

ACROSS THE RIVER – A TRANSBOUNDARY PEACE PARK FOR SIERRA LEONE AND LIBERIA

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT
01 April 2009 to 30 September 2013



1 Description

- 1.1 Beneficiary: Vogelbescherming Nederland (VBN)
- 1.2 Contact person: Bernd de Bruijn, senior conservation officer
- 1.3 Partners: Forestry Development Authority, Liberia (FDA)
Forestry Division, MAFFS, Sierra Leone (FD)
Society for the Protection of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)
Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)
BirdLife International
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- 1.4 Title of the Action: Across the River - A Transboundary Peace Park for Sierra Leone and Liberia
- 1.5 Contract number: DCI-ENV/2008/151-577
- 1.6 Reporting period: 1 April 2009 – 30 September 2013
- 1.7 Target countries: Sierra Leone, Liberia
- 1.8 Final beneficiaries: National Forestry Authorities, national environmental CSOs, forest edge communities (2,000 people directly)



H.E. Ellen JOHNSON SIRLEAF, President of Liberia, and H.E. Ernest BAI KOROMA, President of Sierra Leone, launching the Transboundary Project in Lalehun, Sierra Leone on 15 May 2009

List of Acronyms

AVJCF	Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation
ARTP	Across the River Transboundary Project
CBD	Conservation of Biodiversity
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CI	Conservation International
CoP	Conference of Parties
COPAN	Consolidation of Protected Area Network
CSSL	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone - BirdLife in Sierra Leone
EFA	Environment Foundation for Africa
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
EXPAN	Expansion of Protected Area Network
FD	Forestry Department - Government of Sierra Leone
FDA	Forest Development Authority - Government of Liberia
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
GFP	Gola Forest Programme
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Geographic Positioning System
GRNP	Gola Rainforest National Park
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LCG	Local Conservation Group
LFI	Liberia Forestry Initiative
MAFFS	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (Sierra Leone)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOV	Means of Verification
NCE	No-cost extension
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PA	Protected Area
PDD	Project Development Document
PIT	Project Implementation Team (project management and national and international project partner coordinators)
PMT	Project Management Team (West Africa sub-regional coordinator of BirdLife International, project manager and assistant project manager)
PROPSE	People, Rules and Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources
PST	Project Support Team (VBN, BLI and RSPB senior representatives)
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REDD	Reducing Emission for Deforestation and Degradation
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Birdlife in the UK
SCNL	Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia - BirdLife in Liberia
STEWART	Sustainable and Thriving Environments for West African Regional Development
VBN	Vogelbescherming Nederland - BirdLife in the Netherlands

2 Assessment of implementation of Action activities

2.1. Executive Summary

The 4.5 year EC funded Across the River – a Transboundary Peace Park for Sierra Leone and Liberia Project commenced in April 2009 and ended in September 2013.

Its **Overall Objective** is: *Upper Guinea Forest estate in West Africa protected in critically threatened and important cross border areas and managed effectively by national institutions and authorities with the active collaboration of local communities.*

The **Specific Objective** is: *The long-term conservation of forests, their biodiversity and global carbon storage benefits are secured through national and international partnerships for improved forest governance across the Sierra Leone – Liberia border.*

In close collaboration with Vogelbescherming Nederland (BirdLife in The Netherlands, hereafter VBN), the grant beneficiary, the project has been managed by BirdLife International and implemented by five project partners: in Sierra Leone by the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (BirdLife in Sierra Leone, hereafter CSSL), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Birdlife in the UK, hereafter RSPB) and the Forestry Department (hereafter FD); and in Liberia by the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (BirdLife in Liberia, hereafter SCNL) and the Forest Development Authority (hereafter FDA).

Building the project

The project started off with a high-profile launch in Lalehun, Sierra Leone, by the presidents of both countries H.E. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone and H.E Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia. Their strong commitment to the project and the support of the local communities have been of great value throughout the project. In the first year of the project, most key staff was recruited, financial and administrative procedures were put in place, and all essential project equipment was purchased. Project management has invested significant time and effort to enhance financial and administrative capacity of the project partners where necessary. A Project Steering Committee was established at the start of the project, consisting of 11 members representing project partners and communities at the higher management level. A total of five annual PSC meetings have been held throughout the project period, alternating between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Throughout the project period the PSC has functioned effectively and performed its duties as set out in their Terms of Reference. The Project Management Team consisted of the West Africa sub-regional coordinator of BirdLife International (based in Accra, Ghana), the project manager (based in Monrovia, Liberia) and assistant project manager (based in Kenema, Sierra Leone). The Project Implementation Team (PIT) has been meeting twice annually to discuss and review the Project Action Plan, project progress, project planning, activities, and preparing the PSC agendas. In addition, National Project Implementation Teams (NPIT) meetings have been held monthly. In addition, the international partners VBN, BirdLife International and RSPB had monthly virtual meetings via telephone and Skype. Various project Monitoring and Evaluation structures and procedures were put in place and have functioned throughout the project period, which have been supplemented by three ROM missions (in 2010, 2011 and in 2012). Their recommendations have been subsequently implemented by project management, including a project modification and a request to the EC for a six month no-cost extension, both of which were formally approved by the EC.

Towards a protected Transboundary Peace Park

In October 2011, an MoU on cross-border collaboration was signed by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security of Sierra Leone and by the Managing Director of the FDA in Liberia, formalizing the cooperation between Sierra Leone and Liberia “in management, research, protection and conservation of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park”. This MoU was a significant step, with strong commitment for future collaboration for forest conservation. Later that year, the Gola Forest Reserve in Sierra Leone was upgraded to the Gola Rainforest National Park and officially launched by H.E. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic Sierra Leone on the 3rd of December 2011. The similar gazettement of the proposed Gola Forest National Park in Liberia was an objective under the World Bank funded COPAN and, later, EXPAN projects in Liberia. This gazettement process has however been experiencing considerable delays and is now foreseen in 2014 (at the moment of writing, the gazettement package has been submitted to the Office of the President, who has announced the legislation in her annual message). A transboundary agreement with two different levels of conservation status would have implied serious problems of harmonisation of law and enforcement, as well as confusion amongst the (often contiguous) forest edge communities in both countries. Therefore, the establishment of the Peace Park has unfortunately not been achieved during the project period, awaiting National Park status in Liberia. Despite this delay, the ARTP project partners have committed themselves to continue efforts post-ARTP to realize the establishment of the transboundary Peace Park and work is continuing, thanks to secured follow-up funding sources.

Understanding biodiversity, livelihoods and their linkages

Under the project’s research programme, implemented by the RSPB through the ARTP team of Research Technicians and the Research Coordinator, strong links have been established with a diversity of projects and institutions. These collaborations included a variety of national universities, government agencies, and international partners. Throughout the project, very close collaboration with the GFP/GRNP has taken place under all research activities. Twelve Research Technicians recruits have been employed in year 1 of the project: six from Liberia and six from Sierra Leone. All recruits have enjoyed extensive theoretical and practical training, which has contributed significantly to the national research capacity of both countries.

The Gola PAs in both countries, and the linking corridors, have been extensively surveyed. Field data has been collected through ground truthing and camera trapping, and monitoring of vegetation cover, habitats, species, communities, human activities etc. Among the recorded species, at least 42 species were first country records for Sierra Leone, while 19 species were recorded in Liberia for the first time. Twelve, possibly 13 species, i.e. three butterflies, eight dragonflies or damselflies, one frog and possibly one shrew, proved to be new to science and await formal description. This implies that a wealth of knowledge remains to be unlocked in these world biodiversity hotspots. The data has been compiled and analysed, resulting in the publication and dissemination of the ARTP Biodiversity Report which provides a comprehensive compilation and analysis of all the research done and data collected under the project. The report provides a set of valuable recommendations on future selection of key corridor areas, strategic management measures and current and future research and monitoring. In addition to the biodiversity surveys, socio-economic surveys have been conducted in both countries. The findings from the socio-economic surveys have been used to guide project activities, particularly the development of the ARTP Livelihood Implementation Plan and the implementation of livelihood and awareness activities. Reports from the research programme are key parts of the Gola gazettement package in Liberia.

Corridors for wildlife passage and peoples’ livelihoods

CSSL and SCNL have built strong relationship with the Gola local communities and its traditional and local government authorities in both countries. In Sierra Leone the ongoing Gola Forest

Programme provided a solid stepping stone to engage with local communities and to expand the collaborative network in the Gola area, while in Liberia though the network had to be built afresh. The networks, with over 85 LCGs (i.e. Livelihood Groups, Nature Clubs in schools and Local Conservation Groups) established under the project, have provided a broad platform for CSSL and SCNL to promote the project and its objectives, and to implement the various project activities, including the sensitization of communities on the wise use of the forests, while communities have used the platform to share their opinions, wishes and concerns, directly with CSSL and SCNL and, more indirectly, with FD and FDA. The formal establishment of corridor areas and their participatory management by local communities has not yet been achieved due to the pending gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park and Peace Park establishment. Following the completion of the socio-economic surveys under the project, various livelihood interventions were developed, focusing on Inland Valley Swamp rice production, livestock-for-bushmeat pilot interventions and benefit sharing schemes for women's business intervention, and benefiting 36 community groups in Liberia and 44 groups in Sierra Leone, representing an approximately 2,000 beneficiaries. In Liberia SCNL further organized a Community Forest Study Tour with the aim to familiarize Gola communities with opportunities for livelihoods based on community forestry, a novel concept in the Gola with significant future potential. At the end of ARTP the interventions and work with the community groups is currently continued by SCNL and RSPB under ongoing and new initiatives in the Gola area.

Strengthening capacity for forest governance

At the start of the project, fifty Forest Guards recruits were selected and employed, 25 in Sierra Leone and 25 in Liberia. The recruits were equipped and underwent a 7-week intensive training course in law enforcement, protected area management and conservation basics, skills and techniques. This has been followed by two refresher trainings; one in 2012 and one in 2013. In addition four senior PA managers from the FDA enjoyed a four months training course in Wildlife Management at the College of African Wildlife Management in Mweka – Tanzania. In Sierra Leone, the Forest Guards operate from Kenema and Lalehun. In Liberia, the Gola forest field station in Gbarpolu County was refurbished in 2010 and has been functioning as the Gola Headquarters since.

The MoU established the formal legal basis for Sierra Leone and Liberia, through the FD and FDA respectively, to develop coordinated and collaborative patrol and law enforcement planning and implementation along and across their border in the transboundary Gola area. In Sierra Leone coordination of the work of the Gola Forest Guards is a joint effort by FD and RSPB under the umbrella of the Gola Rainforest National Park management structure, and the Forest Guards actively patrol throughout the newly established National Park. In Liberia, management of the Gola Forest Guards was initially weak, and reporting by Forest Guards in Liberia was therefore poor and irregular. This has however started to improve significantly in 2013 with the replacement of several people with key responsibilities for the management of the Gola, plus the new operational support for the Gola Forest Guards under the AVJCF project.

A Joint Cross-border Patrol Plan was adopted in 2013 and the first joint patrol conducted soon after. However, these patrols do not yet have the envisaged regularity, because pending Peace Park declaration, harmonization between the management and law enforcement approaches of the two countries is incomplete which poses a formal and legal obstacle to conduct cross-border patrols. However, the MoU and consecutive discussions between FD and FDA ensure that swift progress can be made once the Peace Park is established.

Strengthening civil society

Both CSSL and SCNL have enjoyed tremendous development and strengthening under the project. The project increased visibility, exposure and capacity of the national NGO's, enhancing staff capacity and confidence. Project management invested greatly in technical capacity building

on-the-job. Further, in addition to ongoing support by BirdLife International for its local partners under its Network and Capacity Development, the RSPB has facilitated the restructuring and institutional and governance strengthening of CSSL under its own Partner Development Support programme. In Liberia, SCNL was able to hire a consultant under the project who undertook a Needs Assessment and facilitated a Strategic Plan development workshop for the organization. In addition, staff from both partners have been able to attend targeted trainings to build and expand technical skills and knowledge. After project end, SCNL will be profiting from RSPB core support in a similar fashion as CSSL. The capacity built under the project, the experience gained, the network expanded, plus the high profile of the project has significantly raised the ability of both organizations to play a key role in national and international conservation efforts, both on the short-term as well on the longer term. Throughout the project the project partners, especially CSSL and SCNL, have engaged with communities and community based organizations under various project activities. The communities have benefited from education and awareness-raising activities, as well as from training under the livelihood implementation plan. The foundation for active community participation in environmental governance as laid by ARTP in the Gola is providing ample current and future opportunities for government, CSOs and the local communities to build and expand upon as to ensure that conservation and development initiatives benefit all stakeholders.

Timber trade best practices

In June 2012, a report containing lessons learned and best practices for optimum sustainable forest management in the sub-region was completed, prepared by Professor J. Woods, College of Agriculture and Forestry - University of Liberia. This study consisted of a review of relevant documents on timber trade in West Africa and interviews with various key stakeholders in Liberia. The report has been disseminated among the project partners and 64 other contacts and stakeholders in Liberia and Sierra Leone. In addition, the study and findings were presented by Professor Woods at the University of Liberia for students of the College of Science, students of the college of Agriculture and Forestry and other invitees in October 2012, alongside two other ARTP presentations. The event was well attended with over 100 students, faculty members and other invitees, including FDA and EC-Liberia representatives.

Towards long-term sustainable financing of forest conservation

Initially the aim was to develop a carbon project for the Transboundary Gola Peace Park. However, it soon became clear that the overall costs, work and time involved in developing a full carbon project would be much higher/larger than initially anticipated and it was therefore decided to focus the REDD carbon project work on the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone, and later share experiences with Liberia. It was decided that two so called Project Design Documents would be developed under which the carbon credits would be marketed and sold: one under the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) standards and one under the Verified Carbon Standards (VCS). Winrock International was subcontracted in October 2011 to provide guidance in developing the technical aspects of the process. A feasibility report was finalized in October 2011 and all stakeholders agreed at developing a REDD project for the Gola Rainforest National Park. After an intensive, complex and lengthy the two Project Design Documents were submitted process in December 2013 and external auditors visited Sierra Leone in February 2014 for validation of the carbon, and the outcome of the validation is anticipated in the coming weeks. Although the development of the carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park has not been completed before the end of ARTP, the tremendous progress made so far and the anticipated positive outcome of the validation is a direct result of ARTP. The projected revenue of the sale of the carbon credits is currently estimated at 1 million USD, though the exact figure will only become known once the sale of the carbon credits will be completed. This work was managed by the RSPB.

2.2 Activities and results

The “Across the River - a Transboundary Peace Park for Sierra Leone and Liberia” project commenced on the 1st of April 2009 and was ceremoniously launched on the 15th of May 2009 by H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone, and H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, in Lalehun in the Gaura chiefdom of Kenema district in Sierra Leone. The five partnership agreements with FD, FDA, CSSL, SCNL and RSPB, were signed in September/October 2009. On the 11th of March 2013, the four year project was granted a 6-months no-cost extension, therefore extending the project period to the 30th of September 2013.

Result 0. Effective ARTP project management framework established and maintained, project wide and in each country.

0.1 Establish and maintain a Project Steering Committee (PSC)

A Project Steering Committee, consisting of 11 members representing project partners and stakeholders, (i.e. VBN, BirdLife, FDA, FD, CSSL, SCNL, RSPB, GFP and CI), including 2 representatives of paramount chiefs from edge communities from both countries, was established at the start of the project. The duty of the PSC is to “*provide guidance for governance, as well as overall strategic policy, management and implementation direction to the Project*”. The first meeting of the PSC was convened right after the project launch during which the PSC agreed on its terms of reference and mode of operation, approved the project activity calendar, project focal points, the project management structure. After this first meeting a total of four annual meetings have been held throughout the project period at the end of each project year. The venue of the meetings alternated between Sierra Leone and Liberia, and were chaired by the Director of FD or FDA respectively. During these meetings an annual Narrative Report and Financial Report of the previous project year were presented by the project manager to the PSC for review and adoption, while a Work (Action) Plan and budget for the upcoming project year were shared by the project manager for review, guidance and prioritization by the PSC.

