



# THE PEPPERBIRD

SCNL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | 5TH EDITION | VOL.07-20-2022



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS!!**

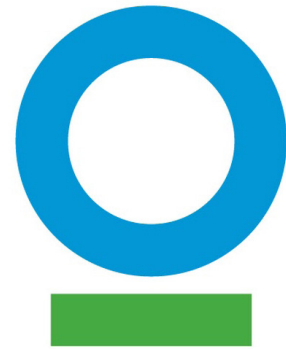
**90 WOMEN BENEFIT FROM SCNL'S LOAN PROGRAM IN NORTHERN LIBERIA**

**IN SINOE AND GRAND BASSA COUNTIES, 120 YOUTHS SELECTED TO SERVE AS ECOBRIGADE**

APPRECIATION TO  
**CURRENT DONORS**



**RAINFOREST  
TRUST®**



**CRITICAL** | **ECOSYSTEM**  
PARTNERSHIP FUND

**CONSERVATION  
INTERNATIONAL**



giving  
nature  
a home



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE KNOW YOUR PROTECTED SPECIES	<b>04</b>
PREFACE BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS	<b>05</b>
MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	<b>06</b>
BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS	<b>07</b>
SCNL WELCOMES SAO TOME BIRDLIFE AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS	<b>09</b>
RSPB STAFF VISIT SCNL	<b>11</b>
90 WOMEN BENEFIT FROM SCNL'S LOAN PROGRAM IN NORTHERN LIBERIA	<b>12</b>
SCNL CONDUCTS FARMERS FIELD SCHOOL TRAINING FOR FARMERS	<b>14</b>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOLUR PROJECT HAS BEGUN WITH FIELD ASSESSMENT	<b>16</b>
SCNL THROUGH THE LFSP DONATES 52 MOTORBIKES TO FOREST EDGE COMMUNITY DWELLERS	<b>18</b>
IN SINOE AND GRAND BASSA COUNTIES, 120 YOUTH SELECTED TO SERVE AS ECOBRIGADE	<b>20</b>
SCNL AND KONGBA DISTRICT HOLD COMMUNITIES DIALOGUE MEETING	<b>22</b>

## ORGANIZATION'S PROFILE

The Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) was established in 1986 in response to the Liberian Business Law of 1976 for not-for-profit organizations with Business Registration Number: 051185951. The organization is a non-governmental, non-political and not-for-profit agency.

SCNL as the Lead National Civil Society Organization for nature conservation has the mandate to educate, encourage and assist civil society understand the need and patterns of conserving nature, build consensus on effective management of biodiversity by ensuring the use of natural resources is sustainable and that biodiversity is effectively managed and appropriately utilized.

SCNL also maintains a membership base as part of efforts to increase voices for nature conservation in Liberia as well within the West African Sub-Region through sustainable partnerships. As part of the activities of SCNL each year an Annual General Assembly (AGA) is hosted in order to deliberate on issues around nature conservation including a review of related policy issues and the advancement and sustainable way forward for the organization.

**Vision:** We ensure that biodiversity is effectively managed and wisely used.

**Mission:** We educate, encourage, and assist the public to understand the need to conserve nature, build consensus on the effective management of biodiversity, and ensure that the use of natural resources is sustainable.

Values:

- Increase institutional capacity for effective management of biodiversity.
- Strengthen community structures in providing basic information on the threats, use of other renewable natural resources, and biodiversity
- Increase advocacy for the creation of additional protected areas.
- Increase alternatives livelihood opportunities for communities around Protected and potential conservation areas
- Heighten public awareness of the socio-economic, environmental and aesthetic
- Cultural values of natural resources.

**Motto:** *Helping to Conserve Nature*

4 | THE PEPPERBIRD - OCT. - DEC. -2022

## KNOW YOUR PROTECTED SPECIES

### PICATHARTES



**Picathartes** - are rockfowl or bald crows are a small genus of two passerine bird species forming the family Picathartidae found in the rainforests of tropical west and central Africa. They have unfathered heads, and feed on insects and invertebrates picked from damp rocky areas.

**Conservation Value** - *Picathartes gymnocephalus* is a globally 'Vulnerable' bird endemic to the highly threatened Upper Guinea forests in West Africa. In an environment under a high level of threat, the high breeding site fidelity (or breeding site persistence) of this species enables long-term monitoring of colony site occupancy, colony size, and other breeding parameters, which provide multiple indicators of population status.

**Habitat**- There are two species of birds in this family, the gray-necked rockfowl (*Picathartes areas*) and the white-necked rockfowl (*Picathartes gymnocephalus*.) They are found in rocky areas of rainforests in west and central Africa.

**Feeding** - This rockfowl feeds primarily on insects, though some plant matter, such as fruit and flower buds, is eaten. One feeding strategy involves following *Dorylus* army ant swarms, feeding on insects flushed by the ants.



*Professor John T. Woods  
Member, SCNL Board of Directors*

***Greetings Fellow Members of the Society  
for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia***

I am reminded that SCNL was established in 1986 with the objective of creating a general assembly of citizens and making them aware of malingered for conservation in Liberia. The reason is clear today, Liberia is a country of 9.6 million hectares of land area containing about 40% of the Tropical rainforest in the upper Guinea region of West Africa. It is established that this rainforest is rich with high biodiversity characterized and known as a Hut Spot which by nature needs critical attention from conservationists.

The conservationists have grown from the stage of mere awareness building of society to an actual operation of protecting our biodiversity. Understanding this biodiversity is required. There are notably about 2900 vascular plant species, 150 small and large mammals species, 600 bird species, 75 reptile and amphibians species, and 1000 insect species. On average, there are more than 300 species per hectare.

It is understandable that when the reformer of the forest policy in 2006 formulated a sustainable management of the Liberian forest consider a 3C's policy, commercial community, and conservation. The conservation policy comprises setting aside 30% of our forest area for conservation. One way of establishing conservation areas is by gazettement Protected areas (PA).

