

# *Darwin Initiative Annual Report*

## Darwin Project Information

Project Ref Number	14-049
Project Title	Participatory Management of Priority Biodiversity Sites in Taraba State
Country(ies)	Nigeria
UK Contract Holder Institution	Royal Society for Protection of Birds
UK Partner Institution(s)	
Host country Partner Institution(s)	Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), Taraba State Government
Darwin Grant Value	GBP 98,634
Start/End dates of Project	April, 2005- March 2008
Reporting period (1 Apr 200x to 31 Mar 200y) and annual report number (1,2,3..)	1 April, 2006- 31 March 2007. Annual report # 2
Project Leader Name	Alex Hipkiss
Project website	N/a but referred to on NCF website: <a href="http://www.ncfnigeria.org/projects.php#p1">http://www.ncfnigeria.org/projects.php#p1</a>
Author(s), date	Alex Hipkiss, Aderopo Akinsoji

### 1. Project Background

The project is located in four forests occurring in two Local Government Areas (LGs) of Taraba State, Nigeria. Ngel Nyaki and Ture (Akwaizantar forest) are in Sardauna LG in the Mambilla Highlands, while Buru and Afrobe/Akwabe forests are in Kurmi LG, lower down in the Donga Valley. Together the four forests form a significant part of the Guinean Forest biodiversity hotspot that has lost about 90% of its forests but still contains 270 endemic terrestrial vertebrate species 70 of which are threatened and 7 of which are Critically Endangered. One such threatened species is the Endangered Western Chimpanzee. There are also 2,250 endemic plant species including the threatened *Prunus africana*. Ngel Nyaki Forest Reserve on the Mambilla highlands has 24 Red Data List plants. These forests are IBAs which contain 2 globally threatened bird species, Crossley's Ground-thrush *Zoothera crossleyi* (Near Threatened) and Bannerman's Weaver *Ploceus bannermani* (Vulnerable) and seven restricted range birds.

This project forms an integral part of a larger state-wide programme that aims to ensure the sustainable management of Taraba State forests by creating a more prominent role for the forest edge communities in forest management. Hitherto, these communities had never before been involved in management of these forests on which they depend. There is a high level of poverty with resultant forest conversion arising from unsustainable agricultural practices that have caused a tremendous loss of forest resources and biodiversity. It is believed that the objectives of the project will be achieved at the site level through a more direct involvement of communities in participatory forest management regimes coupled with income generation and livelihood schemes. At the Local Government, State and Federal Government levels, the intent of the programme is to influence decision and policy matters with regards to the role that communities can play in forest management and the contribution sustainable forest management can make to poverty alleviation and livelihood enhancement. The project also intends to influence forestry laws to incorporate elements of Participatory Management in which communities will be able to play prominent roles in forest management in such a way that their livelihoods will be improved while biodiversity is conserved at the same time.

## 2. Project Partnerships

**Project partnerships:** The UK partner, RSPB and host country partner, NCF have continued to collaborate well. Two visits have been made by the RPSB to Nigeria during the year to offer support to the NCF staff implementing the project and to NCFs head office in Lagos.

The project also collaborates very closely with the Taraba State Forestry Department who have three staff seconded to the project. The State government has also made commitments to support the project financially, however due to internal wrangling within the State Government, and despite the funds being allocated already, they are still to be released. This proposed and promised funding is critical to the sustainability of the programme, and the project will need to continue lobbying hard to ensure that this becomes institutionalised by the end of the project.

Other Collaborations:

**Fauna & Flora International (FFI).** The project is collaborating with FFI to look at ways in which currently available technology can be applied to address some of the conservation issues associated with our project. A joint proposal to secure some identified equipment from potential donor(s) is in preparation.

**Nigeria Montane Forest Project (NMFP).** We have been working together with NMFP in the areas of plant collection, wildlife monitoring and joint patrol of Ngel Nyaki Forest Reserve. We are planning to start monitoring of epiphytic flora of Ngel Nyaki forest involving staff of NMFP. Most of these epiphytes are orchids.

**BirdLife International Partnership.** The Project Manager visited Kenya to look at NatureKenya's (BirdLife in Kenya) programmes with local communities and forest management which have links to Darwin funded programmes. He gained valuable insights into BirdLife's Site Support Group activities in Kenya, and through interaction with other participants, elsewhere in Africa.

**Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).** The CBD focal point in Nigeria is Alhaji Maiwada Mohammed Omar, Deputy Director of Environmental Conservation at the Federal Ministry of Environment based in Abuja. NCF works closely with the FME, but the project itself has no immediate or direct link. As the project develops, particularly when it begins to review and recommend changes to forest management laws then some direct contact may be made.