Throughout the project period the PSC has functioned effectively and has facilitated successful project implementation through pro-active project monitoring, securing support and participation of a broad range of stakeholders, advising on high level staff and other important project issues, facilitating co-ordination with other similar projects and programmes, especially the Gola Forest Programme, and mobilizing government and third-party cost sharing. Notably, it also provided a platform for exchange between the local communities through the paramount chiefs and the government authorities. The last PSC meeting was held on the 17th of April 2013 in Kenema, Sierra Leone.

0.2 Recruit project staff

Most key staff was recruited in the first year of the project; the research coordinator to lead the Research under Result 2 was recruited by the RSPB at the start of year two. A few key staff replacements took place during the project. The project manager was obliged to resign in November 2010 as a result of inadequate performance; his duties were temporarily taken over by the BirdLife sub-regional coordinator for West Africa, until a new project manager was recruited in November 2011. Furthermore, the assistant project manager resigned halfway 2011 and his replacement was recruited in September 2011. After the Financial and Administrative Officer for the BirdLife Monrovia office moved on, a successor was recruited in May 2012. The CSSL project coordinator moved on and was replaced in July 2011.

0.3 Project Implementation Team established and meets regularly

The Project Implementation Team (PIT), consisting of the BirdLife project manager and assistant project manager, the VBN project coordinator plus the project coordinators of the five project partners from both countries met twice annually with the objective to discuss and review the Project Action Plan, project progress, project planning, activities, partner relations, challenges and other ARTP project management matters. In addition, at the national levels, the National Project Implementation Teams (NPIT) meetings were held twice a year, i.e. in between the two project-wide PIT meetings. At the April 2012 PIT meeting it was agreed that the partners would strive to hold *monthly* National Project Implementation Team meetings to further facilitate and enhance communication and coordination. These formal monthly NPIT meetings have been taken place when useful in addition to the frequent and less formal daily and weekly interactions between the project partners in and between the two countries. In addition to the formal PIT meetings, the project manager, based in Liberia, conducted frequent management and monitoring visits to Kenema and Freetown, Sierra Leone during the project period. Further project coordination was facilitated by the Project Support Team (PST), consisting of international partners VBN, BirdLife International and RSPB, through monthly virtual meetings via telephone and Skype.

0.4 Procurement of equipment and materials

All essential project equipment was in place by the end of Year 1 - start of Year 2. Those include all required office and IT equipment for Monrovia and Kenema project management offices, and partner offices; six 4x4 vehicles, 9 motor bikes; plus forest guards' and research field equipment (e.g. camping gear, GPSs, digital cameras, and survey tools). In year 3 an additional 2 motor bikes were purchased plus 30 research (trap) cameras.

The Forestry Development Authority in Liberia and the Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security in Sierra Leone provided office space for the project manager on its premises in Monrovia and Assistant Project Manager in Kenema respectively. In 2010 the Forestry Development Authority had to transfer to their original office premises with limited space, obliging the project office in Monrovia to be relocated to its own new premise.

0.5 Partner capacity development framework established and functional

At the start of the project, project implementation capacity of the project partners from Liberia and Sierra Leone was comparatively low. To address this, from the start of the project, project management, with guidance from VBN and reinforced by the long-term supporting partnership between RSPB and CSSL, has invested considerable time and effort in actively working with each partner on matters related to project management and implementation, including work planning, budgeting, proactive project implementation, narrative reporting, financial management and accounting, and communications. Over the project period this has resulted in significant improvements in capacity with lasting positive impact, particularly within the two Civil Society partners.

0.6 Monitoring and Evaluation plans developed and implemented at project and site levels

In addition to the existing internal management and monitoring systems in place at the project partners, a specific Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was developed and various structures, measures and tools were put in place to facilitate active monitoring and evaluation of project implementation progress. Those include:

- Annual PSC meetings (see 0.1) plus bi-annual PIT and additional regular NPIT meetings (see 0.3).
- Bi-annual submission of Technical Progress Reports by project partners to project management.

- Submission of quarterly work plans by project partners to project management for review, guidance and approval.
- Submission of quarterly budget forecasts by project partners to project management for review, guidance and approval, and submission of quarterly financial reports by project partners to project management.
Note: initially, budget forecasts and work plans covered a 6-months period but halfway the project this was increased to quarterly work plans to enhance monitoring.
- A Project Mid-Term Review was conducted by an international expert in August - September 2011, which was followed by a Project Partners Experience Sharing and Lessons Learned Workshop in Kenema, Sierra Leone in October 2010, and a modification of some project activities and related budget lines.

The project Action Plan and the project LogFrame provided the monitoring and evaluation framework, specifically of progress measured against the project Objectively Verifiable Indicators (see 2.4). In addition, the project received three ROM missions commissioned by the EC, in 2010, 2011 and in 2012, which provided useful and constructive conclusions and recommendations which were subsequently implemented by project management and project partners (for details we refer to the relevant ROM Reports).

One project modification was processed, amending both activities and budget, and was approved by the EC on 10 October 2012. This amendment deleted some sub-results that were considered too ambitious (e.g. relating to FLEGT under Result 6), and rearranged the budget following a better insight into actual costs. This report follows the amended results and sub-results. Furthermore, a 6 months' no-cost extension was requested and granted on 10 March 2013.

0.7 Put in place Financial and Administrative procedures

At the inception workshop following the project launch, partners were briefed on EC procedures and each received all procedure documents, guidelines and templates on a memory stick. In the first year of the project, each project partners opened separate bank accounts for the Across the River project. The EC project financial procedures and requirements were deliberated at a workshop in the Netherlands, organized by VBN, in December 2009, and project financial and administrative procedures were developed and agreed upon.

As indicated under 0.5, financial and administrative capacity among the Liberia and Sierra Leone project partners was initially low and project management has, throughout the project period, invested significant time and effort to enhance financial and administrative capacity of the project partners. Further, halfway the project, following the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review, certain financial and administrative procedures were modified which facilitated the swift and timely transfer of funds to the partners.

Over the project period, adherence to internal procedures and reporting requirements and deadlines has continued to improve significantly. This was reflected by the annual financial project audits: after a relatively weak start, with some ineligible expenditures, the auditors noted a considerable improvement of expenditure verification over the years. However, ensuring adequate finance and administration at the local partners remained an area that required continued attention, guidance and support.



The Project Steering Committee Meeting in Monrovia, 17 April 2012 (Bernd de Bruijn)



Project Steering Committee and Project Implementation Team meetings in Kenema, various years (Bernd de Bruijn)

Result 1. Enabling environment for cross border conservation collaboration at local, national and regional levels between Liberia and Sierra Leone and the Mano

1.1 MOU and vision for cross border collaboration and ‘Peace Park’ negotiated and signed by Liberia and Sierra Leone protected area authorities.

The MoU, prepared by senior staff of FD and FDA, was signed by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security of Sierra Leone and by the Managing Director of the FDA in Liberia in September-October 2011, formalizing the cooperation between Sierra Leone and Liberia “in management, research, protection and conservation of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park”. In Year 4 the FD and FDA both formally disseminated the MoU in Sierra Leone among Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Immigration, Police and communities.

1.2 Presidents of Liberia and Sierra Leone sign accord, under the Mano River Union for increased cross border collaboration and the establishment of a cross border Peace Park.

The Accord signing is reliant on the gazettelement of the proposed Gola Forest National Park in Liberia as an objective under Consolidated Protected Area Network (COPAN) project funded by the World Bank in Liberia and which has experienced substantial delay (see elaboration under 1.4). The FD and the FDA have indicated that the political process towards the Accord signing can and shall however be initiated when the gazettelement is becoming concrete. With the recent submission of the Gola National Park gazettelement package to the Office of The President, this is now the case.

1.3 Develop procedures for enhancing and harmonising the protected area status, legal and regulatory frameworks, of the Peace Park.

The MoU provides a strong basis for this deliverable, and resulting discussions were held with the FDA and FD on how to proceed. It was agreed that first there would be national reviews and draft harmonization of legal and regulatory frameworks of both countries, which would be followed by a bilateral workshop to review and harmonize the work done at national level. However, due to the ongoing delay of the gazettelement of the Liberia Gola Forest National Park (see 1.4), this has not further progressed since. With the gazettelement scheduled for this year, the FDA has already reached out to FD to continue work towards the Transboundary Accord and underlying arrangements, which are already being drafted.

1.4 Establishment and designation of a Transboundary Peace Park.

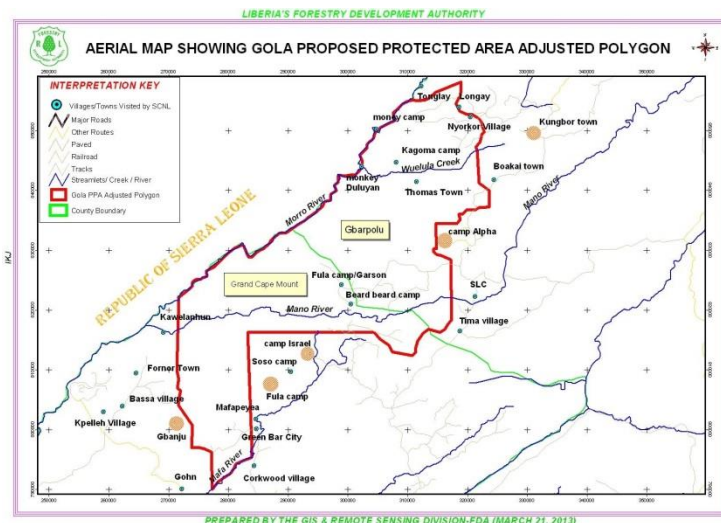
Before establishment and designation of a Transboundary Peace Park can occur, it proved necessary for Liberia to first gazette the Gola Forest National Park. The upgrade of (part of) the Gola National *Forest* to National *Park* in Liberia was one of the main objectives of the World Bank funded COPAN project. Although the process toward the gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park was initiated, this objective (among others) was not achieved before the end of the COPAN project on 30 November 2012 due to a variety of reasons including limited institutional capacity of the FDA, the PUP¹ scandal which paralyzed the FDA in 2012, and poor communication and

¹ In September 2012, the FDA became under heavy scrutiny after Global Witness released a damaging report on the unchecked issuing of so called Private Use Permits (PUPs) which (quote from the report) “contain no sustainability requirements and therefore would essentially allow companies to clear 40 percent of Liberia’s forests, including almost half of Liberia’s primary intact forests”. As a result of this scandal, President Johnson from Liberia suspended the Managing Director of the FDA in August 2012 and ordered an investigation into the matter as a result of which the Board of the FDA was dissolved and several senior staff were dismissed early 2013. A successor MD was appointed.

coordination between the different relevant government entities. The World Bank subsequently decided that various unaccomplished COPAN activities, including the Gola National Park gazettement would be transferred to the World Bank funded EXPAN (Expansion of Protected Area Network) project. EXPAN's formal end date was July 2013 however a one year no-cost extension was granted.

Although the Gola Forest National Park gazettement is not a project objective under ARTP, the delay in realizing it under COPAN/EXPAN has had a paramount and direct delaying effect on the realization of the Transboundary Peace Park under ARTP. I.e. without a Gola Forest National Park established in Liberia, the Transboundary Peace Park cannot be realized. With this in mind, much effort and multiple initiatives have been undertaken by ARTP project partners during the project period to encourage the FDA to hasten the gazettement and to facilitate where possible. Numerous meetings have been held between ARTP project management and FDA (up to the level of Managing Director) on the matter and a first 'road map' was developed by FDA with input from BirdLife International and SCNL, followed by several 'road map meetings' to discuss progress.

In addition, ARTP management has been actively liaising with the World Bank in Liberia to ensure a continuous joint approach towards the FDA. The EC Delegation in Liberia has also been engaged by ARTP management and has been interacting with the FDA on the subject. A high-level meeting was even organized with SCNL, the ARTP Project Manager and the Vice President of Liberia at which the general slow progress of the establishment of a protected area network in Liberia was discussed, and during which specific reference was made to the Across the River project and the delay in the establishment of the Gola Forest National Park and the Peace Park. This meeting resulted in a direct communication by the President of Liberia with the FDA regarding the concerns expressed during the meeting. And in February 2013 a telephone meeting was organized by BirdLife International between its CEO, the ARTP Project Manager, and the Managing Director of the FDA to discuss, among other things, progress in this last phase of the project. This ongoing intensive and high-level attention for the matter has contributed significantly to the FDA finally commencing its community consultations around the proposed Gola Forest National Park in November 2012.



Proposed boundary for the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia (source: FDA)

During the fifth and last ARTP PSC meeting held in April 2013, the PSC developed and endorsed an ambitious Road Map towards the gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park and the Peace Park Accord signing before end of project. It was agreed that the project manager, the Liberia project partners and the Liberia PSC members would meet regularly to monitor progress. A total of six of those formal meetings have taken place since, in addition to numerous informal

meetings. These meetings considerably enabled the project partners to encourage, guide and monitor progress. Whereas progress remained slow - due to institutional and capacity challenges within the FDA - the ARTP project partners have committed themselves to continue efforts post-ARTP to realize the establishment of the transboundary Peace Park, and work has indeed continued. In November 2013, the community consultations were finally concluded with the signing Community Consent Agreements by representatives of the Gola communities in Liberia. This was followed by the selection and hiring of Professor John Woods in December 2013 as the consultant to prepare the Gazettment Package for the designation of Gola National Forest as a National Park, which has in the meantime been submitted to the Office of the President. In her annual address in March 2014, H.E. Johnson Sirleaf announced this to be tabled to Parliament.

1.5 Domesticate and utilize International Treaties to further enhance cross border collaboration.

Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). With the experienced delay in the establishment of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia and the subsequent establishment of the Peace Park, both countries have as yet been unable to capitalize on the transboundary initiative, and to use the relevant and suitable clauses in the conventions to inform decision making on the ground in their cross border policies and programmes. However, UNFCCC REDD and related procedures and guidelines have been used to design processes towards protected area establishment and management, and the lessons-learned in Sierra Leone (see Result 7) in this regard have been shared with Liberia.

1.6 Mainstream cross border conservation issues into the Mano River Union agenda and agreements.

The Mano River Union has been very supportive of the project. The MoU for cross-border collaboration between Liberia and Sierra Leone that was signed by both countries was done under the auspices of the Mano River Union offices in both countries. Through this achievement and the high level, presidential, support for ARTP, the project has contributed to mainstreaming transboundary management of natural resources in the four Mano River Union states and through the development of new transboundary initiatives between them.

1.7 Develop advocacy, communication and education programmes and implement both nationally and internationally to promote and ensure support for the Peace Park.

The project launch received much media attention and featured on many news websites and newspapers. The launch was attended by over 300 members of the forest edge communities. A 1,000 T-shirts stating the project strapline and logo's were distributed.

In addition to the project launch by the two presidents of Liberia and Sierra Leone in May 2009, the EU Development Days in Stockholm in October 2009 provided a second high profile and visibility opportunity. On appeal by the EC and in agreement with the project partners, BirdLife International and the RSPB attended the event where both partners seized the occasion to promote both ARTP as well as GFP. During a press conference to promote Gola at this international setting, the two presidents reiterated their political commitment to the projects.

In year 1 of the project a partner workshop was held in Kenema, Sierra Leone to launch the project advocacy, communication and education programmes. A draft Communication and Visibility Plan was prepared with an agreed main objective to facilitate and enhance conservation awareness, project understanding and visibility among stakeholders, particularly local communities, which was subsequently finalized, circulated and put into action early year 2.