Thus, over the years the governments of Liberia have set aside the Proposed Protected area (PPA) of the Liberian forest landscape. Five of these PPA have been gazetted into a fully protected area by previous governments, including Sappo National Park, East Nimba Nature Reserve, Lake Piso Multi-Purpose Reserve, The Gola National Park, and The Grebo-Krahn National Park.

There are gazettement packages prepared for other proposed protected areas yet to be gazetted by this government. However, SCNL is actively engaged in providing High Conservation Value (HCV) for established Protected areas. This means identifying and implementing with partners' projects design. To protect our species that are endemic, endangered, vulnerable, and trained.

Protecting habitats that accommodate these spices. Ensuring that the species provides environmental services and Communities continue to enjoy benefits from having these species. As a member of the board of Directors, we have provided policy guidelines and oversight for SCNL and partners to continue to provide High Conservation Values (HCV) in the Protected areas of the Liberian forest. This distinguishes SCNL from other conservation institutions in Liberia. The Board of Directors of SCNL is proud of this enviable position of SCNL and calls for the expansion and modernization of the general assembly to render broad base participation and endorsement of SCNL's role and operation in Liberia. Thank you.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Michael F. Garbo, Executive Director*

2022 began with a lot of prospects for SCNL. There were new projects and additional staff were hired to help enhance our work. Unfortunately, [the cold hand] of death took away two of our colleagues, (Mr. Emmanuel Smith and Mr. Roland Keymah). May their souls and the souls of all faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in perfect peace. We engaged with communities and provided support such as loans, donated motorbikes, and trained farmers in the production of cocoa, etc.

SCNL also coordinated with stakeholders, civil society organizations, Forestry Development Authority (FDA), the Environmental Protection Agency, (EPA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and others for constructive partnerships for the preservation of forests and the environment.

One of the biggest engagements was attending the BirdLife International 100 Year Celebration in the

United Kingdom and the Sustainable Financing in Conservation, the Gola calls to International Communities at the CBD CoP15, Montreal, Canada 2022. SCNL remains grateful for these opportunities, geared toward protecting the environment.

This 5th edition of our annual newsletter: The Pepper Bird is our way of informing the public and our partners of our achievements covering October to December 2022.

As we come to the end of 2022, it is our hope at SCNL, 2023 will be much more prosperous, with more support in order to further enhance our work in the counties. To all the staff at SCNL, our international staff, and donors, (Birdlife International, RSPB, FDA, EPA, Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME), UNDP, etc., SCNL remains grateful for your assistance. Let's continue to work together to conserve nature. Happy new year!

# BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS!!

*A CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS, REFLECTION, AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE*



*SCNL Executive Director, Michael F. Garbo (sitting back) at the World Congress in the UK*

**“ SCNL congratulates one of its most important partners, BirdLife International on its 100 years anniversary. We had wonderful discussions with partners from across the continent, and it was an excellent experience. We were encouraged to remain committed, and work together in programming, projects ”**

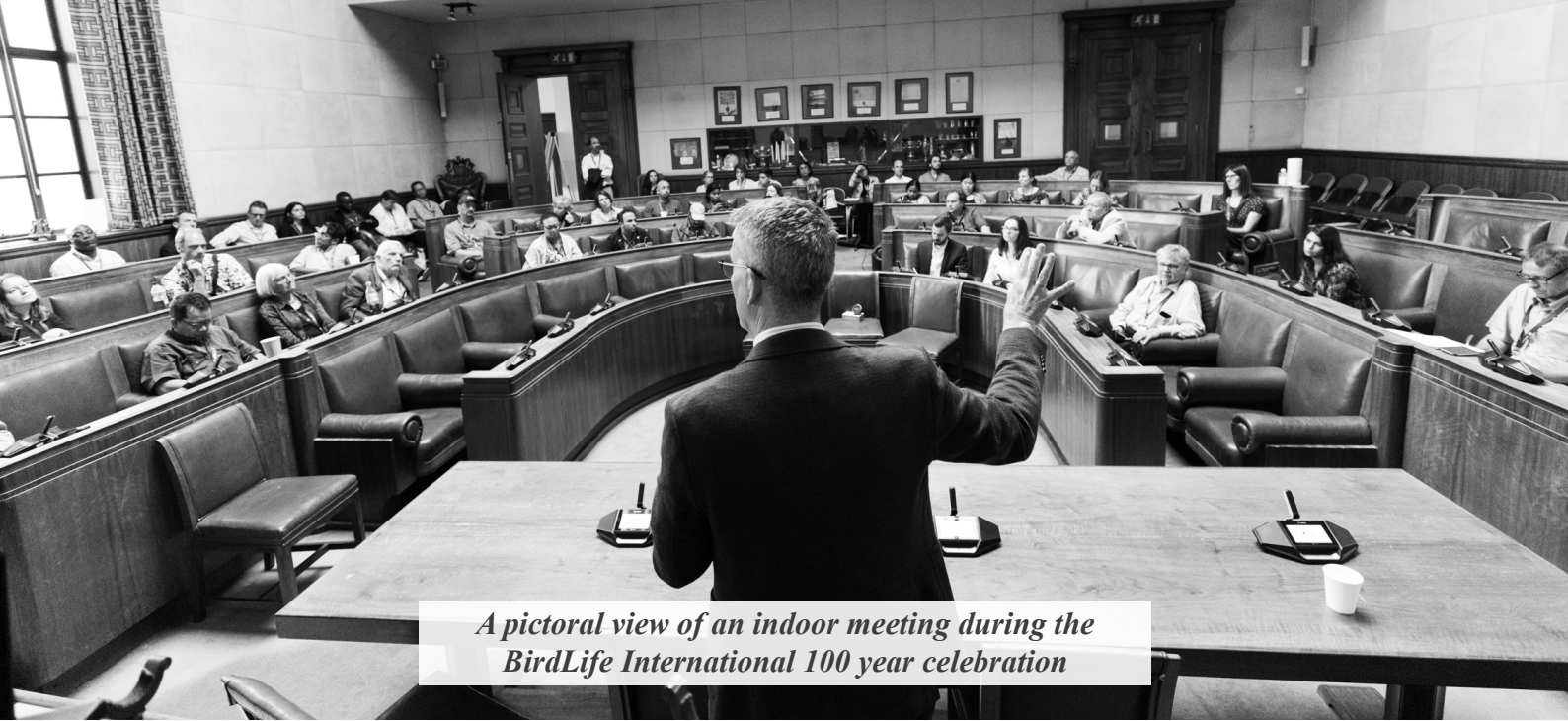
Established in 1922, BirdLife International is the largest and oldest partnership for nature in the world. With 119 partners across all continents, and driven by beliefs that local people, working for nature in their own places but connected through global partnership, are the key to sustaining all life on the planet. BirdLife International protects birds and conserves the most vital habitats for nature, works to make human impacts kinder to the planet, and convinces society to take positive action against climate change and biodiversity loss.

