

FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Name: Conservation International - West Africa Program

Project Title: Conservation Connections: Developing a Conservation Corridor for the Nimba Highlands and the Sapo-Tai Complex

Date of Final Project Completion Report: June 2003

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

Changes in responsibility.

In January 2002, two months after the establishment of the Abidjan Office, CI opened a new office in Monrovia to whom Liberian side of the Sapo-Tai corridor was mandated. Additionally, the management of Nimba corridor was placed under the CI/Birdlife Alliance with direct responsibility passed to the Chef du Projet of the Marahoué National Park project. Since January, the corridor manager has been tasked with the development of CI interaction on the Ivoirian side of Sapo-Tai corridor. The Corridor Manager has also assumed responsibility for the Guinean side of Nimba corridor, as CI does not have an office in Conakry. The Corridor Manager has also served as a CI representative at the national level in both Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.

However, since September 2002, political instability in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia has made field implementation impossible. This has greatly affected the development of new activities within the corridors. Several donors, including the EU have suspended activities creating a gap in current funding as well as a general feeling of donor reluctance, making fundraising more difficult.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: *The NGO sector in the sub-region using increased resources to implement a fully integrated approach to conservation based upon a corridor model.*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
<i>1 Operating costs for Abidjan unit for FY03 fully met and core functions continue to be performed (CI reporting, annual meeting, monitoring CEPF projects etc)</i>	Core CI functions continue to be performed in the Abidjan office, however political instability has made fundraising for operating costs extremely difficult.
<i>2 By the end of FY04 new investments toward conservation in the sub region equal or exceed two times the initial CEPF investment.</i>	CEPF's initial investment in West Africa was \$4.3 million. Over the past two years CI and our partners have used this investment to leverage additional funds. While we do not know exact numbers for our conservation partners, to date CI has raised an additional \$950,000 for its conservation activities. The West Africa Program anticipates raising an additional \$3.4 million in this region by the end of FY04.
<i>3 75% or more of conservation projects implemented by the NGO sector articulate shared outcomes</i>	<p>Within Côte d'Ivoire, collaboration has been established with all major international conservation NGOs in the region including, BirdLife, WWF and FFI. This collaboration has lead to a greater synthesis of conservation activities moving towards shared outcomes. Additionally the Abidjan office has supported several local NGOs, assisting them to develop projects that share similar conservation outcomes; these include SOS Foret, AfNat, NESDA, FONGED, etc.</p> <p>In Liberia, the establishment of the Alliance for Conservation in Liberia (ACL) has formalized partnerships with several international NGOs including CI, WWF, FFI, the Philadelphia Zoo as well as local NGOs such as the Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL). This partnership has provided a platform to coordinate conservation efforts within the country.</p> <p>In Ghana, a National Stakeholders task force has unified all actors in the bushmeat crisis, synthesizing activities towards shared outcomes.</p>
<i>4 The Abidjan unit is meeting CI's institutional demands (financial, reporting, strategic planning, and hosting of CI staff)</i>	<p>The Abidjan office is currently meeting CI's institutional demands. The office has conducted its annual financial audit (for the Marahoué National Park project and the Conservation Connection project) in June 2002. The auditor has sent the final reports to CI's Finance Department in DC.</p> <p>The Abidjan staff have also provided regular administrative support to CI's staff and partners in Côte d'Ivoire including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EBM team expeditions (January – February 02; July – August 03) ▪ CI President's mission in West Africa (Liberia, Ghana Côte d'Ivoire in January 02) ▪ The WAPS products Launch (July 02) ▪ A RAP mission (March 02)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The West Africa Chimpanzee workshop (Sept. 02) ▪ A T&OA workshop in Guinea (Dec. 2002)
<i>5 Facilitation of conservation partnerships</i>	<p>Conservation partnerships within the region continue to be developed. In Côte d'Ivoire a consultation process has been initiated with, SODEFOR, GTZ, and WWF. Results of this process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A workshop for TNP operation plan (planned for December 02) during which CI and GTZ planned to discuss future partnership. This meeting has been delayed due to the civil conflict in the country, however it is hoped it will be reconvened soon. ▪ A proposal developed and submitted to GCF to define the Sapo-Tai corridor, to formalize partnerships and initiate discussions with Sodefor on upgrading the protection status of Haute Dodo and Cavally forests. ▪ CI, WWF, ARDECO, AFNAT, Birdlife and FONGED working together within PCGAP process ▪ Abidjan Office facilitating a partnership between BirdLife, SOS FORET and SCNCI to implement the conservation capacity building project funded by CEPF. <p>Additionally the Abidjan office organized a Threat and Opportunities workshop for the Pic du Fon in Guinea, in collaboration with Rio Tinto Explorations and also a workshop to define conservation priorities for the West African Chimpanzee. Both of these workshops have expanded existing and facilitated new conservation partnerships within the region.</p>
<i>6 CEPF grants monitored</i>	<p>CI staff have worked closely with local NGOs to support the development of their CEPF proposals in the last two years. However to date CI has not specifically taken on any monitoring role for CEPF funded projects in the hotspot.</p>