A series of community sensitization workshops was organized in the Gola area by SCNL in Liberia and CSSL in Sierra Leone where the project, its objectives and anticipated activities were

set out, while the project's relation to other ongoing initiatives, notably GFP and COPAN was explained. This information was also relayed to a wide audience in the project area in both countries via radio broadcasts in the local languages Gola and Mande using local radio stations. In February 2012 a second specific Project Communication and Visibility meeting was organized in Monrovia – Liberia for the relevant partner staff. At the meeting progress of implementation of the Communication and Visibility Plan was assessed and priorities were redefined. It was agreed that ongoing conservation awareness and project understanding and visibility activities in the Gola communities would be further stepped up alongside the commencement of the livelihood interventions targeted for year 3 (see Result 3). A new and engaging project visibility logo was developed and 600 ARTP t-shirts and caps and 1,200 project leaflets were produced in the weeks after the meeting and used for project advocacy work. In March 2012 the project manager met with the VBN Communications Officer to further develop the communication and visibility activities. Starting in year 3, frequent (weekly) radio broadcasts produced by CSSL (together with GFP) and by SCNL provided a popular platform for (local) communities and other stakeholders to exchange views on conservation, natural resource management and project activities.

Seven large project billboards plus a number of smaller billboards in the communities have been erected at strategic locations in Liberia and Sierra Leone while throughout the project period numerous newspaper articles were published both in Liberia and Sierra Leone while a stream of internet articles appeared on the partners' websites. The articles contributed by enhancing project profile and context by reporting on highlighted project developments, activities, events and conservation issues.

At the BirdLife International World Congress which was held in June 2013 in Ottawa, Canada which was attended by over 500 conservationists, donors, politicians, and businesspeople from more than 120 countries, a televised message from the president of Sierra Leone was shown in which H.E. President Ernest Bai Koroma reconfirmed and stressed its country's commitment to continue its support to save the Gola transboundary forests of Sierra Leone and Liberia.



Nest (left) of the Gola Malimbe (top right), a rare yellow-and-black forest weaver with a tiny world distribution (right) - (Gola Malimbe by Nik Borrow, nest photo by Bernd de Bruijn)

Result 2. Areas for strategic forest and wildlife corridors between Liberia and Sierra Leone identified, mapped and monitored.

2.1 Establish links between national universities, government agencies, and international partners to collaborate on and plan cross border research.

Over the project period, abundant strong links have been established with a diversity of programs and institutions and close collaboration has been initiated and taken place under the ARTP research component, implemented by the RSPB through the ARTP team of Research Technicians and the Research Coordinator. Those collaborations included the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation and Max-Planck Institute Leipzig for chimpanzee work in Liberia, with Ulm University in a fruit bat project in Liberia, Chester University on collection of dung samples for DNA data base on bushmeat, Basel Zoo under the pygmy hippo project, University of Georgia on pygmy hippo radio telemetry project, Njala University (Sierra Leone), the attached Center for Biodiversity Research and the Eastern Polytech in Kenema under various collaborative student bachelor and internship research projects on larger mammals, bush meat and carbon stocks, while the ARTP research coordinator has been appointed as adjunct lecturer at Njala University.

In addition, BirdLife International and SCNL participated in a 2012 workshop, organized by FFI and IUCN, to contribute to development of a Pygmy Hippo Action Plan for Liberia. The research data on Pygmy Hippos collected under ARTP are providing a vital part of the scientific base for the Action Plan. The world population of Pygmy Hippo occurs in only three countries and the project area is the westernmost point in its distribution.

A close collaboration has taken place with Wageningen University in conducting then ARTP socio-economic surveys as described in further detail under 2.7.

Throughout the project, very close collaboration with the GFP/GRNP has taken place under all research activities.

2.2 Implement scientific capacity building programme for national staff and partners

Twelve Research Technicians recruits have been employed in Year 1 of the project: six from Liberia and six from Sierra Leone. All recruits have received extensive theoretical and practical training in the use of materials, data sheets, reporting, field research techniques, communication with communities etc throughout the project period by the ARTP Research Coordinator and other national and international experts in a variety of expertise areas. As a result of this, those Research Technicians are now without doubt among the best trained and most experienced researchers in both countries, particularly when it comes to field work.

At the end of ARTP, the Sierra Leone Research Technicians have been absorbed by GRNP while one Liberian Research Technician has been employed by the FDA, one is currently pursuing a study in Environmental law, while one Liberian Research Technician was selected and admitted to the MSc programme in Biodiversity Conservation at Njala University in Sierra Leone and has, as part of his MSc, conducted research on the "Ecology and conservation of the Endangered pygmy hippopotamus (*Choeropsis liberiensis*) in and around the Gola Rainforest National Park in south-eastern Sierra Leone". The combined efforts of ARTP and GRNP have made Gola a scientific hub for conservation research capacity in the countries.

2.3 Establish research camps at strategic locations.

This action has been dropped following the Mid-Term Review, where this was not considered a priority and the available budget was insufficient. As a consequence the corridor research is being organized from Kenema and Monrovia, with temporary field camps during the field work.

2.4 Corridor areas mapped and monitored GIS technology.

The corridor areas, as well as the Gola PAs in both countries, have extensively been mapped under the research component of the project. Field data has been collected through ground truthing and camera trapping, monitoring of vegetation cover, habitats, species, communities, human activities etc. The camera trapping provided unprecedented insight into distribution of mammals and ground-dwelling bird species inside and outside the protected areas. GPS coordinates have been taken throughout all activities and digitized. In addition to the ground work, LiDAR data and orthorectified high resolution air photos have been collected over two key corridor areas as part of a larger flight mission over GRNP.

The data was pooled with the data collected under the other research activities conducted under the project (see below paragraphs 2.5. and 2.6) and analyzed in conjunction, resulting in the publication and dissemination end of September 2013 of the ARTP Biodiversity Report which provides a comprehensive compilation and analysis of all the research done and data collected under the project. The report provides science-based criteria for demarcation of corridors, recommendations for strategic management and for future research and monitoring, and will thus be a key document of the Liberia Gola gazettelement package. The report was also shared with other stakeholders.



From top left: Research Technicians Team (Annika Hillers), White-necked Picathartes (Guy Shorrocks/RSPB), Pygmy Hippo on camera trap, one of the many butterfly species of Gola (Annika Hillers)

2.5 Conduct rapid biodiversity and threat assessments made of corridor areas

Five Rapid Assessments on butterflies, bats, birds, dragonflies and rodents/small mammals were conducted in the Gola area in Year 2 of the project by a joint team of ARTP research staff and international experts, while two Rapid Assessments, one on reptiles and one on amphibians, was conducted in November 2012. The Assessments, supplemented with data from other research activities, recorded the presence of an astonishing 206 bird species, 109 mammal species, including 11 primates, 31 bats, 31 rodents and shrews, and 17 large mammals, 451 butterfly species, 145 species of damselfly and dragonflies, 19 reptiles, and 35 amphibian species. Among the recorded species during the Across the River Project research, at least 42 species were first country records for Sierra Leone, while 19 species were recorded in Liberia for the first time. Twelve, possibly 13 species, i.e. three butterflies, eight dragonflies or damselflies, one frog and possibly one shrew, are new to science and await formal description. Out of the recorded species, 22 mammals, 14 birds, six dragonflies and damselflies, 13 amphibians, and four reptiles are of 'global conservation concern', which is defined as being categorised by IUCN on their Red List as Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered or Data Deficient, or are protected under the law by CITES. Throughout the field research, threat data, e.g. snares, shot gun shells, carcasses, illegal mining sites, has been collected when encountered, reported to the GRNP and the FDA for follow up law enforcement actions, analyzed and reported in the ARTP Biodiversity Report.

2.6 Conduct assessments of habitat requirements and threats to key landscape species such as forest elephant, chimpanzee, bongo, forest birds and other migratory (or larger home range) species.

In depth monitoring and threat assessment has been part of the research conducted under ARTP. Research activities included a pygmy hippo survey (and conservation for Basel Zoo project), the pygmy hippo radio telemetry project in collaboration with the University of Georgia and White-breasted Guinea fowl radio telemetry. A chimpanzee and elephant survey (67 transects) in Liberia and an elephant and leopard survey (13 transects) in Sierra Leone has been completed. A camera trap study, with habitat data collection, has been completed and all 36,450 pictures have been analyzed resulting in 61 species and distribution patterns identified. The results have been compiled in the ARTP Biodiversity Report. The collaboration with local communities in the gathering of data throughout the project has had a positive side-effect contributed to awareness creation for key landscape species and conservation by involvement of members of local communities as conservation wardens, guides and porters.

2.7 Conduct socio-economic and cultural studies of local communities to determine importance of biological resources on their livelihoods and impact of corridors and trans-boundary project.

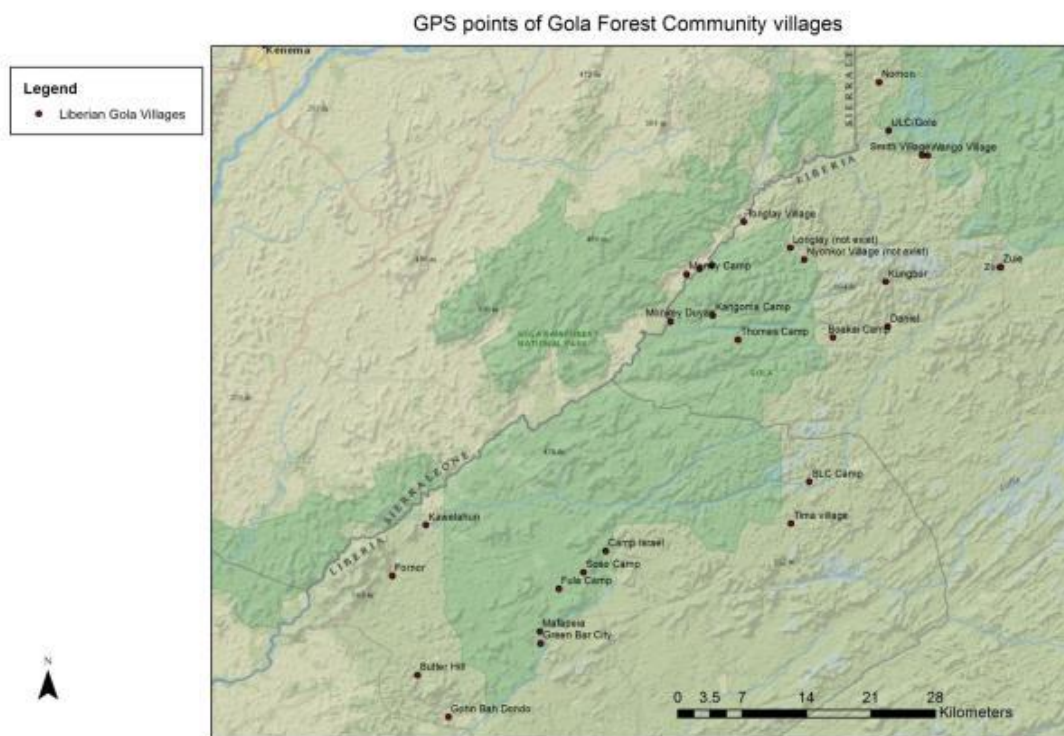
Early into the project, a first socio-economic survey has been conducted by CSSL in 56 Gola communities in Sierra Leone, while SCNL surveyed 47 communities in Liberia, providing an important baseline and first understanding of the socio-economics of the communities in the Gola area. The data collected from these surveys has assisted in the design, planning and follow up surveys which have been conducted in collaboration with Wageningen University and Research (WUR) from The Netherlands: in 2010 in Sierra Leone as a collaborative exercise by WUR and GFP, and in 2012 as a collaborative exercise by WUR and SCNL. Two socio-economic reports have been produced and disseminated. The findings from the socio-economic surveys provided an in-depth insight into social, cultural and economical situation of forest-edge communities, and have been used to (further) guide project activities, particularly the development of the ARTP Livelihood Implementation Plan and the implementation of livelihood and awareness activities. The report on the socio-economic survey in Liberia will be a key part of the Gola gazettelement package.

2.8 Produce reports on biodiversity, socio-economics of proposed corridor areas for use by decision makers and published in peer review journals.

As mentioned above, the socio-economic survey reports have been completed and disseminated in Sierra Leone in 2010 for and in Liberia in 2012; the ARTP Biodiversity Report has been completed and disseminated in 2013.

The manuscript on the Chimpanzee survey conducted in Liberia has been submitted to *Oryx -The International Journal of Conservation* in 2013. Other scientific articles, particularly on the conducted Rapid Assessments, are forthcoming, given the considerable time lapse between acceptance, review and actual publication.

The socio-economic surveys conducted by WUR in collaboration with various project partners have resulted and/or contributed in various published papers, working papers, policy reports and training materials.



Villages included in the socio-economic survey in Liberia (from WUR Report).

Result 3. Corridor area forest edge communities capacited to sustainably improve their livelihoods through participative natural resources management and conservation.

3.1 Demarcate and clearly map corridor areas with the participation of Civil Society Organisations and local communities.

Due to the pending gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, no Peace Park corridor areas have formally been designated and demarcated yet. However, the ARTP Socio-economic Survey and the ARTP Biodiversity Survey data collected during the project provide the FD and FDA with the scientific basis to engage with stakeholders and to make informed decisions on which areas are most valuable and most suitable to be designated as corridor areas, with the Biodiversity Report recommending six corridor areas identified as being of outstanding importance, based on the number of key landscape species recorded in the respective areas, and their importance for connecting different forest blocks.

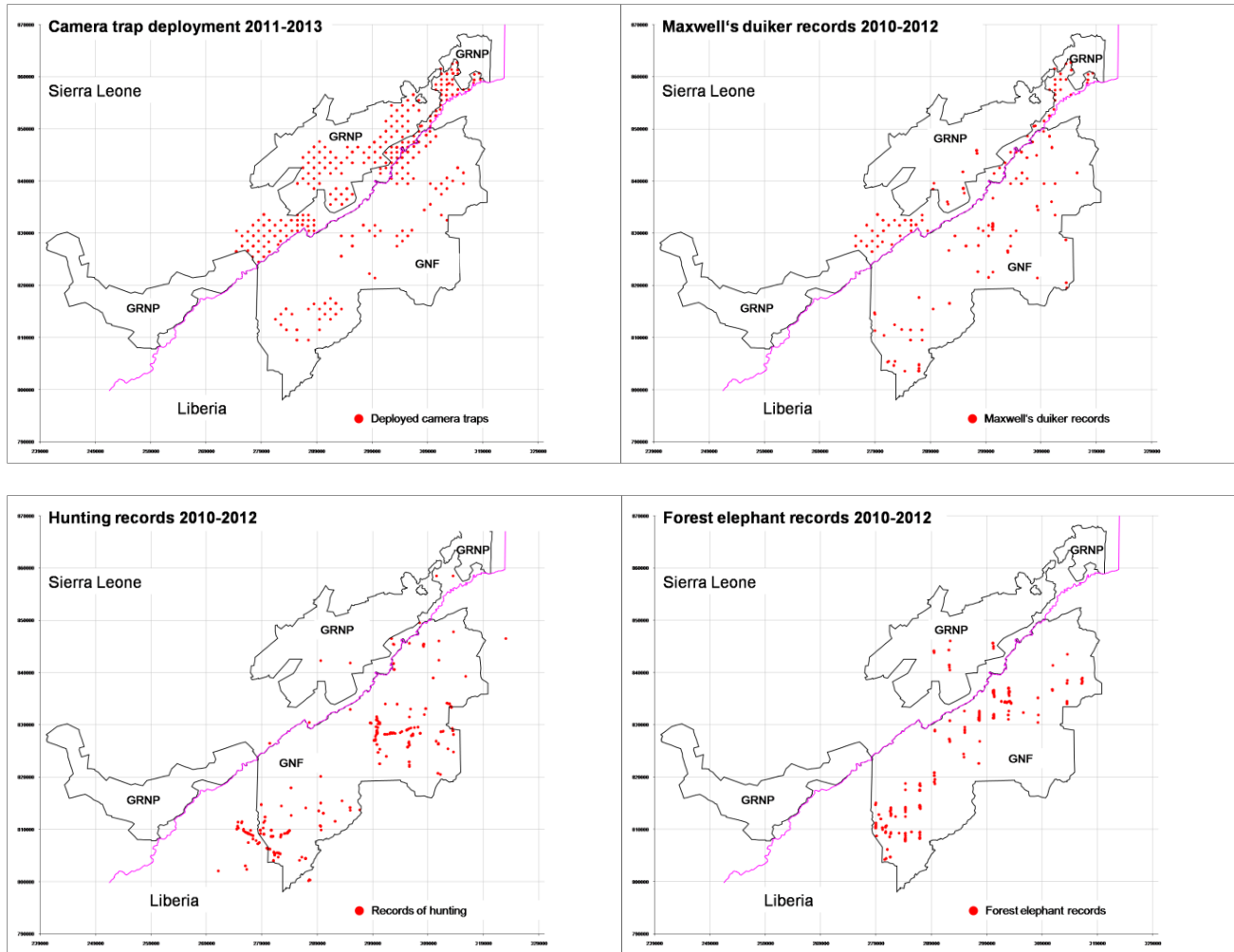
In addition, the new 5-year EC funded ENRTP project “Securing Liberian forest connectivity through community forest management and innovative financing mechanisms” (see 5.2), implemented by RSPB, SCNL and FDA, will focus specifically on a crucial corridor area north of the proposed Gola Forest National park in Liberia, providing an important link with the most northern block of the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone.

