

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	15/031
Project Title	Novel and practical conservation strategies following mining in Sierra Leone
Country(ies)	Sierra Leone
UK Organisation	Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
Collaborator(s)	Mind the Gap Environmental Foundation Africa (EFA) Njala University (NU) Fourah Bay College (FBC) Conservation International (CI)
Project Leader	Dr Jan Dick
Report date	Oct 2008
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 2
Project website	

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).

The primary activity in this 6 month reporting period was the establishment of additional experimental plots by SRL. This has been achieved although at a lower rate than initially proposed. The original proposal aimed to encourage additional compost and seedling production from the villagers in the second year of the project – this has not happened because there was over supply in the first year. The in country partners have continued to monitor the plots and write up the results in report format.

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.

A planting plan was agreed with SRL management in Nov 2007 which was in line with the proposal. This plan was not implemented. There are three primary reasons (i) the expense of the first years experiment was much higher than initially estimated at \$150,000 (\$37500/ha) (it had the additional benefit of testing a compost spread which was deemed too expensive during the planning phase in Nov 2006), (ii) change of personnel (both the head of Health, Safety and Environment and the General Manager of the company were replace) and (iii) the sinking of the second dredge on 25th July resulted in a major upheaval within the company. A total of only 4 plots (4*0.25 ha) were planted rather than the proposed 16. While this is disappointing I do not think it is a fatal blow to the project. The 2007 demonstration plots are proving to have been very successful in demonstrating the value of additional soil organic matter and we are in negotiations with the company regarding the final years planting plan. We are proposing to use the money budgeted for monitoring the 2008 plots to collect additional data from

