

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Fauna & Flora International

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Interim Support to the Management of Sapo National Park, Liberia

Implementation Partners for this Project: The Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA), plus the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) from late 2002-early 2003 only

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): October 1, 2002 - December 31, 2005

Date of Report (month/year): January 2006

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

This project was intended initially for a 12-month period as a bridge between other, larger grants for supporting Sapo Park. The timing coincided with Liberia's civil war of 2003, the bankruptcy of SCNL (2003-04) and the Park's invasion and subsequent evacuation by miners and hunters (October-03 to August-05). Thus the original work-plan and budget had to be completely revisited in order to address the Park's most pressing needs. Thanks to the flexibility and support of CEPF managers, the project did allow basic operations to continue at the Park for much of the project lifespan, lasting until World Bank/GEF resources became available (August 2005) and supporting the Park throughout the evacuation process of July-August 2005. The grant allowed Conservation International (CI) to focus the support it raised for the Park on the evacuation and restoring basic infrastructure & equipment in 2005.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose To continue active but basic protection and management of Sapo National Park between when the UK Darwin funding ends (30-Sept-02) and when GEF funding begins (expected July 2003)

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
No major encroachment on Sapo National Park and prosecution of minor encroachments	Prior to the conflict of 2003 (Oct-02 to Apr-03), no major encroachment on the Park was reported. From approx. Oct-03 through Aug-05, a massive invasion by miners and hunters occurred, coinciding with a period of lawlessness across south-east Liberia. All major encroachment was halted after Aug-05.
Smooth functioning of park administration	Park administration was being built up prior to the conflict, but the conflict set this back. The Park's secretary was trained in FFI's Monrovia office in 2004-05 in financial & equipment management as well as administration.
GEF or other longterm funding is secured funding is secured and	GEF funding of \$975,000 secured and is available Aug-05 to Jul-10. UK Darwin Initiative funding for communal

becomes available before the proposed grant runs out	forests around the Park secured (\$200,000) for Oct-04 through Mar-07. CI secured funding for quick-impact investments in 2005: Park evacuation, equipment, infrastructure, training and TA.
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Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

The project was basically successful in that it supported basic operations of the Park through an extremely difficult period in Liberian history, and it supported them until larger, long-term funding came on-line. It was not successful, however, in halting encroachment on the Park during the 2 years of lawlessness in south-east Liberia. However in a situation of *force majeure*, this cannot be expected.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The project did not have any particularly expected or unexpected impacts. It was the broader political conditions that evolved in unexpected and unfortunate ways which had unforeseen negative impacts on the project.

While the project undeniably supported the FDA's Park staff through many difficult years, the project did not address the needs of surrounding communities beyond offering stipends to locally recruited auxiliaries to Park staff. This inattention to communities' needs has resulted in perspectives in some communities that conservationists care only about the Park and not about people. This grant could not have addressed communities' needs, but this perspective must be redressed under the GEF grant.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: Effective enforcement of wildlife and national park laws and regulations at SNP	
1.1 Lack of any major infraction of relevant rules and regulations	Since the Park evacuation was completed in August 2005, no major infractions of Park rules had come to light through December 2005 and communities were respecting the Park.
1.2 Minor infractions detected and prosecuted	From September 2005 to present, with the Park evacuated, the focus was on re-establishing cohesive management of the Park, not prosecuting minor infractions. Such prosecution could provoke backlash from communities who have not received development support they believed was promised to them.
1.3 Park staff and volunteers mobilized and equipped for patrols, research and other assigned duties	From October-02 through April-03, Park staff and local volunteers were supported to do their work. In April-03, FFI did an emergency evacuation of all personnel and equipment possible as fighting swept through the area. FFI supported (not with project funds) these FDA staff April-September 2003 during the worst of the fighting. When staff could return to the Park and begin preparing for the Park's evacuation, FFI used the grant to re-start stipends and to provide basic equipment. Although much of the Park's equipment was looted in 2003, including 7 of its 8 motorcycles, in the post-evacuation period essential equipment, communications and transportation have been restored.
1.4 Training seminar for park staff and volunteers on basic duties and	Training in basic Park skills and equipment use (like safe motorcycle operation) provided late 2002 and early 2003. The

