



***Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species***  
***First Annual Report***

RENEWING MANAGEMENT OF SAPO NATIONAL PARK AND CREATION OF THE  
LIBERIAN PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM,

LIBERIA, WEST AFRICA

Project Reference no. 162/9/001

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**\*\*\* WARNING \*\*\***

*Please respect that this report contains frank and confidential information. It is not intended for public disclosure, nor for circulation. Doing either of these could risk not only the favourable outcome of this project but also the success of the many conservation and forest management initiatives underway or trying to get underway in Liberia.*

## 1. Darwin Project Information

<i>Project title</i>	RENEWING MANAGEMENT OF SAPO NATIONAL PARK AND CREATION OF THE LIBERIAN PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM
<i>Country(ies)</i>	LIBERIA
<i>Contractor</i>	Fauna & Flora International
<i>Project Reference No.</i>	162/9/001
<i>Grant Value</i>	£92,962
<i>Start/Finishing dates</i>	Started 1 April, 2000, will finish 30 September 2002 (modified from 31 March, 2002)
<i>Reporting period</i>	1 April 2000 - 31 March 2001

## 2. Project Background

Liberia is a classic example of a country rich in biological wealth whose poverty drives its inhabitants to mine its resources rather than invest in their long-term management. Liberia is emerging from a civil war that left its economy and infrastructure in ruins. Poverty and lack of economic opportunity are widespread. At over £2 billion, Liberia's external debt is oppressive. In this context, conservation is not a top government priority. Donors have been reluctant to restart aid to the current government.

Liberia contains an estimated 43% of the remaining Upper Guinean Rainforest, a forest belt of extraordinary biological value that once extended from southern Togo across to Guinea. Today it survives only in remnant patches. Liberia was identified in a West Africa Conservation Priority-Setting Exercise in 1999 to have the best biodiversity conservation potential in humid West Africa, although it is facing imminent and intense threats. If this ecosystem is to be preserved, including its megafauna that require large blocks of habitat, Liberia is the *key* country where it can happen and significant action must occur now. To date, Liberia has only one fully protected area, Sapu National Park. A plan to create a network of 8 parks and nature reserves was stalled by the war and work on it is only now restarting.

Already unsustainable mining of the remaining forests from commercial logging, hunting and itinerant agriculture is underway. However the elements of an effective protected area system and institution remain from before the war and can be strengthened. To counter the destructive trends, this project addresses the following top priority actions: restarting management of Sapu National Park including outreach to local communities, strengthening capacity of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority's (FDA's) Division of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), and developing efficient and effective tools to generate the information for justifying new protected areas. These are the necessary first steps to establishing a functioning protected areas network in Liberia.

## 3. Project Objectives

In order to protect the biological diversity of Liberia, the overall project objective is to permit the country to establish a representative protected area system and to establish an active, competent management presence at all protected areas.

Specific objectives include:

- re-establishing active, effective and planned management of Sapu National Park,
- ensuring local communities' support and respect for Sapu NP,
- building Liberian capacity in conservation management planning,
- building Liberian capacity in protected area management field skills,
- establishing Sapu NP as a training ground for the previous objective, and

- assisting Government to evaluate and choose areas for expanding the protected area network through developing a rapid assessment tool for evaluating an area's conservation value.

The project will result in an 18-month operational plan for Sapo National Park, followed at the project's end by development of a full, long-term park management plan, backed up by reports synthesising relevant information on the park. The latter will include a section on institutional development and training for the DWNP. The project will improve local capacity in conservation management planning, park protection and management, and field research techniques. It will renew active management at Sapo NP, including patrols and law enforcement, community development, and research. It will develop the park as the training ground for protected area staff nationally. It will initiate community outreach and environmental education programmes around the park. Finally, the project will develop a rapid assessment indicator system of ecological integrity/disturbance to aid in expanding Liberia's protected area network.

Neither the objectives nor the outputs have been modified since the project began. However the time needed to achieve them is proving to be greater than originally expected. The original project schedule was modified to extend the 2-year implementation period to about 2.5 years. This change was approved in principle in an exchange of e-mails with Sylvia Smith on 17 and 26 January 2001, and the budget rescheduled accordingly. However the details of a new implementation schedule were not approved then by the Darwin Secretariat because they needed face-to-face discussion in Liberia, which occurred in March. A new project timetable is included in this report.

#### 4. Progress

Project implementation began officially in April 2000 although actions on the ground were slow to start, in part because the project began close to the beginning of the rainy season and mostly because of low in-country capacity and professional standards on the parts of the FDA and the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL). Although the project received a lot of press locally and internationally, these Liberian partners began the project more prepared to talk about it than to do it. These problems are summarised in the first 6-monthly report, covering April-September 2000.

Since September 2000, a lot has happened including mobilisation of the field teams. Positive momentum is building in a way that looked uncertain at the time of the last report. This positive momentum is reinforced by the presence of a full-time WWF officer in Monrovia, recruited from within FDA by the WWF's West African Regional Programme Office (WARPO), and by the launches of the biological monitoring or "biomonitoring" programme supported by Darwin and the Whitley Foundation, a bushmeat monitoring programme by the Philadelphia Zoo and SCNL, a community forest project by Catholic Relief Services and SCNL, and a nation-wide forest assessment project (see section 5).