At this year’s World Congress Day Celebration, which took place on September 12-16, 2022, in the United Kingdom, (UK), conservationists, renowned environmental activists, and officials of BirdLife International and partners gathered to celebrate the organization’s 100 years of existence. Representing the Society for Conservation of Nature of Liberia

(SCNL), at the historic event, was its Executive Director, Mr. Michael F. Garbo.

Mr. Garbo shared that Africa’s 22 partners, along with the rest of the partners held a series of fruitful discussions on climate change, conservation, the Greater Gola landscape, challenges, and the way forward. He added during the celebration, BirdLife International’s ten years strategic plan was adopted and accepted. “SCNL congratulates one of its most important partners, BirdLife International on its 100 years anniversary. We had wonderful discussions with partners from across the continent, and it was an excellent experience. We were encouraged to remain committed, and work together in programming, projects...”.

Patricia Zurita, Chief Executive Director, BirdLife International, acknowledged the roles of families and



*A pictorial view of an indoor meeting during the BirdLife International 100 year celebration*

**“ We are determined to intensify the synergies of our strategic pillars of sites, species, systems, and society and roll out projects that scale up our experience globally ”**



*Patricia Zurita CEO, Birdlife International*

partners connecting communities around the globe to ensure birds are protected. “We are determined to intensify the synergies of our strategic pillars of sites, species, systems, and society and roll out projects that scale up our experience globally”.

She encouraged all partners to be committed, enthusiastic, and energetic for the fight ahead in protecting birds globally. “So yes, my hope, our hope at BirdLife is a magnificent thing with feathers, undergirded with science and tireless work, and empowered by millions of people around our magnificent planet,” she added.

The Executive Director upon his return in a briefing told all SCNL’s staff to keep working harder and deepen their knowledge in the areas of REDD+ and carbon financing to contribute immensely to nature conservation in Liberia and beyond.



*Mr. Richard Dixon, Head of Gola, RSPB, and Mr. Michael F. Garbo at the BirdLife International 100 years celebration*



# SCNL WELCOMES SAO TOME BIRDLIFE AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

## EXCHANGE VISIT, STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP

As part of the implementation of the activities of the EU-funded Project, PAPFor, strengthening the Birdlife partnership is key to achieving the outcome of the PAPFor Project. As such, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), welcomed a team from Sao Tome BirdLife and representatives from the Forestry Development of Sao Tome and Principe. A team of four; Maria Conceicao, Litoney Oliveira, Olvio Almeida Lopes Carposo, and Hudson Costa Da Graca

The four-day visit began with an indoor presentation at the main offices of SCNL in Monrovia, where the team from Sao Tome, SCNL, and the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) converged.

During the interactive presentations, SCNL Program Manager, Mr. Michael E. Taire, presented SCNL's project activities, while SCNL PAPFor Project Coordinator, James P. Mulbah briefed the team on PAPFor's activities, and FDA presented [prospects and challenges] and ways the FDA is working to protecting the forest as well as the progress and challenges in the establishment of protected areas and community forests in Liberia.



*SCNL, FDA, and Sao Tome team after the presentation*

The Sao Tome team was treated professionally by SCNL and everyone they met. With the help of SCNL, they had the opportunity to visit RobertSport and held a brief meeting with rangers, and the local leadership of the FDA. With a request from SCNL, FDA made a boat available that took the Sao Tome team, FDA, and SCNL staff across the historic Lake Piso for a boat ride. It was an amazing experience and the team appreciated the kind gesture from SCNL.

In Fornor, Grand Cape Mount County, the Sao Tome team again met with rangers, FDA staff, and local leaders, and were briefed about the activities in conserving nature. Along with SCNL Mulbah, the team was escorted to the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) for site seeing, and upon arrival, they expressed delight for the visitation.

The team also visited Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue Protection (LCRP) and met with Co-Founder and Executive Director, James Desmond. He explained to the team why the LCRP was established and how it



*Sao Tome team, SCNL, and LCRP Co-Founder and Executive Director, James Desmond*



*SCNL, Sao Tome, and FDA rangers in the Gola Forest National Park*



*SCNL Executive Director, Mr. Michael F. Garbo receiving a souvenir from the Sao Tome team*

On behalf of the Sao Tome, Maria Conceicao shared, “We are very happy to visit the SCNL family, they are doing a great job! Thank you for the warmest welcome, and hospitality, we are glad to be here,” she shared.

is benefitting not only in protecting chimpanzees but providing jobs for over 40 Liberians. The team was very amazed by seeing several chimpanzees being protected by LCRP. They appreciated Mr. Desmond and encouraged him to keep up the good work.