3.2 Encourage Civil Society Organisations, community groups and Local Conservation Groups to engage in collaborative protected area management.

Both CSSL and SCNL have built strong relationship with the Gola local communities and the traditional and local government authorities in both countries. In Sierra Leone the ongoing Gola Forest Programme provided a solid stepping stone to engage with additional local communities and to expand the collaborative network in the Gola area, while in Liberia the network had to be built afresh. The networks, with over 85 LCGs (i.e. Livelihood Groups, Nature Clubs in schools and Local Conservation Groups) established under the project, have provided a broad platform for CSSL and SCNL to promote the project and its objectives, and to implement the various project activities, including the sensitization of communities on the wise use of the forests. Communities have used the platform to share their opinions, wishes and concerns, both directly with CSSL and SCNL and more indirectly (facilitated by CSSL and SCNL) with FD, FDA and other project stakeholders.

Throughout the project period, the relationships between the CSOs and the communities have progressively strengthened, with the start of the ARTP Livelihood component in Year 4 of the project (see 3.4) markedly boosting vast goodwill among those local stakeholders. However, a few communities in certain areas in both countries have remained less welcoming mainly due to the high level of illegal activities (e.g. mining) that those communities, and the large contingent of outsiders they house, are engaged in.

The forestry authorities in both countries have engaged actively with local communities towards the establishment of the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone in 2011 and the pending gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, resulting in increasing engagement of those local stakeholders in the management of those protected areas. Particularly in Sierra Leone, the development of the carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park (see Result 7) is resulting in broad dialogue and strong collaboration between the various stakeholders in the collaborative management of the forest. In Liberia, the slow progress of the community consultation and demarcation, and the low visibility of FDA in the field, initially caused impatience within the communities because the impact of establishment of the National Park remained unclear. Like the PSC on the higher level, the Local Conservation Groups on the field level have played a key facilitating role in starting to bridge the gap that existed between the FDA and the local communities. This resulted in significantly improved understanding and dialogue.



Data from camera traps, and transects on species and human activities have been put into GIS (from corridor and biodiversity assesment reports).

3.3 Carry out a transparent and documented negotiation process with all settlements in proposed corridor areas for their claims for rights within the corridor areas.

As elaborated under 3.1. the negotiation process with communities in proposed corridor areas will only follow once the stage of corridor identification commences. Depending on the progress of the Gola Forest National Park gazettement in Liberia, a first Corridor Identification Workshop between FD, FDA and other stakeholders can be planned in 2014, funded under the AVJCF project (see 5.2).

3.4 Alternative livelihood and benefit sharing schemes explored with local communities living within the community reserves and corridor areas, leading to enhanced appreciation of the values and functions of the forests.

An ARTP Livelihood Implementation Plan, a joint effort between CSSL, SCNL, BLI and a consultant (Prof. Paul Richards, associated 'with Wageningen, Cambridge and Njala Universities) was prepared and completed in May 2012 following participative consultation of target communities. The Livelihood Implementation Plan covers background, goal, objectives, partners' roles and responsibilities, expected outputs, outcomes, timeframes and budgets.



Images of communities livelihoods interventions and workshops (© CSSL, SCNL)

This has provided very useful guidance to implementation of effective livelihood interventions. A copy of the Livelihood Implementation Plan was shared with the EC Delegation in Sierra Leone.

Implementation of the livelihood activities commenced in June 2012 in both project countries, and has targeted a total of 80 LCGs; 36 groups in Liberia and 44 groups in Sierra Leone. These 80 community groups represent approximately direct 2,000 beneficiaries, and many more indirect. In Liberia each LCG enjoyed one specific intervention, while in Sierra Leone some larger LCGs were established, participating in two interventions.

The initial phase focused on identifying, organizing and training, in collaboration with external specialized trainers, of the 80 community groups in aspects such as; Small Scale Business, Basic Farm Monitoring Skills, Small Business and Basic Financial Management Skills, Livestock Husbandry Skills. This was followed in the second half of Year 4 by the actual start of the livelihood activities: e.g. the purchase and distribution of agricultural tools, seeds, construction of livestock shelters, purchase of livestock, and benefit sharing schemes.

The relatively late start of the ARTP livelihood component was a matter of concern, however the 6-months no-cost extension provided the necessary opportunity to enhance and complete the capacity building of the LCGs, and to establish a solid monitoring and support framework by CSSL and SCNL.

The positive (or negative) impacts of livelihood interventions take time to become apparent and evaluation of the successes remained therefore difficult at the end of the project. However a few observations are in place:

- The benefit sharing schemes have the advantage of micro-credits, with the notable difference that the loan does not eventually come back to the provider (i.e. the CSOs), but revolves within the community, supporting different initiatives. Ultimately, at project end, the funds have been translated into diversified benefits within the communities. Under the benefit sharing schemes for women's business intervention, the initial internal pay back rates of the loan plus interests have been 100% in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. With a particular focus on women, this success rate of the first loan cycle was very encouraging and many of the beneficiaries have indicated that the resulting businesses have put them in a position of respect, increased control and assistance in addressing financial challenges including the payment of their children's school costs and fees. For example, Ms Jebbeh Watson, micro-loan group member from Fonor village stated that she was baking bread prior to receiving the loan. Now, using the benefit sharing scheme, she has moved on to add a dry goods business and is currently able to help with her children's needs unlike before when the burden was entirely on her husband.
- The Inland Valley Swamp rice production interventions which are taking place in Sierra Leone showed promising results after the first growing season, as all community groups report rice yields which significantly exceed the input. Which the newly acquired agricultural skills, this is expected to further encourage the LCGs to continue to choose this sustainable cultivation practice above (or at least alongside) the widespread practice of slash-and-burn.
- The livestock-for-bushmeat pilot interventions show small increases in livestock numbers in the year of implementation and therefore a level of potential. However, it is not clear yet whether this has also resulted in a decrease in bush-meat consumption among the beneficiaries and it is therefore not possible at this stage to assess the conservation impact of this specific intervention.
- As mentioned under 3.2 one major accomplishment of the livelihood component of ARTP is that it has generated an enormous amount of goodwill among local communities and other stakeholders. This has certainly contributed to the successful implementation of

other project activities and has created a much more welcoming attitude and outlook among local communities when it comes to conservation initiatives in the Gola area.

- As a means to boost the number of LCGs² in the Gola area, SCNL has embraced the opportunity to engage the livelihood community group members in becoming part of the Gola LCG network, which has further strengthened local participation in conservation and natural resource management in the Gola.

In Liberia SCNL further organized a Community Forest Study Tour with the aim to familiarize Gola communities with opportunities for livelihoods based on community forestry, a novel concept in the Gola with significant future potential. The study tour was held from 21st -24th August 2013 during which 8 Gola community representatives from both Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties, together with 2 SCNL staff visited communities in East Nimba where various community forest initiatives are ongoing under the USAID funded PROSPER project. Local facilitation was done by the FDA Chief Park Warden of East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNR). The study tour has initiated significant interest by the Gola participants and they have upon return widely shared their positive experience within their communities. In addition, the participants have organised separate meetings with each of their county legislative officials, representing them in the state parliament, with the purpose to enlighten them on their experiences and to solicit their support in the cause for similar opportunities in the Gola forest.

Result 4. Forest governance, management/monitoring capacity and effectiveness of the Government of Sierra Leone and Liberia for cross border conservation is strengthened.

4.1 Improve the patrol and enforcement activities between Sierra Leone and Liberia through better coordination between the two management authorities and other relevant agencies.

The MoU (see 1.1.) between Sierra Leone and Liberia has established the formal legal basis, through the FD and FDA respectively, to develop coordinated and collaborative patrol and law enforcement planning and implementation along and across their border in the transboundary Gola area. In Sierra Leone coordination of the work of the Gola Forest Guards is a joint effort by FD and RSPB under the umbrella of the Gola Rainforest National Park management structure, and the Forest Guards actively patrol throughout the newly established National Park. Field reports are being produced regularly and important law enforcement results and progress have been reported throughout the project period. Illegal mining and hunting are among the main threats reported and addressed. Military personnel providing support to illegal miners were arrested in one instance, which was taken to the level of the Minister of Defence. An MoU between GRNP and the local police force, signed in 2012, has resulted in frequent joint patrols of Forest Guards and armed police officers.

The Forest Guards in Liberia are not yet as well organized and effective as their colleagues in Sierra Leone. This is partly due to the fact that, pending the formal gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park, there are no established National Park forest boundaries yet which weakens the law enforcement authority of the Forest Guards. Also, the mechanisms for collaborative patrol with security officers, as exist in Sierra Leone, are still lacking. Management of the Gola Forest Guards has been particularly weak and reporting by Forest Guards in Liberia has therefore been poor and irregular, limiting the information about the status of illegal activities or successes achieved by the Forest Guards. It is obvious that the FDA still has some ground to

² Local conservation groups are organized, independent groups of voluntary individuals who work in partnership with relevant stakeholders, to promote conservation and sustainable development at Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and other key biodiversity sites. They are one of the practical ways of achieving conservation by the local communities (source: http://www.birdlife.org/action/capacity/africa_ssgs/index.html).

cover before it will catch up with the level of work by the FD/RSPB in Sierra Leone. However, the AVJCF project, implemented by BirdLife International in collaboration with SCNL and FDA, which commenced in January 2013 and which has a specific operational support and capacity building objective targeting the Liberia Gola Forest Guards, is making a significant pro-active contribution to realizing this needed improvement.



Forest guard training (top). Poaching and artisanal mining are the most commonly encountered offences.

Joint cross border patrols have not yet commenced on a level that was anticipated at the start of the project. The reason for this is the fact that the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia and therefore the Transboundary Peace Park has not yet been established. Because of this the FD has indicated to be very reluctant to conduct cross-border patrols as long as the formal framework (i.e. the Peace Park) is not yet in place. This creates legal issues resulting from differences between national protected area and forestry laws. Despite this reluctance, one first 'milestone' cross border patrol in the Gola forests was planned to take place in February 2012. The patrol was a partial success since the Sierra Leonean Forest Guards in the company of 4 supervisors from the FDA in Liberia (attending a refresher course in Sierra Leone) reached the border on time and crossed into Liberia and undertook a brief patrol in the forest. The other Liberia Gola Forest Guards however didn't manage to reach the border in time due to logistic difficulties.

To address the lack of progress in organizing joint patrolling and anticipating the formal gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia before the end of 2013, a two day workshop was held in Kenema – Sierra Leone in February 2013 with the goal “to develop a Joint Cross Border Law Enforcement Action Plan to monitor and patrol the Gola Forests in Liberia and Sierra Leone”. The workshop was attended by 14 participants from the FD, the Gola Rainforest National Park, the FDA and the proposed Gola Forest National Park. The workshop agreed to draft an Action Plan for Joint Cross Border Patrol and Monitoring Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park. This would provide the framework for capacity building of forest guard and ranger teams from both countries to conduct effective patrol and monitor activities, to encourage partners and local communities to participate in cross border patrols, to conduct periodic joint cross border patrol of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park, and to provide strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan implementation. A draft was prepared, including actions and implementation plan. However, from the resulting internal senior discussions within the FD particularly in the weeks following the workshop, the FD concluded that the lack of harmonization between the management and law enforcement approaches between the two countries was too significant to presently engage in joint cross border patrols. FD advocated for a follow up workshop, to be attended by senior management of both FD and FDA, with the aim of producing a specific MoU for Transboundary Patrolling which would build upon the foundations laid by the signing of the MoU earlier mentioned on the cooperation in management, research, protection, and conservation of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park. Since, no follow up has been made by FD and FDA and, again, it is clear that no concrete steps can be taken until the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia has been established. Still, the foundations have been laid and will continue to be built upon in the near future.

4.2 Patrol infrastructure assessed and enhanced in strategic locations.

In 2010 the Gola forest field station in Liberia in Gbarpolu County was refurbished and is functioning as the Gola Headquarters since.

Two outposts were planned to be constructed at strategic locations in the Gola area: one in Liberia and one in Sierra Leone. Unfortunately this has not been realized due to inaction of FD and FDA on this despite repeated reminders by project management.

4.3 Senior park staff and wildlife officers receive scholarships for further training in protected area management.

In 2010, four senior PA managers from the FDA enjoyed a four months training course in Wildlife Management at the College of African Wildlife Management in Mweka, Tanzania, which covered topics such as Communication skills, Conservation geography, Wildlife biology, Wildlife ecology, Field identification and ecological monitoring, Data collection, processing and interpretation, and Tour Guide skills. Three out the four FDA trainees concluded the course successfully with a certificate. Following FDA's example in 2010, after much encouragement by project management, in January 2013 the FD also expressed concrete interest in the opportunity to have FD senior staff attend the same training at the College of African Wildlife Management. However by that time this expression of interest was too late and could not be realized since the January-June 2013 course had already commenced, while the next course opportunity, running from July to December 2013, would be ineligible since it would exceed the end of project date.

4.4 Train forest guard and ranger teams in internationally recognized field ranger courses and equipped with communication and other appropriate equipment.

Fifty Forest Guards recruits were selected and employed, 25 in Sierra Leone and 25 in Liberia. The recruits were equipped and underwent a 7-week intensive training course in law enforcement, protected area management and conservation basics, skills and techniques. The

training was conducted in two phases with phase one taking place in February 2010 at Sileti in Gola Forest in Kenema Sierra Leone and the second phase in Liberia's SLC camp in Gola National Forest in Gbarpolu County in June and July 2010. The training was conducted by GFP staff.

A first, one week, refresher training was organized in February 2012 by GFP for the 50 Gola Rainforest National Park Forestry Guards (25 paid through ARTP; 25 paid through GFP). Four senior Gola forest guard staff (supervisors) from the FDA also attended the training which enabled them to train their colleagues back in Liberia. The training focused on all aspects of the work: e.g. patrol planning, patrol execution, field craft, community outreach, human rights, wildlife identification etc.

A second one week refresher training was organized by the FDA at the end of August 2013 which was attended by the 25 Liberia Gola Forest Guards, 5 senior Gola forest guard staff from Sierra Leone plus 12 senior Forest Guards from 5 other protected areas in Liberia; the latter providing the first ever opportunity for a wide representation of Liberia forest guards to exchange knowledge, experiences and ideas, to learn together and to coordinate approaches. The different training sessions were conducted by senior FDA staff plus various specialists from other government entities such as Ministry of Defense (Moral and Discipline), Liberia National Police (Crime Investigation and Reporting), Ministry of Justice (Arrest and Court Procedures), Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (Basic Immigration Laws of Liberia) and Ministry of Health (First Aid).

Result 5. Capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and local communities to play a key role in national and international conservation efforts is improved.

5.1 Support collaborating CSOs to play a lead role in project implementation in advocacy, education and research programmes.