Accomplishments/slippages to date (based upon the timetable in the original proposal):

Project Activities	Progress/Comments
<i>1- Review and update of the Sapo National Park Management Plan</i>	
a. Synthesis of all post-war information on the status of the park, resources at the park's disposal (human, financial, infrastructure, equipment, etc.). Facilitated workshop to review and update the 1986 Sapo NP management plan, with participation from FDA, SCNL, local communities, commercial interests in the region, and international conservation partners.  <i>Scheduled for quarters 1-4 (Q1-4)</i>	FDA and SCNL formed a technical committee to address the need to update the management plan, and concluded that an assessment mission to the park was needed. The mission's TOR were drafted and reviewed. The mission occurred in November although the resulting report was of very poor quality and did not answer in detail the questions that needed answering. SCNL paid FDA for the mission nevertheless (in order to maintain good relations?).  SCNL and FDA never prepared, as agreed, the bibliography of all published and unpublished literature available in Liberia on the park, including internal FDA reports. However FFI gathered all information it could internationally on Sapo, and is continuing to do so. FFI made copies of all documentation found and will send them

	<p>to FDA in May.</p> <p>A management planning workshop was held 17-21 March at Jalay's Town on the border of Sapo Park. A special hall was constructed for the occasion. Instead of elaborating a long-term management plan, SCNL, FFI and DWNP opted to prepare an 18-month operational plan and only to outline the long-term plan for now.</p> <p>A second workshop is tentatively scheduled for approximately April 2002 to review the 18-month operational plan and outline of a long-term management plan, and turn them into a real management plan.</p>
<p>b. Compilation of conservation management planning resource information, distribution and explanation of such materials at the workshop. On-the-job training in conservation management planning <i>Scheduled for Q2-4</i></p>	<p>FFI pulled together and shared much protected area management planning materials in preparation for the workshop. The process used during the workshop is laid out in the Protected Areas Management Planning Guidelines prepared by the Countryside Council for Wales. J Suter co-ordinated the technical content and did most facilitation of the workshop. Long-term planning was unfamiliar to most participants so Peal, Suter, J Murray and the head of DWNP agreed it was more important that participants bought into and understood the process followed rather than producing a long-term plan that few participants contributed to or understood. Thus the 5-day workshop involved a lot of training - explaining, exercises and debate - in addition to focused planning for the future.</p> <p>A second protected area management planning training is scheduled for the next Sapo Park management planning workshop (April 2002 tentatively).</p>
<p>c. Finalisation, publication and dissemination of Sapo NP management plan <i>Scheduled for Q4</i></p>	<p>Planned for Q4 (January-March 2001) but slipped to Q5 (April-June 2001) because the workshop occurred only in the second half of March 2001.</p>
<p><i>2- Provide emergency support to the park to restart effective management</i></p>	
<p>a. FDA to review and refine immediate staff needs, operational responsibilities and chains of command for the park, in consultation with SCNL and FFI <i>Scheduled for Q1</i></p>	<p>FDA prepared a report (a wish list) on the equipment at the park and equipment needed to restart active management. However FDA/SCNL did not prepare a report reviewing and refining immediate staff needs, operational responsibilities and chains of command for the park, planned to be done in May 2000. Thus emergency support (training, equipment, infrastructure) never started in 2000. The workshop in March 2001 ended up doing what FDA and SCNL were supposed to have done on their own in May 2000 (and did an excellent job of it). However FFI clearly overestimated local capacity to do so alone.</p>
<p>b. Provision of motivational allowances for park staff <i>Scheduled for Q1-4</i></p>	<p>Underway since May 2000 for Monrovia FDA staff and since October for field staff once these were organised into teams.</p>
<p>c. Provision of basic training in techniques for patrolling, handling incursions, ecological monitoring, administration, community relations and other identified priority topics using a "learning-by-doing" approach. (Most activities must take place during the dry season) <i>Scheduled for Q1,3 and 4</i></p>	<p>FDA and SCNL failed to organise any detailed training courses or modules, despite having agreed to, nor did they identify training priorities until the March workshop. The only thing they did organise was a day of introductory lectures by Monrovia FDA staff during a visit in February 2001 in anticipation of the March workshop.</p> <p>Dr Waitkuwait began training in research techniques in late March. Mr Murray provided administrative TA to SCNL throughout March</p>
<p>d. Provision of basic equipment for park staff <i>Scheduled for Q3-4</i></p>	<p>Very little equipment was provided because FDA never presented a coherent justification for its lists of desired equipment. A prioritised list was prepared only at the end of the March workshop.</p>
<p>e. Construction of simple ranger outposts and trails <i>Scheduled for Q3</i></p>	<p>Work on these began in February with WWF support and is continuing in Q5 with Darwin support.</p>
<p>f. Clearance, marking and maintenance of park boundaries <i>Scheduled for Q3-4</i></p>	<p>Work began on this on 31 March and is to continue, weather permitting, through May 2001.</p>
<p><i>3- Develop and begin implementing a phased staff training and recruitment plan, using Sapo NP as a training ground for protected area staff nationally</i></p>	
<p>a. FDA, in consultation with SCNL and FFI, to undertake an institutional needs analysis</p>	<p>FDA considered the planned activities premature given that DWNP lost many of its experienced staff in the war and its new staff have</p>