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

In the first year of the project substantial progress was made in hiring staff and establishing a CI Office in Abidjan. Staff in Abidjan have worked to engage in the local conservation networks as well as to support the visits of CI partners and staff, including the visits of CI's President and CEO, the launching of the West Africa Priority Setting Products, the EBM Advisory Committee and the West African Chimpanzee Workshop.

In the last 6 months, civil conflict in Côte d'Ivoire has made it nearly impossible to develop, implement or even continue conservation projects in the field. However in light of this situation the office in Abidjan has continued to support the processes necessary for conservation, in

hopes that field activities will resume shortly. The Corridor Manager has continued to participate in the many conservation forums in the country including the preliminary discussions for the PCGAP process as well as several associations of local NGOs.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

With the opening of offices in both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, CI has established itself as a major partner for conservation in West Africa. However with both CEPF and GCF housed in CI's headquarters office, CI is seen as a donor in the region rather than an equal implementing partner. This is an unexpected perception that the staff in the field has had to work against.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: From the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: Office established and operational in Abidjan.	CI now has a fully operational office in Abidjan and will sign an agreement with the government of Côte d'Ivoire in FY04.
<i>1.1 Strategic plan written with input by local partners and used to direct CI's activities</i>	The West Africa Program's executive summary is being used as a strategy document for the organization. The Abidjan Office staff has contributed to the West Africa Program Executive Summary in FY 02 and FY03, providing input from local partners.
<i>1.2 Staff hired (director, coordinator/finance officer, secretary by March 2002</i>	Today all members of the Abidjan office staff are in place. The director has hired an accountant, bi-lingual secretary and a driver. Annual staff evaluations were conducted in July 2002.
<i>1.3 Management structure designed and in place and functioning efficiently and effectively by March 2002</i>	The Abidjan office is operational. The procedures manual and the "règlement interieur" are now available. However, the country agreement process has been stalled by the civil crisis facing the government.
<i>1.4 Office space secured, equipment purchased and operational (see budget for list of equipment)</i>	Appart from the vehicle, all equipment listed in the budget has been purchased. CI is waiting for the country agreement to be signed and tax-free status to be given before purchasing the vehicle. This will be done in FY04.
<i>1.5 Financial Accounting System installed and in use by June 2002</i>	The financial accounting system was installed and in use by May 2002. The annual audit was conducted in June 2002 and the final report has been submitted to CI-DC.
Output 2: Fundraising strategy in place and implemented.	Fundraising in the sub-region continues to be difficult as donors are generally reluctant to invest during civil conflict. It is hoped that funding will be made available as stability returns to the region.
<i>2.1 Fundraising strategy written with input from CI's devcom and completed by March 2002</i>	For the Côte d'Ivoire side of Sapo Tai Corridor, it will be necessary to develop a corridor plan to direct investment for conservation. A proposal for this plan has been submitted to GCF for review and possible funding in FY04. Furthermore in Côte d'Ivoire the proposed PCGAP funding instrument for biodiversity conservation has not yet materialized. However efforts by all