*SCNL, Sao Tome team and FDA staff on the historic Lake Piso*



*Dr. Luba Meshkova teaching SCNL Roland Warner smart mobile training in data collection*

# RSPB STAFF VISIT SCNL

*SUPPORTING THE PAPFor PROJECT THROUGH TRAINING AND INNOVATION*

As part of strengthening SCNL Staff for the implementation of PAPFor Project, a team from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), visited the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia and provided training in camera trapping and SharePoint Data Management for SCNL Science Conservation and Project Departments. Dr. Penny Gardner, RSPB Research Scientist, trained the staff in camera trapping and biomonitoring, while, Dr. Luba Meshkova, RSPB GIS specialist, trained in SharePoint Data Management training.

Dr. Penny conducted the training in Tima Town, the Headquarters of the Gola Forest National Park. She also conducted a practical camera trap deployment session with SCNL’s staff, eco-guards, and some Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Rangers. Emmanuel Loqueh, SCNL Research Officer, who participated in the training, said the camera trap training was good and useful for SCNL Science and Conservation Department. “Most of our camera data have not been synchronized in a database. The camera trap training provided that...we were trained in Map View Professional (software), a software used to gather all camera data. Thanks to Dr. Gardener for the opportunity to learn new software for the improvement of our work,” he said.

The second session of the training focused on SharePoint Data Management, Dr. Luba Meshkova, the RSPB GIS specialist led this session and taught the team how to set up their Microsoft account to access the SharePoint Site. She navigated the platform and uploaded essential documents to populate the site.

Meanwhile, RSPB International Project Officer, LisaMarie Newth, also visited SCNL to directly interact with beneficiaries, and learn about challenges under the Darwin project. The Darwin project is a Small Business and Microloan Program being implemented by SCNL. The Small Business and Microloan Program is being run along forest-edge communities, around the Gola Forest National Park, in Gbarpolu County. 320 women, as beneficiaries across eight communities in Kongba District, and the scheme is managed by the Normon and Tonglay Community Forest Management Body (CFMBs).

During LisaMarie’s meeting with the beneficiaries in Camp Alpha, she held a focus group discussion and interacted with them directly. She also appreciated the strategies the women are using to repay their loans for the cycle.

# 90 WOMEN

## BENEFIT FROM SCNL'S LOAN PROGRAM IN NORTHERN LIBERIA

*PROTECTING THE FOREST THROUGH COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT*



*A cross-section of beneficiaries and SCNL staff after the presentation of loans in Yallahum*

Conserving nature requires the provision of functional programs for forest-edge communities. The fact is, communities closer to the forest, specially protected areas, most times depend on the forest for livelihood. So, when conservation organizations extend activities that are beneficial to the communities, it makes it much easier for the conservation of the forest and environment.

In Northern Liberia, precisely, Lofa County, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), with support from Rainforest Trust (RFT) is currently working enormously for the gazettement and establishment of the Foya Proposed Protected Area. As part of activities geared to improve the lives of the forest edge community dwellers, SCNL's microloan is providing Millions of Liberian Dollars to women, (farmers and small business holders) for the improvement of their businesses.

From October 25, 26, and 29, 2022, respectively, 90 women, comprising farmers, and small business owners from Yallahum, Yanohum, Kailahum, Pasulahum, Lukasu, Pasulahum, Dukor Gbongo, and Vahum received LD\$20,000.00 each as loan to improve their local businesses. During the disbursement in each town, town chiefs, youth and elders were present to serve as witnesses. The women were placed into five groups, each group came up with a name, a chairlady, rules to govern the group, the amount to be paid for appearing late for a meeting, and a fine if found misbehaving.

SCNL's Loan Officer, Yuconjay Noyu. Barchue is passionate, hardworking, and determined to see women succeed. She provided training on how the loan will be paid by the women and taught them how to manage their businesses for more profits. The loan officer, with a charismatic style of grabbing



*SCNL Yuconjay N. Barchue presenting a loan to a local businesswoman in Yallahum*

the attention of the women, encouraged them not to get overly excited but to work harder in order to repay the loan, while at the same time improving their businesses. “SCNL through Rainforest Trust (RFT) is pleased to be providing the loan, to you, the (women). The money you have received is not free, you are to work hard to repay the loan even though; it will not be taken away from the community other people also need to benefit as you paid back. Yuconjay N. Barchue encouraged the women as they received the loan “Your hard work will encourage SCNL to do more and as you know, use their money wisely, and handle it with care. women are the backbones of homes, and women are trusted people, and I am hopeful you will work hard for the growth of your businesses”.

Musu Kamara, Yallahum, Satta Kamara, Yanohum, Mamai Konneh, Kailahum, and Ma Mary Kamara, Pasulahum are all businesswomen. They were among the 90 beneficiaries and appreciated SCNL and the Rainforest Trust for the loan. Satta Kamara has three children, and the father of the children passed away years ago. She said things have been different with the family since the children’s father died. Due to hardship, coupled with the passing of her partner, Kamara dropped out of school to take care of her children. She said, “I stopped in 8th grade, I don’t have anyone to take care of me,

and my responsibility; however, I am selling dry goods, and with the loan received from SCNL, I will improve my business, and work hard so SCNL can keep helping me”.

For Mamai Konneh, a mother of three, purchasing more goods is the best option for growth. “SCNL is doing more than well for me. I am going to buy more goods, sell them, then pay the loan back. Money business is hard, to see an organization like SCNL helping us with a loan is a great help. I want all the women to work together, forget about confusion so we can better our businesses and families”.

Like the rest of the women in Vahum, Jartu Mustapha danced and shouted joyfully when she saw her country’s currency, the Liberian Dollar for the first time in years. Due to the deplorable road condition, residents of Vahum go to neighboring Sierra Leone to transact using the Leones. She said, “I am very happy to see Liberian Dollars in Vahum. This is my first time seeing our Liberian Money. We don’t see our money because of the bad roads. We go to Sierra Leone to buy and do business. This loan given to me by SCNL will be used to increase my market, and I will work hard to repay the loan. I tell SCNL thank you very much for your help. To the other women, let’s work together to pay the loan back”.