<p>for its Wildlife &amp; National Parks Division. Publishing and dissemination of resultant phased staff training and recruitment plan. Continued refinement of plan in light of progress establishing new protected areas and raising financial support</p> <p><b><i>Institutional assessment and development/ printing of plan scheduled for Q1</i></b></p>	<p>academic credentials but lack practical field experience. DWNP needs first to build up the practical experience of its personnel, they feel, with outside technical training for key topics and individuals, and then will be prepared for an institutional assessment. WWF is assisting to develop and may support an international training plan. For much of last year, DWNP lacked clear vision, strong motivation and the desire to prepare a development plan. This is changing.</p> <p>At the March workshop, several discussions focused on staffing and training needs for the park, which form part of the operational plan. Training will occur mostly at Sapo Park, using a learning-by-doing approach rather than a theoretical, classroom approach. FDA headquarters staff will participate in training sessions at the park to expose them to everything that goes on there, even if they will not be posted in the field.</p>
<p>b. Implement first phase of the plan</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for Q2-4</i></b></p>	<p>No action, see above.</p>
<p><b><i>4- Develop a rapid assessment indicator system of ecological integrity/disturbance, to be combined with a national-level satellite-based assessment of forest cover (separate project), for quickly assessing potential new conservation areas</i></b></p>	
<p>a. Refinement of the hypotheses and definition of exact parameters to be tested regarding indicator species, level of disturbance, management needs of the target species, and suitability of areas for conservation. Agreement of specific transects, information needed from rural villages and training plan finalised</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for Q1-2</i></b></p>	<p>Dr WE Waitkuwait developed and led a faunal monitoring programme for 10 years in moist forested areas across Côte d'Ivoire. His biomonitoring programme has already developed the hypotheses and parameters to test so the system needed only setting up in Liberia. Agreeing the transects, information from local villages, target species, etc. was handled by Dr Waitkuwait and Mr Murray in April 2001, in consultation with Mr Peal and FDA.</p>
<p>b. Training of FDA and SCNL field staff in ecological monitoring techniques, use of GPS handsets and basic PRA skills. Some villagers will be hired and trained too.</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for Q3-4</i></b></p>	<p>Began on 31 March 2001, basically after this reporting period ended. Dr Waitkuwait will bring some of his Ivoirian colleagues to Liberia to train local Liberians and work alongside them in Q5. This way they will be able to share data on both sides of the border.</p>
<p>c. First intensive survey conducted in Sapo NP and Cestos-Senkwehn riversheds, and preliminary data analysis and refinement of hypotheses</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for Q3-4</i></b></p>	<p>To begin in May 2001 (see below). Only Sapo National Park will be targeted at present because the level of disturbance in the Cestos-Senkwehn area is too great to warrant working there anymore.</p>
<p>d. Continuation of data collection throughout wet season, followed by data analysis and further refinement of hypotheses</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for Q4 and onwards</i></b></p>	<p>Activity 4c is essentially the same as 4d since the first intensive survey will be from May-September, which is the rainy season. However Mr Peal won the Whitley Award in February 2001 allowing him to expand this research initiative to 3 years. Thus continuous monitoring will go on from May 2001 to April 2004, throughout several rainy and dry seasons.</p>
<p>f. 2nd intensive survey, followed by data analysis, 1-day workshop in Monrovia and preparation of conclusions for a species-based rapid-assessment index of ecological integrity and conservation worthiness. Publication &amp; dissemination of results in Liberia as well as internationally (neighbouring countries &amp; an intl. scientific journal)</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled for year 2 only</i></b></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><b><i>5- Initiate a community outreach and assistance programme</i></b></p>	
<p>a. On-going community visits and consultations to explain the objectives of the park, and to seek local perspectives and support</p> <p><b><i>Scheduled mostly for Q3-4</i></b></p>	<p>FDA and SCNL has held four groups of community meetings throughout the year to discuss the project, community development needs and how the park will contribute to the area's well-being. Less formal consultations have been on-going through SCNL's wells &amp; latrines initiative. However all consultations have been held back by lack of organisation and lack of focus on how to approach the issues.</p>

