

Applicant: **Garbo, Michael**
Organisation: **Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)**
Funding Sought: **£409,994.00**
Funding Awarded: **£409,994.00**

DIR26S2\1011

27-011 Building an investment model enabling citizens to protect Liberia's forests.

We will generate evidence that community-managed small loan programmes paired with targeted forest-friendly livelihood training can form a sustainable and scalable funding model to empower communities, reduce poverty and conserve vital habitat in Liberia's Community Forests (CFs). Loan interest will fund Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) to protect high conservation value forests. Evidence generated will support the design and establishment of a ≥£1 million social-environmental investment fund to capitalise 12 CF loan and CCT programmes across the transboundary Gola landscape (Liberia/Sierra Leone).

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Mr
Name	Michael
Surname	Garbo
Website (Work)	scnliberia.org
Tel (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title Mr
Name Michael
Surname Garbo
Website (Work) [Redacted]
Tel (Work) [Redacted]
Email (Work) [Redacted]
Address [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)
Phone (Work)	[Redacted]
Email (Work)	[Redacted]
Address	[Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]

Section 2 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

Q3. Project title:

27-011 Building an investment model enabling citizens to protect Liberia's forests.

What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. DIR26S1\100123

DIR26S1\1550

Q4. Country(ies)

Which eligible country(ies) will your project be working in? Where there are more than 4 countries that your project will be working in, please add more boxes using the selection option below.

Country 1	Liberia	Country 2	No Response
Country 3	No Response	Country 4	No Response

Do you require more fields?

No

Q5. Project dates

Start date:

01 April 2020

End date:

31 March 2023

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):

3 years

Q6. Budget summary

Year:	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total request
Amount:	£94,232.00	£198,755.00	£117,007.00	£ 409,994.00

Q6a. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

Total project costs = £ [REDACTED]

Partners will provide £ [REDACTED] of project costs (30%). Of these:

- SCNL will provide £ [REDACTED] in the form of staff salaries and operating costs.
- RSPB will provide £ [REDACTED] in the form of staff salaries and consultancy fees.
- Environmental Finance will provide £ [REDACTED] in the form of consultancy fees.

Q6b. Proposed (confirmed and unconfirmed) matched funding as % of total project cost (total cost is the Darwin request plus other funding required to run the project).

30%

Section 3 - Project Summary

Q7. Summary of project

Please provide a brief summary of your project, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking. Please note that if you are successful, this wording may be used by Defra in communications e.g. as a short description of the project on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Please write this summary for a non-technical audience.

We will generate evidence that community-managed small loan programmes paired with targeted forest-friendly livelihood training can form a sustainable and scalable funding model to empower communities, reduce poverty and conserve vital habitat in Liberia’s Community Forests (CFs). Loan interest will fund Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) to protect high conservation value forests. Evidence generated will support the design and establishment of a ≥£1 million social-environmental investment fund to capitalise 12 CF loan and CCT programmes across the transboundary Gola landscape (Liberia/Sierra Leone).

Section 4 - Lead Organisation Summary

Q8. Lead organisation summary

Has your organisation been awarded a Darwin Initiative or IWT Challenge Fund award before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

No

If no, please provide the below information on the lead organisation.

What year was your organisation established/ incorporated/ registered? 01 January 1986

What is the legal status of your organisation? NGO

How is your organisation currently funded? SCNL is primarily funded through project grants. We also implement consultancy contracts, collect membership fees, sell SCNL-related items, and receive a small amount of core funding from the RSPB.

Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. Large organisations please note that this should describe your unit or department.

Aims

Vision: Liberia's biodiversity is effectively managed and wisely used.

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

Ensuring communities benefit from sustainable development of nature is central to our work

Activities

- Establish protected areas (PAs).
- Advocate for more PAs.
- Support communities to establish Community Forests (CF) with conservation zones.
- Raise awareness about biodiversity, climate change and other environmental issues.
- Implement rainforest-friendly livelihoods activities with communities around PAs and CFs.
- Monitor Important Bird Areas (IBAs).

Achievements

1987: First registered Liberian conservation NGO.
1999-2002: Establishment and management of Sapo National Park.
2011: Contributed to establishment of trans-boundary Peace Park.
2016: Established Gola Forest National Park (GFNP).
2015-2019: Establishment of first Community Forests in Gola Forest.
2012-2019: Introduction of rainforest-friendly livelihood activities.
2019: Development of GFNP management plan.

Provide details of 3 contracts/projects held by the lead organisation that demonstrate your credibility as an organisation and provide track record relevant to the project proposed.

These contracts/awards should have been held in the last 5 years and be of a similar size to the grant requested in your Darwin application.

Contract/Project 1 Title

Establishing the Gola Forest National Park: the second National Park in Liberia

Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)

██████ USD

Duration (e.g. 2 years 3 months)

3 years (Sept 2015-September 2018)

Role of organisation in project

Lead applicant and implementer of project funded by Rainforest Trust. We advocated for and supported the Liberian government to create the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) – the second national park in Liberia. We carried out community consultations, negotiated the boundary, and developed the management plan.

Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project

We delivered the following outcomes:

- Communities inside and neighbouring the proposed GFNP fully consulted on the gazettement of GFNP.
- GFNP declared and launched by Government of Liberia, forming an integral part of transboundary stewardship of the Greater Gola Landscape.
- Boundary of the GFNP physically demarcated with concrete pillars and signage.
- GFNP financing plan developed.
- GFNP management plan developed. This identifies areas of high conservation value as well as potential community use zones and collaborative forest management areas.
- Government and civil society staff capacity to operationalise the GFNP increased.

Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)

Our contact was Sally Lahm [REDACTED] SCNL and Rainforest Trust are finalising another grant beginning Jan 2020. Our contact now is Bryan Curran [REDACTED]

Contract/Project 2 Title

Securing Liberian forest connectivity through community forest management and innovative financing mechanisms (GolaMa).

Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)

[REDACTED] EUR

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)

6 years

Role of organisation in project

As co-applicant and main implementing partner we were responsible for day-to-day project implementation, particularly engagement with communities and liaison with government officials. We ran the project office, employed and managed project staff, hired sub-contractors to support Tonglay and Normon clans to establish Community Forests and improve livelihoods.

Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project

Main outcome: Normon and Tonglay Clans each established a Community Forest with conservation zones, thereby improving livelihoods and securing an internationally important forest corridor.

Specific outcomes:

- Community forests established with well-defined boundaries, effective governance structures, and agreed rules for management.
- Forest communities benefitting from new, rainforest-friendly income-generating activities including small loans, intensive lowland rice and groundnut production, rainforest-friendly cocoa production, beekeeping, adult literacy.
- Biomonitoring of the CFs established and community members trained.
- Commercial bushmeat hunting reduced in project area.
- Artisanal miners engaged in CF process and organising themselves to more fully benefit from CF establishment.

Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)

European Union contact: David Palacios,

[REDACTED]

We are part of a consortium implementing another 3-year EU project (starting January 2020) to conserve the Gola Forest.

Contract/Project 3 Title

West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC): Community Landscape Management to Reduce Deforestation and Biodiversity Loss in the Gola Transboundary Forest Landscape

Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)

[REDACTED] USD

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)

3 years 3 months

Role of organisation in project

As co-applicant and only implementing partner in Liberia we are responsible for day-to-day project implementation, particularly engagement with communities and liaison with government officials. We run the project office, employ and manage project staff, hire sub-contractors to support the Sokpo Clan to establish 2 Community Forests and improve livelihoods.

Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project

The Gola WA BiCC project is a transboundary collaboration that contributes to the long-term sustainable management of the Transboundary (Sierra Leone/Liberia) Peace Park and surrounding forests of the Gola Forest Landscape.

In Liberia, we are:

- Working with the Sokpo Clan to establish 2 Community Forests.
- Introducing new, rainforest-friendly income-generating activities including small loans, intensive lowland rice and groundnut production, rainforest-friendly cocoa production, beekeeping.
- Working with colleagues in Sierra Leone, government and civil society, to establish structures to conserve manage the transboundary Gola Forest Landscape.

Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)

WA BiCC Chief of Party: Stephen Kelleher,

WA BiCC Technical Manager: Nouhou Ndam

WA BiCC is implemented by consultants TetraTech with USAID funding.

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts? If you select "yes" you will be able to upload these. Note that this is not required from Government Agencies.

No

If no, please provide details.

We have provided the requested accounts for 2016, 2017. The 2018 audit is underway, to be completed early December and will then be sent on.

Section 5 - Project Partners

Q9. Project partners

Please list all the partners involved (including the Lead Organisation) and explain their roles and responsibilities in the project. Describe the extent of their involvement at all stages, including project development.

This section should illustrate the capacity of partners to be involved in the project. Please provide Letters of Support for the Lead Organisation and each partner or explain why this has not been included.

N.B: There is a file upload button at the bottom of this page for the upload of a cover letter (if applicable) and all letters of support.

Lead Organisation name: Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)

Website address: <https://www.scnlliberia.org/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

SCNL is Liberia's leading civil society conservation organisation and the Liberia partner of BirdLife International. We have a 30-year history of promoting responsible stewardship of Liberia's outstanding natural resources in partnership with communities. While we work throughout Liberia, our activities are focused on the Gola Forest. SCNL was responsible for the gazettelement of the Gola Forest National Park in 2016, Liberia's second national park, and contributed to the gazettelement of the third national park, Grebo Krahn. We are particularly proud of our commitment to community engagement in these efforts. We also have significant experience in community forestry, currently working with 3 clans to negotiate the 9-step legal process to establish 4 CFs as well as in supporting community sustainable livelihoods (including the production of cocoa, honey, ground nuts and lowland rice). SCNL will lead this project, using existing trained staff, who are already working with the Tonglay and Normon clans to further the community forestry programme and will continue to do so using grants from the EU and Rainforest Trust (January 2020-December 2023). These teams are made up of staff with experience in community forestry, livelihoods support, biomonitoring and monitoring and evaluation (see detail provided in SCNL staff CVs).