# SCNL CONDUCTS FARMERS FIELD SCHOOL TRAINING FOR FARMERS

IMPROVING FARMERS' SKILLS, ENCOURAGING CASH CROP PRODUCTION



*“This initiative taken by SCNL is to help you, the (farmers), and I believe when each one of you works more effectively, the training will be successful ”*

*cross-section of beneficiaries and SCNL staff at the Farmers' Field School Training*

Under the Liberia Forest Sector Project, (LFSP), founded by the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), and run by the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), fifteen master farmers from forest-edge communities in Grand Cape Mount County have begun an eleven-day intensive Farmers Field School (FFS) training, on cocoa production. The training which is taking place in Tahn, Grand Cape Mount County is providing a theory and practical components on cocoa production. Beneficiaries are expected to go back to their respective communities and serve as trainers for other farmers.

At the opening of the training, several local authorities from Manneh Clan were present. Tahn Town Chief, Jah Zohn welcomed the guests and participants, he wished the farmers a successful training and appreciated SCNL and FDA for the training. In remarks, Thomas Z. Binda, who proxied for Commissioner Authur M. Konneh, extended thanks to SCNL and FDA for the training.

Implementing partner, Vainga Agriculture Development & Management Consultancy, (VADEMCO) National Program Manager, G. Ambullai Perry, on behalf of VADEMCO, also appreciated SCNL for the training. “You are welcome to the official FFS training. This training is expected

to last for eleven days, and it consists of theory and practical, which has to do with cocoa production. The training will be intensive, so cooperation, energy, attention, and participation are needed from all participants for a successful training,” he said.

B. Tarnue Johnson, Acting County Agriculture Coordinator, Golakonneh District, said the opportunity provided to the farmers was important and encouraged the beneficiaries to take the process seriously. “This initiative taken by SCNL is to help you, the (farmers), and I believe when each one of you works more effectively, the training will be successful,” he mentioned.

Gwendy Boimah, Clan Chief, Manneh Clan, said besides mining, no agricultural activities were ongoing in the clan. He expressed delight in the training of the farmers. “We didn’t know anything about cocoa production, and SCNL is now introducing it to [our] people, it is welcoming”.

The clan chief further said in other areas, the production of orange, cocoa, kola nuts, etc. is ongoing, but such cash crop farming isn’t available in Manneh Clan. “Take the training SCNL is providing



***Group work ongoing at the training***

very seriously! It is an excellent opportunity for the beneficiaries because the gold and diamonds will be mined, and subsequently, nothing will be left, but when you have alternative plants like cocoa, plantain, etc. Livelihood will improve in the communities. We are serious about farming, which is why I am grateful for this training in our Clan because these beneficiaries will train other farmers. thank you,” he advised.

Richard Hoff, II, SCNL, Program Assistant, said the training is essential because some sister countries like Ghana and Ivory Coast are now ahead of Liberia in



***Group presentation***

cocoa production, but Liberia can make a comeback if farmers are trained to start mass production of cocoa.

Hoff encouraged the farmers to think big by planting more cocoa, “You become an employer because you will employ people to work on the farm. Access to the market is key in the transportation of cocoa, but SCNL is concerned about that. As efforts will be made to grant farmers easy access to the market, it is important to now focus more on production”.

He told the farmers when they are trained, and go out in the communities, they should be patient when training other farmers. On behalf of the Executive Director, Mr. Michael F. Garbo, and the Program Manager, Mr. Michael E. Taire, Mr. Hoff congratulated the participants and wished them a successful training.



***Mr. Richard Hoff, II, speaking during the opening of the training***

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOLUR PROJECT HAS BEGUN WITH FIELD ASSESSMENTS

*COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME*



*After the inception meeting with clans leadership of Mano river Kongo*

The Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) has begun the implementation of the FOLUR Project with its first assessment trip to Northwestern Liberia. The FOLUR Project seeks to promote biodiversity and sustainable food systems for enhanced livelihood opportunities in the North West Liberia landscape through land use planning, restoration of degraded lands, strengthening governance, policies, and market incentives for nationally replicable models of deforestation-free cocoa and oil palm value chains.

On the 10th of May 2022, the project was launched at the Royal Grand Hotel in Monrovia with national stakeholders present. Everyone was told the nature of the project and what is expected of them for the implementation and success of the FOLUR Project. Also, from the 29th of August to the 6th of September, 2022, there were engagement meetings held in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, Sinje, Grand Cape

Mount County, and Bopulu, the Capital of Gbarpolu County with the local government. It aimed to meet with local communities, smallholder farmers, commercial agroforestry plantation operators, and civil society organizations in the landscape.

In line with the project implementation under SCNL's activities, we planned to first do a need assessment as well as identify 'aggregators and smallholder farmers in the communities within the project landscape (Clans and districts).

On the 13th of October, 2022, the project team of five (5) left for Grand Cape Mount County for a total of 10 days. The assessment focused on two districts; the Tewor and Porkpa districts. In the Tewor district, Passawe and Fahnbulleh clans were visited, while in the Porkpa district; the Sokpo and Seimavulla clans were visited.





*SCNL Staff and community dwellers in a meeting in gbesseh before conducting the household survey*

Three meetings were held in Fahnbulleh, Passawe, Sorkpo, and Seimavualla Clans. These meetings brought together the District Commissioners, Clan Chiefs, Youth Leaders, Civil Society Organizations, Women Leaders, Oil Palm, Cocoa farmers, and Cooperatives Leaders. The first meeting was held in Teinii, and participants were from the Fahnbulleh Clan, the second meeting was held in Weilor; participants were from the Passawe Clan, while the last meeting was held in Mano River Kongo which included participants from both Sokpo and Seimavualla Clans. The total number of persons that attended the three meetings were 73 persons.

The SCNL-FOLUR team was welcomed to Grand Cape Mount County and leaders from those clans reaffirmed their willingness to work with the team and to ensure the objective of the project is achieved. An overview of the project was given by the project coordinator, Charlene Jallah Freeman. In her presentation, she highlighted the following: Those collaborating government agencies (EPA, FDA, LLA, LISGIS, and MOA), and their roles in the project, the project duration, the geographical locations which include Lofa, Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu counties, the project objectives. She also talked about the project intervention by county: direct restoration, and the implementation of community land use plans, the four components of the project, the project core indicators, and targeted stakeholders.

