

FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Name: Conservation International

Project Title: Liberia Forest Re-assessment

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): January 1, 2001 - December 31, 2003

Date of Report (month/year): March 31, 2003

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

The Liberia Forest Re-assessment project has been the lead project driving behavior change with regard to biodiversity conservation and natural resource extraction in Liberia's forests. The LFR has played a critical role, throughout Liberia's civil conflict, of engaging both the Liberian government as well as local and international stakeholders. The LFR has developed capacity in Liberia to better manage forest resources while also informing the international community of the status of these resources and the governance of their use. LFR involvement in these issues has also helped bring to light the role of natural resource extraction in fueling conflict – thereby mainstreaming the importance of good governance of forest resources and robust conservation of biodiversity.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose:

To promote sustainable forest management and conservation of Liberia's biological diversity, and to improve overall environmental management. To assess forest cover and the protection status & management of key forest areas; to update Liberia's system of legally protected forest areas, be they for forestry purposes, nature conservation, research, or low-impact human use (buffer zones, recreation, other), and (2) to improve forest management decisions, land-use planning, environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and related activities through a computerized, reliable and widely accessible data system on Liberia's forests and related socio-economic parameters in forest areas, capable of continued expansion and updating, with Liberian staff trained to use and update it.

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	

1. Liberia's forests classified and mapped	Completed though not ground-truthed due to conflict
2. 3 Liberians trained in GIS/RS	9 government technicians trained
3. Final GIS database including vegetation map published	Database completed integrating social information developed by the UN (vegetation map not completed)
4. Products used to identify priority areas for conservation and new proposed protected areas	Priority areas identified and protected areas proposed and (some) created
5. Products used to plan and manage new and existing Liberian protected areas	Information used for management and financing planning

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

Due to civil conflict the project has actually had a limited impact on changing forest sector behavior and sustainability of the sector. Yet given this context the project has been extremely successful in setting the foundation (both from an information understanding/awareness, and capacity point of view) upon which such behavior changes may be realized. The success of the GIS capacity building has served to put the conservation community and the government in a strong position to improve decision making in natural resource management and protection of biodiversity.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The main unexpected impacts were:

- strong influence of project products on UN Peacekeeping planning
- reinforcement of UNSC decision making on timber sanctions and the humanitarian and private sector impact of sanctions

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs:

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: An up-to-date geographic information system (GIS) database for Liberia for identification and map production of changes in Liberia's forest cover over the past decade, current land uses and forest cover in key forest areas, changes in land use, Liberia's biodiversity, forest areas under particular threat or particularly vulnerable to disruption, and socioeconomic parameters	GIS database established and used to identify, prioritize, and create protected areas and provide a foundation for land-use planning and understanding the threats to biodiversity
1.1 GIS Database, vegetation analysis in place	GIS database developed and established
1.2 aerial imagery integrated into classification process	Aerial survey completed and data integrated into database
1.3 Change detection demonstrating areas of greatest pressure	1985 – 2000 change detection completed for entire country
Output 2: Liberian (and international) staff trained to interpret satellite images, update and utilise the project and other GIS databases (query database, map production, conduct EIAs, land-use zoning, etc.	A total of 9 technical staff trained in GIS from the Forest Development Authority (5), Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (3), and Environmental Protection Agency (1)

2.1 <i>Trained Liberian staff</i>	All staff trained in GIS and introduction to remote sensing
2.2 <i>Liberian staff using the data and producing maps and reports</i>	9 staff using information within the LFR project and their ministries producing maps and reports
Output 3: Legal (re-)classification and zoning of priority forest areas according to agreed criteria (biological resources, conservation or forestry potential, threats to the forest, demographic trends, , etc.);	GIS information used to re-classify to areas (Sapo and Nimba). Other priority areas identified and national forest reserve information developed. Information used to design landscape strategies for other uses including low-impact logging, agriculture, and infrastructure.
3.1 <i>Priority Areas for new protected areas established.</i>	Protected area network designed
3.2 <i>Support by Liberian Government for reclassification</i>	2 areas re-classified and government support gained for protected area network (including CI-GoL MOU)
Output 4: Basic management plans for 4-6 priority protected areas (national parks/forests, nature reserves);	Management plan completed for Sapo and other management plans currently being developed based on that model
4.1 <i>Management Plan for 4-6 protected areas produced</i>	Sapo mgmt plan developed
4.2 <i>Results used as a basis for new protected area system</i>	Sapo mgmt plan used to plan for other protected areas
Output 5: Increased local and international awareness of Liberia's biodiversity and its regional significance	Information developed and distributed to all interested and pertinent parties including Liberian government agencies, foreign governments, NGOs, UN etc.
5.1 <i>Greater knowledge of the extent and condition of Liberia's forests and biodiversity</i>	Information developed and ongoing
5.2 <i>Radio segments of project results broadcast in Liberia</i>	Radio interviews and newspaper placements accomplished
5.3 <i>Products disseminated to all potential users</i>	Data distributed to UN, US Government, EU, UNEP, other NGOs and many others
5.4 <i>International media broadcasting information generated from project</i>	Project information highlighted, through various avenues, in international media such as BBC and Washington Post

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

This project has been extremely successful given the challenging environment in Liberia and has achieved and gone beyond all of its intended outputs and outcomes. The project has also established a strong foundation for continuing the project through sustainable means.

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

The vegetation map is the only output unrealized due to lack of information and inability to access the field in order to develop needed information. This has not greatly impacted the overall impact of the project because other data products were used instead and have proved sufficient for decision-making.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

The project developed socio-economic and settlement location information for communities around protected areas to ensure that creation of new protected areas did not involve resettlement of rural populations.

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)

In the future pertinent Liberian government agencies must be more engaged in the project design process. This was not possible during the design process of this project but will be possible in the future. While this lack of engagement contributed to difficulties in the project it did not significantly hinder its success.

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

CEPF should, in the future, provide greater oversight and engagement with the project implementers and provide greater input for the final stages of the project to ensure that its impact is maintained and built upon. CEPF should also work to better coordinate its investments to ensure that it helps to build partnerships among grantees to maximize effectiveness of these funds. Several CEPF grantees were not aware of this project's activities and its relevance to their projects and as a result had limited benefit from this project's outputs.

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

VIII. 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 X
No

If yes, please also complete the following:

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