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

Have you provided a cover letter to address your Stage 1 feedback? Yes

Do you have partners involved in the Project?

Yes

1. Partner Name: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Website address: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

RSPB is the UK partner of BirdLife International, collaborating with SCNL since 2009 to conserve the Gola Forest. RSPB will continue to provide technical and financial support to SCNL to carry out the Darwin programme. Specifically, in this project RSPB will:

- Support the development of a partnership between EF and SCNL by providing significant matched funding for EF staff time and also some RSPB staff time from the sustainable finance team (Jake DiPaolo). Outside of this project, RSPB has contracted Environmental Finance to help reduce reliance on grant funding by creating long-term sustainable financing schemes and we hope to share lessons learned with the BirdLife partners for whom we act as a supporting partner.
- Support the SCNL project leader and co-ordinator in the delivery of their first Darwin project by providing 10% of Anne Gardner's time as co-leader (Anne is the project manager of the previous and also the new EU projects).

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

2. Partner Name:

Environmental Finance Limited (EF)

Website address:

<https://www.environmentalfinance.co.uk/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

EF is the UK's leading environmental impact investment advisor, with experience of designing >£150 million of social-environmental impact funds. Informed by evidence gathered through the Darwin programme, EF will work with SCNL and RSPB to design an investable model for delivering an expanded small loan and Citizen Conservation Team programme in 12 Community Forests across the Gola transboundary region.

EF's team brings a wealth of experience from finance, investment, fund management, engineering and charity sector backgrounds. EF works with key partners across the conservation industry to design and deliver funding models for the benefit of people and nature. Its work to date includes the design and delivery of a "Blue Impact Fund" in partnership with WWF UK, supporting impact investment in marine and coastal communities; advising the RSPB across a range of conservation investment programmes; and the development of a "Natural Environment Impact Fund" for DEFRA.

EF currently manages over £50 million of impact funds. These include Community Owned Renewable Energy (CORE), a £50 million investment fund launched in 2017 that acquires solar assets in partnership with and benefitting communities; and PICNIC, a £3.3 million impact fund launched in 2019 investing in the UK's urban parks and green spaces.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

3. Partner Name: Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs)

Website address: None

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The CFMBs, appointed by the elected Community Assembly and Executive Committee, oversee the activities and management of the Community Forests.

In this project, the CFMBs will manage the small loan programme within the communities, using established sub-committees to administer the funds, and monitor funded activities. With support from SCNL staff, the CFMBs will also be responsible for overseeing the creation and management of Citizen Conservation Teams, groups that will work to protect areas of high conservation value forest in the CFs on an ongoing basis through patrolling, bio-monitoring and environmental education.

Three rounds of loans have tested the communities' ability to administer these loans with repayment rates currently at over 99%. Supported by SCNL staff with training and ongoing mentoring, the members of the CFMBs have built their capacity over the past two years to carry out their roles and responsibilities and will receive further training and support as part of this project.

We provide letters of support from the two Community Forest Management Bodies (Tonglay and Norman CFMBs) and from three loan groups (Together we will do it, Togetherness and Faith) representative of the 26 that are currently part of the programme.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

4. Partner Name: Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

Website address: <http://www.fda.gov.lr/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) is a State Corporation with the mandate to sustainably manage and conserve all forest resources for the benefit of present and future generations of Liberians. As such, the FDA has oversight responsibility for all forest-related activities in Liberia. SCNL and RSPB are strong partners of the FDA and have been collaborating closely for many years.

The FDA is organised into three departments – conservation, community and commercial (“the three C’s”). Two FDA staff, one each from the conservation and community departments, have acted as FDA focal points for previous project and will serve in the same capacity for this project. These staff participate in management activities such as planning, monitoring and evaluation, and play a key liaison role between the FDA and other partners.

Additionally, regional staff of the FDA participate in community forestry activities in the Gola region. While the regional office is small and therefore relies on partners to lead on many activities, the Regional Forester herself is from the Gola region, is well-respected in the communities, and contributes significantly to the community forestry process. The FDA supports this project and is particularly interested in finding mechanisms for sustainable financing of Community Forests.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

5. Partner Name: *No Response*

Website address: *No Response*

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project): *No Response*

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes
 No

6. Partner Name: *No Response*

Website address: *No Response*

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):





No Response





Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes No

If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

No Response

Please provide a cover letter responding to feedback received at Stage 1 if applicable and a combined PDF of all letters of support.

 [SCNL Darwin Letters of Support R26S2 1550](#)
 04/12/2019
 13:08:17
 pdf 4.3 MB

 [SCNL R26S2 1550 Response to Stage 1 comments](#)
 04/12/2019
 13:07:58
 pdf 5.15 MB

Section 6 - Project Staff

Q10. Key project staff

Please identify the key project personnel on this project, their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Please provide 1 page CVs for these staff, or a 1 page job description or Terms of Reference for roles yet to be filled. These should match the names and roles in the budget spreadsheet.

