

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2012)

Project Ref No	19-004
Project Title	Building Capacity of the Next Generation of Liberian Conservation Professionals
Country(ies)	Liberia
UK Organisation	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
Collaborator(s)	University of Liberia, Forestry Development Authority, Forestry Training Institute and Zoological Society of London, University of Cambridge
Project Leader	Dr Chloe Hodgkinson
Report date	April to September 2012
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	To be activated Year 1Q3

Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project

Output 1. Activities for Q1 and Q2:

1.1. Hold inception stakeholder workshop to launch project and assess priorities for academic and field course content

- Two day combined inception and teacher training workshop held 27-28 September 2012. 13 lecturers from the Forestry Training Institute (FTI), University of Liberia (UL) and the Nimba County Community College (NCCC) were introduced to the concept of conservation biology and the module development process. USB flash drives with the training materials, conservation articles and an eBook were presented to each instructor.

1.2 Devise and develop 6 academic modules and embed into curriculums of UL and FTI

- MSc student from the University of Cambridge hosted June –July 2012 to conduct a curriculum gap analysis for conservation topics at UL and FTI and review employee's needs. Full report available
- In partnership with lecturers, 12 modules have been created under two courses - Biodiversity Conservation I (An Introduction) and Biodiversity II (Species and habitat management) for insertion into curriculums. To date seven modules have been inserted into the FTI curriculum.

Output 2. Activities for Q1 and Q2

2.1. CEERCL Steering Committee formed and operational

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been agreed and signed by all partners: FFI, UL, FTI, Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and Zoological Society of London (ZSL).
- Terms of Reference have been drafted for the CEERCL Steering Committee and the first meeting was held on the 22nd of September 2012. A business plan is being developed

2.3 Construct and equip research centre and campsite

- Land was secured for the construction of the research centre in Jalays Town, adjacent to the Sapo National Park (SNP) and the land certificate has been received.
- 3 quotations were received for the constructions and one building contractor was selected.
- Construction of the main office, manager house and campsite commenced on 9th June 2012 with a ground-breaking ceremony. The buildings are still under construction.
- ZSL course modules have been received and will be adapted for the first field course in Jan 2013.

Output 3. Activities for Q1 and Q2

3.1 Conduct an in-depth review of current understanding of SNP's biodiversity and identify knowledge gaps

- Knowledge gap analysis completed and report produced.
- Based on a gap analysis, we have started an internship programme that currently supports 4 UL graduates through i) training on conservation issues, research methods and soft skills such as proposal development and ii) support for research grant application

3.3 Clear and map a trail system in the park for use by researchers, rangers and tourists

- Due to delays in completing the construction of the centre, this activity will now take place in 2013

3.4 Continuation and growth of SNP bio-monitoring programme

- SNP Park biologist and FDA regional extension officer based in SNP participated in the inception / teachers training workshop on Conservation biology

Output 4. Activities for Q1 and Q2

3.5. Host national and international researchers to conduct applied research work

- Researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University, Birdlife, Lund University, Sweden and University College London have expressed interest in conducting research on birds, primates, insects and human ecology. In all cases training for Liberian students will be incorporated.
- Publicity material for the research centre to be developed in Q3.

4.1. Produce monthly and annual reports for CEERCL

- Quarterly and semi-annual report produced

4.2 News features and radio broadcasts released nationally

- The inception workshop was broadcast on national Liberian television. DVD copy available.

4.3 Research reports/publications posted on www.liberianfauna-flora.org

- Knowledge gap analysis report posted.

4.4 Conferences/Seminars attended to present research work

- Abstract submitted to 'Capacity Building for Conservation' conference, Columbia, 12th-15th Feb 2013

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months.

We have experienced delays in the building constructions due to the unusually heavy rains that led to destruction of parts of the walls of the constructed building as well as bad road conditions preventing the transport of building materials to the area. We will therefore not be able to commence activities at the research centre or host international researchers until the fourth quarter, starting January 2012.

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

Discussed with LTS: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

Received confirmation of change acceptance no/yes in.....(month/yr)

3. Do you expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No

If yes, and you wish to request a carry forward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carry forward request: £5256

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures? No