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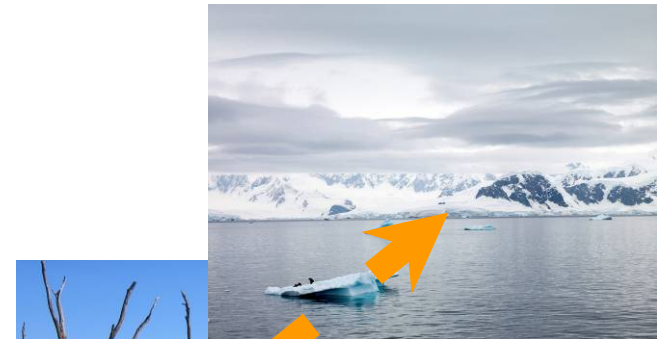
# Field exercise: Transect Walk

USAID Staff Environmental Training  
Pretoria ■ 11–15 May 2009

# The transect methodology

❖ **TRANSECT=**  
a path along which one observes  
and records environmental attributes  
of interest, e.g.

- **Key species counts**  
*(record number of observations, distance from the transect line—a classic technique for estimating populations of key species and thus assessing ecosystem health)*
- **Land use and land cover**
- **Soil profiles**
- **Etc.**



**Used in many  
disciplines: ecology &  
NRM, landscape  
characterization for  
integrated agricultural  
development, etc. . 2**

# Our assignment

## ❖ “Integrated transect” approach focusing on

- *Economic uses and activities*
- *Natural landscape & human interventions/the built environment*
- *Environmental health*
  - How intact are ecosystems & ecosystem functions?
  - How healthy is the environment for the people who live in it?

## Objectives

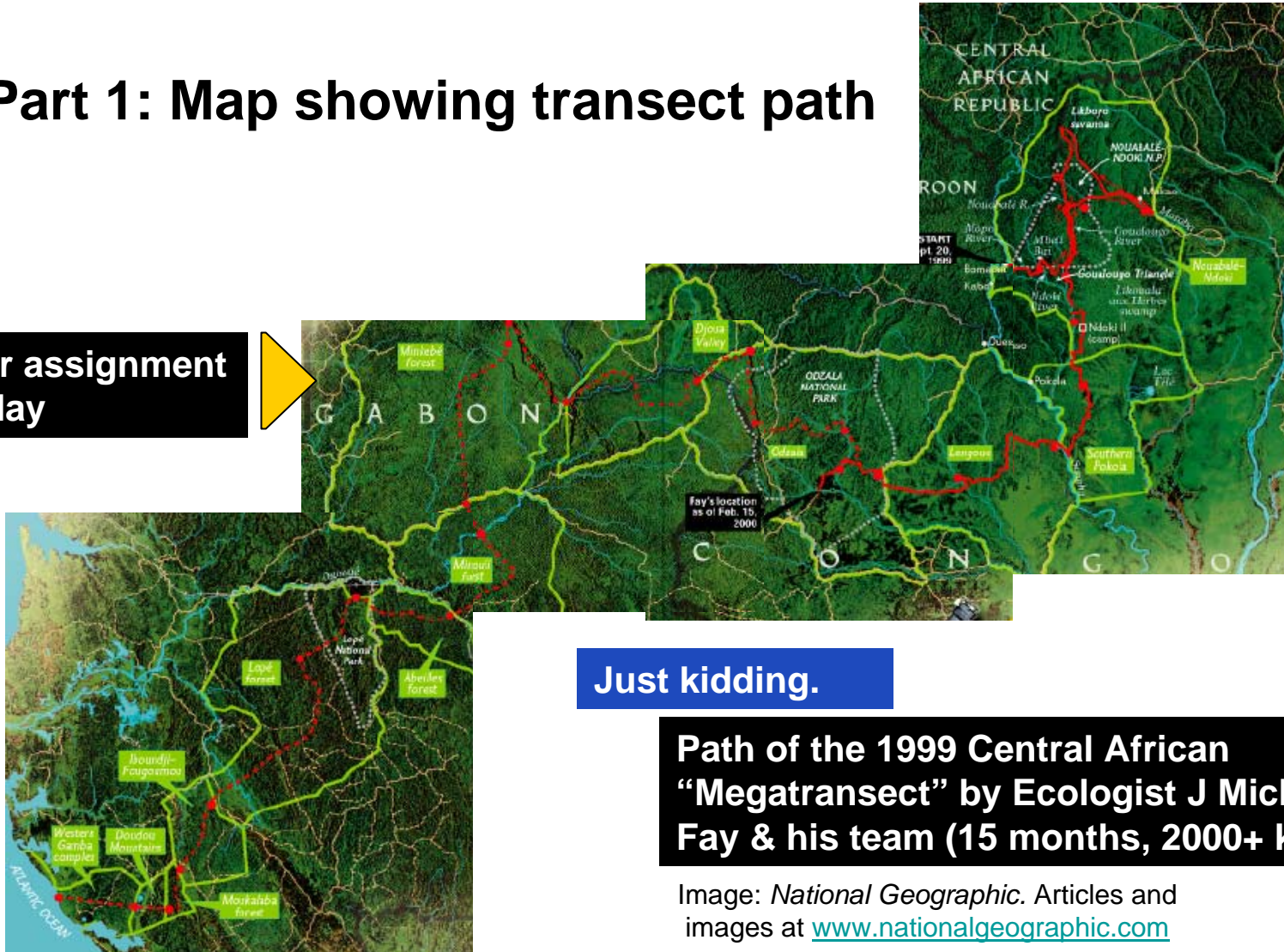
**Use a systematic, structured approach to practice field observation from an environmental perspective.**

**Get a head start on understanding the local “baseline situation”**

# Recording transect results

## ❖ Part 1: Map showing transect path

Our assignment today



Just kidding.

Path of the 1999 Central African “Megatransect” by Ecologist J Michael Fay & his team (15 months, 2000+ km)

Image: *National Geographic*. Articles and images at [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

# Recording transect results

## ❖ Part 2: Transect diagram

Example from an integrated transect focused on agro-ecosystem characterization

From N. van Duivenbooden et al. *Landscape & Urban Planning* 34 (1996), 143-160.