If your team is larger than 12 people please review if they are core staff, or whether you can merge roles (e.g. 'admin and finance support') below, but provide a full table based on this template in the pdf of CVs you provide.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Michael Garbo	Project Leader	10	Checked
Anne Gardner	RSPB Project co-leader	10	Checked
Emmanuel Smith	SCNL Project coordinator	25	Checked
Lawrence Sherbo	SCNL Community mobilisation officer	100	Checked





Do you require more fields?

Yes

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Gbeadeh Emmanuel	SCNL Community mobilisation officer	100	Checked
To be appointed	SCNL Community mobilisation officer	100	Checked
Abraham Flomo	SCNL Research technician	100	Checked
Jamesetta Chaesar	SCNL Monitoring and evaluation officer	50	Checked
Saybah Massa	SCNL Financial Officer	100	Checked
Jake DiPaolo	RSPB Sustainable financing liaison	10	Checked
Richard Fitton and Olivia Bennett	Sustainable finance advisors (each 15%)	15	Checked
James Mansfield	Sustainable finance advisor	5	Checked

Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

Ensure the file is named clearly, consistent with the named individual and role above.

 [SCNL Darwin Key Personnel CV and JD R26S2 1 550](#)
 04/12/2019
 13:14:45
 pdf 1.22 MB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

Yes

Section 7 - Problem Statement & Conventions

Q11. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in terms of biodiversity and its relationship with poverty. For example, what are the drivers of loss of biodiversity that the project will attempt to address? Why are they relevant, for whom? How did you identify these problems?

Liberia's Community Forestry (CF) legislation enables communities to manage and benefit from their forest assets and thereby reduce their poverty. By engaging CF communities to conserve part of their forests, CFs

can link protected areas to benefit biodiversity, particularly large, mobile species (e.g. chimpanzees and forest elephants, which face increasing threats).

SCNL and the FDA are supporting three clans in the Gola Landscape to designate 4 CFs and include conservation zones in this way (with funding newly secured to support another three clans in Liberia and five chiefdoms in Sierra Leone - see map in supplementary documentation).

This 350,000 ha landscape contains the largest remaining tract of Upper Guinea Rainforest, a biodiversity hotspot containing 60 globally-threatened species.

However, cashflows from forest-threatening activities (unsustainable agriculture, illegal bushmeat trading and mining) provide attractive short-term income opportunities and whilst communities are willing to set conservation targets for CFs, a lack of conservation culture combined with poverty and insufficient commercial infrastructure and business support prevent communities from investing time and resources into alternative sustainable livelihoods and conservation activities.

SCNL has worked for five years with the Tonglay and Normon clans and have evidence that: (1) tailored small loan schemes can incentivise uptake of sustainable income-generating activities to reduce poverty and support the establishment of conservation targets for CFs; and (2) a reliable, secure source of income could incentivise communities to conserve and monitor their CFs.

Scaled and expanded loan schemes could reduce poverty through sustainable income-generating activities whilst generating sufficient interest to pay community members to conserve CFs.

Environmental Finance believe a £1.2 million impact investment fund could fund such loan schemes across the Gola Landscape. However, we currently lack sufficient evidence to support the Investment Case to attract this scale of investment as well as ensuring an efficient and impactful deployment of funds.

Q12. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q12a. Your project must support the objectives of one or more of the agreements listed below.

Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported and describe which objectives your project will address and how.

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q12b. Biodiversity Conventions

Please detail how your project will contribute to the objectives of the agreement(s) your project is targeting. You should refer to Articles or Programmes of work here.

Liberia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II (NBSAP)

Target 5, Action 1 of the NBSAP aims to establish Community Forests and to "provide incentives to communities for ecosystem services". This project will expand an existing small loan programme (the conditions of which prohibit damaging activities, e.g. commercial bushmeat hunting and trading) tripling the number of loans available to forest communities. These loans will provide the incentive described by the NBSAP, encouraging communities' uptake of conservation activities.

More importantly, the expanded loan programme will provide additional evidence to allow partners to build a robust Investment Case to attract investment capital of £1,200,000 by project end, which will, post project, be used to further scale the two loan schemes and an additional 10 across Liberia/Sierra Leone, to a point where the interest generated can fund Citizen Conservation Teams to steward and monitor High Conservation Value Forest to deliver ecosystem services.

CBD

Cooperation (Article 5) between Liberia (Community Forest Management Bodies, SCNL) and UK (Darwin Initiative, RSPB, Environmental Finance) will help protect an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot and improve livelihoods of some of the poorest and most remote communities in Liberia.