	<p>and need better vision and structuring.</p> <p>Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in their Sinoe County Education and Conservation programme has supported SCNL to establish “community forests” under local community management, to catalogue non-timber forest products, and to pursue environmental education. In parallel, CRS is providing assistance for clean water-supply and sanitation. Their intervention has clarified approaches and hopefully CRS will continue to play a large role in future.</p> <p>In terms of both consultations and development assistance, there has been a strong road bias and communities further from roads are beginning to resent the lack of attention.</p>
<p>b. Provision of seeds, tools, pit latrines and wells for select neighbouring communities <i>Scheduled for Q3-4</i></p>	<p>Through December 2000, 3 wells and one latrine had been installed. The remaining ones began construction in April 2001.</p>
<p><i>6- Project Management</i></p>	
<p>a. Identify international and SCNL staff to be responsible for project execution</p>	<p>SCNL staff were readily identified. FFI had difficulty pinning down the appropriate international staff to lead the biomonitoring and management planning workshops within the original time frames. This delayed the launch of the biomonitoring programme although no negative consequences are foreseen. M Appleton’s unavailability for the management planning workshop led to J Suter facilitating development of a scaled down plan, which ended up being more appropriate to local needs. Mr Appleton will travel to Liberia instead in about April 2002 to facilitate a full management planning workshop.</p> <p>Local organisational and administrative capacity within SCNL and FDA led to FFI hiring J Murray to ensure key aspects of the project were set up or executed properly. This was enormously useful and FFI will endeavour to bring Mr Murray back in future.</p>
<p>b. Prepare (1) memoranda of understanding between FFI and SCNL and FDA-DWNP, (2) accounting procedures and training, (3) financial modalities, and (4) technical and financial reporting requirements</p>	<p>All these documents and procedures were agreed and signed with SCNL and FDA, although SCNL and FDA have not been reporting to the standards FFI needs. Therefore FFI have had to do a lot of checking during visits to Liberia and Mr Murray was hired to put in place more reliable systems.</p>

The project’s research component, the biomonitoring programme, began in earnest on 31 March 2001 and so has not produced results yet. A report from Dr Waitkuwait is due in June outlining the results of his 3 months in-country setting up the programme, the specific adaptations needed for Liberia to the hypotheses and methodology developed in Côte d’Ivoire, and the timetable for results.

Significant difficulties are described in sections 5 and 9. The biggest problems have been the lack of organisational skills and motivation on the part of Liberian project partners, and the low professional standards prevalent in Liberia.

The project design was altered in that the rapid re-starting of management activities envisioned was not possible. For various reasons, FDA and SCNL did not take the necessary steps to prepare the emergency support plan, to organise field training, to prepare an institutional development plan, and several other activities. Thus the project has advanced much more slowly and its international staff have had to play prominent roles in moving activities forward that were to be done by Liberians alone.

The exit strategy, or better stated the “hand-over strategy”, for the project has been developing well. Liberia completed ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity in late 2000. Therefore they are eligible for Global Environment Facility support, and the World Bank and Catholic Relief Services are committed to preparing a proposal with FFI for continuing management of Sapo Park and building capacity of DWNP after the Darwin Project ends.

<b>Revised work plan through the end of the project.</b>	Semesters
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<b>Activities</b>	<b>April- Sept. 2001</b>	<b>Oct 2001- March 2002</b>	<b>April- Sept. 2002</b>
<i>1- Review and update of the Sapo National Park Management Plan</i>			
a. Synthesis of all post-war information on the status of the park, resources at the park's disposal (human, financial, infrastructure, equipment, etc.). Facilitated workshop to review and update the 1986 Sapo NP management plan, with participation from FDA, SCNL, local communities, commercial interests in the region, and international conservation partners.		X	
b. Compilation of conservation management planning resource information, distribution and explanation of such materials at the workshop. On-the-job training in conservation management planning		X	
c. Finalisation, publication and dissemination of Sapo NP management plan			X
<i>2- Provide emergency support to the park to restart effective management</i>			
a. FDA to review and refine immediate staff needs, operational responsibilities and chains of command for the park, in consultation with SCNL and FFI	completed		
b. Provision of motivational allowances for park staff	X	X	X
c. Provision of basic training in techniques for patrolling, handling incursions, ecological monitoring, administration, community relations and other identified priority topics using a "learning-by-doing" approach. (Most activities must take place during the dry season)	x	X	X
d. Provision of basic equipment for park staff	X	x	x
e. Construction of simple ranger outposts and trails	X		
f. Clearance, marking and maintenance of park boundaries	X	x	x
<i>3- Develop and begin implementing a phased staff training and recruitment plan, using Sapo NP as a training ground for protected area staff nationally</i>			
a. FDA, in consultation with SCNL and FFI, to undertake an institutional needs analysis for its Wildlife & National Parks Division. Publishing and dissemination of resultant phased staff training and recruitment plan. Continued refinement of plan in light of progress establishing new protected areas and raising financial support		X	x
b. Implement first phase of the plan		x	X
<i>4- Develop a rapid assessment indicator system of ecological integrity/disturbance, to be combined with a national-level satellite-based assessment of forest cover (separate project), for quickly assessing potential new conservation areas</i>			
a. Refinement of the hypotheses and definition of exact parameters to be tested regarding indicator species, level of disturbance, management needs of the target species, and suitability of areas for conservation. Agreement of specific transects, information needed from rural villages and training plan finalised	X		
b. Training of FDA and SCNL field staff in ecological monitoring techniques, use of GPS handsets and basic PRA skills. Some villagers will be hired and trained too.	X		
c. Monitoring programme established in Sapo National Park, and preliminary data analysis and refinement of hypotheses. Continuation of data collection throughout the coming 3 wet and dry seasons, accompanied by data analysis and further refinement of hypotheses.	X	X	X
d. 1-day workshop in Monrovia and preparation of conclusions for a species-based rapid-assessment index of ecological integrity and conservation worthiness. Publication & dissemination of results in Liberia as well as internationally (neighbouring countries & an intl. scientific journal)			X
<i>5- Initiate a community outreach and assistance programme</i>			
a. On-going community visits and consultations to explain the objectives of the park, and to seek local perspectives and support	X	X	X
b. Provision of seeds, tools, pit latrines and wells for select neighbouring communities	X	x	x
<i>6- Project Management</i>			
a. Identify international and SCNL staff to be responsible for project execution	Completed.		
b. Prepare (1) memoranda of understanding between FFI and SCNL and FDA-	Completed. Additional		