CSSL and SCNL, both BirdLife International Partners and collaborating CSOs under the project, have enjoyed ongoing support by BirdLife International through investment in Network and Capacity Development. In addition, the project has provided an excellent opportunity to further increase structural technical support and 'capacity building on the job', notably by project management.

In addition, SCNL was able to hire a consultant under the project who undertook a Needs Assessment and facilitated a Strategic Plan development workshop for the organization. This consultancy plus the workshop outcomes included an update of the policies and other management documents of the SCNL, and most importantly, the development of the first four year Strategic Plan (2012-2016) for SCNL.

CSSL has received intensive on-the-ground support from a consultant, recruited by the RSPB, who facilitated a review and restructuring of the organization with the aim to enhance its effective functioning. This is part of the ongoing long term institutional support from the RSPB dating back more than 2 decades.

Staff from both partners have been able to attend targeted trainings to build and expand technical skills and knowledge, e.g. the Project Coordinator of SCNL attended a short term (3 months) training course on Project Planning and Management at the Liberia Institute for Public Administration (LIPA), and a two weeks course in Conservation and Natural Resource Management at Njala University in Sierra Leone. Capacity of the SCNL Finance Officer was strengthened through the training course in the use of two financial software packages. Additional training opportunities for SCNL staff are available and being utilized under the Liberia AVJCF Project (see 5.2) which builds on the ARTP initiative.

The capacity built under the project, the experience gained, the network expanded, plus the high profile of the project has significantly raised the ability of both organizations to play a key role in

national and international conservation efforts, both in the short-term as well as in the longer term.

5.2 Support the strategic and fundraising plans for CSOs for engagement in protected area management.

As part of the restructuring of CSSL, facilitated through RSPB, a fundraising strategy has been developed to ensure funds are available for the sustainability of the organization and site actions. A fundraising strategy is an integral component of SCNL's four-year strategic plan. SCNL, with assistance from BirdLife International, secured USD 34,000 from UNDP/GEF small grant programme for livelihood interventions in 2012-2013 in communities around Gola. The implementation of that project has complemented the ARTP Livelihood component by targeting communities not yet benefiting from the ARTP support. Further, BirdLife International in collaboration with SCNL secured Euro 277,000 from the Aage v Jensen Charity Foundation (AVJCF) for *The Gola National Park in Liberia: realizing its vast potential* project. This 24 month project has started on the 1st of January 2013 and builds on the foundations of the ARTP project by focusing on continued trans-boundary policy harmonization, field training and operational support for the Gola Forest Guards, on setting up a participative biodiversity and threat monitoring program jointly implemented by FDA, SCNL and the local communities, on supporting forest edge communities with alternative sustainable livelihood strategies plus further capacity building of SCNL.

In addition, in March 2013, the RSPB, with input from SCNL and BLI, has submitted a proposal to the EC under the ENRTP (Thematic Programme for Environment and sustainable management of Natural Resources, including energy) for the project "Securing Liberian forest connectivity through community forest management and innovative financing mechanisms". The 5 year project will focus on a crucial corridor area north of the proposed Gola National park in Liberia and SCNL is a full partner in the project. The proposal has been approved and implementation of the project has commenced early 2014.

5.3 Build capacity of Local Community Group (LCGs) in key competencies to strengthen their ability to participate in and influence environmental governance

Throughout the project the project partners have engaged with communities and community based organizations under the various project activities as detailed in the various relevant paragraphs. In the process towards the gazettelement of the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone, and the ongoing process of the gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia extensive community consultations have taken place between various stakeholders (see 1.4). Extensive and similar consultations are taking place in the development of the carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone (see 7.1). The various Nature Clubs and Local Conservation Groups established by SCNL in Liberia (see 3.2) have created opportunities for those groups to voice their views on environmental and conservation issues, in collaboration with and support from SCNL. And the ARTP livelihood interventions, which commenced in June 2012 (see 3.4), have further enhanced collaboration and dialogue between local communities, Civil Society (often functioning as a facilitating intermediate) and government. The rippling effect of livelihood actions has also been beneficial to government: the resistance of certain communities to government conservation actions, reported in the early stages of the project in both countries, has significantly reduced since the start of the livelihood interventions. This is directly linked to the benefits being derived under the project's livelihood component.

The foundation for active community participation in environmental governance as laid by ARTP in the Gola is providing ample current and future opportunities for local communities to ensure that conservation and development initiatives are of benefit to them, and that their voice is heard in the implementation.

Result 6. Best practices of sub-regional timber trade used to assist implementation of FLEGT in Sierra Leone.

6.1 Review completed studies on the timber trade in the sub-region ongoing, and best practice drawn out.

In December 2011, Professor J. Woods, College of Agriculture and Forestry - University of Liberia, was hired a consultant to conduct a "West Africa Timber Trade Study". After reviewing and consolidating relevant documents on timber trade in West Africa and interviewing various key stakeholders in Liberia, a final report was submitted to ARTP project management in June 2012. The report presents key findings and lessons learned on best practices that would ensure optimum sustainable forest management in the sub-region. The report observes that there are strengths and weaknesses in the process of sustainable management of forest resources in the sub-region, and conclude that the timber trade in the sub-region could be sustained if the model designed and proposed in the report can be applied in all countries in the sub-region.

The report has been disseminated among the project partners and 64 other contacts from a wide variety of organisations, donors, government agencies, CSOs and other stakeholders both in Liberia as in Sierra Leone, including the EC Delegations in the two countries.

In addition, a presentation on the study was given by Professor J. Woods at the Fendell Campus of the University of Liberia for students of the College of Science, students of the college of Agriculture and Forestry and other invitees in October 2012, alongside two other ARTP presentations: one by the ARTP research team on ARTP's biodiversity research and one by SCNL on conservation and community engagement. The event was well attended with over 100 students, faculty members and other invitees, including FDA and EC - Liberia representatives.



Students of University of Liberia attending Prof. Woods' lecture.

Result 7. Mechanisms of carbon trading and sustainable financing options investigated and where possible established and exploited.

7.1 Explore mechanisms of trading carbon credits through avoided deforestation or reforestation and the REDD processes and establish viable schemes.

Initially the idea was to develop a carbon project for the transboundary Gola Peace Park. However soon it became clear that the overall costs, work and time involved in developing a full carbon project would be much higher/larger than initially anticipated and it was therefore decided

to focus on Gola in Sierra Leone first. At a later stage, the Liberia side would then be able to benefit from the experience in Sierra Leone, facilitated by the project partners.

After the first explorative and planning activities in the first two years of the project, the development of a REDD carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone took off with the organization of a series of meetings and workshops to build capacity and understanding of REDD, its implications and implementation processes. The meetings and workshops were well attended by government Ministers and other government staff, local communities, GRNP staff, as well as by local NGOs staff and donors based in Sierra Leone. It was decided that two so called Project Design Documents (PDDs) would be developed under which the carbon credits would be marketed and sold: one under the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB³) standards and one under the Verified Carbon Standards (VCS⁴). Winrock International was subcontracted in October 2011 to provide guidance in developing the technical aspects of the process. A feasibility report showed positive results and all stakeholders agreed at developing a REDD project for the Gola Rainforest National Park. A carbon coordinator was appointed by the RSPB at the beginning of Year 4 to oversee the development of tasks for the carbon project, in particular the community consultations that form the social impact assessment aspect of the work required for the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) standards. As part of the CCB standards requirements, a grievance mechanism has been developed and put in place for stakeholders, particularly local communities, to enable them to make grievances about the development and implementation of the REDD project and conservation activities, and GRNP staff has been trained in the procedure.

Through stakeholder analysis 3 key groups were identified for further consultation who have been actively engaged in the further design and development of the project through meetings, surveys and assessments of focal groups, the latter with the aim to develop with-and-without project scenarios, to design potential livelihood projects and indicators, as well as to understand the socio-economics of communities and how they were using the reserves before conservation work began. Expert interviews with District Forest Officers and District Agricultural Officers as well as various NGO staff were carried out to complement the data collection process. A REDD benefit sharing agreement has been developed with paramount chiefs and landowners, while extensive carbon stock data have been collected and analyzed in the past two years.

The development and submission of the two PDDs did take longer than originally anticipated, but these were submitted as a direct result of the project in December 2013 and were then made publically available⁵. Likewise, as a direct result of the project, external auditors visited Sierra Leone during February 2014 for validation of the project following a desk review which took place in December 2013. The outcome of the audit is expected in March 2014. In anticipation meanwhile a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) has been created in Sierra Leone which will be responsible for selling and managing the carbon funds once the PDDs have been validated.

At the PIT meeting in October 2012, a special session was allocated for the project partners from Sierra Leone, specifically the RSPB, to brief the project partners from Liberia, specifically the FDA, on experiences and lessons-learned in setting up a carbon project. While Liberia is currently exploring the opportunities for Liberia for developing carbon projects for their forests, the RSPB

³ The Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards is a widely used international standard for the multiple-benefits of land-based carbon projects which enable investors, policymakers, project managers and civil society observers to evaluate land-based climate change mitigation projects by identifying high-quality projects that adopt best practices to generate significant benefits for local communities and biodiversity while delivering credible and robust carbon offsets.

⁴ The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) is a robust, global standard for voluntary carbon offset projects. The VCS programme ensures all carbon credits are real, measurable, additional, permanent, independently verified, unique and traceable.

⁵ See:

<https://vcsprojectdatabase2.apx.com/myModule/Interactive.asp?Tab=Pipeline&a=3&i=1201&lat=7%2E606174&lon=%2D11%2E020161&bp=1> and <http://www.climate-standards.org/category/projects/open-comments/>

and the FD have offered to further share with the FDA, when requested, their knowledge and experiences in developing a carbon project.

7.2 Raise and place carbon revenues in a suitable sustainable financing fund.

This will start once the carbon project development process is completed. The projected revenue of the sale of the carbon credits stands currently at around 1 million USD.

2.3 Please list activities that were planned and that you were not able to implement, explaining the reasons for these.

During the first half of project implementation, it became clear that the project design was overambitious in relation to the realities encountered on the ground. Following, and referring to, the recommendations of the 2011 and 2012 ROM reports and the Mid-term evaluation, the project LogFrame and budget was reviewed in close consultation with the EC and submitted by VBN in August 2012. The modified project document was approved by the EC in October. The proposed project modifications were not structural and shifted the focus on opportunities, taking into account the constraints encountered, resulting in a practical and realistic approach of realization of the project objectives. Summarized: the Project Overall and Specific Objectives were not changed; four out of the seven expected results (i.e. 2, 3, 5 and 6) were slightly modified; 27 OVIs were modified; 7 deleted and 4 new OVIs were added; and 8 out of the 50 project activities were deleted, 1 replaced and 4 activities modified.

In addition to the above project modification, and as advised through the 2012 ROM mission, a six month no-cost extension request was submitted to the EC in November 2012 in order to allow more time to realize those project activities which was formally approved by the EC in March 2013.

Although significant additional progress has been made during the no-cost extension, two key project outcomes have not yet been realized at the end of the project in September 2013: the establishment of the Peace Park (and directly related outcomes under other Results) for reasons described under 1.4 and the completion of the realization of the carbon project in Sierra Leone as described under 7.1.

However, although the project ended in September 2013, the project partners have since continued efforts to realize the pending outcomes of the project. As described under the relevant sections, in Liberia, BirdLife and SCNL have been actively engaged and are continuing to push for the gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, and the following presidential signing of the Transboundary Accord. In Sierra Leone the RSPB, in collaboration with the FD and CSSL are in the final phase of realizing the carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park.

2.4 What is your assessment of the results of the Action? Include observations on the performance and the achievement of outputs, outcomes and impact in relation to specific and overall objectives, and whether the Action has had any unforeseen positive or negative results (please quantify where possible; refer to Logframe Indicators).

Considering the challenges for conservation and livelihoods work in the region, especially with regard to the socio-economic context and capacity challenges of government and ngo's, the ARTP has yielded considerable and sustainable results. This achievement has been greatly benefited from support at the highest government level and from the EC Delegations in both

countries, as well as the dedication of the project partners. Although the Transboundary Peace Park has not yet been established due to the delay in the establishment of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia under the World Bank funded COPAN and EXPAN projects, and various subsequent outcomes and outputs therefore have not been realized within the time frame of the project, the project has made a significant and lasting contribution to forest conservation, knowledge base, local livelihoods, awareness, local ngo, community and government capacities in both countries. With the stage strongly set, there is little doubt that Liberia will designate Gola a National Park and that the Transboundary Peace Park will be launched in the very near future.

The below table presents a summary and the highlights of the accumulative progress over ARTP Year 1-4 plus no-cost extension (NCE) against the objectives, results and OVIs of the project LogFrame.

ARTP LogFrame impact assessment		
Overall Objective	OVI	Summary and highlights of the accumulative progress Year 1-4 plus NCE
Upper Guinea Forest estate in West Africa protected in critically threatened and important cross border areas and managed effectively by National institutions and authorities with the active collaboration of local communities.	OO1 Transboundary Peace park established and functioning.	Peace Park not achieved: roadmap towards Liberia Gola Forest National Park gazettement and establishment Peace Park developed.
	OO2 Five years after the end of the project there is no further reduction since the end of the project in the extent of the priority conservation areas of the upper guinea forest.	Not yet applicable.
Specific Objective		
The long-term conservation of forests their biodiversity and global carbon storage benefits are secured through national and international partnerships for improved forest governance across the Sierra Leone – Liberia border.	SO1 Collaboration between Government forestry Staff from both countries in protecting the area of forest that comprises the Gola National Park in Sierra Leone and the Gola National Forest in Liberia increases significantly by the end of Yr2.	See details below under Result 1.
	SO2 Before the end of Yr 4 the official process towards formal engagement of local communities in the management of the Gola Peace Park has been formulated, validated and started.	Significant results achieved in engagement of local forest edge communities as described under Result 3. Formal engagement in the management of the Gola Peace Park not achieved since the Peace Park not been established before end of project.
	SO3 Before the end of Year 4 monitoring of forest resources shows no negative trends in abundance, distribution and quality of forest resources.	As described under Result 2, biodiversity research baseline data has been collected and analyzed and final report produced and disseminated, providing the baseline for future biodiversity monitoring and evaluation.
	SO4 By end of year 4 project accepted as carbon credits project.	Not achieved by end of project but as described under Result 7 continuing to be on course and expected to be achieved before end of 2014.