Incentivising communities living adjacent to the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) to manage and preserve High Conservation Value Forest as Community Conservation Zones within their Community Forests will contribute to In-situ Conservation (Article 8(e,j))

The partners will pool technical/scientific expertise to develop/prove a replicable impact investment model. In line with Article 18 we will share the model through our global networks, ensuring replicability and scalability.

CITES

A key impact will be incentivising communities to abandon illegal hunting for the bushmeat trade (e.g. chimpanzees) and for the illegal wildlife trade (e.g. pangolins), both through the small-loan programme and by sustainably enabling the communities to monitor and police their Community Forests.

Q12c. Is any liaison proposed with the CBS / ABS / ITPGRFA / CITES / CMS / Ramsar / CCC focal point in the host country?

Yes

If yes, please give details.

We have discussed the project with Mr. J.S. Datuama Cammue, the National CBD Focal Point at the Environmental Protection Agency. He has provided a letter of support for the project (please see attachments). We have also discussed the project with Blamah Goll, CITES focal point at the FDA. We will share lessons learned from the Darwin programme with the EPA and the FDA and other NGOs in Liberia through regular presentations and a final end-of-project roundtable.

Q12d. Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Please detail how your project will contribute to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

#1 End poverty (Targets 1.1-1.2, 1.4-1.5, 1a)

Target communities are among the poorest and most marginalised in Liberia. We will support their access to income-generating resources (1.4), training, and small loans to reduce poverty (1.1-1.2) and increase resilience through income diversification (1.5.).

#2 Hunger and food security (2.3-2.4)

Expanded small loan schemes will triple the number of people supported to develop rainforest-friendly agriculture.

#4 ...inclusive and equitable education...(4.3-4.4) and #5 Gender equality (5.5)

Current loan schemes specifically benefit women, empowering them economically, and by encouraging them to participate in literacy and numeracy training, helping address gender inequality in literacy rates. Communities wish this to continue. However, men also benefit from the project - they are more likely to benefit from employment in Citizen Conservation Teams as well as equitable access to livelihoods training and support.

#8 Sustainable economic growth (8.2, 8.4)

The project will support income diversification within target communities (8.2), and show how economic growth can be achieved without degrading the environment (8.4).

#10 Reduce inequality (10.1-10.2)

We will build capacity of community organisations (Citizen Conservation Teams and Community Forest Management Bodies) to represent their communities at various levels and support their livelihoods through income-generation support.

#15 (15.1-15.2,15.5,15.7,15.9,15a,15b)

We will support Liberia to meet national/international commitments on forest protection (15.1) by supporting community forest management (15.2) and preventing degradation of biodiversity (15.5). Empowered communities will take responsibility for controlling illegal activities (15.7), develop biodiversity conservation goals (15.9), and with SCNL, advocate for forest protection in local/national development plans (15.9).

Section 8 - Method, Change Expected, Gender & Exit Strategy

Q13. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and Impact.

Provide information on:

- How you have analysed historical and existing initiatives and are building on or taking work already done into account in project design. Please cite evidence where appropriate.
- The rationale for carrying out this work and a justification of your proposed methodology.
- How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).
- How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, etc.).

We will use this Darwin grant to gather evidence to build an Investment Case to attract c.£1.2 million to establish a social-environmental impact investment fund based on small loan schemes for forest-friendly livelihoods and forest protection across the Gola region. Data collection will be designed to demonstrate:

- Scaled-up loan schemes can reduce poverty, engaging 3-4 times the number of people in forest-friendly livelihoods than the current scheme;
- Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs) can manage the enlarged scheme;
- Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) can conserve scaled-up areas of 'Community Conservation Zones';
- Loans can generate sufficient profits for CFMBs to pay CCTs for environmental stewardship on a sustainable basis; and
- The optimum livelihood support activities to increase the value of the loan programme by increasing long-term borrower capacity.

This will be achieved by:

- Expanding loan schemes run by Normon and Tonglay CFMBs (Output 1). We will increase training for CFMBs/Clan and village leadership to administer expanded schemes. We will triple loan funds by adding £20,000/Clan to demonstrate CFMBs' capacity to manage enlarged schemes, increasing beneficiaries from 130 to c.430.
- Supporting Normon and Tonglay CFMBs to run effective CCTs (Output 2). We will support CFMBs to establish and fund one CCT per CF, responsible for patrolling Community Conservation Zones, monitoring illegal activities and delivering environmental education. CCT members will be selected by communities following a transparent process. CCT stipends will be more reliable than potential earnings from unsustainable activities, e.g. bushmeat hunting, making them more attractive. We will build community members' skills to carry out CCT duties.

We will assess the impact of the expanded loan schemes and CCTs on (i) community wellbeing using household surveys and (ii) forest protection using forest cover satellite data, illegal activity data (e.g. bushmeat hunting) from CCT patrolling reports and community member interviews.

