

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2011)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	17-014
<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Development of a Cross-Sectoral Environmental Governance Platform for the Nimba Mountains</b>
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Liberia; Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Fauna & Flora International
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Mano River Union (MRU)  Sustainable Thriving Environments for West African Resource Development (STEWARD) - a program supported by the US Forestry and Wildlife Service.  Conservation International, Centre for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB)  Conservation International (CI) - Liberia  Société des Mines de Fer de Guinée (SMFG), Guinea Government of Guinea – Environmental Management Authority for Nimba and Simandou  Centre de Gestion de l'Environnement des Monts Nimba et Simandou – (CEGENS)  Union des Volontaires pour le Développement Intégré de Zontompiézo, Guinea UVODIZ  Aide Universelle pour le Développement de la Nouvelle Génération, Guinea AUDNG  Arcelor Mittal, Liberia  The Forest Development Authority (FDA), Liberia The Environmental Protection Agency, Liberia (EPA) Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL) The National Environmental Agency, Cote d'Ivoire
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Pippa Howard</i>
<b>Report date</b>	<i>31 October 2011</i>
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	<i>HYR3</i>
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.nimbadarwin.org">www.nimbadarwin.org</a>

**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).**

2.1 Gathering the data and issues raised in previous in-countries workshops, consolidating and assessing to help identify the priority themes for the platform. This data includes the commissioning of a Nimba Atlas, on a GIS platform, to enable interrogation and access for the future SEA and SMP.

2.2, 3.2 An important Transboundary visit between Liberia and Guinea was organised for community stakeholders at the request of the Nimba County Superintendant to the DI project. The purpose of this transboundary visit was to show the stakeholders from Liberia the progress in activities occurring within Guinea Nimba. The 3 day visit was organised and delivered by the two project field officers (Gondo Gbanyangbé and James Kpadehyea). A return visit between community stakeholders in Guinea to Liberia is also planned in the latter part of the project.

3.2 & 3.3, 5.1 & 5.2 During the last 6 months both of the DI project field staff have been using a questionnaire developed to work with previously identified stakeholders (as a result of the stakeholder mapping process) towards the production of the Collaborative Management Framework (CMF). One of the STEWARD (Sustainable Thriving Environments for West African Resource Development) field staff joined the programme to work with the two DI field staff in the production of the preliminary report on the CMF. Such collaboration resulted in \$27,200 of funding secured from the STEWARD programme towards the development of the CMF. This work is currently ongoing. The DI project continues to work alongside the Manu River Union (MRU) following the MoU signed earlier in the year.

3.3 Strategic meetings have been held with companies interested in resource extraction from the Nimba Mountains, notably ArcelorMittal, BHP Billiton and SMFG. The project has registered its interest in independent review of the EIA's being undertaken by these mining corporations and assisting the regulatory authorities in the development of required capacity to undertake their own reviews. ArcelorMittal have agreed to continue to provide their EIA survey data as a contribution towards the development of the Nimba Atlas. The project continues to seek equivalent data from Cote D'Ivoire and Guinea.

4.1, 4.4, & 4.5 The Newmont mining company (possibly in collaboration with BHP Billiton) has pledged support (£70,000) to fund a training course in the new year organised by the DI project and to be delivered by Dr. Jo Treweek. This training course was originally planned for the last quarter of 2011, however due to the political situation in Cote d'Ivoire and the Liberian National election (October 11-26<sup>th</sup>) it was felt best to postpone and deliver when key partners are available.

4.6 A workshop is planned in Cote d'Ivoire jointly organised by the DI project, the Ivorian Offices of Parks and Reserves (OIPR), and the STEWARD programme. This was intended to be held on October but has been postponed due to the Liberian General election (see below).

5.3 The DI has been invited to be part of the Liberian Government delegation for the Commission to UNESCO at the UNESCO agm in Paris in late October/early November. This opportunity will serve to promote the Transboundary Boundary Biodiversity Governance Platform and seek long-term support for the project.

5.3 An application to the FFI Rapid Response Facility has been made by the DI project on behalf of OIPR as a result of the political instability in the country. During the recent conflict in Cote d'Ivoire the Nimba offices of OIPR were ransacked and all equipment either destroyed or stolen. If successful this will help re-build these offices towards the protection of the Nimba World Heritage Site.

6.1 Website constantly being updated ([www.nimbadarwin.org](http://www.nimbadarwin.org)) to improve the communication strategy and disseminate results.

6.4 An article detailing the recent activities of the project was recently published in the Darwin newsletter ([http://darwin.defra.gov.uk/newsletter/DARWIN\\_NEWS\\_18.pdf](http://darwin.defra.gov.uk/newsletter/DARWIN_NEWS_18.pdf)).

**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.**

1. SMFG have started their exploratory mining phase on Nimba between Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire. This is in the middle of the WHS and is likely to cause a very significant impact on the area

2. Cote d'Ivoire has experienced significant political unrest during the past 6 month – this has impacted on field work to this region, delaying workshop schedule. It has also resulted in the offices of OIPR being ransacked. As a result the DI project is applying for FFI's Rapid Response Facility (RRF) funds to assist refurbishing the OIPR offices in Nimba towards the protection of the Nimba WHS.

3. Due to the Liberian National election (11<sup>th</sup> October and expected run-off 26<sup>th</sup> October) field activities (such as the planned workshop in Cote d'Ivoire) have been postponed until November due to border closures.

4. SMFG has begun extensive biodiversity baseline monitoring surveys for the Nimba Mountain – focusing on their concession in Guinea. This will provide significant new data to the Nimba Atlas and all indications are that we will receive the base data by year end to complement existing data for Liberia. This data is fundamental for the integrated management plan for the Nimba Mountains.

**Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

NA

**Discussed with LTS:** no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

**Formal change request submitted:** no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

**Received confirmation of change acceptance** no/yes in.....(month/yr)

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

Yes  No

**If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.**

**Estimated carryforward request:** £

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

Not at this stage