Hawa Biddle Dugbeh, SCNL's Gender and Safeguarding Officer spoke about the grievance mechanisms and the actors involved in handling issues arising from the field. She encouraged the communities to use the grievance mechanism platform in resolving issues relating to gender and safeguarding.

During the assessment in the Porkpa District, it was observed that the majority of the farmers are cocoa farmers and there was no oil palm farm observed during the assessment. It was also observed that the local/individual cocoa farmers did not have general farming equipment and chemicals such as pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, and fertilizers for improved cocoa production. In the communities that were visited in Porkpa, District, it was observed many of the farmers have no idea about climate-smart agriculture.

Other activities carried out during the assessment were interviewing individual farmers and also data collection done to gather information on persons with vulnerabilities, and it was realized that the majority of the vulnerable people were mostly elderly persons that have passed the age of 50 and above and their family members were the ones answering questions for them due to their inabilities to answer some key question.

# SCNL THROUGH THE LFSP DONATES 52 MOTORBIKES TO FOREST EDGE COMMUNITY DWELLERS

*IMPROVING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD, PROTECTING  
THE FOREST*



*Some of the new motorbikes presented to the community dwellers*

The Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), through the Liberia Forest Sector Project Northwest Cluster, (LFSP), funded by the Forestry Development Authority, (FDA), and the World Bank, and being implemented by SCNL, as part of an effort to preserve the Gola Forest has donated 52 motorbikes forest edge communities.

The team, on Tuesday, began distributing the brand new TVS Star Motorbikes among cooperatives and communities in Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount Counties.

At a well-attended event in the two counties, Mr. Richard Hoff, SCNL or LFSP Project Coordinator, said SCNL has developed an interest in working with community dwellers through sustainable livelihood and a good health care system for people that are

situated within and around the Gola Forest, in an effort to protect the forest.

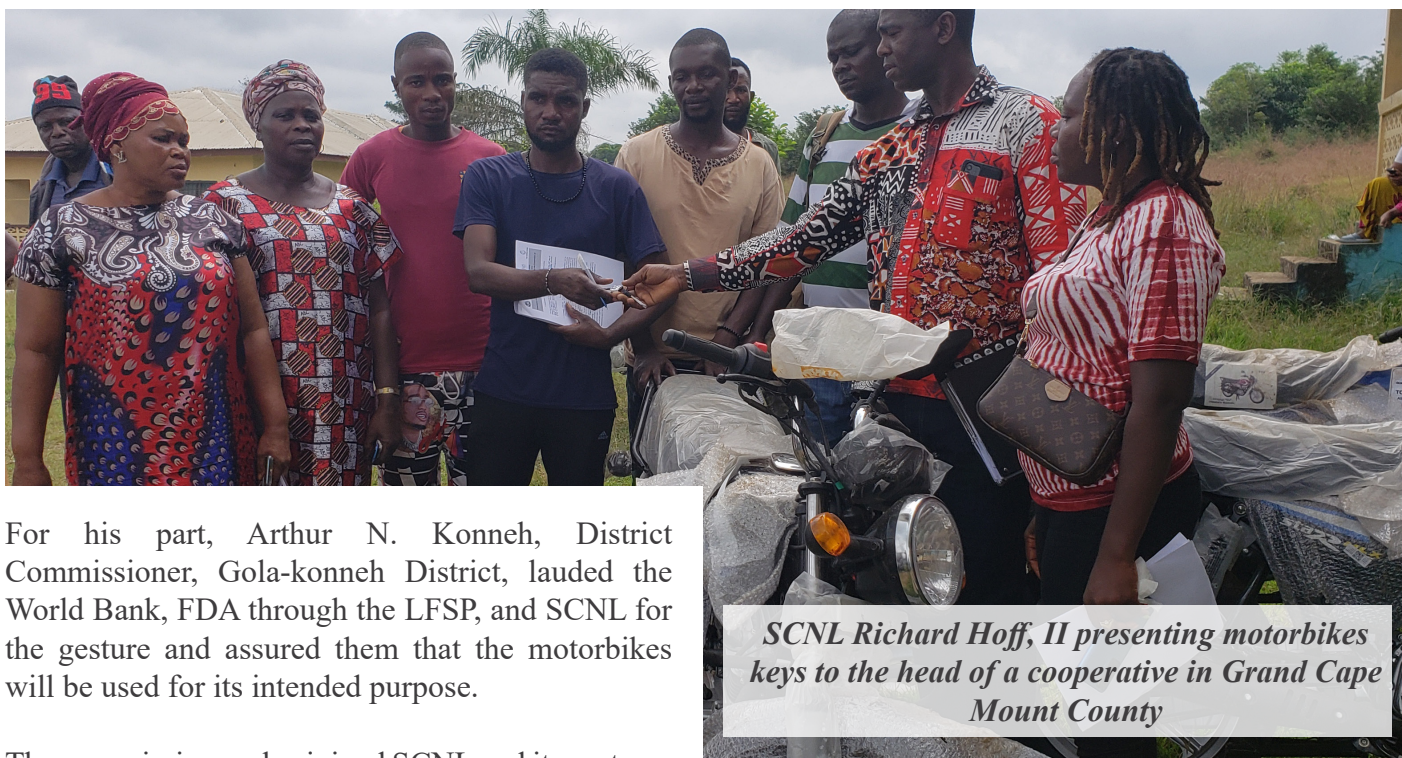
He said the 52 motorbikes will be used by each of the cooperatives to generate funds for commercial purposes, for forest edge communities as means of reducing the cutting down of trees from the forest.

“We have come to add effort to what FDA is doing to safeguard the forest by providing these motorbikes which will be used to generate money for community dwellers in an effort to stop cutting down trees in the forest,” Mr. Hoff said.