Using evidence generated through this programme, we will design an investment fund to finance a further scaled-up loan programme to be launched by the project's end (Output 3). The initial deliverable will be an Investment Case proposal by impact investment advisor, Environmental Finance, setting out the terms and structure of the fund. EF will then fundraise for c.£1,200,000 fund by end of project. Key activities include: analysis of financial, impact and risk data (e.g. testing interest rates, CTT membership and stipend levels), analysis of how the loan scheme and livelihood support programme might be structured to mitigate risks/overcome barriers; and determining the optimal capital structure and design for the fund.

We will share results with the conservation/development community across Liberia and Sierra Leone (Output 4), tailoring dissemination to audiences (e.g. workshops for FDA and exchange visits for communities). We will leverage BirdLife/ EF networks to share the model with other African regions.

An underlying aim is for SCNL to develop their project leadership skills (Output 5). RSPB will continue to support SCNL through its ongoing capacity-building programme and day-to-day mentoring. Government and community participation in the project's management will be assured through representation on the Project Implementation Team (PIT).

Q14. Raising awareness of the potential worth of biodiversity

If your project contains an element of communications, knowledge sharing and/or dissemination please provide a description of your intended audience, how you intend to engage them, what the expected products/materials will be and what you expect to achieve as a result.

For example, are you expecting to directly influence policy in your host country or is your project a community advocacy project to support better management of biodiversity?

We have four main audiences:

Local communities (Tonglay and Normon clans).

Literacy rates are very low. We will engage clans through radio programmes and community meetings using some visual materials, but mostly oral presentations/drama shows. Expected products/materials will include: photographs, other presentation materials, scripts for dramas. We expect to increase communities understanding of the value of forest protection and biodiversity which will promote a culture of biodiversity conservation in Community Forests.

Liberia's conservation and forest policy actors.

We will engage these actors through one-to-one meetings, visits to project communities and for FDA and NGOs, targeted workshops and presentations. Key products/materials include a Citizen Conservation Team (CCT) model report, workshop and exchange visit reports. We expect to raise actor's awareness of the benefits of adopting the sustainably-financed CCT model.

The Africa/Global conservation community.

We will engage this community through presentations at the Africa Regional meeting of the BirdLife partnership and others where appropriate, project partner websites and ideally, the Darwin newsletter. Expected products include presentations, website and newsletter articles. We expect to enable other communities with community forests in the Greater Gola Landscape, Liberia, Africa and worldwide to adopt the Citizen Conservation Team model.

Investors.

We will engage with investors through: video-conferences, face-to-face meetings, emails/phone calls and investor workshops to discuss investment marketing and social and environmental impact. Key products/materials include:

- Presentation on the investment opportunity including biodiversity goals
- An "Investment Case" and/or "Investment Memorandum" document, detailing the investment opportunity, its impact and supporting evidence
- A webpage on the Environmental Finance website
- A knowledge-sharing case study detailing the Darwin programme process and the resulting funding model design

We expect to secure formalised investor commitment(s) in the impact fund, encourage application of the funding model to other regions in Africa and increase Investor awareness of environmental impact investment opportunities.

Q15. Capacity building

If your project will support capacity building at institutional or individual levels, please provide details of what form this will take and how this capacity will be secured for the future.

Key capacity-building results:

SCNL staff will develop project management skills. SCNL and RSPB will develop understanding of impact investment. FDA staff will benefit from the sharing of lessons learned. However, the core capacity-building effort will target the Tonglay and Normon communities, especially the Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs), Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs) and community leadership.

CCTs will be trained to carry out three main activities:

- a. patrolling Community Forests (CFs);
- b. biomonitoring; and
- c. conservation education and awareness raising.

Training will include specific one-off training (e.g. workshops) and ongoing mentoring from project staff. All CCT staff will be trained to support each other and additional training focused on those with the most aptitude/interest in the different activities, a model we have already deployed successfully in the communities. Project staff will meet CCTs/CFMBs regularly to jointly-assess progress and training

programmes.

The concurrent EU and Rainforest Trust projects will train CFMBs in CF management. The Darwin Project will provide additional, specific training in loan programme and general financial management. Although the loan sub-committee members are already managing the programmes, expansion support is needed.

For each CCT, we will train 3 junior members annually in addition to the 12 permanent members. Junior members will be able to participate in conservation activities and can potentially replace permanent members as and when needed.

EF will grow its experience in designing environmental impact funds - testing funding models in a new, remote environment with a novel conservation funding mechanism. EF will learn from SCNL/RSPB about the unique local challenges and solutions that will influence the design of an appropriate fund structure.

EF will provide guidance to RSPB and SCNL in impact investment and fund design throughout the project, informing how to design the scheme to have the best chance of becoming scalable and attracting external investment.

Q16. Gender equality

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Explain how your project will collect sex disaggregated data and what impact your project will have in promoting gender equality.

In Liberia, and especially in the Gola area, women are less literate than men (nationally: 62.4% adult male literacy and 32.8% for females; Gola: 44.4 % adult men literacy, 15.8 % adult women literacy). Furthermore, Gola is one of the most impoverished regions in Liberia. Consequently, Gola women have a significant need for, and their households would benefit from, economic empowerment and literacy and numeracy training.