	<p>partners continue in anticipation of its implementation.</p> <p>In Guinea, a RAP expedition and a Threats and Opportunities Assessment workshop for the Pic de Fon were conducted in 2002. An action plan has been developed to direct investment in this area. CI's West Africa Program and local partners will start implementation of the plan in FY04.</p>
<i>2.2 Fundraising strategy implemented according to schedule articulate in plan</i>	<p>Based on CI's strategy for the Sapo-Tai and Nimba corridors, project proposals targeting several donors have been developed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in the Simandou Range, Guinea targeting USAID: \$1.2m • Transboundary Corridor planning in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire targeting ITTO: \$2m • An Elephant Survey in Mont Peko targeting GEF SGP: \$30 000 • Strengthening biodiversity conservation in Sapo-Tai corridor targeting GCF: \$25 000
<i>2.3 Additional funds in account.</i>	To be evaluated at the end of FY 03 and during FY04.
Output 3: System established and operating to monitor and evaluate CI projects and CEPF funded initiatives.	In FY03 the program has laid the foundation for this system through site visits, information exchanges, and consultations with donors. However due to staff changes within the program and civil conflict within the sub-region this system has not yet been formalized.
<i>3.1 Abidjan office conducts site visits and provides technical assistance to CI/CEPF projects throughout CEPF implementation period</i>	The Abidjan Office has conducted missions to assist in the development of several projects: (i.e. the ITTO proposal development mission for Côte d'Ivoire/Ghana elephant corridor in Accra Oct.2002; the T&OA workshop for Pic de Fon in Guinea, Nov and Dec 2002; the Sapo NP operational plan Workshop in Liberia, Nov 2002)
<i>3.2 CI/CEPF Reports written, reviewed, and submitted according to CI/CEPF schedule</i>	Reports are currently being written and submitted as needed, however there have been several delays as responsibilities and staff changes have occurred in the West Africa Program.
<i>3.3 Adaptive management practices and lessons learned documented and disseminated</i>	CI has been working with partners to exchange lessons learned as well as to build support for the corridor concept, these have yet to be documented as implementation has occurred more slowly than originally planned.
<i>3.4 International NGOs and donors are consulted on a regular basis (measure through quarterly reports)</i>	<p>The Abidjan office has established contact with World Bank, GEF, and EU through PCGAP process. These groups, along with local and International NGOs, meet as often as necessary including; the drafting of a letter to the Word Bank in October concerning PCGAP, a Meeting with EU in October regarding the program Transitoire, the GEF National operational focal point workshop in Nov 02 regarding funding procedures and other opportunities.</p> <p>CI and partners are now in the project development stage and are cultivating potential donors such as USAID, ITTO, and the GEF.</p>
<i>3.5 Steering committee for sub region formed</i>	Due to fact CI has not implemented field activities it

<p><i>and meeting twice a year (project reports) starting in March 2003</i></p>	<p>is inappropriate to create a steering committee. CI is currently working on project and partnership development, if funding for corridor development is achieved and implementation in the field possible the need for a steering committee will be reevaluated.</p>
<p>Output 4: Well-designed CI strategy for sub region in place and operational, integrating relevant internal departments.</p>	<p>In FY03 CI's West Africa Program developed a fully integrated regional strategy for Upper Guinea.</p>
<p><i>4.1 3 year CI strategy for sub region written and updated annually with input from key conservation actors.</i></p>	<p>The West Africa Program's executive summary is serving as a strategy document for conservation in the sub-region. Information from local and international partners is incorporated as the document is updated annually.</p>
<p><i>4.2 Internal CI departments contributing to key elements of strategy</i></p>	<p>1) The West Africa program and CABS conducted a RAP expedition in Haute Dodo and Cavally forests in March 2002, increasing the scientific knowledge that will be used to upgrade the protection status of these areas.</p> <p>2) CI's West Africa Program and CELB developed an alliance with Rio Tinto Exploration to pursue biodiversity conservation in the Pic de Fon, Guinea. A RAP expedition was conducted aimed at improving the scientific understanding of biodiversity in the Pic de Fon. This has led to the development of an Initial Biodiversity Action plan, for which a proposal has been submitted to USAID.</p> <p>3) CI West Africa Program, CABS and others external partners, in an effort to define a strategy to avoid species extinction, developed an Action Plan for conservation of the West African Chimpanzee.</p> <p>4) FSD's Regional Strategic Planning program has provided support to the development of workplan and executive summary documents.</p>
<p><i>4.3 Goals of key conservation actors taken into consideration when formulating CI's strategy for the sub region.</i></p>	<p>The executive summary and workplans of the West Africa Program reflect input and collaboration from partners.</p> <p>The T&OA workshop, organized by CI and Rio Tinto, gathered many Guinean conservation actors and has contributed to the Initial Biodiversity Action Plan (IBAP) developed for Pic de Fon, Guinea.</p>
<p><i>4.4 Advisory committee consisting at a minimum of Key NGOs, government departments, and key donors formed by Jan 2002</i></p>	<p>Due to civil conflict and the subsequent halt of field activities, CI did not establish a separate advisory committee for conservation in the sub region. Instead CI has focused on establishing itself as a major contributing partner in many existing forums.</p> <p>In Côte d'Ivoire, CI is member of the Tai National Park Scientific Advisory Committee formed by the Minister of Scientific Research, Minister of the Environment, the Switzerland Research Center, the University of Abobo Adjamé Center for Environmental Research, Tai National Park project, GTZ/KFW and WWF.</p> <p>As follow up to the EBM, an Elephant advisory</p>