He extended thanks and appreciation to Norway, the World Bank and the FDA for their continuous partnership to protect Liberia’s forest.



*Beneficiaries along with SCNL staff*



*SCNL Richard Hoff, II presenting motorbikes keys to the head of a cooperative in Grand Cape Mount County*

For his part, Arthur N. Konneh, District Commissioner, Gola-konneh District, lauded the World Bank, FDA through the LFSP, and SCNL for the gesture and assured them that the motorbikes will be used for its intended purpose.

The commissioner also joined SCNL and its partners by calling on citizens to stop cutting down trees and encouraging them to protect the forest for future generations.

“We need to preserve the forest in other to get very good oxygen. So, on behalf of the people of Gola-konneh District, I say thank you to the World Bank, FDA, and SCNL for bringing such a good livelihood program, which is just a prelude for more good

things in other for our people to stop brushing the forest,” he said.

George Ville, Youth Chair, Tahn, praised SCNL through World Bank and the FDA for livelihood assistance. “We are happy, we can assure you that nobody will go to the forest to cut down the trees, etc.,” he added.

# IN SINOE AND GRAND BASSA COUNTIES, 120 YOUTH SELECTED TO SERVE AS ECOBRIGADE

## CREATING AN AVENUE FOR YOUTHS TO GET EMPOWERED WHILE UPKEEPING THE ENVIRONMENT



*Newly trained eco-brigade members in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County*

Humans' activities and natural disasters can create erosion and all sorts of harm to the environment. Just like many countries, the situation remains the same in Liberia. To curtail this, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), has been working with a brand of youth for environmental ecosystem protection. 120 youths, known as "Youth Eco-brigade" have been selected from Sinoe and, Grand Bassa Counties respectively to help protect the seashore and the communities. The Youth Eco-brigade in Sinoe County was named: 'Snokrol Eco-Brigade' meaning "Inside Here We Live". While the Youth Eco-brigade in Grand Bassa County was named: 'Gbehzohn Eco-Brigade'.

During the selection processes, SCNL and the local officials of the counties were present to ensure the selections were done fairly. On October 26, 2022, in Sinoe County, the selection was done at a meeting, which was graced by hundreds of stakeholders, the City Council, represented by Mr. Otis K. Seaton, Mayor of the City of Greenville, local community leaders from the forty-nine communities in Greenville, youth, as well as media representatives from ELBC and Liberty Radio (Sarah Ellis and Decontee Gleekan).

Johnson G. Koikoi, the Project Lead, SCNL, gave the background of the Project; Title: Livelihood and Employment Creation. Koikoi mentioned that the

project when implemented, will reduce poverty by 63% among young people mainly those residing in nine of the 15 counties, particularly, Greenville which continues to face environmental issues like (flooding & Sea Erosion), as well as unattainable livelihoods.

Hon. Otis K. Seton, City Mayor, Greenville embraced the establishment of 60 Youth Eco-brigade by SCNL and appreciated UNDP for supporting the project that is helping the unemployed youth of Greenville, an effort he said is buttressing the effort of Greenville City Cooperation.

On November 5, 2022, in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, where 60 Youth Eco-brigade were selected, several youths added their voices to that of the youth in Sinoe County and extended heartfelt thanks and appreciation to UNDP, SCNL and the local leadership of the counties for the volunteering program that is seeking to empower them and reduce poverty. "We are happy, ready, and willing to work. We are happy UNDP, and SCNL are helping us, we are serious youth, once we are supported, we will do our best to deliver on time," some youth said.

Michael F. Garbo, Executive Director, SCNL, making remarks, appreciated UNDP for the program, and the officials of both counties for ensuring a smooth process. He informed the selected youths, and the local officials of the city of Buchanan that the program will benefit the youths, once they work hard.

"This program is being supported by the UNDP; it is a great initiative many youths in Grand Cape Mount County have benefited from. The program is now in Buchanan, take it seriously, and work harder... the UNDP is going to provide working tools, and even train all of each of you in small business management," Mr. Garbo added.

Assistant Development Superintendent Hon. Flee A. Glay, Hon. James Y. Beyan, Manager of Buchanan City, and Madam Dorothy K. Clarke, City Chair welcomed the program and encouraged the youth



*Newly trained ecobrigade members in Greenville City, Grand Gedeh County*

not to focus on money, but be passionate and take the volunteering program much more seriously for future career growth.

On November 26, and 28, 2022, the Government of Liberia, GoL, through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, (MoC), the Environmental Protection Agency, (EPA), and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, (MoYS), with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), launched the Youth Eco-brigade program in Buchanan and Greenville.

Mr. Janjay Baikpeh, Superintendent of Grand Bassa County, who officially launched the Youth Eco-Brigade Program, said it is an opportunity for the youth to be empowered while at the same time helping to clean the port City of Buchanan and its environs.

“We had a meeting with the UNDP representative, and we asked where they could help the youth of the county, and today, we are excited to see 60 youth empowered for the benefit of Grand Bassa County. I am encouraging each of you to take ownership of the opportunity given and make use of what you learned during the training to initiate businesses that will keep the city clean,” said Mr. Janjay Baikpeh.

“The \$400.00 is a good start...you have to be an ambassador for positive change. To become an ambassador, you have to take charge of what you have, let people see your work, and keep placing you in a position of leadership. You have a greater opportunity ahead of you, so take the Youth Eco-brigade Program seriously”.

The implementing partner for the Eco-brigade, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), through its Executive Director, Mr.

Michael F. Garbo, gave the background of the Youth Eco-Brigade Program and encouraged the 120 youths participating in the program from Buchanan and Greenville to be grateful to UNDP and the Government of Liberia for the initiative.

He said the purpose of the program was to empower the young men and women to give a facelift to the two cities, calling on the local leadership and the entire citizenry of both cities to join the youths in keeping the environment clean.

