

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2009)

Project Ref. No.	16-010
Project Title	Wildlife Wood Project
Country(ies)	Ghana and Cameroon
UK Organisation	Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
Collaborator(s)	<i>UK</i> – Timbmet <i>Ghana</i> – JCM, LLL and Samartex (SAX) timber companies; Ghana Forestry Commission; University of Ghana (Legon); KNUST <i>Cameroon</i> – Pallisco and SFID (Group Rougier) timber companies; MINFOF; University of Yaoundé I; CRESA; CIFOR
Project Leader	<i>Mr Chris Ransom and Dr Noelle Kumpel</i>
Report date	<i>1st April to 30th September 2009</i>
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR 3</i>
Project website	www.zsl.org/wildlifewoodproject

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

During the reporting period we continued to carry out extensive field work in both countries, identifying wildlife indicators and testing their suitability as part of a monitoring programme ahead of full analysis and preparation of recommendations for timber companies for incorporation into their concession management plans:

Ghana. Research has focused on comparing wildlife community status in unlogged forest with regenerating forest, trialling a range of methodologies, training Wildlife Department staff and involving workers recruited from local communities, timber company staff and Ghanaian universities. Responses to logging activities across a range of taxa have been evaluated:

- 1) *Bird communities (via aural detections/Distance sampling)* – having finished his fieldwork in November 2008, University of Ghana (Legon) student Nathaniel Annorbah submitted his MPhil thesis in June and is currently preparing a manuscript for submission to a peer-reviewed journal;
- 2) *Understory bird communities (via mist net sampling)* – 20,000 mist-net-hours were completed during the reporting period by the project manager and a trained team of community assistants;
- 3) *Hornbills (via playback surveys)* – surveys were carried out in April and May by University of Ghana contractor Dr Lars Holbeck and Wildlife Division staff;
- 4) *Mammal communities (via reconnaissance surveys and camera trap sampling)* - reconnaissance surveys involving ZSL team members, SAX staff and Wildlife Division staff and led by Dr Sylvain Gatti of West African Primate Conservation Action took place from May to August 2009 with camera trap surveys ongoing;
- 5) *Amphibians (via direct searches/sampling)* - KNUST MPhil student Adum Gilbert Baase has led local survey teams and his thesis is in preparation;
- 6) *Vegetation structure and composition (via direct sampling)* – these were run concurrently with the understory bird surveys.

Cameroon. The most significant achievement was the completion in October 2009 of a one-year biomonitoring program in both Pallisco's and SFID's logging concessions, carried out by the timber companies' own biomonitoring teams, allowing an assessment of the short-term impacts on wildlife of logging activities under two management schemes. To determine appropriate wildlife monitoring method(s) in timber concessions, four main studies took place during this reporting period, carried out by the biomonitoring teams, ZSL staff and students from University of Yaounde I, CRESA and Imperial College London:

- 1) *Comparing diurnal surveys of indirect signs of wildlife with nocturnal surveys of direct signs using the Pallisco and SFID biomonitoring databases;*

- 2) *Testing camera traps as a wildlife monitoring tool in timber concessions;*
- 3) *Comparing wildlife abundance estimates obtained through reconnaissance surveys with linear transect surveys in logged forests - we have also been developing innovative methods, adapting the recce technique to allow the use of the Distance Sampling method to estimate absolute densities and are currently carried out detailed analyses of these data;*
- 4) *Identification of core chimpanzee areas as areas of High Conservation Value (HCV) – a new technique has been developed to identify chimpanzee communities and map their territories for inclusion as HCV sites by forest managers according to FSC's Principles, Criteria and Indicators; data collection will be conducted up to mid-November.*

Socio-economic research has been ongoing during the reporting period. UCL PhD student, Bjorn Schulte-Herbruggen, completed his field work in Ghana and submitted a report to project partners of his preliminary findings on the importance of bushmeat for livelihoods of cocoa farmers within a timber concession. In Cameroon a report on bushmeat harvest volume, consumption, trade and dependency in villages along the road separating Pallisco and SFID's concessions was completed by contractor Julius Tieguhong. Furthermore, a study was carried out focused on the consumption of bushmeat in Pallisco's worker camp and the effectiveness of the company's supply of alternative sources of protein and attempts to limit its impact on local wildlife. The report of this study is currently in preparation.

Capacity building has continued in the form of field training for wildlife department and timber company staff and supervision of Masters students. Three new students have joined the project in Cameroon, making up a total of 8 students being supervised over the WWP's lifetime. Students and logging company staff have been trained in wildlife/socio-economic survey methodology, data collection in the field and the use of Microsoft Excel, Word and GIS Software ArcView for analysis and report writing.

In order to raise awareness of the need for effective wildlife management and conservation actions in and around logging concessions, a roadshow informing logging company staff and local communities about the threats to biodiversity and the legal context of the exploitation of wildlife resources in the project area has been set up in Cameroon with a local NGO. Pallisco has contributed financially to this by purchasing the majority of the roadshow material. A radio programme announcing the launch of this activity and the role of the Wildlife Wood Project (WWP) in improving wildlife management in logging concessions was also produced and broadcast in the project area in Cameroon.

Preliminary data have been presented to international audiences at the UK Bushmeat Working Group in June, the American Ornithologists' Union annual meeting in the USA in August and a WWF/FSC workshop in Yaounde in September. We have continued to send monthly update newsletters by email to colleagues and partners in both Ghana and Cameroon disseminating project activities and results in both countries. An updated WWP project information sheet has been produced and disseminated. A regularly updated project web blog has been put online (<http://www.zslblogs.org/?cat=47>).

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Ghana. Implementation of the MOU with SAX has expanded our activities and area of operation, with additional project sites added in this final year of the project. This has meant that several months of data collection remain and the research timetable will extend into the final reporting period, running alongside ongoing analysis and interpretation. During this reporting period some unforeseen repairs to the project vehicle were required (~4 weeks/~£1500), which restricted our field activities during this period.

Cameroon. Progress has been slow in establishing a strong and effective relationship with MINFOF, the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife. Although we have very good contacts with decentralized delegations of MINFOF in the local towns of Abong Mbang and Mindourou, we have yet to formalise an MOU with the central administration. A file including a draft MOU was submitted to MINFOF several months ago but no response has been forthcoming. Progress has also been slow in formalising ZSL's presence in Cameroon through the Ministry of External Relations (MINREX) which claims to have lost our files. This lack of a formalised partnership with MINFOF has meant we have been unable to train government rangers in wildlife monitoring techniques in Cameroon. The MOUs will be pursued over the next months.

As a consequence of the global economic downturn and SFID's inability to provide the project with sufficient staff, we have been unable to set up a study site in Djoum where SFID is running a second sawmill (in the south of Cameroon) as planned. This has meant that the project has concentrated its

research work in the east of the country.	
Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?	
Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	no/yes, in..... (month/yr)
Changes to the project schedule/workplan:	no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

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

No – apart from responses to Annual Report Review Comments below.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**