skills	<p>Park's secretary was trained for almost 2 years in the FFI-Monrovia office in financial and equipment management, and in administration.</p> <p>After the conflict of 2003, other partners (CI, US Forest Service, UNMIL police) took the lead in training in law enforcement, Park management planning, etc. A GEF-funded TA for patrols & monitoring was posted in Nov-05 and will continue <i>in situ</i> training of park staff.</p>
1.5 Key park infrastructure rehabilitated (apart from the HQ) including park boundaries cut or cleared and posted with signs and cement beacons	<p>Before the 2003 crisis, the safari camp and ranger outposts were improved, 3 HF radios repaired & installed around the Park, Park boundaries were fully cut and marked with beacons, and signposts were installed along boundary. Beginning in early 2005, while the CEPF grant was used for basic operations, CI rebuilt Park buildings. Boundary (re)demarcation will begin in Jan-06.</p>
Output 2: Effective regular and comprehensive contact maintained with local communities	
2.1 Attitudes of local communities towards the park improve from those found during the socio-economic survey of March-02	<p>Prior to the 2003 conflict, attitudes of local communities did not appear to be improving. Complaints of "no benefits" were constantly heard at the Nov-02 management planning workshop. Planned outreach activities included launching a communal forest pilot project with accompanying agro-forestry support, which would have helped improve relations. Significant emphasis in the 2002 management plan was placed on community outreach, participation mechanisms and development support.</p> <p>After the conflict, in 2005 assessments were conducted of Park-adjacent communities' development needs, possibilities for community forestry, grassroots authority structures and possibilities for communal forests. The funding for labour-intensive works programs was never provided as expected during and after the evacuation, which is worrisome. Now that development priorities and authority structures are returning to their pre-war state, the works program is no longer well advised as it puts cash into the hands of those who need to be re-integrated, and keeps cash and authority from traditional leaders who need to be empowered. With the support of traditional authorities and development aid channeled via grassroots structures, perhaps community attitudes will improve.</p>
2.2 Appropriate committees or advisory groups formed for local communities to communicate with park staff	<p>These were planned in the Nov-02 workshops and built into the World Bank/GEF proposal, but had not been established by the end of the grant. Other activities were higher priority, like restoring safety and evacuating the Park. The TOR for the committees are to be developed by March 2006 and the committees formed by June 2006.</p>
2.3 Community liaison park staff trained and in post at the park, actively visiting villages	<p>Training of the Park's community liaison staff did not occur but is planned to begin in the first half of 2006 with GEF support. The Communal Forest pilot project, however, has been actively visiting villages since late 2004, determining development needs and planning interventions when funding is available. A home gardens/agro-forestry support program is likely to start in the first half of 2006.</p>
Output 3: Strengthening of Park administration and headquarters	
3.1 Key park HQ infrastructure renovated	<p>Renovations occurred in late 2002 and early 2003, but the fighting of 2003 resulted in the looting of the Park HQ, the annihilation of the safari camp, and the loss of beacons and signs around the Park so that the Park boundary became unrecognizable.</p> <p>In 2005, CI rebuilt of built from scratch a new Park HQ, Park sub-stations (3) and a dormitory. The boundary will be demarcated starting Jan-06. The former HQ was restored to</p>

	support the evacuation.
3.2 Administrative support and materials provided and/or in place	Prior to the 2003 conflict, and again starting in mid-2005, the Park was supplied with basic operating resources to support its administration. The Park's secretary was trained at FFI-Liberia's office for almost two years and on her return to the Park will be a valuable asset.
Output 4: Long-term management plan for the park developed	
4.1 Management planning workshop held	This was held at the Park in Nov-02 with a follow-on workshop in Monrovia in Dec-02.
4.2 Workshop report including a management plan produced	The results are in the workshop report and formed the basis for the proposal that was used to secure funding from the World Bank/GEF, the UK Darwin Initiative, several smaller donors and hopefully the French GEF in early 2006. After the conflict, the FDA convened a working group to revisit the workshop results and draft them into a 'management plan' that requires further refinement. CI brought in international TAs in mid-2005 to assist the Park to re-start basic operations, looking at very practical measures like patrol schedules, infrastructure needs, stock management, personnel management, etc. While not formally a management plan, this assisted the Park to reach a stage where management can focus on a longer-term plan again.
Output 5: Long-term funding for the park secured	
5.1 GEF (or other) large donor agrees to finance implementation of the management plan	GEF funding of \$975,000 secured from the World Bank and is available Aug-05 to Jul-10. UK Darwin Initiative funding for communal forests around the Park secured (\$200,000) for Oct-04 through Mar-07. CI secured funding for quick-impact investments in 2005: Park evacuation, equipment, infrastructure, training and TA. A proposal to the French GEF for €800,000 went successfully through the first stage of a two-step approval process.