Expected results	OVI	
Result 0. Effective project management framework established and maintained, project wide and at each country.	By the end of the first 6 months of the project, project partners have signed partnership agreements that confirm their respective roles and responsibilities in executing the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All five partnership agreements were signed in September/October 2009: i.e. around 6 months after the official start of the project (April 2009).
	Steering Committee meets once a year. Project implementation team meets 2x a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PSC has met 5 times during the project period. The PIT has met twice a year during the project period. Frequent NPIT meetings were held during the project period: largely in between the PIT meetings. In Year 4 the frequency of the NPIT meetings was increased. In addition: the PST (BirdLife, VBN and RSPB) have had frequent meetings via Skype.
	All equipment in place by End of year 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In place by the end of Year 1 – start of Year 2 were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all required office and IT equipments for Monrovia and Kenema project management offices, and partner offices. Six 4x4 vehicles, and 9 motor bikes have been procured. Forest Guards and Research field equipment: e.g. camping gear, GPSs, digital cameras, and survey tools. In addition: in Year 3: 30 Research (trap) cameras plus an additional 2 motorbikes were purchased.
	Training plan in place by end of first half of Yr 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific training plan has been drafted, but several trainings have been conducted. Project management has invested considerable and continued effort in capacity building and supporting project partners, where required. This has addressed major initial weaknesses with certain partners in work planning, budgeting, implementation, narrative reporting, financial management and reporting, accounting, communications and workshop facilitation.
	Monitoring and evaluation plan in place by end of Yr 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E plan has been prepared and implemented; with in the last two years more direct focus on measuring project progress via OVIs and MOVs. Annual financial audits: after a relatively weak start in year 1, the auditors noted a considerable improvement of financial reporting and expenditure evidence (supporting documents) over the years.
	All financial and progress reports submitted to project management and project donor on time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All financial and progress reports have been submitted to the project donor in time. Some partners however have not always managed to meet the reporting deadlines which required active follow up from project management.
	Mid-term evaluation and response completed by end of Year 2.5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Mid-Term Review conducted in August – September 2011. In addition: three Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) missions were assigned by the EC to the project (2011, 2012 and 2013). Recommendations from both the Mid-Term review and the ROM missions have been implemented.
Result 1. Enabling environment for cross border conservation collaboration at local, national and regional levels between Liberia and Sierra Leone and the Mano River Union and trans-boundary Peace Park	MOU for cross border collaboration and 'Peace Park' signed before the end of Yr 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MoU prepared by senior staff of FD and FDA, and officially signed by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security of Sierra Leone and by the Managing Director of the FDA in Liberia in September-October 2011, formalizing the cooperation between Sierra Leone and Liberia "in management, research, protection and conservation of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park". In Year 4 the FD and FDA both formally disseminated the MoU in Sierra Leone among Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Immigration, Police and communities.

established.	Accord signed before the end of Yr 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peace Park Accord not achieved.
	Joint Management procedures defined and agreed before the end of Yr 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited concrete achievements: implementation/actualization of MoU has been progressing slowly. However, an important Cross Border Law Enforcement Action Plan Workshop was held in February 2013 (see Result 4) though implementation halted due to the delay in the gazettement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia.
	Gola National Forest in Liberia designated as a National Park before the end of Yr 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not achieved. Note: GNP gazettement is part of the World Bank COPAN/EXPAN project. Current status: several steps have been taken such as consultation on national level and county level, biodiversity report and socio-economic report ready, community consultation completed in July 2013, consultant hired by FDA in December 2013 to prepare gazettement package. Remaining: completion of preparation of gazettement package, submit to Office of President, lobby with President's office and National Legislature to enact bill to establish Gola Forest National Park.
	The importance of cross border conservation, and support for its implementation increases nationally and internationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has received widespread exposure; through enhanced project visibility and advocacy by project partners both nationally and internationally. Cross border conservation is on the political (and donor) agenda of the two countries with several new initiatives recently started.
	Peace Park declared by national governments and road map towards Management Plan agreed upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gola forest reserve in Sierra Leone was upgraded to the Gola Rainforest National Park in February 2010 (GFP). Gola Forest National Park in Liberia not yet established. Peace Park not yet established.
	Mano River Union recognizes trans-boundary conservation of Greater Gola Forest before the end of Year 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not achieved. MoU published under the Mano River Union
	By the end of Yr 3 Partners are using lessons learnt from one another to improve their success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the start of the project, the project has provided and used ample opportunities for partners to share ideas, learn, be inspired and improve their success, through e.g. joint design, planning and implementation of various project activities and exchange of ideas and experiences at (N)PIT and PSC meetings. A formal project partner Experience Sharing Workshop was held in October 2010.
Result 2. Areas for strategic forest and wildlife corridors between Liberia and Sierra Leone identified, mapped and monitored.	By end of Yr 1 national staff and partners have the skills necessary to contribute to the research plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 Research Technicians employed (6 from Liberia and 6 from Sierra Leone) in Year 1: received extensive theoretical and practical training in the use of materials, data sheets, reporting, field research techniques, communication with communities etc. One Liberian Research Technician selected and admitted to the Biodiversity Conservation MSc programme at Njala University in Sierra Leone, where, as part of his MSc, he has conducted research on the "Ecology and conservation of the Endangered pygmy hippopotamus in and around the GRNP".
	Biodiversity work of international standard, carried out in cross-border areas, reported and/or published and disseminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive collaborations with a variety of national and international Universities and international experts. Researched areas: the GRNP in Sierra Leone, the proposed GNP in Liberia and the corridors areas. Extensive field data has been collected through the use of various field research techniques, e.g. ground truthing, transect surveys, camera trapping, mist nets, dung collection, DNA sampling, community questionnaires. Data collected on: vegetation cover, habitats, (key) species,

		<p>communities, human activities, threats etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six dragonfly and damselfly species, three butterfly species, one frog species and possibly one mammal species, which are new to science have been discovered. • Recruitment of many community members as casual labour, has helped in creating awareness of the uniqueness of the forest.
	Halfway Yr 4 biodiversity and threat assessments, mapping of corridor areas and socio-economic assessments completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The collected biodiversity and threat data has been analyzed; final Biodiversity Report concluded and disseminated in September 2013; articles on the research published or being written up for publication in peer review journals. • Socio-economic surveys were conducted in Sierra Leone in 2010 under a collaboration between Wageningen University, RSPB/GFP, and CSSL. • The socio-economic survey in Liberia was conducted in 2012 under a collaboration between Wageningen University, BirdLife and SCNL. • Final reports were produced in November 2010 and December 2012 respectively. • The reports have been, and are still instrumental in designing and planning the ARTP (and GRNP) current and future livelihood activities; the Liberia socio-economic survey report will be a critical part of the Gola NP gazettement package. • Several publications and working papers have resulted from the socio-economic research in Sierra Leone, and several are in preparation on the survey in Liberia.
Result 3. Corridor area forest edge communities capacited to sustainably improve their livelihoods through participative natural resources management and conservation.	Baseline socio-economic study on livelihoods in corridor areas completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported above.
	Platform established for conservation awareness in forest edge communities (for discussions and exchange of ideas and opinions about community forests, natural resources management and resulting livelihood opportunities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform established by CSSL and SCNL through engagement with local communities, the establishment of Nature Clubs in schools, Local Conservation Groups and the 80 local community groups engaged in the ARTP livelihood program. • Eight permanent Community Mobilizing Officers were employed who were based in the communities. • Forest Guards in both countries actively engaged with local communities, in addition to FDA engagement with local communities through their Gola gazettement community consultations. • And in addition, the platform has further been strengthened by GRNP through their work with communities, e.g. livelihood and carbon project development work.
	Pilot agreements on the management of natural resources with best performing community in Sierra Leone and in Liberia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot agreement signed in Liberia; not achieved in Sierra Leone because of capacity constraints of CSSL.
	Livelihood interventions (e.g. seed exchange, benefit sharing schemes etc.) implemented in at least 40 forest edge communities in corridor areas and around Gola PAs in both countries and household livelihood security of participating groups improved against the initial baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 Community groups established. Livelihood interventions implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Preparing for (i.e. getting acquainted with) opportunities for livelihoods based on community forestry. ➢ Benefit sharing for women's business in forest edge communities (40 groups): e.g. sale of dry goods, gasoline, palm oil, local soap production, pastry, fast food and sale of cane juice. ➢ Support for local agrarian livelihoods, notably Inland Valley Swamp rice production as a more productive and sustainable alternative to Upland Rice Farms (19 groups).

		➤ Livestock-for-bushmeat pilot interventions (21 groups).
Result 4. Forest governance, management/monitoring capacity and effectiveness of the Government of Sierra Leone and Liberia for cross border conservation is strengthened.	By end Yr 2 patrolling of the park by the two management authorities begins (never happened before) and law enforcement effort produces tangible results (i.e. arrests, confiscations etc) which are reported in a consolidated report before the end of Yr 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 Gola Forest Guards were employed in 2010. • Equipped with uniforms, boots and other forest guard equipment. • The Gola Forest office in Gbarpolu County - Liberia was refurbished. • The Forest Guards, particularly the FGs in Sierra Leone, are actively involved in regular field patrols. • Several significant arrests and confiscations have been made: e.g in Sierra Leone in Year 4 alone +5,000 patrol kilometers were covered, during which 80 arrests were made, and 10 shotguns, 195 shotgun cartridges and 966 snares were confiscated. • Field reports are produced; consolidated law enforcement report received from GRNP/FD; not received from FDA. Capacity and performance in Sierra Leone clearly ahead of Liberia. • A MoU between GRNP and the local police force, signed in 2013, has resulted in frequent joint patrols of Forest Guards and armed police officers. • In February 2012 the first joint cross border patrol took place when the Sierra Leone Forest Guards in the company of 4 senior Forest Guards from the FDA crossed into Liberia from Sierra Leone and undertook a brief patrol in the Liberian forest. • In February 2013, a two day Joint Cross Border Law Enforcement workshop was held in Kenema, attended by 14 participants from the FD, FDA and GRNP. The workshop has resulted in a draft "Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park Joint Cross Border Patrol and Monitoring Action Plan". Implementation of Action Plan put on hold pending the gazettelement of the Gola in Liberia.
	By end Yr3 training of 40 staff in ranger techniques complete.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon employment in 2010, all 50 ARTP Forest Guards enjoyed a six week training focusing on biodiversity, ecology, conservation, administration, communication, first aid, community outreach, patrol techniques, law enforcement etc. • In 2012, GFP organized a one week refresher training for the 50 GRNP Forest Guards; four senior Forest Guard staff (supervisors) from the FDA were also invited and attended the training. • In 2013: FDA organized a one week refresher training for the 25 Gola Forest Guards; 8 senior Forest Guards from other Pas in Liberia plus six senior Forest Guards from GRNP – Sierra Leone.
	Before the end of Yr 4 10 senior forestry staff receive scholarships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2010, four senior PA managers from the FDA enjoyed a four months course in Wildlife Management at the College of African Wildlife Management in Mweka – Tanzania • FD only showed interest in this opportunity under the project when it was too late.
	The percentage of illegal activities recorded within the park which results in a prosecution is recorded and reported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated report received from GRNP; none received from FDA.
Result 5. Capacity of BirdLife partner CSOs to play a key role in national and international conservation efforts is improved.	CSO and LCG performance indicators developed and improve over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BirdLife International has provided and continues to provide continuing support for their BirdLife <i>partners</i> CSSL and SCNL through investment in Network and Capacity Development. • In addition, significant structural technical support and 'capacity building on the job' has been provided under ARTP, notably by project management to SCNL and CSSL in Kenema, and by the RSPB to CSSL in Freetown. • CSOs' staff have attended various trainings as part of capacity

		<p>building, e.g. Project Planning and Management training, Conservation and Natural Resource Management training and financial software packages training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As BirdLife International partners, CSSL's and SCNL's performances are annually assessed through a method called the BirdLife Quality Assurance or 'Health Check' system, and support is provided to implement improvements.
	Advocacy plan defined and advocacy activities implemented by CSOs in both countries from Yr 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Advocacy and Visibility Plan has been prepared in 2010. A wide variety of visibility and advocacy actions have been undertaken: town hall meetings, community sensitization workshops, meetings with government officials, establishments of Nature Clubs, bill boards, newspaper articles, radio programmes, visibility and advocacy materials etc. Other project partners (FD, FDA, BLI, VBN, RSPB) also have been playing an active advocacy role while engaging with project stakeholders, both nationally as internationally.
	Fundraising plans produced end Yr 2. CSO partner incomes from non-project sources show an increase over the years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing support for fundraising by CSSL and SCNL by RSPB and BirdLife. SCNL: 30,000.- USD from UNDP/GEF small grant programme for livelihood interventions in communities around Gola (2012-2013); BirdLife /SCNL/FDA: 255,000.- Euro from Aage v Jensen Charity Foundation for <i>The Gola National Park in Liberia: realizing its vast potential project</i> (2013-2014). RSPB/SCNL/BirdLife: 1,570,000 Euro from the EC under the ENRTP (Thematic Programme for Environment and sustainable management of Natural Resources, including energy) for a project focusing on "Securing Liberian forest connectivity through community forest management and innovative financing mechanisms" (2014-2019). Various other project proposal opportunities and initiatives are continued to be explored and developed by the partners.
	10 Staff from 2 NGOs receive training in influencing environmental governance, working with protected areas authorities, monitoring FLEGT compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific trainings as initially proposed have been organized, instead the approach has been chosen to provide and use the ample opportunities for capacity growth through 'on-the-job training', resulting in extensive accumulation of theoretical and practical experience during the project period.
Result 6. Best practices of sub-regional timber trade used to assist implementation of FLEGT in Sierra Leone.	Best practice review of sub regional timber trade available, by end Yr 3, circulated amongst stakeholders and used to assist in FLEGT implementation in Sierra Leone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Africa Timber Trade Study conducted early 2012 by Professor J. Woods from the University of Liberia. Report disseminated among the project partners and 64 other contacts from a wide variety of organisations, donors, government agencies, CSOs and other stakeholders both in Liberia as in Sierra Leone, including the EC Delegations in the two countries. In October 2013, the study and report was presented by Professor Woods at the University of Liberia to 100 students, faculty members and other invitees, including FDA and EC – Liberia representatives.
Result 7. Mechanisms of carbon trading and sustainable financing options investigated and where possible established and exploited	Carbon trading potential assessed in Sierra Leone and reported end of Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of Reference developed by the RSPB for Carbon Consultancy in collaboration with CSSL and FD. Following submission and evaluation of bids from three consultancies as per EU procedure, a contract has been signed with the non-profit carbon consultant agency Winrock International. Facilitated by a series of workshops, consultations, and meetings with relevant stakeholders, a carbon project concept for the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone was designed. A feasibility study was conducted resulting in a Feasibility

		Report in October 2011: feasibility was assessed as positive and all stakeholders agreed at developing a carbon project for the Gola Rainforest National Park.
	Report based on lessons-learned for setting up a carbon project shared with project partners in Liberia and more widely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance understanding among stakeholders, a series of information meetings, consultations and workshops have been organized in Sierra Leone for representatives of Government Ministries, local communities, NGOs (SCNL), donors and staff. At the last PIT meeting, a special session was allocated to provide the opportunity for the RSPB to brief the project partners from Liberia, specifically the FDA, on their experiences and lessons-learned in setting up the carbon project in Sierra Leone. While Liberia is currently exploring the opportunities for Liberia to develop carbon projects, the RSPB and the FD have expressed their availability to further assist the process in Liberia when requested.
	Project Design Document (as per international REDD legislations) for Sierra Leone validated and verified halfway Yr 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two PDDs (Project Design Documents) have been prepared: one under the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) standards and one under the Verified Carbon Standards (VCS). Validators have visited the Gola in Sierra Leone in February 2014 which is the likely final step towards validation of the two PDDs.
	Carbon marketing and money flows incorporated in Project Design Document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above.
	Carbon credit sales from Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone generate \$1million before the end of Yr4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) has been set up: the CLG will be responsible for selling and managing the carbon funds. Actual sale of the carbon credits shall start once the PDDs have been validated.



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2.5 The outcome on the final beneficiaries and the situation in the target country or target region which the Action addressed.

The Gola communities and community groups which have been engaged during the project have been given a voice and are post-ARTP still engaged in various activities initiated during the project, e.g. the Gola gazettement, livelihood interventions, nature clubs, LCGs, the carbon project development. They have not only benefited from these activities in social and economic terms, but they have also been empowered to address needs and concerns to government representatives, thanks to raised awareness and local platforms such as LCGs, and the consultations with regard to park demarcation and carbon protocols.

The civil society partners in Sierra Leone and Liberia have shown great commitment to the Action and have played a crucial role in project implementation, especially in relation to local community support and empowerment. The capacity of CSSL, SCNL to play an active and participative role in conservation and environmental management, planning and governance has been developed and strengthened considerably.

The international project partners continue to be involved in the ongoing work in the Gola, either directly (RSPB and BirdLife International) or indirectly (VBN). The project has further built and subsequently strengthened ties between FD and FDA with the level of communication and collaboration between the FD and FDA significantly increased, specifically in relation to transboundary policy and management.

It is significant that, in a region not usually at first associated with nature conservation, so much progress could be achieved. The present commitment to combined conservation and development is reasing for hope. In the 4.5 years of project implementation, it has also become clear that significant support from donors, international development institutions and INGOs continues to be needed to support this commitment and to ensure progress in the Gola area and the wider conservation and environmental governance sector (and other sectors as well) in both countries. Thankfully, we have succeeded in generating follow-up funding through several sources but even so, progress has shown to be slow. This has not only been experienced under ARTP but has been and continues to be experienced under other initiatives and projects too (COPAN and EXPAN being exemplary related examples). It illustrates that any involvement will have to be a long-term one, if we are to realize big ambitions such as ARTP.