DWNP, (2) accounting procedures and training, (3) financial modalities, and (4) technical and financial reporting requirements	international TA may be required.
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“X” indicates the activity will occur in a given semester. “x” indicates the activity may happen at a low intensity, or weather permitting, or if it has not already been completed and slips.

## 5. Partnerships

Over the past year, FFI have maintained for the most part very good working relations with SCNL, its primary local counterpart. The strengths of this partnership reside in (a) the long-standing trust and collaborative relations between the people in both organisations, (b) shared objectives, and (c) a practical approach, not bogged down by racial or historical/colonial baggage, to maximising the comparative strengths of each partner.

Problems have arisen, however, due to the extremely slow and expensive nature of communications with Liberia, to certain SCNL staff not taking deadlines seriously, to not adhering strictly to budgets, to weak accounting within SCNL, to SCNL’s President’s (Alex Peal) heavy travel schedule, and to an attitude that external donations are rights rather than a *quid pro quo* that must be worked for. Mr Peal and SCNL’s Board of Directors are aware of the problems and are trying to take action, but the prevalent low professional standards of Liberia coupled with spotty capacity in SCNL cannot be overcome rapidly. In order to ensure effective execution of several activities and to build capacity in SCNL, Mr James Murray was sent to Monrovia for two months (March-April 2001) where he helped to redesign SCNL’s financial and accounting systems and make other administrative improvements. Ideally he would remain there longer but the present budget will not accommodate this.

Collaboration with FDA has been very good at the technical level, and quite difficult at the managerial level. Sapu Park staff and local community “volunteers” have been greatly motivated by receiving their modest monthly stipends, £20 and £10 respectively, and by the several visits received from FDA headquarters, the management planning workshop and training, the equipment and other logistical support provided by the project. FDA’s research unit is actively involved in the biomonitoring initiative, receiving training in research design, data collection and analysis (on computer). A new park warden was assigned from FDA headquarters who is energetic and committed, and FDA’s Head of the Wildlife and National Parks Division is able to act in a technical capacity again.

The problems with FDA occur with the Deputy Managing Director for Conservation and Reforestation. Although he is receiving a motivational stipend, in return for which he is doing nothing positive for the project, he does not feel it is enough. He therefore tried to block, among other things, the park management planning workshop because we refused when he demanded a cash payment of £5000. This type of corruption and obstructionism is common at higher levels of the Liberian civil service. While we flatly refuse to pay any such bribes to anyone, we have had to spend a considerable amount of time negotiating with honest civil servants who can apply pressure behind the scenes to allow us to get on with the work. The long-term solution to our difficulties is to have the guilty Director removed from office. But this we cannot do since FDA’s Managing Director (President Taylor’s younger brother) is fairly unconcerned that the organisation functions smoothly.

Collaboration with the West African Regional Projects Office of WWF (WARPO) has been excellent. FFI have planned activities with WARPO and harmonised staff salaries & stipends in Liberia to ensure a level playing field. WARPO hired a representative from within the FDA who proved invaluable to the good outcome of the management planning workshop and, because he is within FDA, has been critical for moving other aspects of the project forward. Such aspects include demarcating the park boundaries, planning and organising training for park staff, outreach to communities surrounding the park (park awareness programmes as well as basic sustainable development assistance), supplementing the stipends provided by the Darwin grant so that additional local volunteers can be associated with park management, construction of park infrastructure and provision of office and field equipment to FDA. These activities expand the planned Darwin project and draw WWF more and more into Liberia.



In parallel to the Darwin Initiative, FFI began an initiative entitled “A Re-assessment of Forest Cover, Updating of the Protected Forest System, and Improvement of Environmental Information for Liberia” in February 2001, funded principally by the European Commission’s Tropical Forest Budget Line and Conservation International’s Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund for a sum of just less than one million Euros (approx. £630,000). The project will build directly upon the Darwin project’s accomplishments, taking the next steps to establish a system of nature conservation areas in Liberia. Specifically it will provide the opportunity to apply the biological integrity index, currently under development, to identify areas for full protection (conservation) status and will justify recommendations for creating new protected areas. It will continue to build capacity in Liberia in areas such as research techniques and protected area planning, and will raise the profile of conservation in Liberia nationally and internationally. Finally it will improve forest management generally so that forest areas adjacent to conservation areas should be better managed.

