

FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Name: Conservation International

Project Title: Increasing Our Knowledge of Biodiversity in Priority Areas of the Upper Guinean Forest Through Biological Assessments

Project Dates: December 2001 – June 2004

Date of Report: August 25, 2004

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

This project has been a true collaboration between CI's West Africa Team, the Rapid Assessment team, and our local partners throughout West Africa. Through this project we have not only increased knowledge of several biodiversity priority areas within West Africa, but also trained a team of capable local scientists to conduct further research throughout the region. We have been instrumental in providing critical links between local scientists and international experts, which will be maintained far beyond the life of this project. We have established a cadre of experts both local and international who work well together and are able to perform at the highest conservation standards. The teams assembled through this project have all expressed their interest in additional projects similar in nature that we are currently pursuing.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: Biological information collected of rapid assessments is used in conservation and management planning

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level: Biological information collected through rapid assessments is used in conservation and management planning	Biological information collected as a result of the Haute Dodo/Cavally RAP has been used in conservation planning – unfortunately, that planning has been put on hold as a result of the current political situation in the Ivory Coast. Biological information collected through the Pic de Fon RAP has been used to inform decisions not only for the project area and to better manage this classified forest, but also has affected conservation and management planning throughout

	<p>southeastern Guinea. Biological information collected through the Ghana RAP is being used by CI-Ghana and the Forestry Commission of Ghana to guide management activities within the surveyed GSBAs. Biological information collected from Dere, Diecke and Mt. Bero, Guinea during the second Guinea RAP is being used to set priorities within southeastern Guinea and to guide landscape-level conservation planning in the region.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 1.1 Trained regional scientists influence the environmental policies of their institutions</i></p>	<p>Beginning with the Haute Dodo/Cavally RAP in March 2002, a number of regional scientists were trained including participants from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Benin. These participants helped to form the basis of a regional RAP team, available to participate in biological surveys within the region as needed. We were able to call upon a number of scientists trained in the Haute Dodo/Cavally RAP to participate and receive additional training in the two Guinea RAPs, as well as in the Ghana RAP. Furthermore, we were able to work with a number of Ghanaian scientists during the Ghana RAP. Among regional RAP trainees and participants, our teams included representatives from a number of West African institutions: the University of Sierra Leone, the N'zerekore Forestry Center (Guinea), Guinee-Ecologie, DNEF (department of water and forests-Guinea), Winrock International (Guinea), Laboratoire d'Ecologie Appliquee (Benin), University for Development Studies (Ghana), University of Ghana, Wildlife Division (Ghana), Ghana Wildlife Society, Lamto Ecological Station (Cote d'Ivoire), Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, Afrique Nature (Cote d'Ivoire). We are now continuing to work with all of these regional scientists to target donors and develop effective conservation projects.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 1.2 Protection of previously unknown high priority biodiversity areas is increased</i></p>	<p>The protection status of the sites surveyed in Cote d'Ivoire has yet to change. We expect this will remain a possibility and priority once the political</p>

	<p>situation becomes more stable. The Pic de Fon classified forest will likely keep the same status of protection, though it has been declared a no-go zone for logging as a result of the RAP surveys. The status of Dere, Diecke and Mt. Bero will not likely change, though management regimes, particularly of Diecke, will be improved based on our ongoing collaboration with the N'Zerelore forestry Center. CI-Ghana is using results of the RAP surveys to work with the government of Ghana towards an increased level of protection for all areas granted GSBA status. We expect to soon receive GCF funding to assist the government in enhancing protection. The government had previously been unaware of levels of encroachment into these areas. Through the final RAP report we will continue to suggest that Draw River GSBA be joined to Ankasa National Park and that this area receive that level of protection.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 1.3 Management of previously poorly understood high priority biodiversity areas is improved</i></p>	<p>Management has dramatically improved at the Pic de Fon since management has been transferred into the hands of the N'zerekore Forestry Centre due to survey results. RAP results also point to the need for reconsideration of logging practices within the Diecke classified forest and these recommendations are currently being implemented by the CFN. Though protection status of the GSBAs in Ghana has yet to change, management regimes are being carefully considered and the government is now more acutely aware of threats to the biodiversity within these areas.</p>

Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

This project has been highly successful, not only achieving what it set out to do (collect useful biological information, develop capacity within a region with little to no capacity for such surveys, raise awareness within the region of biologically important areas and improve management of these areas), but also in that this project has made possible a number of other projects. As a result of the first part of this project (the training course and survey in Cote d'Ivoire), the Pic de Fon Guinea RAP was made possible, cuminating in yet another RAP in SE Guinea, as well as the Rio Tinto/USAID/CI "Alliance" in Forest Guinea. This, in turn, is leading to additional possibilities for advancing conservation in Guinea and providing opportunities for scientists trained during these RAPs to find

further work in the field of conservation. The RAP in Ghana has created a relationship between several Ghanaian participants and the University of Vermont. The University has now provided research materials, equipment and books to Ghanaian institutions and plans to conduct further work in the country. Several participants from these RAPs are now continuing on in their education – some are working towards master’s degrees and others towards PhDs.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