2.6 List of all materials produced during the Action

All materials and equipment purchased by the project partners under the project have been reported through the annual project financial reporting to the EC, and all relevant supporting documents have been submitted. The list is provided in Annex 1. All materials and equipment have remained with each project partner that did the purchase of the said items. Each of the six vehicles purchased under the project and the only items with an individual value of above 5,000.- Euro have been transferred to each of the six project partners. Copies of the proofs of transfers are attached in Annex 2.

2.7 List of all contracts (works, supplies, services) above 10.000€ awarded for the implementation of the action

- Winrock International
A contract was signed with non-profit carbon consultants, Winrock International, following submission and evaluation of bids from three consultancies as per EU procedures. The contract was signed in July 2010, amended in August 2010 for Phase 1 (USD74,370) and in October 2011 for Phase 2 (USD194,500).

2.8 Sustainability of the Action

Sustainability of the Action is guaranteed through a set of initiatives and commitments:

- BirdLife International has made ARTP part of its global programme 'Forests of Hope', and will continue its involvement and support in Gola.
- FD, RSPB and CSSL continue their work and collaboration in the Gola Rainforest National Park, as initiated before ARTP and strengthened through the project. This includes, among other, completion of the development of the carbon project for the GRNP, integration of the ARTP livelihood initiatives and established livelihood CBOs into the GRNP livelihood programmes and guaranteed continued employment of the 25 ARTP GRNP Forest Guards under GRNP. Other initiatives are being developed and implemented by FD, RSPB and CSSL in the Gola area.
- FDA is committed to the gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, and both FDA and FD have indicated their commitment to the establishment of the transboundary Peace Park once the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia has been gazetted. BirdLife, VBN and SCNL are pro-actively following up on the progress and assist the FDA and facilitate where and when needed and possible.
- SCNL are continuing to work with the CBOs and SSGs established under the ARTP livelihood component.
- Following discussions held at the ARTP PSC meeting in Kenema on the 17th of April 2013 a short-, mid- and long-term post-ARTP Strategy has been developed. The purpose of the Strategy is to guide how RSPB, VBN, CSSL, SCNL and BirdLife (notably the Africa Secretariat) will move ahead post-ARTP to coordinate and advance biodiversity conservation in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and West Africa more generally.
- As mentioned earlier in the document, BirdLife International has been successful in securing funding from the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation for the proposed Gola National Park in Liberia. The funding of 255,387.- Euro is facilitating the implementation of the project "*The Gola National Park in Liberia: realizing its vast potential*". The project

commenced on the 1st of January 2013 and will end on the 31st of December 2014. The project goal is “to facilitate the establishment of the Gola National Park in Liberia and support communities to sustainably manage forest resources to maximize benefits to them whilst protecting globally threatened endemic wildlife”.

In addition, RSPB in collaboration with SCNL and FDA have been successful in securing 1,570,000 Euro from the EC under their ENRTP (Thematic Programme for Environment and sustainable management of Natural Resources, including energy) for the implementation of a 5-year project “*Securing Liberian forest connectivity through community forest management and innovative financing mechanisms*” with the Specific Objective of “Community Forest Management Agreements established in the Gola National Forest, Liberia, secure a nationally and internationally important forest corridor, whilst establishing a model for sustainable financing and improved livelihoods”. Project implementation has started in early 2014.

2.9 Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues

The project has contributed to mainstreaming of environmental sustainability, good governance and democracy. High-level commitment to and visibility of the project have had their influence on national and international audiences with regard to the importance of rainforest conservation. At the national level of both project countries, there are examples especially with regard to balancing mining interests with those of conservation and local people. Awareness-raising, organization, consultations and the carefully designed livelihood interventions have considerably empowered forest edge communities to take an active role in forest governance, as well as to make their voice heard and ensure a more democratic representation in protected area decisions, management and use. The strengthening of the two governmental partners will be of benefit to the wider implementation of the countries’ protected area and biodiversity conservation policies, taking into account people and nature in a proper balanced way.

2.10 Monitoring and Evaluation during the project period

In addition to standard day-to-day monitoring and evaluation by the individual project partners of the various activities implemented, by project management, the PIT meetings and through the annual PSC meetings (see subresult 0.6), four formal monitoring and evaluation exercises were conducted during the project period. Those and their key recommendation are:

ROM Mission 2010:

- To address issues of coordination and financing arrangements as soon as possible to avoid further delays and loss of momentum;
- The project should seriously think about developing alternative livelihood strategies for the target communities to maintain their support of the project;
- The Gola Forest project has a high visibility amongst the communities. The Transboundary project must step up the momentum of their work with the communities especially in Sierra Leone;
- To find an alternative source for the Euro 100,000 that is intended to be gained from carbon credits.
- Recommendation to EC Delegation: To closely monitor the project’s efforts to address the above issues.”

ROM Mission 2011

- Reduce outputs and outcomes and assign one leading agency per result area;
- Expand the Monrovia office with strong operational project management skills;
- Prepare a high level mission to Liberia to support forest demarcation;
- Hire an international management TA to support the assistant project manager in Kenema;
- Organise a motivational midterm conference between ARTP and GFP to celebrate results;
- Negotiate for secondment staff at FD and FDA;
- Organise a second round of enhancing finance and budget systems.

Mid-term Evaluation of the project 2012

- Revise logframe and amend budget;
- Assign roles and responsibilities in more detail;
- Address staff grievances/improve cooperation;
- Enhance implementation at partner level;
- Adjust financial reporting and cash flow cycles;
- Enhance visibility, notably biodiversity value;
- Request for a no-cost six months' extension.

ROM Mission 2012

- Coordinate Forest Guards patrol plans on both sides of the border, which may also contribute towards joint cooperation, increase capacity building and good governance in Gola;
- Increased coordination with GFP at strategy level may prove to be crucial for the establishment and adequate management of forest corridors, as well as their sustainability;
- Discuss and consider the needs and possibilities to have a no-cost extension by EoP;
- Monitoring should also be undertaken against OVIs to provide adequate assessment of project achievements;
- In consultation with project partners, produce a list of impact pathways and share it accordingly;
- Discuss and formalize phase-out strategy.

The various recommendations generated through the above four M&E exercises have each been welcomed by project management and the project partners, feedback has been given to the EC and action has been undertaken where feasible, as described under the various relevant paragraphs.

2.11 Lessons learned

It is obvious that all partners, but particularly the local partners, have enjoyed a steep learning curve from start to end of the project. The large scale of the project, its transboundary aspect, the broad scope of eight result areas, and the interactions between multiple collaborative project partners, each coming from different backgrounds and with various experience have provided each individual partner with multiple learning opportunities throughout the project period. Experiences and lessons learned have been and will continue to be shared by project staff within their organizations and beyond. The BirdLife partnership model is providing further unique leverage opportunities of utilizing and disseminating lessons learned within the wider BirdLife partnership by BirdLife and the BirdLife project partners RSPB, CSSL and SCNL. A notable

exchange between the two countries has resulted in Liberia - to a large extent - catching up with Sierra Leone in terms of government and ngo partner capacity, as well as demarcation process, forest guard skills, livelihoods interventions, carbon credits and project management.

3 Partners and other Co-operation

3.1 Assessment of the relationship between the formal partners of the Action

The relationships between the formal project partners have been constructive and congenial. All BirdLife partners feel closely connected in their common goal and have a strong sense of collectiveness. The relationship with the FD has been cordial, thanks to the existing good ties with GFP, even though there have been instances of a perceived lack of ownership by FD, which has however been addressed. The limited outputs of the FDA under the project, resulting a.o. in the continued delay in the gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park, did strain the relationship between the other project partners and the FDA. ARTP project management has consciously been guarding and facilitating for the right balance to be maintained between allowing the other project partners to increase pressure on the FDA, minimizing disturbance of the constructive and positive collaboration between the partners.

3.2 Sustainability of the partnership

The partnership as such is almost entirely continuing, with the exception of VBN phasing out their involvement. This is because RSPB, already having a strong presence in Sierra Leone, intended to extend their support to Liberia, using their considerable experience. VBN instead is directing its interest in more northern parts of sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on migratory birds. Thus, SCNL, CSSL, RSBP and BirdLife International are continuing their efforts in both countries, in close collaboration with FD and FDA. As elaborated under 2.8, ample new initiatives are being implemented and developed, building on the project results and partnership of ARTP.

3.3 Assessment of relationship between project organisation and State authorities in the Action countries

With two presidents launching the project, and repeatedly voicing their commitment to achieving the project's objectives, the relation between the project and the state authorities can only be described as strong. The support this commitment has provided to the image and implementation of the project cannot be overstated.

As set out in paragraph 3.1, working relations with FD and FDA have been good. However, slow progress and low capacity in the governmental departments have at times strained the relationship with the ngo's, who do not have high levels of bureaucracy and often show a (more or less) healthy sense of impatience. Overall, all partner realize the necessity of working together and that a good working relationship is vital to achieving our shared objectives. Thus, discussions have always been (or at least ended) in a constructive and respectful atmosphere.



The presidents at the European Development Days in Stockholm (2009), where project management organized a side event to highlight the ARTP (© RSPB; the project banners are just visible behind the presidents)

3.4 Relationship with any other organizations involved in implementing the Action

The national BirdLife partners CSSL and SCNL have built close ties with the focal forest communities. Initially, some communities expressed distrust or confusion, which has in all cases been redressed by awareness-raising and proof of goodwill through job provisions, the livelihood interventions and community consultations. The participation of the two paramount chiefs from both sides of the border in all PSC meetings was a notable sign of good cooperation, facilitating communication between communities and the governmental bodies. The various Wildlife clubs, Local Conservation Groups and CBOs in the communities on both sides of the border have been a significant part of the implementation strength of the Action, and as described under 2.8, will continue to be a factor of importance in the Gola area post-ARTP. For the implementation of the livelihood component of the Action, SCNL teamed up with The Foundation for Women (Liberia) in the training of local community groups in financial use and management of benefit sharing schemes.

The various research components under ARTP have built strong collaborative links with the universities in Sierra Leone, as well as with national and international universities, education, research institutes and NGOs. Relationships with each of them have been very positive and proven to be constructive, helping to maximize the impact of the work.

ARTP project management has engaged frequently with the World Bank on the various matters that touch both on ARTP and the COPAN and EXPAN Project. This engagement, through BirdLife and SCNL, continues up to date.

3.5 Links and synergies with other actions

In addition to the mentioned direct link with the World Bank COPAN and EXPAN projects, close synergy with the GFP in Sierra Leone, funded through the EC, continued up to the formal end of the project in July 2012, and has continued since until the end of ARTP (with GFP formally replaced by GRNP: Gola Rainforest National Park). ARTP and GRNP have been closely collaborating on many project activities such as the completed biodiversity and the socio-

economic research, the planning and implementation of community livelihood activities, management of the Gola Rainforest National Park's Forest Guards (25 which were paid through ARTP; 25 paid through GFP/GRNP), the sharing of vehicles for joint activities, the attempts of planning and commencing of joint cross border patrols, forest guards training etc. Frequent meetings have taken place between both entities throughout the project period in order to facilitate this intensive cooperation. The synergy was further facilitated through GRNP representation at the ARTP PIT and PSC meetings.

The pioneering dimension of the carbon work under ARTP, has led to regular contact of the RSPB specifically with a number of third parties involved in other actions. Links with the EC specifically linked to the secured REDD-readiness project in Sierra Leone have been made to share lessons learned on developing a carbon project, also close links with the EPA in Sierra Leone are kept to make sure that the ARTP carbon work fits with Sierra Leone's framework on Climate Change which is currently being developed. Also, the work carried out within this action has much guided the development of an ENRTP proposal for work in the Gola area in Liberia.

And, as mentioned before, end of 2012, BirdLife International has been successful in securing additional funding from the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation for the proposed Gola National Park in Liberia. The project commenced on the 1st of January 2013 and will end on the 31st of December 2014, and has provided substantial synergy during the period of overlap with ARTP.

In the early stages of the project, there has been exchange with Welthungerhilfe, which was also implementing an EU-funded project in the Gola area in Sierra Leone. Conservation International participated in several PSC meetings and was a partner in advocacy actions in Liberia. There has been a level of exchange and contact with STEWARD.

3.6 If your organisation has received previous EC grants in view of strengthening the same target group, in how far has this Action been able to build upon/complement the previous one(s)? (List all previous relevant EC grants).

VBN has not received previous related EC grants, but the EC grant to RSPB, in support of the Gola Forest Programme deserves mentioning, since ARTP has built upon the results and experience of the GFP and strengthening of CSSL, has complemented its actions in Sierra Leone and has replicated actions in Liberia.

3.7 Co-operation with the services of the Contracting Authority

Co-operation with the EC Delegation in Freetown has been experienced by VBN, and the project partners, as supportive and constructive. In addition, the Delegation supported the successful project launch and other advocacy where relevant. Communication has usually been rapid and effective. The constructive attitude of the Delegation has been a great asset in the implementation of this complex project.

4 Visibility

The project has had good coverage in national and international media, BirdLife partner magazines and websites, and many other visibility and communication materials have been produced. In both countries the frequent radio broadcasts by CSSL and SCNL highlight the EU funded Action. A list of media coverage is provided in Annex 3. Visibility of the EU contribution to the Action is ensured by representation of the EU logo on project vehicles, sign post and sign boards in both countries, on t-shirts, caps, stickers, leaflets and other project documents. In all publications, either in newspapers or on websites, the EU is acknowledged as the (main) donor of the Action.



Sign outside the Monrovia project office (left), project sticker (right)



Project vehicles with logo's (left), pygmy hippo awareness-raising event in Sierra Leone (right)

The project has no objection whatsoever to publication of the results on the EuropeAid Cooperation Office website by the European Commission, or any other publication of results from this report whatsoever.

Contact person: Bernd de Bruijn

Signature:

Location: Zeist, the Netherlands
 Date original report due: 29 March 2014
 Date original report sent: 24 March 2014

Annex 1: List of equipments

Across the River Project Asset Inventory											
Partner:	BL-Monrovia-Kenema										
Date:	January 15, 2013										
Note: record all items with a purchase value of 175,- Euro or above.											
Number	Item	Brand	Type (where applicable)	Serial number (where applicable)	Date of purchase (see your financial reports)	Cost in Euro (see your financial reports)	Comments				
1	Double cab pick up	Toyota	Hi Lux	BL-3	4-8-2010	24.829	Good				
2	Double cab pick up	Toyota	Hi Lux	BL-2	4-8-2010	24.829	Good				
3	High top 4x4	Toyota	Land cruiser	BL-1	4-8-2010	33.798	Good				
4	Desk top	Dell	Optiplex 360	BZ-5WH 4-J	21/08/10	736	Good				
5	Desk top	Dell	Optiplex 360	FJ5LMBX	9-5-2010	736	Good				
6	Laptop	Toshiba	Satellite	Y9774144K	9-5-2010	775	Good				
7	Laptop	Toshiba	Satellite	Y9756677K	9-5-2010	775	Good				
8	Laptop	Dell	Vostro	X13-04655	9-5-2010	969	Good				
9	Laptop	Dell	Vostro	Serial number can't be found	-	-	Stolen				
10	Lap top	Lenovo	Think pad	2901CTO	12-3-2010	1.866	Good				
11	Photocopier	Canon	PC.D340	HC 1-0494	21-8-2009	656	Good				
12	Printer	HP	HP Laserjet P 2055d	CNCJC1387	-	322	Good				
13	Scanner	HP	HP Scanjet 5590	FLSD-0406	21-6-2011	490	Good				
14	Scanner	HP	VCVRA0706	CB68364002	-	157	Good				
15	Satellite phone	Thuraya	SG 2520	FGL5LNBX	21-6-2011	1.084	Good				
16	Satellite phone	Thuraya	SO 2510	TZ5SO-2510	21-6-2011	1.084	Good				
23	Air Conditioner	GE	Split	G5000046	22-9-2009	662	Good				
25	Executive Desk	-	-	No serial number	21-8-2009	645	Good				
28	Executive Leather Chair	-	-	SM-6040	21-8-2009	179	Good				
34	Coffee Table	-	-	No serial number	21-8-2009	258	Good				
35	Semi Executive Office Chair	-	-	No serial number	21-8-2009	172	Good				
37	Office Filling cabinet	-	-	No serial number	21-8-2009	157	Good				
38	Book shelf	-	-	No serial number	24-4-2010	233	Good				
52	Flat screen TV	LG	32LK310	108KKLP8R264,	18-2-2012	338	Good				
53	Marquis Generator	TMGC3000P	2.8KVA	No serial number	22-11-2011	301	Good				
54	Generator	Perkins	13KVA	No serial number	22-9-2009						

Across the River Project Asset Inve

Partner: CSSL

Date: January 11, 2013

Note: record all items with a purchase value of 175.- Euro or above.