The forest re-assessment project involves the National Environmental Commission of Liberia (NECOLIB), the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) as well as the FDA. The first two institutions are fortunate to have management that currently is more professional and honest than that of FDA. Thus the good relations established with NECOLIB and MPEA have given FFI and SCNL leverage in their dealings with FDA.

## **6. Impact and Sustainability**

The project and its leader, Alexander Peal, President of the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, have been heavily promoted over the year April 2000 - March 2001. The project was announced publicly in a press release at the April 2000 workshop of National Environmental Commission of Liberia (NECOLIB), which was the nation’s first step towards developing an overarching environmental policy framework and environmental regulatory agency. Several articles devoted to or mentioning the Darwin Initiative project for Sapo National Park have appeared in Liberian, British and American newspapers, the conservation newsletters of FFI and SCNL, and on several internet news pages, viz. the Pan-African News Agency, BBC Wildlife and Our Planet (UNEP’s Newsletter). The British Honorary Consul to Liberia spoke on national radio of the initiative too. The workshop to update the park management plan was videoed and excerpts were aired on national television for four consecutive weeks (March-April 2001).

In April 2000, Alex Peal won the highly prestigious Goldman Prize for the Environment for Africa. During the related ceremonies and follow-up press events held in San Francisco, Washington DC, London and Monrovia, he drew significant attention the plight of Liberia’s forests and the few Liberians and international supporters willing to support their conservation and management. Then in February 2001, Mr Peal won the coveted Whitley Award to expand the research initiative of the Darwin project into a 3-year, comprehensive programme. This again brought excellent media attention to Mr Peal, SCNL and Sapo Park, and highlighted the Darwin Initiative’s support.

While the Darwin Initiative/DETR are not the only supporters of Sapo Park, they are certainly the most significant in terms of the size of the grant, their political weight and especially their catalytic effect on other conservation groups and donors. Mr Peal winning the Whitley Award for Liberia, for instance, would not have been possible without the Darwin grant. Many research institutions in Europe, North America and recently Asia have begun to piggy-back their research on the Sapo Park project or on the biomonitoring programme. The World Bank recently requested that FFI, SCNL and the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA) submit a proposal to the GEF to carry on the work once the Darwin grant ends. While this is not strictly an exit strategy, the Darwin Initiative grant was intended to spark international interest and support from scientific-cum-conservation organisations and donors who would carry efforts forward at the end of the project. So far the project has lived up to every expectation and more in this regard.

Associated with this international interest is the increasing local perception that the international community is serious about conservation and forest management in Liberia, and thus Liberians should take it more seriously. FDA staff have been noticeably more enthusiastic about their jobs since the project began and have requested training and expatriate assistants to work alongside them. To date the Darwin Initiative has provided only a small amount of training but the bulk has been rescheduled to begin after March 2001. Nevertheless the needs in Liberia are enormous and capacity-building to levels comparable with other African nations will take years.

## 7. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

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

<i>Code No.</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Description</i>
6Ai	25 people	People trained in protected area management planning
6Bi	17 weeks	20 received 3 days training, 5 received 5 days training (=85 days)
6Aii	11 people	FDA field staff and local assistants trained in research methods
6Bii	1 week (Y1 only)	Training began in last days of March and continues to end-May
6Aiii	22 people	22 FDA park staff received introduction to methods for patrolling and community outreach
6Biii	4 weeks	1-day of training for everyone (=22 days or ~ 4 weeks)
6Aiv	1 person	Training for SCNL account/secretary in accounts management, provided by J. Murray
6Biv	1 week	
7	1 manual/report	Short guide of the process used to develop the 18-month operational plan for Sapo Park
8	3 people 10 weeks	J Suter made 4 supervision missions, including his facilitation of the management planning workshop, totalling 4 weeks. J Murray made one trip for 4 weeks through 31 March. E Waitkuwait made one trip for 2 weeks through 31 March.
9	1 plan	18-month operational plan for Sapo Park developed (compilation nearly complete as of end-April)
14A	1 workshop	5-day workshop to prepare an 18-month operational plan for Sapo Park and to outline a long-term management plan, March '01, incl. on-the-job training in park management planning (see 6Ai).
14B	2 workshops	-Project presented the Darwin Project to the Conference on Forests and Biodiversity (Yale University, USA, 31 March-1 April 2000) -Project presented at the National Environmental Commission of Liberia Planning Workshop, Monrovia, 5 April 2000 -Presented at the publicity event in London for sponsors of FFI's Liberia programmes, the British press and Liberian diplomats, 5 May 2000 -Project presented at the Darwin Initiative Project Leaders Seminar, London, 10 May 2000
15A	5 printed press releases	-Press release by J Suter on the Darwin Initiative project for Liberia, 6 April 2000 -The News (national Liberian newspaper) "Britain Gives US\$200,000 To Revamp Sapo Forest" 7 April, 2000 (errors due to local misinterpretation of press release) -ACTION NOW!, the internet newsletter of Save My Future (Liberian NGO), "British Government Provides \$200,000 for Sapo National Park", April 2000 -The Pepperbird (SCNL's newsletter), Sept. 2000. "Several Project Agreements Signed" includes description of Darwin Initiative -PanAfrican News Agency, 13 November 2000. "Liberia's Lone National Park Under Post-War Assessment"
15B	5 local town meetings. Note these are not really	-Town meetings in Jalay's Town at the border of Sapo Park to discuss the project, April and November 2000 and February 2001 -Meeting with chiefs from villages surrounding the park to discuss

