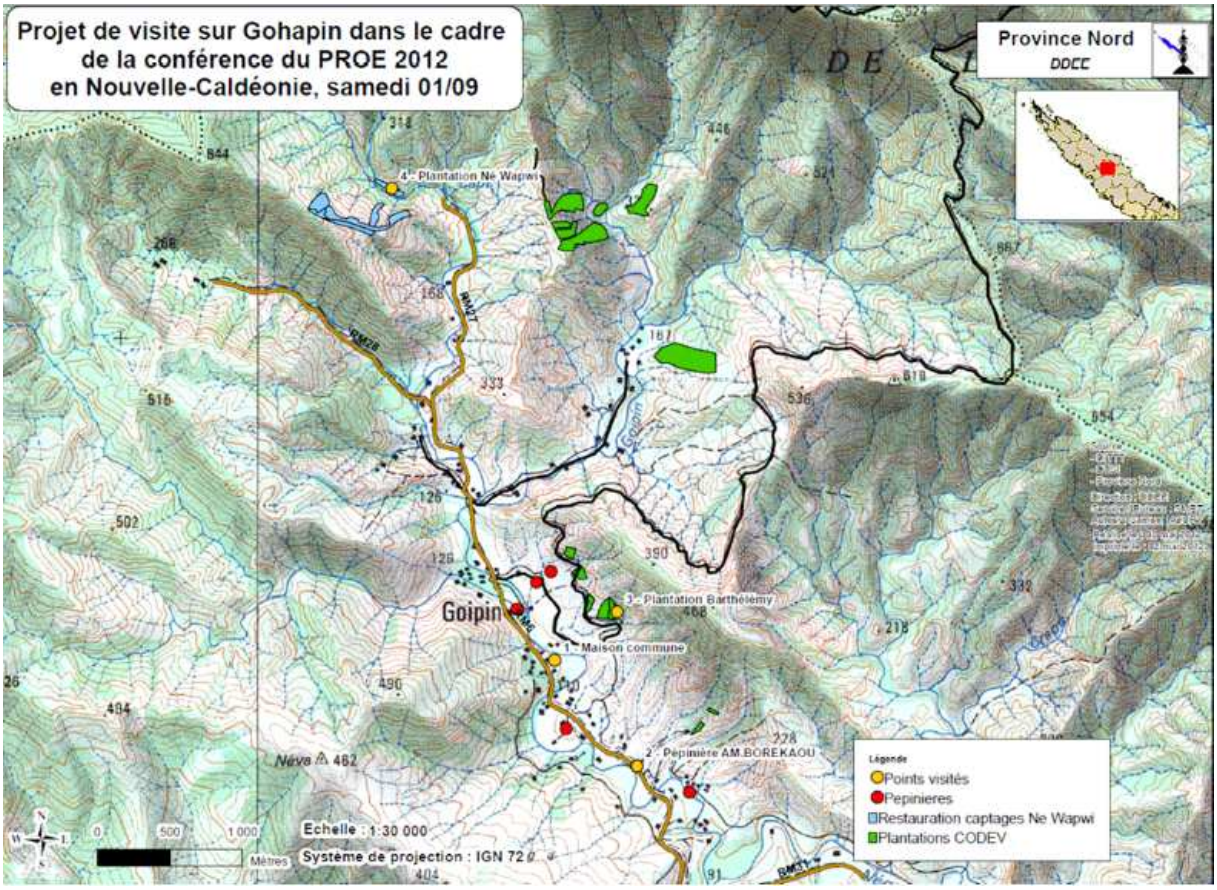
Goopa tribe is located at the south of the North Province in the municipality of Neko (Poya) at just about 250 kms from Noumea **(see map**). Nearby the Aoupinie forest, a wilderness reserve since 1975, the tribe is the most populated in New Caledonia (800 inhabitants) and is conscious of the need to preserve its natural environment.

To this extent, the tribe population and the New Caledonian office of WWF-France are committed to a project of sustainable development based on the valorisation of the natural and cultural heritage since 2003.

This project, among others, integrates fire prevention and active restoration of the forest cover near watersheds around the hamlets.

From 2007, an integrated program was set up, resulting in awareness-raising actions and planting healing forest species in a network of nurseries. The challenge was to mobilise the inhabitants of the tribe for the forest restoration and for a collective social control on fire.

The North Province was solicited in 2008 to reinforce the project on forest restoration engaged with WWF. The community is financially helping the project via its Code of Development for the reforestation of local essence production.



2) The project and the outcomes:

➢ The nurseries

The first nursery was created in September 2006 by Mr Denis MEANDU-POVEU. Passionate about nature, Denis had tested germination, then the reproduction of an increasing number of pioneer forest species. Being successful, the association of women "WA ERETEU" opened in November 2007 a second nursery to breed the plants from the first nursery.

From 2008 with the financial support of the North Province and WWF, new nurseries have been created by women of the association.

Currently, there are 12 nurseries in Goopa tribe with a total capacity of approximately 30.000 plants a year (with an effective delivery of 15.500 plants annually).

These nurseries ensure the entire reforestation of the tribe and of a few sites in the neighbouring tribes.

Ms Anne-Marie BOREKAOU's nursery was within the first to be created in 2008.

(See map point 2)

Beginning with a single 28 m^2 module, the nursery was quickly enlarged to 84 m^2 for 7.500 forest plants capacity ("faux-tamanoux, kaoris, kohus de montagne…"). These young plants come from seeds or seedlings harvested in the nearby forests. M. BOREKAOU managed the production line from harvest to the plants delivery all by herself.



- **<u>The plantations</u>**

The "Barthélémy" plantation (see map point 3) started in May 2007 for the first eco-citizen forest restoration site during the first Festival on Nature, co-organised by WWF and the tribe council. The plantation was named Barthélémy WIN-NEMOU in memory of the first man to show how healing forest species, in particular the Niam moto (guioa villosa) "the eye of the forest", could be re-introduced in the valleys that are not burning anymore .

Every year since, the plot receive eco-citizen projects of various dimensions, co-supervised by WWF and the tribe. Today this initiative benefits a dozen of others sites belonging to different clans.



The "Nepwapwi" plantation (see map point 4) aims firstly to stop swiddens and secondly to accelerate the natural expansion of the forest cover on the protected perimeter of the main drinking water intake site. A range of concepts are implemented: forest edges' extension, seed summit plantation, corridors installation, selection of melliferous and zoochores plants to optimise the natural regeneration by perch effect (seeds dispersion by birds and fruit bats under the first plants), sowing increase.

Technically, the operation is a local experiment and a unique experience in New Caledonia which could be set up to benefit others projects of the same nature in the future.

The plantation also aims to exercise a community control on fires. It is successful as no fire has been signalled in the watershed area ever since.

Started in 2008, the plantation is nowadays spreading over about 13 ha, with a goal set to approximately 20 ha. All plants come from the tribe nurseries and are transported on men's backs and on horsebacks.

