



**Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2020)**

Project reference	24-005
Project title	Enabling rural poor to help protect biodiversity of Dja, Cameroon
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Cameroon
Lead organisation	Royal Antwerp Zoological Society
Partner(s)	Projet Grands Singes, Foundation Camerounaise de la Terre Vivante, Living Earth, African Wildlife Foundation, Tropical Forest Rural Development
Project leader	Dr Nikki Tagg
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	HYR4
Project website/blog/social media	www.landscapeconservation.org.uk (separate Dropbox account for M&E, non-public)

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

A. Fish Farming;

Reinforcement of capacities of members of the common initiative group; 3 sensitisation meetings were organised in the villages and capacities of the management committee of the common initiative group reinforced in view of passing on ownership and management of fishing activities to them. All activities were carried out with the project protocols to minimise the probability of COVID-19 transfer (see below)

Mapping of the fishing zone; fishing activities in the four zones in 17 villages were mapped out. The outcome indicates that fishing activities reduced from sector one which is close to Somalomo to sector 4 which is further in the reserve. This activity indicated the main fishing zones along the Dja river

Construction of fishing stand; Construction of the fishing stand (a 'fish shop'); construction work on the fish store in Schouam was completed and ready to use.

Sustainability in fishing offtake; a study was carried out in the 17 villages to determine the sustainability of fishing offtake and on the sanitary condition of the river. The results indicate that the quantity fished is sustainable at the current level of offtake, and the sanitary conditions of the river was good, confirming that the habitat is functioning well, and that the fish is of good quality (this impacts not only on consumption but the price of fish at market when trading).

B. Cocoa Farming;

PLANNED AND REALISED ACTIVITIES ACCORNING TO OUTPUT.

The following activities were planned to be executed during the period from April 2020 – October 2020

Act 2.7 Monitoring and maintenance of cocoa Farmers

- Follow up of new farms created during the project., visit of farms and regular inspection.

Act 2.8 Technical Support at all Stages.

- Reinforcing of new nurseries (with fruit trees, local trees) individually created by producers to replace the missing ones and extend the areas of their cocoa fields.

Capacity building of producers for the establishment of individual nurseries.

Some of the challenges that were register during the distribution of cocoa plants from the central nurseries were:

- The central nurseries were far from cocoa producer's farms and as a result, thy took a lot of time to transport the cocoa plants from the nurseries to their respective farms;
- Also, the distance of the central nursery to the neighbouring villages and the weight of these cocoa plants also made the transportation to be difficult.

The alternative that was proposed to solve these problems was the establishment of "individual cocoa farms" for the different cocoa producers who needed the plants.

The methodology that we used to set up these individual cocoa nurseries was as follows:

- To begin, we first of all register all the cocoa producers who needed plants or wanted to increase the size of his cocoa farm;
 - Secondly, the cocoa farmers were trained on the different steps that need to be taken for the settle down of a nursery;
 - After the training, each cocoa farmer set up his nursery and follow-up were organised to make sure that they take care of their cocoa nurseries
- A total of 6400 cocoa seedling were planted in 13 individual nurseries.

Training on cocoa farm maintenance; clearing, setting shade, enriching farms with fruit trees, diversification with plantains and other local trees Follow-up of newly created farms.

The newly created farms in the 17 villages of the Dja buffer zone needed to be followed up to monitor the progress over the years of the project. This follow up of farms consisted in visiting of each farmer's individual farm, observation of the progress of farms and training on cocoa farm maintenance; clearing, setting shade, enriching farms with fruit trees, diversification with plantains and other local trees.

This other sub activity (follow-up of newly created cocoa farms) were carried out in other to have an idea on their growing rate.

The different information's that were registered during this follow-up included:

- The clean nature of the cocoa farms cleared.
- Secondly, the objective was also to observe and notice the growing rate of these cocoa.
- Thirdly to find out if some cocoa trees are already producing cocoa pods or not.

The different results that we obtained from this follow-up includes:

- About 65% of the cocoa farms that were observed during this period were clean;
- Also, it was observed that the growing rate of these cocoa plants were good, that is about 75% of the visited cocoa farms have a good growing rate;
- We also registered the production of cocoa fruits by cocoa plants in some cocoa plantations (that is about 20 % of the cocoa plants that were planted by the cocoa producers has started to produce fruits).

Training of Cocoa Farmers on harvesting, Fermentation and drying.

The cocoa season being at the peak, a training of cocoa farmers on harvesting, fermentation and drying of cocoa was organised in the different zones of the villages in the northern buffer zone. This was to enable the farmers build their capacity to be capable of producing quality cocoa. Over 59 farmers took part in this training and benefited from the training. About 6 tonnes of cocoa is being fermented and dried in the villages while preparing for the upcoming sales in the month of November.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation.

M&E Bushmeat offtake; The seventh bush meat offtake data set has been collected in the villages and entered in computer. The last data set (the eight) is being collected.

M&E Fish farming; The survey on fishing that was lunched in the 17 villages is continuing. Data has been collected on the biomass of fresh and smoked fish, and on the quantity consumed by farmers, sold and the cost. Data collection is going on.

M&E Cocoa farming; The survey that was lunched on cocoa output in the 17 villages is going on. The quantity of cocoa harvested and sold during the 2018 and 2019 campaigns has been being recorded. Measures are being taken to record the 2020 harvest and sales.

M&E Wildlife survey; The second set of wildlife survey data that was launched in 2018 in the villages has been collected. The two sets of data have been entered in the computer.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

We have noticed conflict between the local population in the 17 villages south of the Dja river where the project is focused and those in the north. Fish famers in the 17 villages are keeping to fishing rules and regulation as stated in REAs – not fishing during the no take periods, using recommended material, etc. Those in the north who are not involved in the project do not keep to these.

This is an overall positive impact in the 17 villages in the south and negative in the north, confirming that the project approach put up in the south is successful.

The lesson learn is that the same approach should be expanded to local villages in the north of river Dja for an overall conservation of resources in the Dja reserve and its periphery.

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The application of barrier measures recommended by the Cameroonian government to stop the propagation of the virus impacted this project negatively. Project activities in the field were suspended, project staff absent in the field for a couple of months and there was no close follow-up of some activities including fish farming survey. Data collection was interrupted as villagers needed the assistance of project staffs who were absent. Other project activities that were planned during this lockdown including bushmeat offtake data collection were shifted ahead. Measures are being taken to carry on these suspended activities and this might cause an overall delay in the project timeline. The final project might not be ready on time.

2c. 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

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

No

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

None. We have continued in our activities to support the villages in the northern buffer zone of the Dja Faunal Reserve, ensuring that safeguard procedures for minimising the probability of transfer of COVID-19, through the provision of personal safety equipment, distribution of masks and hand sanitisers (provided by the Government and supporting agencies) and adhering to social distancing.

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 can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**