As mentioned above, one of the greatest impacts are the additional opportunities that we have leveraged through this project. By having a well-trained, experienced team with demonstrated success on the ground, CI has been able to pursue several additional RAP projects such as that with Rio Tinto in Guinea. Today we are currently discussing possible RAPs with two other major international mining companies. We have also been able to link local scientists with research institutions and funding opportunities in order to help them further their academic career.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs:

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1:	
<i>Indicator 1.1 Training course for Rapid assessments takes place</i>	Training course took place in March 2002 in Côte d'Ivoire.
<i>Indicator 1.2 Trained regional scientists ready for participation in RAP</i>	Trained regional scientists and international expert trainers have participated in 4 RAP surveys in the past 2 years.
Output 2: Biological information is collected from two priority areas within West Africa.	
<i>Indicator 2.1 Rapid biodiversity Assessment takes place in first priority site in 2002 with participation of trained regional scientists</i>	A RAP took place in Haute Dodo/Cavally in 2002 with participation of trained regional scientists. An additional RAP took place in Pic de Fon, Guinea in 2002 with participation of trained regional scientists.
<i>Indicator 2.2 Rapid biodiversity Assessment takes place in second priority site in 2003</i>	A third West African RAP took place in four GSBAs in Ghana in 2003 with participation of trained regional scientists. Finally a RAP took place in Dere, Diecke and Mt. Bero classified forests in 2003 with participation of trained regional scientists. We are currently in discussions several more RAPs in Guinea, Ghana, and Sierra Leone for

	which we plan to involve our trained regional scientists.
Output 3: Publication and dissemination of RAP results	
<i>Indicator 3.1 RAP report finalized, printed and disseminated to all RAP participants</i>	<p>The content of the Côte d'Ivoire report is complete, though finalization was delayed due to the continued conflict in the country. The printed report will be available by the end of 2004.</p> <p>The Pic de Fon report is finalized, printed and distributed (though broad dissemination within Guinea is still pending).</p> <p>A preliminary Ghana report has been finalized printed and distributed. The Ghana final report will be printed early 2005. The Dere, Diecke and Mt. Bero preliminary results have been printed and disseminated. Final report will be printed early 2005.</p>

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

The project overall has been extremely successful and has surpassed the expected outputs in most areas. The team has been trained and has conducted 4 Rapid assessments in three West African countries. Each RAP has raised the profile of the survey area by highlighting the areas important biodiversity and often with the discovery of new species. The information generated through these assessments is currently being used by the West Africa Program to try and encourage enhanced protection and/or better management practices within the surveyed areas.

Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

With the exception of the Cote d'Ivoire final RAP report, all outputs have been realized. We had originally planned the second survey to take place in Liberia, which proved not to be possible due to the country's political instability last fall. However, the Ghana survey was able to place much needed attention on the state of the GSBAs in Ghana and to alert government officials to levels of threat and encroachment.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

Not applicable

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

One of the most important lessons learned through this project was the unforeseen benefits that are possible from such a project. Though the project was conceived to build local capacity for biological assessments in the region, which it did. There have been many more subtle benefits to the scientists, the CI programs involved, and to conservation in West Africa. Many of the regional scientists have developed strong support networks with international experts and institutions. Many are pursuing further education or have received additional work opportunities because of them. CI programs have been able to demonstrate their capacity to deliver clear results with the assembled teams and as such have received recognition and additional opportunities from donors, private sector industries, and local governments. We have also had opportunities to survey several areas which were previously unknown and have learned more about West Africa's remaining biodiversity than originally expected.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/failure)

Due to the nature of working in West Africa, we ran against a number of obstacles while trying to implement this project. The flexible way in which this project was set up and the amount of room we had within our objectives and outputs made it possible for us to look at the broad purpose of the project, regroup and re-plan when necessary, but continue to move forward within the timeframe, rather than just postponing due to political difficulties. Also, because this project was designed to build capacity within the region as a whole, and wasn't country or site specific, it made other activities possible that were not even imagined prior to the project's implementation. Had we focused on Ghana or Cote d'Ivoire only, we would not have created the capacity necessary to do good work, with the appropriate partners, in Guinea. Because the project was designed with a region-wide focus, it created, and continues to create, opportunities for advancing conservation in areas where CI does not (yet) have a strong presence, as well as those areas where CI is well established.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

As mentioned above, the flexibility made possible through CEPF was extremely helpful in ensuring the projects success. Had we not had the opportunity to change the geographic scope, delivery of the project would have been stalled for quite some time.

Additionally the scientists and CI staff, both local and international, who were involved in the project, are ultimately responsible for its success. The team was totally committed, demonstrating continued readiness throughout the two years to come together for the expeditions. They often prepared on short timelines and remained flexible as we evaluated the ever-changing situations on the ground. As a RAP team leader, Jennifer McCullough proved excellent. She maintained a very strong team with great dedication, which we hope to work with for years to come.

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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