

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	24-004
Project title:	Conserving critical forest biodiversity in Guinea through sustainable agricultural livelihoods
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Guinea
Lead organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Partner(s)	L'Institut de Recherche Agronomique de Guinée (IRAG) and Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré (CFZ)
Project leader	<i>Laura Fox</i>
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>31st October 2017 HRY1</i>
Project website/blog/social media etc.	<i>www.fauna-flora.org</i>

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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 to end September).

Overarching:

The sub-grant agreement was set up, officially translated and signed between IRAG and FFI. A project manager has been recruited to be based at the project site. She cannot start until the 1st February 2018. An interim project manager has been appointed to be based at the project site from October to end December 2017.

Output 1:

1.1 Inception workshops and participatory design of agricultural extension package with beneficiary farmers including soil and weed mapping to match annual and perennial crops to best locations according to available lands (Q3):

The three extension workers who will set up the field schools and work with the communities have now been selected. Design of the agricultural extension package is underway and this has been desk based to date and not yet taken to the communities for participatory design. The official inception workshops with the communities are being planned for Y1 Q3.

Output 2:

2.1 Identify with village councils and CFZ land in the transition zone for those direct beneficiary farmers that need it, ensure harmonisation of the process within community and establish culturally appropriate agreements for long term use of the land (Y1)

2.2 Review condition of land provided, identify appropriate annual and perennial crops, select appropriate farming methods with beneficiary farmers and prepare the land including managing weeds and increasing fertility through planting of 'mucuna'.

2.3 Establish project baselines, gender disaggregated from bas-fonds crops and monitor annually for direct beneficiary farmers

2.4 Ground truth, update design and implement agricultural transition plan, incorporating

agricultural extension plan, in participation with direct beneficiary target farmers including mapping shifting labour roles and responsibilities for women and men, support to enhance and shift to self-selected annual and tree crops etc. to ensure feasibility and ownership of the plan

Activities under Output 2 are now scheduled to start in Q3Y1.

Output 3:

3.2 CFZ ranger staff conduct regular patrols of bas-fonds and attend bas-fond users association meetings on a regular basis to update users and ensure a strong and harmonious dialogue with communities.

Regular monthly patrols have been conducted by the patrol posts to monitor any expansion of bas-fonds. We are in the process of re-evaluating these patrols so that they are more in line with the project objectives, in particular those posts which cover the four pilot villages. A map is being drawn up to identify which bas-fonds are in the different sectors covered by each post. Two rangers from each patrol post will also be selected to attend all meetings and as observers to the field schools. This will increase capacity within CFZ.

3.3 Provide training on environmental impacts of herbicide and pesticide use in water systems and safe application to bas fond associations in 4 villages and beyond (Q2 going into Q3)

IRAG do not have existing training packages on this topic. We are trying to identify national expertise on this, particularly through the universities. No progress made on this activity in Q2 and it is likely that any training will be pushed back to Y1Q4.

3.4 Conduct baseline survey for water quality in targeted bas fonds and repeat survey in year four (Q1 going into Q2)

Research is underway to find the most appropriate and cost effective technique to conduct the water quality survey. IRAG are also reaching out to their staff in Kankan location who specialise in irrigation systems to see what they recommend. We are in the process of contacting hydrological departments at various universities in N'Zerekore, Kankan and Conakry to organise testing and analysis of water samples. These activities will continue into Y1Q3 and Q4.

Output 4:

4.1 Develop restoration plan incorporating identification of suitable cost effective methods for enhancing the restoration of bas-fonds based on successful work by CFZ to date including assisted and natural restoration and identification of suitable species to be planted as feasible, based on various suitability criteria including potential to increase forest cover and attract wildlife species to the sites (Q3)

FFI and CFZ have started to review what plans CFZ have in place for restoring degraded forest areas.

4.2 Develop baselines for a selection of indicators including ground cover / density of woody vegetation/ species richness depending on conditions found in bas-fonds areas to be restored (Q3)

This activity will get underway in Y1Q3 and Q4.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.

We have recruited a project manager but she is not able to start until 1st February 2018. We have an interim project manager in place from October 2017 to end December 2017.

A new Director has been appointed to head CFZ. She only took up her post earlier this month and is in the process of settling in.

This has meant that activities have been delayed in starting in the field and we will assess in early December if we are able to catch up on all activities and budget spend by 1st March 2018.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

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

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any **planned** modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**