“Buchanan is a lovely city in Liberia, we have to clean it, so let’s do it together. The \$400.00 you will receive is not a payment. UNDP empowers youth with business start-up funds to help you, the youth generate an income while cleaning your city”.

Gboryonon B. Z. Williams, from the GEF Small Grants Programme, urged the youth to make sure the environment is clean for healthy living. “This program is an income and livelihood alternative for you. Most times, we ask you to protect the environment, stop killing animals, etc. without providing an alternative. At UNDP, there are several programs helping to empower not only youth, but business people, and the environment. However, this program is for the youth, and we hope you make the best use of it”.

She also added that UNDP promotes a culture of engagement, where people are committed to serving their communities, promoting youth leadership for future leadership.

Samuel K. Mappy, the Coordinator/Cadet Program, on behalf of the MoYS, extended thanks to UNDP and its partners calling on the citizens, and the youth to keep cleaning and maintaining the city because only through collective means can the city’s image be changed for the better.

In Greenville, Barbara M. Keah, the Assistant Superintendent, of Sinoe County, and Mr. Otis Seton, City Mayor, of Greenville extended their warmest appreciation to UNDP, the Government of Liberia, and SCNL for empowering 60 youth in Sinoe County. Ms. Keah, who launched the Eco-brigade Program, promised to work along with the youth for the improvement of Greenville.

# SCNL AND KONGBA DISTRICT A HOLD COMMUNITIES DIALOGUE MEETING

*WORKING TOGETHER, FINDING SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY PROBLEMS*



*A cross-section of participants at the meeting*

In an effort to buttress the national government's efforts and make communities more effective in participating in land use planning, develop and respect natural resource management by-laws, including the designation of forest community conservation zones and at the same time providing sustainable livelihoods and sustainable forest management activities, the Liberia Forest Sector Project, (LFSP), through its implementing partners, the Society for the Conservation (SCNL) and the Sustainable Trade Initiative ( IDH) for the Intensification and Acceleration of Impacts by Focusing on Livelihood Development and Land Use Support to Cluster Communities in the Northwest Landscape as well as the involvement of the communities in the process. The Gbarma's Dialogue was intended to sit with the communities' key stakeholders to discuss issues trending in the landscape and find a way forward. The total number of persons in attendance was 59. There were eleven (11) females and forty-eight (48) males. The District Commissioner, Alfred O Bai, of Gbarma District, made remarks where he welcomed everyone, and thanked SCNL for calling for such a dialogue and selecting Gbarma as the venue. SCNL

Program Manager, Michael E. Taire, presented SCNL and partners' initiatives in the Gola Landscape before Key Gola Stakeholders.

In Mr. Taire's presentation, he reminded the participants that SCNL has cooperatively worked with the communities of Gola since 2009, and SCNL is not prepared to, ever leave because the [empowerment and improvement] of the lives of the communities matter to SCNL. He admonished the participants to always reach out to SCNL through the sub-offices or head office in Monrovia if there are grievances that need intervention. The program manager then said the doors of SCNL have always been opened and will continue to be opened to address the concerns of the communities

The Executive Director of SCNL, Mr. Michael F. Garbo added his voice to the presentation and thanked the communities for accepting the invitation for the dialogue.

He said, "SCNL and the communities are like tooth and tongue, they will fight but yet none can live



*A cross-section of participants at the meeting*

without the other”. He said the communities have been very cooperative and nothing should stop the level of cooperation that has existed. He reaffirmed the openness of SCNL’s doors to them for discussion on matters trending in the landscape. He pinpointed a few of the livelihood interventions that are about to kick off by the funds of LFSP and among those are: Provision of motorbikes to some communities, solar light installation in some communities, renovation of Townhalls and schools, and the building of one major bridge on the Kongba Road. On the issue of the road, Mr. Garbo said, he will continue to knock on the doors of the national government and other partners to see the need to intervene someday as the matter of the road cannot be handled by one company or NGO like SCNL.

The Acting Clan chief, of Tonglay, Mr. Elijah Nyonkeh, thanked SCNL for the level of support since 2009 and most importantly for the support given to them for their community Forest legally being established. He said the bad road condition is a major concern and wants SCNL to see what can be done to make the road pliable for vehicles. He was buttressed by the Town Chief of Normon, Joseph Varney. Mr. Varney said SCNL has taught them too many good things about the importance of the forest and due to this massive awareness along with the livelihood provided to the citizens, they have

stopped those who used to cross over from Sierra Leone to farm and hunt in their forest.

The office of the Representative, Hon. Joseph Matthew was represented by his chief of office staff, Mr. Zwanah Boima Dono. He thanked SCNL and the community for turning out and flagging the issue of the bad road. He said, Hon. Matthews is working hard to make sure benefits come to them in kongba as he will continue to engage the national government and partners to intervene.

In Response, SCNL’s Science and Conservation Coordinator, Jerry C. Garteh, thanked the community for their participation in the meeting and flagged the recent recruitment of women eco guards to help protect the environment. Mr. Michael F. Garbo admonished the citizens of being mindful of concession companies that are currently operating in Camp Alpha. “The community should also try to sit with the companies to see what the concession contract says and what they are doing to benefit the communities. These things must be clear in the minds of the communities to avoid the company robbing the citizens of their desired benefits,” he added.



This Newsletter was produced and published by the Communication, Policy and Advocacy Department of the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL).

Production: **Clara K. Mallah**, Communication, Policy Advocacy Officer

Editor: **Mr. Michael E. Taire**, Program Manager

**Layout and Design:** Dorlas Visuals

Copyright © 2022 by the Society for the conservation of Nature of Liberia

All rights reserved:

This book or parts therefore may not be reproduced in any form, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or without prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright laws. For permission requests, write to the publisher.

**Oldest Congo Town, Opposite the Nigerian House | Monrovia, Liberia**

**Tel: +231 886 573 612 | +231 886 511 138 | Email: [info@scnlliberia.org](mailto:info@scnlliberia.org)**

**Website: [www.scnlliberia.org](http://www.scnlliberia.org)**