### **3. Project progress**

#### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities**

##### **Output 1. Project sites are selected.**

A Participatory Forest Assessment has been carried out at all forest sites. The assessment done by consultants, the project team and local community experts and forest users was a very useful exercise in understanding the potential of the products available in the forest. The project will use the results of the study to inform the utilisation sections of the management plans at each site. It also helped communities understand better the potential uses of their forests and the value of managing the forest more effectively. A real challenge will be developing utilisation plans that do not have a detrimental effect on the biodiversity of the forests.

Plant collections and wildlife monitoring continues following on from the biodiversity studies that were done in the previous year.

##### **Output 2. PFM plans developed for project sites and approved by State governments.**

The PFM process has been initiated with the Forest Management Committees (FMCs) being now well established in all the four sites. They have received training in leadership and organizational skills. In Donga Valley the FMCs have formed sub committees such as forest surveillance, forest product marketing, and sustainable environmental management committee.

The project team discussed and agreed the PFM process, steps and stages that will be followed in an internal planning meeting. Each site team will then roll out the process in the coming year.

Forest surveillance and monitoring was carried out in our sites. At Buru Forest patrol men and at Ngel Nyaki volunteer patrol men carry out routine patrol of the forests. They have succeeded in arresting two people in Ngel Nyaki for harvesting crustose lichens and cutting of trees. They have also recovered snares and some duiker skins. The offenders have been handed over to the Forestry Division (FD.) The activities of the patrols have had positive impacts on biodiversity conservation. We are seeking support from the FD for officers to be posted to Akwaizantar Forest Reserve, which is under severe threat.

##### **Output 3. The capacity of community organizations, NCF and FD enhanced to implement PFM plans.**

Extensive training has been undertaken as follows:

###### **For the Project staff (NCF/Government [local and state])**

Eleven Forest Management Officers (FMOs) from eleven LGs attended a three-day training course in Environmental Awareness and Biodiversity Conservation.

Training in Computer Applications for 10 Forestry Division staff for two weeks.

Two week training in Beekeeping and Management at Minna (in Niger State) for two Project Staff.

###### **For communities:**

A three-day Cooperative Management Training course for 49 Forest User Group (FUG) members in Afrobe, Akwabe and Buru Forest Management Committees. Training was also given in Income Generating Activities (IGAs) to 101 members of four FUGs.

In Donga valley, 25 LG officials and Teachers have received Adult Literacy training. Similarly, a refresher course was conducted for teachers in our community and staff of the LG adult literacy department. The curriculum included environmental and conservation topics.

Revolving loans have been granted to the first set of beneficiaries, and some have started to

pay the loans back.

The Project facilitated the building of a Buru Clinic by the community and its equipping and staffing by the LG.

#### **Output 4. PFM approach promoted state & countrywide**

School Conservation Clubs have been activated at each project site, and a monthly environmental awareness campaign covering topics such as slash and burn agriculture, effects of deforestation, etc. has been carried out in the communities.

As reported in the previous Annual Report the project was faced with the development of a network of hydropower dams around the Mambilla Plateau which were being developed in a level of secrecy with Chinese involvement. One exhaustive Anti-Dam enlightenment workshop was carried out in Mambilla highlands, and one in the Donga valley to make communities aware of the potential impacts of the dams, which were not being expressed by the government or the developers. A project newsletter has also been published, and will be published annually.

### **3.2 Progress towards Project Outputs**

The output level assumptions for all outputs remain true. Specific progress on each output is as follows:

**Output 1. Project sites are selected.** In the last reporting period the project had established a strong presence in each of the four project sites with staff permanently based in the communities. Survey reports have been completed at all sites for birds, mammals, plants and insects. The reports are yet to be finalised or circulated widely. A Participatory Forest Assessment was completed later than expected and the project now has a good understanding of the available and marketable forest resources to form the core of each of the Management Plans. The output will be completed, with the circulation of all survey reports, during the coming year.

**Output 2. PFM plans developed for project sites and approved by State Government.**

This output is the core output of the programme and is an ongoing process. The key study to start this off has been completed and the project team, having agreed the steps and stages of the PFM process, will now begin the implementation of the PFM negotiations which will contribute to the overall Management Plans for each site.

**Output 3. The capacity of community organizations, NCF and FD enhanced to implement PFM plans** Several workshops and training events have been completed that contribute to the priorities in the Training Needs Assessment completed in the last report. A draft training plan is being revised prior to implementation. The project should achieve all its training objectives by the end of project.