	workshops and serve the function locally as press releases.	the project and issues related to the park, 19 March 2001 -Meeting with the Sinoe County superintendent to discuss the Darwin Initiative and Sapo Park, 21 March 2001
15C	4 press releases	-FFI News "Restarting Nature Conservation in Liberia" April 2000 (distribution of approx. 3000) -Press release for the publicity event in London for sponsors of FFI's Liberia programmes, the British press and Liberian diplomats, 5 May 2000 - The Daily Telegraph, p.20, 10 May 2000. "Pygmy Hippos at Risk as loggers move into Liberia" -BBC On-Line article 12-06-00 "Liberian forests saved by a Peal"
15X	2 press releases in USA	-Inclusion of the Darwin project in A Peal's press release at the Goldman Prize Ceremonies, USA (April 2000) -Article on A Peal and SCNL projects, incl. the Darwin Initiative, the Friends of Liberia newsletter (USA), autumn 2000
16A	1 newsletter	-The Pepperbird, April 2001. Issue devoted mostly to Sapo Park initiatives (Darwin and co-financiers)
18A	1 television broadcast through 31 March 2001	-4 television episodes of 1/2 hour each on the Liberian Broadcasting Network on the workshop to develop an operational plan for Sapo park, prepared by the FDA media division and aired 25 March, 1, 8 & 15 April 2001
19A	>4 radio broadcasts	-Kiss FM and Radio Veritas (2 Liberian radio stations) broadcast several times an interview with J Suter on the Darwin Initiative, 7-9 April 2000 -Radio discussion of the Darwin project in Monrovia by the Honorary British Consul to Liberia, Mr Brian Brewer, June 2000 -A Peal and J Murray broadcast on DC Talk (a Liberian radio talk show) on 10 March 2001
20	£146	Camping equipment, compasses, torches, misc. small items
23	£20,743	£2383 UK Charitable Trusts £2500 US Embassy-Monrovia £1910 Rainforest Action Network £4300 WWF-WARPO £7500 Whitley Foundation (replaces WildInvest funding) £1650 FFI £500 European Commission-Liberia and Catholic Relief Services

Many of the outputs were realised more or less as planned for Year 1, while some exceeded planned levels (weeks of UK staff in host country, co-financing received, and local, national and international press releases, radio broadcasts and television programmes). Several were not accomplished as planned for a variety of reasons. Less training took place and fewer training manuals and identification guides were produced than planned because SCNL and FDA did not organise the training courses, and the biomonitoring programme began as the first year ended. Thus all the outputs related to biomonitoring (training, transects, equipment, UK time in Liberia) will be achieved in the months of April and May 2001. Little equipment was purchased because the management planning workshop took place later than anticipated and FDA was unable to justify its equipment requests before then. Construction of 6 ranger outposts was funded by WWF and boundary cutting started late due to poor organisation by FDA and SCNL.

**Table 2: Publications**

Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (title, author, year)	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. contact address, website)	Cost £
<i>No publications have yet been produced from this Darwin Initiative project.</i>				

As is clear from the outputs table, a large emphasis has been maintained on publicising the initiative and the need for conservation in Liberia, not only by FFI but more so by SCNL. All future achievements will be publicised in similar fashions, and the additional projects FFI and its partners are launching in Liberia will provide on-going fora to publicise the work begun under the Darwin Initiative project.

## 8. Project Expenditure

**Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period**

Item	Budget	Expenditure
<i>Salaries:</i>		
<i>J Suter (project management)</i>	£6300	£6300
<i>M Appleton (park mgt. planning)</i>	£4000	-0- (deferred to 2001/02)
<i>J Murray (in-country TA, replaces J Daltry/A Entwistle)</i>	£1000	£2000
<i>E Waitkuwait (chief scientific advisor, replaces R Barnes/P Robinson)</i>	£11,000	£4948
<i>A Peal/B Donnie (SCNL management)</i>	£4000	£4000
<i>J Foley (SCNL project manager)</i>	£1500	£1500
<i>SCNL Secretary/accountant</i>	£1000	£1000
<i>15 FDA field staff</i>	£5400	£1760
<i>15 local "volunteers"</i>	-0-	£880
<i>5 FDA DWNP staff</i>	£2700	£2475
<i>Local consultants</i>	<u>£1000</u>	-0-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£37,900 (original)</b>	<b>£24,863</b>
<i>Rent, rates heating lighting etc.</i>	£6656 (original)	£4974
<i>Office administration costs</i>	£3328 (original)	£2487
<i>Capital items/equipment</i>	£3100 (original)	£146
<i>Others</i>	£2150 (original)	£3853
<b>Total</b>	<b>£53,134, then revised in January 2001 to £37,433</b>	<b>£36,323</b>