Women in the Gola area do not traditionally play the major role in household financial decision-making, but global data show that when women make decisions about how money is spent, benefits tend to flow to the household. Our experience so far confirms this and feedback from the borrowers shows evidence of economic empowerment. For example, women are increasing the size of their businesses, expanding into new goods and activities. At the household level they are paying school fees, covering medical costs, and providing the staple food, rice, when their husbands are unable to do so. Borrowers are encouraged to participate in literacy and numeracy training, thereby also helping to address gender inequality in literacy rates.

It is well known that women are better than men at re-paying small loans. We therefore chose to target women in the first round to give the programme the best chance of success. We thought that we might expand to include men later but when we consulted with the community the clear consensus was to continue the programme with other women who had not yet benefited. While we will likely start to include male and mixed groups further into this Darwin project, the main focus will continue to be women.

We note that all monitoring and evaluation data we collect is sex disaggregated.

(see references in supplementary information attachment)

Q17. Change expected

Detail the expected changes this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).

Please describe the changes for biodiversity and for people in developing countries, and how they are linked. When talking about people, please remember to give details of who will benefit and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail - number of households should be the largest unit used. If possible, indicate the number of women who will be impacted.

By end of project:

Benefits to Liberia's forest biodiversity.

The Norman and Tonglay Community Forests (CFs) link Liberia's Gola Forest National Park (GFNP), Foya proposed protected area and Sierra Leone's Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP). This project will:

- incentivise environmentally sustainable businesses through an expanded loan scheme and business and literacy training that discourage unsustainable activities (e.g. commercial bushmeat trading) by blacklisting them from the loan programme.
- enable Norman and Tonglay Clans to trial Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs), ensuring that CF conservation by-laws are respected and that conservation goals (e.g. no loss of primary forest, no illegal hunting) are attained.

This will benefit the c.15,000 ha of conservation zones in the CFs and indirectly benefit all three protected areas by providing connectivity.

Benefits to forest communities around GFNP.

This project will:

- increase direct loan beneficiaries from 130 to c.430, with associated well-being improvements through literacy and numeracy skills, as well as livelihood support programmes. The small loan programme already trialled demonstrated positive outcomes for communities: borrowers reported generating income from loans, as well as benefits from literacy/business training. Income generated by the loans improved the wellbeing of borrower's families (e.g. through paying school fees, purchasing medicine). We expect similar results from the scaled programme. The current 130 loan beneficiaries are all women and we expect the majority of the 430 to also be women (but this will be determined by the communities - see answer to Question 16 and response to stage 1 comments letter).
- employ at least 42 people in 2 pilot CCTs. 24 people will be permanently employed, 18 (6/year) annually. The Community Forest Management Bodies will employ these people and although we will encourage women to play an equal role in CCTs, they prefer not to go into the forest and hence men are more likely to benefit from employment in Citizen Conservation Teams as well as equitable access to livelihoods training and support.

Fund model to scale benefits to forests and communities

This project will be used to gather the evidence required for the design and development of a social and environmental impact investment fund that will attract £1,200,000 of investment by the end of the project.

Long-term impact (post-project)

Once funded, the £1,200,000 impact fund will be disbursed incrementally to 12 Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs) (5 in Sierra Leone, 7 in Liberia). This will deliver:

- Forest protection. c.50,000 ha of high conservation value forest around both GFNP/GRNP will be under community stewardship, linking protected areas.
- Poverty reduction. 82,500 citizens of the Gola landscape will have increased: access to loan schemes/business development support, livelihood options (i.e. employment through CCTs) and resilience through forest-related benefits.

Q18. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, longer term, your expected Impact.

Darwin funding will allow us to generate rigorous evidence (outputs 1 and 2) to develop an Investment Case to attract c.£1.2 million into a social and environmental impact investment fund (output 3) to be dispersed (post-project) to 12 community forests across the Gola Landscape, delivering poverty reduction and forest protection on a landscape scale.

Key assumptions include:

(i) Small loan programmes engage enough people to generate sufficient interest to pay Citizen Conservation Teams acceptable stipends to protect forest.

(ii) Environmental Finance secures funding.

(iii) post-project, communities elsewhere in the Gola landscape have capacity to benefit from the fund/deliver forest protection.

To ensure (i) we will provide tailored business training to every borrower to maximise repayment rates/encourage high loan uptake.

Securing funding (ii) will be achievable with a robust and evidence-based Investment Case. Data (see references) shows that investment in projects offering environmental AND social impact grew by 40% between 2014-2018; overall impact investment increased by 80% to US\$13.6bn, with average transaction sizes of over US\$2m in 2018. This demonstrates demand from investors for highly-impactful, scalable projects, like this one.

EU/Rainforest Trust funding (beginning January 2020) will support communities across the landscape to develop the capacity identified in assumption (iii).