**Output 4. PFM approach promoted State and countrywide** The project has strongly advocated against the Donga Valley Dam projects proposed in the area and has used this objection as a vehicle for raising awareness in communities of the value of their forests and the need for their involvement in the management of such forests. This has had mixed results. The project will be rolling out the promotion of community involvement in this 3<sup>rd</sup> year, further advocacy will be done in the subsequent two years through our funding from the Civil Society Challenge fund (DFID).

### 3.3 Standard Output Measures

Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures)

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 total	Year 3 total
Training Outputs				
6a	PRA training	25 trainees	-	
	Biodiversity survey techniques	20 trainees	-	
	Informal training in computer use and photography for project staff	5 trainees		
	Beekeeping training		2 staff	
	Environmental awareness and Biodiversity conservation		40 FUG members	
	Cooperative management (3 days) for Forest User Groups		11 LG staff, 49 trainees	
	Income generation training for Forest User Groups		4 FUGs, 101 trainees	
6b	PRA training	1day formal training 2wk 'on the job'		
	Biodiversity/computer/photography training	'On-the-job'		
	Exchange visit for project staff to PFM project in Nigeria, Ekuri Initiative	4 days		
	Exchange visit for Project Manager to Kenya		1	
Research Outputs				
8	RSPB Project Manager to assist in project setup and monitoring	12 days	30 days	
12b	NCF biodiversity database enhanced	1	1	
Dissemination outputs				

14a	Biodiversity survey design workshop	4	1 (PFA consultancy)
	Site selection workshop,		2
	Criteria setting workshop		1
	Anti-dam advocacy workshop		
	Newsletter		
15a	One national press release in Nigeria relating to project	1	2
16b	Project Newsletter	-	1
18	One national broadcast on dam-building issue in project area	1	2
Physical Outputs			
20	Value of capital items purchased	£5,919	£0
Financial Outputs			
23	Co-funding	£99,863	£72,459.44

**Table 2 Publications**

Type *	Detail	Publishers	Available from	Cost £
(eg journals, manual, CDs)	(title, author, year)	(name, city)	(eg contact address, website)	
Newsletter	PFMP NEWS	Project	NCF, Lagos, project office in Taraba and FD office in Jalingo	*N250,000 approx. £990

### 3.4 Progress towards the project purpose and outcomes

The project has made some good progress towards the project purpose. The project is working against very difficult and varied problems between each forest site and each community. There is much mistrust of outsiders in some of the communities and mistrust of leaders within the communities, due to widespread corruption. The projects attempt at participatory management is making relatively good progress against this background. The project has certainly salvaged one of the sites from destruction for the foreseeable future (Akwabe /Aforobe), and another site (Ngel Nyaki) is already secured by the NMFP – with much work still to do. One site is still heavily threatened (Akwaisantar), due to its remoteness and the poverty and education situation of its local inhabitants.

Whilst political support for the project remains strong from the civil servants at the state level, the assumption that the top level government is seeing the value of conservation and providing the promised partner funds for the programme is questionable. However, the project will be rolling out more advocacy to the State Government and we hope the assumption will hold true.

### **3.5 Progress towards impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits**

Although difficult to measure, the project through its activities has raised awareness on biodiversity conservation and the people are keen on making sure that they do away with activities that undermine conservation. As mentioned above two communities have added their commitment to protecting their forests, this will be proven by the resulting Management Plans and their adherence to these plans over time.

## **4. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons**

The project developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, which is still in draft form. Data collection and monitoring protocols have yet to be formalised for the overall five-year programme. However, the project's biodiversity surveys and the baseline socioeconomic surveys done last year will be used to write a summary baseline for the Monitoring Plan. The programme is being evaluated by staff in quarterly meetings and in annual meetings to review progress towards the programme's objectives.

### ***Lessons learned***

1. PFM approaches in the Donga Valley may not be entirely suitable in the Mambilla Highlands because the forests in the Donga Valley are Community Forests while those in Mambilla are Forest Reserves.
2. Ethnic composition of the communities must be taken into consideration when planning activities to ensure full participation of all members.
3. The rate of progress of project depends on responsiveness and pace of all stakeholders in carrying out respective activities expected of each.
4. Low literacy and education levels of stakeholders slows down the pace of the project.
5. Bureaucracy in Government plays a negative role in project execution where Government input is required.