	committee was formed by CI consisting of, the Directorate of Protection of Nature, Ghana Wildlife Division and Universities of Abobo Adjamé, Cocody (Côte d'Ivoire) and Kumasi (Ghana).
<i>4.5 Relevant stakeholders are informed of CI's objectives and actions.</i>	<p>Staff from the Abidjan Office have attended several meetings in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia to develop partnerships and keep stakeholders informed of CI's objectives. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Donors' round table for Guinea's National Strategic Biodiversity Action Plan in Mar. 2002 ▪ The Nimba Natural Reserve Tri-national management meeting in Feb. 2002 ▪ The MAB UNESCO National committee workshop in Abidjan in Feb. 2002 ▪ The WAPS products launch July 2002 ▪ Meetings with local NGOs and government institutions (SODEFOR, DPN, Universities, etc.) ▪ Meeting with the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire in Sept 2002. ▪ Workshop for Sapo National park operations plan in Nov. 2002 ▪ Threats and opportunity assesment workshop for Pic de Fon in Conakry, in Dec 2002 <p>During these meetings, CI's objectives and actions have been presented to participants based on available documents.</p>
Output 5: Advisory committee formed to exchange information and guide project development and implementation	As mentioned in 4.4 CI did not establish a separate advisory committee for the sub-region. Instead the West Africa Program staff has focused on building partnerships within existing forums.
<i>5.1 Monthly e-mail dialog between members</i>	Although an advisory committee does not exist, CI's field staff participate regularly in email dialogue with other conservation groups. In Côte d'Ivoire, CI is member of the PCGAP and the Tai National Park scientific advisory committees who exchange regular email. In Ghana CI has played an instrumental role in facilitating dialogue between organizations focused on the bushmeat crisis. In Liberia the ACL has established a regular dialogue between conservation partners.
<i>5.2 Annual meeting in Abidjan for advisory committee</i>	Annual meetings are currently not being held as the advisory committee has not been established.

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

Despite conflict, this project has successfully delivered many of its key outputs. These include the establishment of a CI presence in Côte d'Ivoire, the development of local and international partnerships, and the synthesis of conservation outcomes and investment in the region. Through its presence in Abidjan, CI has increased its ability to leverage new projects and achieve conservation outcomes across francophone West Africa.

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

One output that has not yet been fully realized is #3 pertaining to the monitoring of CI and CEPF funded initiatives. This monitoring system is currently being discussed with CEPF and partners.

It is hoped this will be implemented in the next fiscal year. Although this has affected the impact of the project in terms of biodiversity monitoring, plans are already in place to extend this output beyond the project, therefore its impact, or lack thereof, will not be lasting.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

As a biodiversity conservation project, the implementation of this project has sought to enhance the quality and longevity of the natural environment. Additionally, because field implementation has been limited, the project focused on higher-level policy interactions rather than the direct implementation of activities. For these two reasons the project has not had adverse consequences on the local environment or society.

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.

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

One major issue identified by CI's in country staff, was the lack of understanding on the ground of the Conservation Community within Côte d'Ivoire during the development of this project. The project assumed a general need for coordination of conservation actors within Abidjan when in fact the processes for coordination already existed. CI's Corridor Manager has moved CI to play a significant role in each of these coordinating mechanisms and has had great success in networking between NGOs. She has continually provided guidance to local and international NGOs, the development community as well as the national governments in both Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. This however has all been done without the creation of a new coordinating body. This lack of local information during project development could not be avoided, as CI did not have a presence on the ground when the project was developed. However this has led to several modifications in the initial project design as CI has established a local presence. Changes therefore should not be seen as failures in delivery, but rather modifications due to the local reality.

Establishment of the Office:

The Abidjan office has been established and is fully functional. However CI has learned that legal administrative documents such as the country agreement, a legal document from Ministry of Interior, are difficult to achieve in Côte d'Ivoire. The process is long and can take at least one year. Delays often occur, because the government agencies (Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior) use the time to evaluate the attitude of the requester. Examples of this include Red Cross International Committee who submitted a request in 1998 and received their agreement in January 2003; the International Office of Migrations process took two years from 2000 to December 2002.

Fundraising:

Due to the fact that CI houses two major funding sources (CEPF and GCF), CI is considered as a donor in the region even by local GEF and World Bank representatives. This has made leveraging funds from the region quite difficult. It will take a long time to correct this vision. Therefore new fundraising options will need to be investigated at the DC level while project development and implementation remains to be driven at the field office level.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)***Information on CI's objectives and actions***

The establishment of the office has deepened the knowledge of CI's objectives and actions at local and regional levels. Today CI is an undeniable partner for conservation in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia and Guinea. Despite the fact CI cannot directly fund their activities, many conservation actors visit or invite CI to share information and to collaborate on conservation strategy and project development (PCGAP, Local universities, BNSAP and local NGO development in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea). Further effort needs to be made to consolidate such cooperation throughout the sub-region.

Monitoring and evaluation of CI/CEPF projects:

To date, CI has not specifically taken on any monitoring role for CEPF funded projects. This will continue to be investigated in the next fiscal year.

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