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

Similar to the discussion of purpose-level indicators, the project was successful in bridging a key stage on the Park's history. It was unable to halt encroachment fully, train staff to the levels desired and improve relations with communities. But it support basic operations when security permitted, mapping out a long-term plan and securing significant funding for the post-CEPF period.

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

This question is adequately addressed in the table above, except to say that community outreach, participation in decision-making and development assistance are absolutely critical issues that received inadequate attention during the CEPF grant's lifespan and need urgent support. They are all planned under the GEF/Darwin/French GEF grants, but the overall program urgently needs a development partner to join. Otherwise if relations with communities do not improve, the Park will be encroached on and communities will not manage surrounding forests in a conservation-friendly manner, effectively cutting the Park off from the larger forest block of which it is a part.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

None, however the World Bank/GEF project required preparation of an Environment & Social Management Framework to minimize the impacts of infrastructural works and development aid, and a Process Framework to compensate communities who lose access to livelihoods as a result of the project establishing a management presence over the Parks 2003 extensions. These framework documents are available on request from FFI.

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.

The 'lessons learned' below were compiled from the project's 3.25 lifespan:

- In a context where civil instability is a constant threat, the protected area in question needs an explicit contingency/emergency plan so that when operations need to be suspended, Park staff, NGOs, local volunteers and local communities know what is to happen.
- Well thought-through security policies & plans, training in these plans and rigorous adherence to them (in spite of what may seem safe or expedient) are critical in insecure contexts.
- Restoring security can be a very slow and politicized process with demands and expectations pulling in all directions. To do so successfully, great patience is required, including accepting working within the compromised and private-agenda-plagued contexts.
- The time to develop broad consensus to deal with a problem like the invasion of Sapó Park likewise can be far greater than one would expect. Without a champion to spearhead it and keep it going, it is unlikely to occur satisfactorily.
- It is risky to count on the political will of high-level staff to support conservation, whereas technical level staff tend to be more consistent and reliable. But one must not forget that technical staff need basic financial and logistical support to do their jobs, as well as moral support. Without addressing technical staff's basic needs, they should not be expected to do their jobs. Donors must appreciate this and be flexible with their funding rules. (CEPF was extremely supportive by allowing CEPF funds to be used strategically and opportunistically.)
- Moving forward with a protected area management process that impinges on community livelihoods without securing absolutely certain compensation is risky to the future of the protected area; it could backlash and make park protection worse than at $t=0$.
- Detailed planning with accompanied by careful monitoring of in-country partners is key to ensure that planned activities actually occur; the 'out-of-sight-out-of-mind' phenomenon is common in a post-conflict context.
- Getting agreement from the statutory authorities in charge of a protected area for NGO staff to work on a given project is important, otherwise the authority may not recognize the person and work with him/her.
- Training is consistently under-budgeted for SNP, and a competent, respected dedicated trainer (TA) at the Park is needed for an extended period.
- Mobilizing large donor funding, eg. the World Bank's GEF funding, is highly time-consuming and appropriate time must be budgeted for.

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

Working directly with the FDA proved more effective than through an intermediary NGO that was having institutional difficulties.

The CEPF's budgetary flexibility was invaluable to the grant being used efficiently and effectively in the post-conflict context.

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

VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
FFI	A	\$78,000	This refers to FFI staff and office costs – conservatively estimated at 20% of FFI-Liberia's operational costs – over the 3.25 year project lifetime.
Conservation Intl.	B	Est. \$200,000	This money was used for infrastructure, equipment and training, as well as to support the evacuation process
United Nations Mission in Liberia	D	Est. \$1 million	This money was for UNMIL's logistical support (transport, communications, staff, soldiers, etc.) to the evacuation process and subsequent delivery of support to the Park.
UK Darwin Initiative	C	\$200,000	For piloting communal forests around the Park
World Bank/GEF	C	\$975,000	For continuing and expanding Park management through 2010

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF funded project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability. The continuation of this project with GEF, Darwin and other funding is adequately described above. CI is investigating the establishment of a conservation endowment for Liberia that would help ensure sustainable management of the Park beyond the horizon envisioned by the GEF project.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

None

IX. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes, FFI agrees to this.

If yes, please also complete the following:

For more information about this project, please contact:

Name: FFI's Africa Programmes

Mailing address: FFI, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2TT, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)1223 571 000

Fax: +44 (0) 1223 461 481

E-mail: africa@fauna-flora.org