## **5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

The review questions were forwarded to the NCF for consideration in their work programmes, which was duly done. In response to specific Questions:

Q2. The project has done well to catch up after initial delays and we believe it is now on target. The confusion between RRA and PRA may be a typo. RRA was used in the site selection surveys. However, PRA was used in further detailed socio-economic surveys carried out in each of the final selected communities. On dissemination, the partner NCF is very well connected with national decision makers, and it is envisaged that in addition to organising meetings at the local and state level the finding of these will be presented to the Ministry of Environment and the CBD focal point in the near future.

Q3. The project is endeavouring to develop training materials and has organised a series of training events this year.

Q4. An evaluation will be carried out two years after the Darwin funding ceases (DFID funding), we will ensure that an end line biodiversity and forest condition component is incorporated into this assessment.

Q6. The project is working hard to ensure sustainability of the FUGs. This is through various

means such as ensuring that their management of the forest is of benefit to them, and they see this benefit. If this is not achievable then it is difficult to see how the community-managed forest can be sustained in the long term. This remains a key focus for the programme. This, in parallel with lobbying the state government for more forestry funding is core to the project's strategy.

Q9. The project team is committed to monitoring the PFM process.

## **6. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere**

Has the design of the project been enhanced over the last year, e.g. refining methods, or exit strategy? No.

Discuss any significant difficulties encountered during the year and steps taken to overcome them not already discussed elsewhere.

We have had to contend with chieftaincy disputes in Buru. The project has had to work hard with communities to resolve these internal community issues. This issue no doubt applies to other sites.

Does the project face any particular risks? Ethnic considerations have sometimes delayed our progress e.g. Formation of Forest Management Committees in Yelwa village being delayed due to mistrust between local 'indigenous' agricultural communities and immigrants such as the Fulani pastoralists.

Response of Mambilla people to our anti-dam workshop slowed down some of our activities involving LG officials because they perceived our stand on the dam as against their development. Rough terrain and inclement weather in some parts of the year have also hampered progress.

## **7. Sustainability**

We have had requests from neighbouring villages to extend the project to their communities. Some have even asked to join our communities in carrying out some project activities.

Involvement of LGs, State Government. and other stakeholders should promote sustainability.

The project has also produced a newsletter circulated throughout the communities.

It is too early to be sure of sustainability on continuity, however the programme has three years to complete (two beyond Darwin funding) that we believe we are on target for.

## **8. Dissemination**

Our monthly environmental awareness campaigns and talks given to school Conservation Clubs provide a source of information dissemination in our project sites

We have produced a newsletter and another one is in print. This newsletter has been widely circulated inside and outside Nigeria (Kenya, Uganda, UK).

Our workshop on anti-dam issues was carried by State TV.

The Project Manager attended a workshop on BirdLife International's Site Support Groups (akin to Forest Management Committees and Forest User Groups) in Kenya where he made a presentation on the project and its activities. (There have been requests from Kenya and Uganda about some of our achievements)

A presentation on our project is scheduled for national television in May 2007.

## **9. Project Expenditure**

**10. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes N/A**



## Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2006/07

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2006 - March 2007	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Goal:</b> <i>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>		<p>The PFM process is ongoing and will take the full project cycle to be able to illustrate impact. The forests, for the time being are safe from development/conversion to agriculture, but the project must consolidate on its approach and complete the PFM plans.</p>	<p><i>(do not fill not applicable)</i></p>
<p><b>Purpose</b> Four priority sites for the conservation of forest in Taraba State, Nigeria are managed sustainably through innovative, collaborative mechanisms</p>	<p>-Management plans for all sites are being implemented with limited external support by EOP.</p> <p>-Conservation status of sites at least as good as at beginning.</p>	<p>Management plan yet to be written.</p> <p>Forest patrols, Environmental awareness campaigns and forest patrols ongoing which we hope will contribute to the Indicator.</p>	<p>Consultants to be engaged to support the project to write management plans.</p> <p>Monitoring plans, and stakeholder roles to be decided in Management planning Exercises.</p>
<p>Output 1. Project sites are selected.</p>	<p>Site surveys completed by mid-year 1.</p> <p>4 priority sites selected and project presence established by end of year 1</p>	<p>Done in yr 1</p> <p>Done in year 1</p>	<p>None</p> <p>None</p>

Activity 1.1 . Site selection		Biodiversity studies completed in year 1.  Participatory forest assessment survey done in all forests.	Reports to be circulated  Report to be edited and updated. Resulted to be utilised by Project to plan forest product off take and marketing.
Output 2. PFM plans developed for project sites and approved by State governments.	-Management Planning process completed by end of year 3.  -Govt. approval by EOP	Project had internal workshop to plan the PFM process. Potential experts were consulted to for their potential input	PFM process to begin and will be completed and revised by EOP.
Activity 2. Management planning and monitoring design		Management plan in progress (see above). Baseline data needed have been gathered and Consultants to be engaged soon	Management plan negotiation with each community, and development of simple monitoring plan for development of each plan.
Output 3. The capacity of community organizations, NCF and FD enhanced to implement PFM plans	Training delivered to NCF staff (5), community groups (40 people in 5 Training modules and FD(5) staff.  Agreed performance indicators measured and achieved	Training for NCF, FD, and communities implemented june 06 to EOP.  Note done yet.	Training to be ongoing. Draft Training Plan to be reviewed. Indicators of performance to be done.