Expenditures were under original estimates because the organisational capacity and motivation of SCNL and FDA were lower than expected at the outset. Thus despite good intentions, they did not organise the training, organise the management planning workshop or prepare adequately justified equipment needs to spend the money originally planned. Furthermore they did not organise the field staff for the first 6 months of the project and therefore FFI refused to pay field allowances until this staff became active. However once they field staff was organised, SCNL and FDA management decided to lower the stipends so as not to distort local salaries and to free up budget to remunerate several local villagers for assisting park staff to carry out their functions.

Another reason for underspending was the late start of the biomonitoring programme. Thus some equipment was not purchased until April 2001, and Dr Waitkuwait did not incur expenses until March 2001. Mr Murray's position was not originally envisioned but the great need for institutional and logistical assistance to SCNL was apparent after 6 months (see first progress report). Because Dr Waitkuwait's experience obviated the need for Drs Daltry or Entwistle, FFI chose to reallocate their funding for both years to support Mr Murray. Mr Appleton's input was deferred to 2001/02 and Mr Suter facilitated the management planning workshop and led basic training on this topic. "Rents, rates..." and "Office administration costs" are calculated as a % of the total of other expenditures, thus the amount spent on them is proportionately lower according to the underspend of other budget lines.

Looking forward, the budget is to remain basically as originally planned except that the travel allocation was significantly underestimated. FFI have overspent this line already by £670. I therefore

propose to the Darwin Initiative that £1500 be re-allocated from the budget line “Rents, rates, heating, lighting, cleaning, etc.” to the budget line “Travel and Subsistence - international travel and subsistence”. The amount remaining for “Rents, rates...” until the end of the project would decrease from £6627 (£11,601 - £4974 spent in Y1 = £6627) to £5127. The balance for “International travel and subsistence” would increase from -£670 to £830. Because of other projects coming on line in Liberia, FFI should be able to cover intercontinental airfares from these projects. The Darwin Initiative is needed to pay only for in-country costs and airfares between Abidjan and Monrovia.

In e-mails exchanged with S. Smith (DETR) of 17 and 26 January 2001, we agreed to reschedule expenditures as follows between FY2000/01, 2001/02 and 2002/03:

2000/01 £37,433  
2001/02 £47,000  
2002/03 £8529

Now that exact expenditures are known for 2000/01, I propose the follow slightly amended expenditure schedule:

2000/01 £36,323 (actual)  
2001/02 £47,000  
2002/03 £9639

## **9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons**

SCNL is required to prepare quarterly progress reports and financial statements. These are based upon their activities and interaction with the relevant FDA staff. As mentioned above, despite all good intentions on the part of SCNL and many FDA staff, Liberians tend not to be conscientious about adhering to schedules and work programmes. This necessitated quarterly trips by FFI to Liberia to ensure adequate monitoring of project activities and to push the initiative along. It also led FFI to alter its original international staffing plan to include sending Mr Murray to Liberia for two months.

FFI is tracking all indicators relevant to the international dimension of the project. SCNL and Mr Murray are collecting data on all in-country outputs. Their relevance to the project achieving its overall purpose is difficult to assess after only one year since they indicate only that the planned process is being followed. Liberians tend not to judge success on whether an output was produced so much as if people feel pleased with an event having occurred, so they are not focused on timely production of outputs.

However the Darwin project is realising positive outcomes. Before Darwin, Sapo park staff were not performing their duties (patrols, research, community meetings, hosting visitors) regularly but now they are. FDA research staff stayed in Monrovia before, and now they are in the field collecting data. The real tests of the project achieving its purpose will come when proposals to create new protected areas are put to the Liberian Legislature and the President’s Office, when these new areas need to be managed, when logging companies try to operate along the park boundaries (buffer zone) or try to enter the park, and when local police and military are given orders to stop trafficking bushmeat (since they are the motivating force behind the trade in much of south-east Liberia).

Lessons for future work and plans include:

1. project start-up always takes longer than expected so an additional 6-9 months should be built into any implementation schedule and budget just to get organised and effective,
2. the travel requirements of project start-up are far heavier than one would think they ought to be so provision for extra travel should be made, and
3. lethargy, inertia, disintegration of professional standards, shell-shocked character - or whatever politically correct or incorrect term it is called - is easily underestimated in a post-conflict country like Liberia. It is extremely challenging to motivate people, to help them to think beyond the

coming week or month, or beyond chopping whatever money they can for present survival. People in post-conflict situations are unused to long-term planning and to trusting in a stable future.

Re-building motivation is a long-term undertaking and cannot be accomplished within the time frame of this project. Maintaining a consistent support to Liberian conservation efforts is the only way it will happen and this project so far is successfully launching that process.

**10. Author(s) / Date**

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4 May, 2001