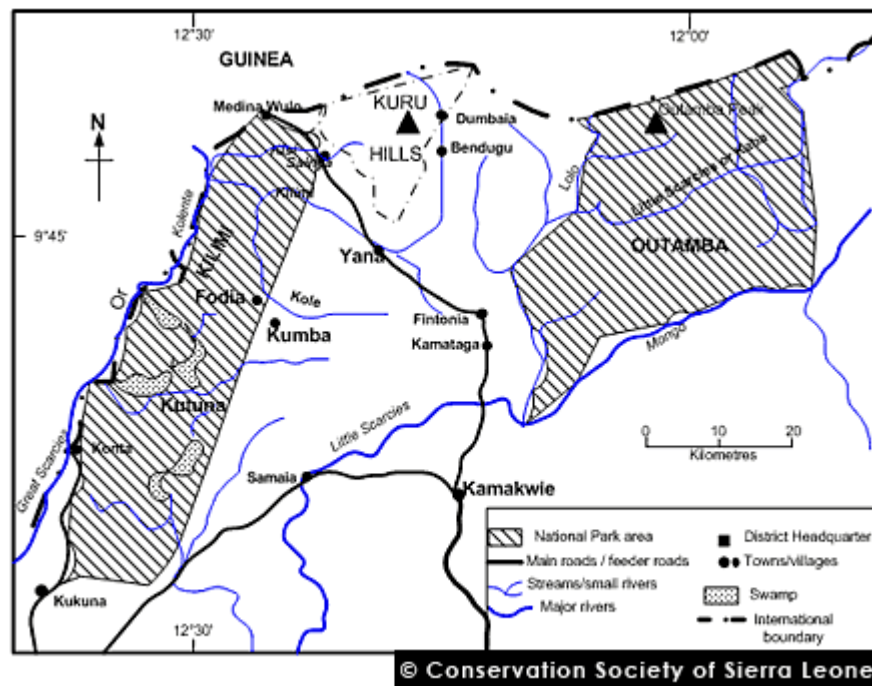


# Outamba-Kilimi National Park

Outamba-Kilimi is the only extensive area of savanna woodland and grass savanna, which has any protection in Sierra Leone. Its primate population, especially the chimpanzee population, is exceptional, and it has considerable potential for education and ecotourism development.



Outamba-Kilimi National Park (OKNP) is found in the extreme north, about 296 km north of Freetown. It lies adjacent to the border with the Republic of Guinea, in the Tambakha Chiefdom, Bombali District, Northern province. The two areas, Outamba (74,100 ha) and Kilimi (36,800 ha), that constitute the park are separated by a stretch of land 1000 km<sup>2</sup> in size. The vegetation is characterised by a mosaic of grassland, closed woodland and gallery forest. Whereas, Outamba has a predominance of tall grasses and woodland, and patches of closed canopy forest, Kilimi has more grassland and more open woodland. There are traces of *Raffia* swamp vegetation and riverine grassland in both areas. Outamba has a perennial lake, Lake Idrissa. The land in general is agriculturally poor. The region is drained by several streams, which flow into large rivers of national importance such as the Mongo and Little Scarcies at Outamba and the Great Scarcies at Kilimi.

## Birds

The 1994 IBA survey recorded 158 and 175 species of birds at Outamba and Kilimi respectively; the two areas having 45 and 39 species exclusive of the other respectively.

The total number of bird species recorded in the whole park so far is 220 including 11 (40%) of the species considered dependent on the

Guinea-Sudan savanna biome that occur in Sierra Leone (Table 3C) (see Harding and Harding, 1992). OKNP holds four species of global conservation concern, one of which, Pallid Harrier (NT), is a rare migrant. Lake Idrissa and river courses seasonally support a good population of wintering plovers, sandpipers, herons and egrets. Thousands of Cattle Egrets visit the area.

## **Mammals and other fauna**

There are nine species of primates in the area, including four threatened species; Western Chimpanzee (En), Red Colobus Monkey (Vu), Black and White Colobus Monkey (NT) and Sooty Mangabey (NT). A small population of Western Elephant (En), occur at Outamba. Other large mammals include Leopard (Vu), Pigmy Hippopotamus (Vu), Water Chevrotain (NT), Maxwell Duiker (NT) and Savanna Buffalo (NT).

## **Access and Facilities**

The two areas occur along Sierra Leone's northern border with the Republic of Guinea. Kamakwie, 15km to the south, is the nearest town. The main highways into the region cross the Little Scarcies river by two old ferries which occasionally break down, halting traffic for days, especially during the rainy season. The park currently has no electricity or tap water system, but there is a well-organised camp with rudimentary, but decent facilities for visitors, including tented accommodation, cooking facilities and a visitor centre. Wildlife Conservation Branch staff can organise guided tours, including canoe trips. Trails are marked and labelled and there is one viewing platform. Rebels invaded the park during the civil war and destroyed facilities, but these are being rehabilitated.

Information provided courtesy of the [Conservation Society of Sierra Leone](#)