Activity 3.1. Capacity Building		TNA completed.  Training programmes are informal to date and draft training plan developed. FD staff (environmental conservation & computer literacy. NCF staff (beekeeping, plant collection, pressing and mounting, computer skills)	Complete training plan and conduct targeted training events.
Output 4. PFM approach promoted state & country wide	-Approach & successes of project documented in local & national newspapers & peer review journals. -Requests received to share experience and expand to other areas.	TV and radio presentations, Newsletter  Request from Masaboi, Nji & Kune to extend project activities to them.	
Activity 4. Awareness raising and advocacy		Advocacy programme against proposed series of Dams.  Monthly environmental awareness meetings on effects of bush burning, tree felling, etc.	Community awareness programmes ongoing.  Community forest policy guidelines to be proposed by March 08

## Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

Project summary	Measurable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
<p><b>Goal:</b></p> <p>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conservation of biological diversity,</li> <li>• the sustainable use of its components, and</li> <li>• the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>To establish an innovative, participatory management programme for the Gola Forest, Sierra Leone, using a conservation concession strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management plan agreed by all stakeholders</li> <li>• Support for conservation of Gola in particular and biodiversity in general increased locally and nationally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed statements of commitment to plan</li> <li>• Results of attitude surveys, membership and enquiry records of CSSL, membership records of children's Wildlife Clubs</li> </ul>	<p>The political situation in Sierra Leone remains stable so that implementation of the long-term programme is possible</p>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p> <p>Knowledge of the biodiversity and natural resources of Gola and the ecosystem services it provides is improved</p> <p>A detailed management plan is developed with the involvement of all stakeholders</p> <p>The capacity of the Forestry Division, the and local communities to play their roles in the new management arrangement is increased</p> <p>Awareness of the importance of the Gola Forest is raised locally and nationally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed studies of biodiversity, natural resources and ecosystem services complete by 12/05</li> <li>• 7 local chiefdoms and all other stakeholders consulted throughout</li> <li>• Plan finalised by 12/06</li> <li>• Offices renovated by 04/06 computer equipment provided to FD by 04/06</li> <li>• 2 weeks training provided to 20 people by 04/06</li> <li>• 2 more weeks training provided to 12 people by 04/07</li> <li>• Target audiences and methods agreed by 12/04</li> <li>• All materials produced and activities complete by 03/07</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study reports, inventories, published papers</li> <li>• Records of consultation process</li> <li>• Management plan</li> <li>• Invoices for renovation work</li> <li>• Invoices</li> <li>• Training reports</li> <li>• Training reports</li> <li>• Records of planning process</li> <li>• Materials (leaflet, posters, press releases, etc) and records of activities (broadcasts, etc)</li> </ul>	<p>Consensus is reached on the practical implications of the study results</p> <p>The final management plan is agreed by all stakeholders</p> <p>Political changes do not prevent stakeholders from making use of their increased capacity</p> <p>Raised awareness leads to an increase in support for the conservation of the forest</p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Forest studies</p> <p>Management plan</p> <p>Capacity-building</p> <p>Awareness-raising</p>	<p><b>Activity Milestones (Summary of Project Implementation Timetable)</b></p> <p>Plan studies by 12/04. Initiate studies 01/05. Complete studies by 12/05.</p> <p>Start preparation of plan 01/06. Complete plan by 12/06.</p> <p>Renovate office by 04/06. Provide computer and computer training to to FD by 04/07. Identify training needs of FD, NCF and local people by 04/06. Provide 2 weeks training to 80 people by 04/007. informal training for NCF, communities ongoing.</p> <p>Identify target groups and methods by 04/06. Initiate activities 05/06. Dissemination of awareness materials ongoing.</p>		

**Annex 3. onwards – supplementary material (optional)**

### ***Checklist for submission***

	Check
<b>Is the report less than 5MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk">Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 5MB?</b> If so, please advise <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk">Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</a> that the report will be send by post on CD, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table?	
Do not include claim forms or communications for Defra with this report.	