

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	13/021
Project Title	Strengthening Capacity for Biodiversity Conservation in West Africa
Country(ies)	Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone
UK Organisation	BirdLife International
Collaborator(s)	Botany Department University of Legon- Université de Cocody, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire Département de Biologie de l'Université de Conakry, Guinée Faculté de science de l'Environnement du Centre universitaire de N'Zérékoré, Guinée Institut de Faranah, Guinée
Report date	31 October 2005 (Reporting period = 1 April-30 September 2005)
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 2
Project website	n/a

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

This report highlights progress made against the workplan in the 2004/2005 annual report which differs slightly from that in the original project document.

- The first annual report of the project was prepared and submitted.
- The second round of national training courses was held in 4 of the 5 countries while the remaining country, Ghana, plans to undertake this course by December. In addition, the delayed first training course in Liberia took place. A total of 43 nationals were trained during the period covered by this report; Liberia 18 (in two training courses), Côte d'Ivoire, 11 and Sierra Leone 14. After the first training course held there, Guinea has since adopted a continuous training programme in collaboration with 3 academic institutions, the Département de Biologie de l'Université de Conakry, the Faculté de science de l'Environnement du Centre universitaire de N'Zérékoré and the Institut de Faranah to maximise benefits to trainees. A total of 32 candidates have been selected for these courses. The first of these has been organized and the second is planned for later this year.
- The project was officially launched in Liberia in April and was attended by representatives of all relevant departments and stakeholders. The keynote address was made by the Managing Director of the Forest Development Authority.
- Guinée Ecologie has signed three memoranda of agreement with three academic institutions, the Département de Biologie de l'Université de Conakry, Guinée, the Faculté de science de l'Environnement du Centre universitaire de N'Zérékoré, Guinée and the Institut de Faranah, Guinée for the training of students under the Darwin project. The agreement allows these institutions to use the offices and field facilities of Guinée Ecologie

and enables Guinée Ecologie to contribute to the review and strengthening of the programmes of these institutions. Both parties have agreed to exchange information and expertise where and when necessary.

- The 3 trainers in Guinea participated in a Rapid Appraisal Program organized by Conservation International. This has helped to further strengthen their capacity.
- Guinée Ecologie, in collaboration with the Department of Biology of the University of Conakry, has established a Technical Education Committee, to monitor and provide advice on the Darwin project.
- Dissemination of project results and information continued through this period through various means. NGOs continued to distribute the bilingual project brochure. SOS-FORETS ran out of copies and had to request for additional copies from the project manager. Sierra Leone issued one press release and had 3 radio discussions and talks on the second training course. An article on the project was included in the July edition of CSSL's newsletter 'The Rock-fowl'. In Cote d'Ivoire articles were published in 4 different newspapers on the activities of the project and on IBAs in general. The project launch in Liberia was covered by national television and reported in several radio stations in the country. An article was published in the BirdLife Africa newsletter on the probable sighting of Ibadan Malimbe in the Kakum National Park in Ghana. The national coordinators of the Darwin project made presentations on their organizations and their activities, including those of the project, at BirdLife International's Council of African Partnership meeting in Kribi, Cameroon, which brought together nationals from 32 countries.
- Reports of the second round of training courses have been prepared and submitted to the project manager and also distributed to the organizations from which candidates were selected. The reports indicate general overall declines in populations of threatened species as well as numerous threats to the sites. The reports make a number of recommendations for more detailed surveys and for actions to mitigate the threats.
- In Côte d'Ivoire, SOS-FORETS organized a workshop in collaboration with the University of Cocody in Abidjan and a CEPF funded project on biodiversity survey, on the threats facing biodiversity and to develop strategies for biodiversity conservation in the country. This was prompted as a result of findings made during the Darwin project training courses at the sites.
- SOS-FORETS is actively involved in a campaign against the planned declassification of some national reserves in Côte d'Ivoire.
- Sierra Leone has completed and published its national IBA directory. CSSL has trained three nationals in the use of the World Bird Data Base (WBDB) of BirdLife international.
- The second training round of courses resulted in the survey of 5 additional sites. Bird data from these sites have been used to populate the WBDB.
- More books, worth GBP 3300, were bought and are being distributed to NGOs.
- A total of GBP 72,145 was secured by NGOs during this period. In Sierra Leone, USD 3000 was obtained by the Gola project for the second training course. Guinée Ecologie secured GBP 7000 from the British High Commission in Conakry for the rehabilitation of 3 glasshouses in the botanic garden, Camayenne, Conakry. SCNL in Liberia has secured USD 15000 from the FAO's Telefood Program to undertake a project aimed at creating income generation opportunities for SSGs/communities, in order to reduce dependency on forest products and to create a forum for raising awareness and training of local people for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. GWS in Ghana secured Euro 30000 from TMF and Euro 42570 from Vogelbescherming (BirdLife Partner in The Netherlands) to undertake work on income generating activities and water bird surveys respectively.

- Guinée Ecologie is rehabilitating a field ecological centre at Kindia near the Grande Chute IBA to be named the “Darwin Centre”

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Two of the three trainers in Liberia were unable to continue in the project after the first training course, due to commitments elsewhere. Fortunately, qualified replacements, one of whom was a co-trainer during the first training course, were identified and were able to fill the gaps in time for the second training course.

Fundraising for the acquisition of equipment for trainees to take away with them after training has been difficult. However, some assistance with second-hand binoculars has been received from the Royal Society for the Protection of birds in the UK. The lack of equipment could deter the trainees from undertaking further action after the training.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

See above.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin’s management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year’s annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**