Number	Item	Brand	Type (where applicable)	Serial number (where applicable)	Date of purchase (see your financial reports)	Cost in Euro (see your financial reports)	Comments
1	Motorcycle/ AFB 362	Yamaha	AG100	3HA119317	3-12-2010	2.586	Good
2	Deskjet Printer	HP	Deskjet- F2180	cn86q4q5qb	-	-	Not in working condition
3	Desktop computer	HP	Desktop	3CQ91712BH	29-1-2010	1.112	Good
4	Laptop computer	Dell	Laptop	kb4p8b2p2b2rvh7	9-2-2010	667	Good
5	Lasserjet Printer	HP	Laserjet P2035N	cnckm00726	18-10-2010	632	Good
6	2.7 KVA Generator	Honda -GX	Stepill	251733	18-10-2010	603	Good
7	119 litre chest Freezer	West point	WBQ Series	No serial number provided	25-10-2010	333	Good
8	3 GPS	Garmin	Etrex	No serial number provided	11-9-2010	281	Good
9	Digital Camera	Fujifilm	-	QUR46989	12-9-2010	258	Not in working condition
10	Motorcycle	TVS	TVS Victor	OFIPA1615949	3-5-2011	890	Good
11	Motorcycle	TVS	TVS Victor	ofihb1621762	16-6-2012	769	Good

Across the River Project Asset Inventory																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
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Across the River Project Asset Inventory

Partner: RSPB

Date: 30th September 2012

Note: record all items with a purchase value of 175- Euro or above.

Number	Item	Brand	Type (where applicable)	Serial number (where applicable)	Date of purchase (see your financial reports)	Cost in Euro (see your financial reports)	Comments
1	GPS (6)	Garmin	60C Handheld	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	15-1-2010	1,125	Transaction number 7
2	Camera (3)	Panasonic	Lumix DMC-ZS3	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	15-1-2010	517	Transaction number 7
3	GPS (15)	Garmin	60C	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	18-1-2010	2,821	Transaction number 9
4	Camera	Panasonic	Lumix TZ7	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	9-3-2010	233	Transaction number 68
5	Laptop	Toshiba	Tecra M10	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	10-5-2010	699	Transaction number 89
6	Satellite phone	Thuraya	-	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	21-4-2010	400	Transaction number 93
7	Microphone	Rycote	VD classic	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	7-6-2010	482	Transaction number 151
8	Sound recorder	Olympus	LS-10 PCM	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	7-6-2010	224	Transaction number 153
9	Notebook	Toshiba	Satellite L500-1XL	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	17-8-2010	344	Transaction number 178
10	Recorder	TBC	TBC	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	19-11-2010	254	Transaction number 222
11	Radio/Telemetry Receiver	-	149-153 MHz W/220 V	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	24-3-2011	522	Transaction number 265. Supplied by Communications Specialists Inc
12	Trap Camera (30)	Hyperfire	PC800	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	4-4-2011	10,142	Transaction number 266
13	GPS (4)	Garmin	60C	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	14-12-2011	772	Transaction number 476
14	GPS (2)	Garmin	GPSMAP 62	RSPB doesn't record serial # of items purchased below (~2500€)	13-1-2012	429	Transaction number 598
15	Motorbike	Honda	TVS Victor Cx	MD6258F1881A61305	29-3-2011	765	Transaction number 1152
16	Motorbike	Honda	TVS Victor Cx	MD6258F1381A61566	17-5-2011	699	Transaction number 1254

Annex 2: Proofs of Transfer



BirdLife International, Africa Partnership Secretariat
Attn. Dr. J. Arinaitwe
P. O. Box 3502
00100 GPO Nairobi
KENYA

Postbus 925
3700 AX Zeist
Boulevard 12
3707 BM Zeist
Telefoon 030 693 77 99
Fax 030 691 88 44
www.vogelbescherming.nl

Reference: 13-B376
Date: 27 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Dr. Arinaitwe,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

- Perkins kVA Generator

Please return a countersigned copy to Vogelbescherming Nederland.

For transfer to BirdLife International,
on behalf of VBN.

R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of BirdLife
International

Dr. J. (Julius) Arinaitwe
Head of Africa Partnership Secretariat
BirdLife International



Vogelbescherming Nederland is Partner van BirdLife International: wereldwijd actief voor vogels en natuur



Postbus 925
3700 AX Zeist
Boulevard 12
3707 BM Zeist
Telefoon 030 693 77 99
Fax 030 691 88 44
www.vogelbescherming.nl

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Attn. Dr. J. Barnard
The Lodge, Sandy
SG19 2DL Bedfordshire
UNITED KINGDOM

Reference: 13-B359
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Dr. Barnard,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

Type of vehicle: TOYOTA HILUX D4D
Number plate: AFB-360
Model number: KUN 25L - PRMDHV
Engine number: 2KD - FTV 2494 Cc
Frame number: MROFR 22G 100664136

Please return a countersigned copy to Vogelbescherming Nederland.

For transfer to the RSPB,
on behalf of VBN

R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of the RSPB

Dr. J. (Jonathan) Barnard
Head of Tropical Forests Unit
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds



Vogelbescherming Nederland is Partner van BirdLife International, wereldwijd actief voor vogels en natuur

Conservation Society of Sierra Leone
Attn. Dr. S. Monde, Executive Director
18-B Becklyn Drive, Off Main Motor Road, Congo Cross
P.O. Box 1292
Freetown
Sierra Leone

Reference: 13-B356
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Dr. Monde,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

Type of vehicle: TOYOTA LAND-CRUISER
Number plate: AFB-361
Model number: HZ178 Hardtop
Engine number: 1 HZ 0632626
Frame number: JTRB71 J 9A7004013

Please return a countersigned copy to the BirdLife International Project Management Office in Monrovia.

For transfer to CSSL, on behalf of VBN



R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of CSSL



Dr. S. (Sama) Monde
Executive Director
Conservation Society of Sierra Leone

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
Forestry Division
Attn. Mr. Sheku Mansaray, Director
Youyi Building
Freetown
Sierra Leone

Reference: 13-B358
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Mr. Mansaray,

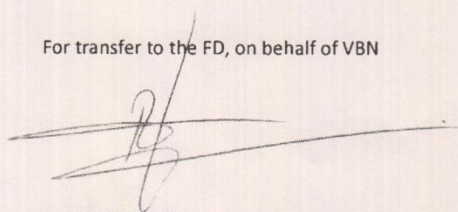
This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

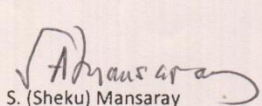
Type of vehicle: TOYOTA HILUX D4D
Number plate: AFB-359
Model number: KUN 25L - PRMDHV
Engine number: 2KD - FTV 2494 Cc
Frame number: MROFR 22G 700664139

Please return a countersigned copy to the BirdLife International Project Management Office in Monrovia.

For transfer to the FD, on behalf of VBN

For receipt on behalf of the FD


R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland


S. (Sheku) Mansaray
Director
Forestry Division

Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia
Attn. Mr. M. Garbo, Interim Executive Director
Tubman Boulevard, CARE Building
Monrovia
Liberia

Postbus 925
5700 AX Zest
Boulevard 12
3707 BA Zest
Telefoon 030 693 77 99
Fax 030 691 88 44
www.vogelbescherming.nl

Reference: 13 B360
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Mr. Garbo,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

Type of vehicle: TOYOTA LAND-CRUISER
Number plate: BLI 1
Model number: HZ178 Hardtop
Engine number: 1HZ 0632624
Frame number: JTGRB71 J

Please return a countersigned copy to the BirdLife International Project Management Office in Monrovia.

For transfer to SCNL on behalf of VBN



R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of SCNL



M. (Michael) Garbo
Acting Executive Director
Society for the Conservation of
Nature in Liberia

BirdLife International, Africa Partnership Secretariat
Attn. Dr. J. Arinaitwe
P. O. Box 3502
00100 GPO Nairobi
KENYA

Reference: 13-B355
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

Dear Dr. Arinaitwe,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:

Type of vehicle: TOYOTA HILUX D4D
Number plate: BLI 3
Model number: KUN25L-PRMDHV
Engine number: 2KD - FTV 2494 Cc
Frame number: MROFR 22G 500664090

Please return a countersigned copy to Vogelbescherming Nederland.

For transfer to BirdLife International,
on behalf of VBN



R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of BirdLife
International



Dr. J. (Julius) Arinaitwe
Head of Africa Partnership Secretariat
BirdLife International

Forestry Development Authority (FDA)
Attn. Mr. Harrison S. Karnwea, Sr., Interim Managing Director
Whein Town, Mount Barclay
Monrovia
Liberia

Reference: 13-B357
Date: 23 September 2013
Subject: Proof of transfer of equipment under the project "Across the River – A
Transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia"
EuropeAid DCI-ENV/2008/151-577

- PROOF OF TRANSFER -

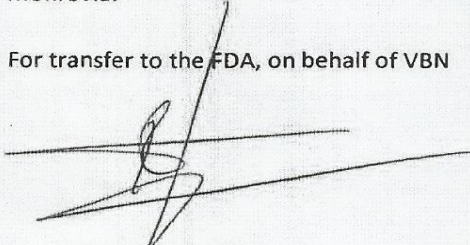
Dear Mr. Karnwea,

This letter serves to confirm the transfer and receipt of the project materials stated below:


Type of vehicle: TOYOTA HILUX D4D
Number plate: BLI 2
Model number: KUN25L-PRMDHV
Engine number: 2KD - FTV 2494 Cc
Frame number: MROFR 22G 500664091

Please return a countersigned copy to the BirdLife International Project Management Office in Monrovia.

For transfer to the FDA, on behalf of VBN


R.G.M. (Robert) Kwak
Director of Conservation
Vogelbescherming Nederland

For receipt on behalf of the FDA


H.S. (Harrison) Karnwea
Interim Managing Director
Forestry Development Authority

Annex 3: Media coverage

An overview of media coverage throughout the project. Articles and screen dumps of website pages are available. Press releases and other articles will have received a wider distribution than the links shown below.

- BirdLife International Datazone: ARTP factsheet
<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sowb/casestudy/416>
http://www.birdlife.org/downloads/africa/Facts_Sheet-Across_the_River_Transboundary_PeacePark.pdf
- Website VBN
http://www.vogelbescherming.nl/vogels_beschermen/internationaal/sierra_leone_en_liberia
- Website CSSL
<http://conservationsl.org/projects/gola-forest-programme/>
- Website SCNL
http://www.scnlib.net/conservation/?page_id=10
- 15 May 2009
Various press releases (VBN, BirdLife) and posting on numerous websites e.g.
<http://awoko.org/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=5685&cnt>
<http://yubanet.com/enviro/Trans-boundary-Rainforest-Park-will-be-a-symbol-of-peace-and-stability>
http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200512234.shtml
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200905200600.html>
http://www.transitionaljustice.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id
Environment news service
- 3 June 2009
VBN Membership magazine Vogels: "Over de Rivier".
- 4 August 2009
VBN Membership magazine Vogels: "Grensoverschrijdende natuurbescherming in Sierra Leone en Liberia"
- 2 October 2009
RSPB, Gola Guardian: "Presidents launch Transboundary Project"
- October 2009
VBN Membership magazine Vogelnieuws: "Peace Park tussen Sierra Leone en Liberia"
- August 2010
VBN Membership magazine Vogels: "Grensoverschrijdende bosbescherming in West-Afrika"
- 04 May 2011
"Carbon project for Sierra Leone soon" <http://www.awoko.org/2011/05/04/carbon-project-for-sierra-leone-soon/>
- 15 June 2011
"Manager assures the public of ARTP support"
<http://www.awoko.org/2011/06/15/manager-assures-the-public-of-artp-support/>

- 01 November 2011
“ARTP Project Manager briefs the press about his project”
Newspaper Awoko Press 22 November 2010
- “*Liberia and Sierra Leone move to designate Gola Rainforest as National Park*”
<http://www.birdlife.org/community/2010/11/liberia-and-sierra-leone-move-to-designate-gola-rainforest-as-national-park/>
- November 2011
“*Tropisch Oerwoud als symbool van Vrede*” (Tropical Rainforest as Symbol of Peace)
In Vogelbescherming Nederland quarterly magazine ‘Vogels’: audience 153,000 members in the Netherlands
- 06 December 2011
“*EU supported Gola Rainforest declared National Park in Sierra Leone*”
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sierra_leone/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/20111206_en.htm
- 16 December 2011
“*New Peace Park Project leader urges residents to upkeep Gola Forest*”
Newspaper Awoko Press: article on the new PM for ARTP and his visit to Sierra Leone
- 30 December 2011
“*Gola Forest Declared a National Park*”
Newspaper Daily Observer – Liberia
- 17 January 2011
“*CSSL to be the lead NGO in Sierra Leone – Sama Mondeh*”
Newspaper Awoko Press
<http://www.awoko.org/2012/01/17/%e2%80%9ccssl-to-be-the-lead-ngo-in-sierra-leone%e2%80%9d-sama-mondeh/>
- 16 February 2012
“*Liberia and Sierra Leone intensify joint patrol in the GRNP*”
<http://www.awoko.org/2012/02/16/liberia-and-sierra-leone-intensify-joint-patrol-in-the-grnp/>
- 22 February 2012
“*NOMO RESIDENTS “FIT YEYE” PRESIDENT KOROMA*”
<http://www.awoko.org/2012/02/22/nomo-residents-%E2%80%9Cfit-yeye%E2%80%9D-president-koroma/>
- 02 March 2012
“*One ex-combatant, two others jailed for illegal mining*”
<http://www.awoko.org/2012/03/01/one-ex-combatant-two-others-jailed-for-illegal-mining/>
- 02 March 2012
“*Human Rights Officer East expresses concern over misuse of Gola Forest*”
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In grateful memory

Joseph Fully, Executive Director of the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia, passed away on 8 April 2011. Mr. Fully was a tireless advocate for conservation in Liberia, and a major force in bringing the Society to where it is today. Having worked as the Wildlife Division Manager in the Forestry Development Authority of Liberia, his experience was of great value for the project.

Andrew M. Muana, Coordinator of the Pygmy hippo conservation project, died on 3 April 2011. A major part of the data and outcomes of this project is the result of his admirable dedication to nature conservation in his home country Sierra Leone. We lost a great colleague and friend.

Sheku Massaquoi, Community Conservation Warden in Gola, Sierra Leone, died on 18 December 2010. He showed a high commitment to his job and was a wonderful colleague.



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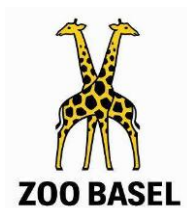
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Vogelbescherming Nederland – BirdLife in the Netherlands
www.vogelbescherming.nl



BirdLife International
www.birdlife.org



Conservation Society of Sierra Leone – BirdLife in Sierra Leone
www.conservationssl.org



Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia - BirdLife in Liberia
www.scnlib.net



Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - BirdLife in the UK
www.rspb.org.uk



Forestry Development Authority, Government of Liberia



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