Q19. Exit Strategy


State whether or not the project will reach a stable and sustainable end point. If the project is not discrete, but is part of a progressive approach, give details of the exit strategy and show how relevant activities will be continued to secure the benefits from the project. Where individuals receive advanced training, for example, what will happen should that individual leave?


This project forms one part of a long-term vision to develop diversified sustainable funding to support Gola forest conservation on an ongoing basis.


SCNL and RSPB have laid the foundations for a robust small loan programme, building the trust of local communities and establishing their commitment to forest conservation. This project will develop an Investment Case for attracting repayable investment to support the expansion of the programme. This investment will enable conservation of community-managed forests within the Gola Landscape to continue without reliance on grant funding.


To the extent of the impact investment fund is delayed in finalising investor commitments or deploying capital, we will seek bridge funding from elsewhere to sustain the programmes until investment is available. At community level, we will continue to build capacity of community members to manage the funds in the long term. Additionally, we will train more people than needed for the Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) so that communities can not only choose the best candidates but there will be back-up should any CCT members drop out. Additionally, we are proposing that the CCTs include three youth members who are trained on an annual basis, further building capacity to replace CCT members as needed.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

 [SCNL Darwin Supplementary Documents](#)

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 pdf 2.76 MB

Section 9 - Existing works, Ethics & Safeguarding

Q20a. Harmonisation

Is this a new initiative or a development of existing work (funded through any source)?

Please give details.

This initiative builds on and significantly expands an existing programme.

Since 2009, SCNL and RSPB have supported communities in the Gola forest to establish Community Forests (CFs). Communities sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SCNL committing to designate part of their CF as Community Conservation Zones (CCZs). In recognition of this, SCNL commits to supporting rainforest-friendly community livelihoods through small loan programmes, business/livelihoods training, and conservation expertise.

Our aim is to link community livelihoods to forest protection by scaling up the small loan programme so that borrowers can generate sufficient interest to collectively fund Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs), responsible for protecting CCZs.

At least £1 million in global impact investment could be available to fund this kind of scheme, but to attract such funding a robust Investment Case is required to evidence that:

1. Small loan programmes paired with livelihoods training can reduce poverty in target communities;
2. CCTs can successfully conserve CCZs; and
3. Loan programmes can be sufficiently scaled-up to generate enough interest to fund conservation activities on a sustainable basis.

The Darwin grant will be used to generate this evidence base in preparation of launching an impact fund by

the end of the project.

Q20b. Are you aware of any other individuals/organisations/projects carrying out or applying for funding for similar work?

Yes

Please give details explaining similarities and differences. Explain how your work will be additional to this work and what attempts have been/will be made to co-operate with and learn lessons from such work for mutual benefits.

Conservation International (CI)'s activities in Liberia share some similarities with this project. CI contracts communities to conserve areas while funding "Frontline Conservationists", which, like our Citizen Conservation Teams, are inspired by global community-based conservation programmes.

However, CI's approach depends on continual external/grant funding. In contrast, this project aims to build an Investment Case for raising funding that will sustainably support this novel structure whereby environmental protection stipends are fully-supported through loan interest, on an ongoing basis.

CI, RSPB and SCNL already collaborate on numerous activities in Liberia and we will continue to share lessons learned on all our initiatives.

Q21. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting the Darwin Initiative's key principles for research ethics as outlined in the [Guidance](#).

SCNL's team is based in Liberia and is familiar with domestic legal frameworks. RSPB supports SCNL from the UK and provides close oversight, ensuring the project and its partners meet its own ethical standards.

Project success relies on maintaining the strong relationship between SCNL and target beneficiaries in the communities. This relationship is built on trust, created by SCNL's commitment to best-practice ethical principles including Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) and respect of traditional knowledge. Memoranda of Understanding signed between SCNL and clans in relation to Community Forests (CFs) are testament to this trust.

SCNL will continue to apply sound ethical principles during this project by ensuring that:

- Decision-making is democratised within communities, with CFMBs seeking community consensus and communicating decisions made to SCNL and government staff;
- SCNL staff will collaborate with CFMBs to implement agreed-upon measures so that the rights, privacy and safety of beneficiaries will be respected throughout the programme;
- Community members within target communities are engaged in deciding how project benefits are shared, including agreeing on loan recipients and CCT roles;
- Community members can apply traditional knowledge to the development and implementation of the programmes, and know such traditional knowledge will be respected;
- All community members provide FPIC ahead of participating in either small loan or CCT programmes, and for evidence-gathering processes conducted during the M&E phases;

- SCNL’s detailed health and safety policies, which apply to all staff engaged in the project, are known to all SCNL staff. Additionally, CCT members will be trained on appropriate health and safety policies as part of the CCT training;
- All beneficiary groups are aware of the potential benefits/risks in the project, so expectations are realistic. SCNL will engage with groups using methods tailored to their needs (e.g. focus group discussions, individual questionnaires).

Q22. Corruption

Explain how you have considered any risk of corruption that may affect the success of this project, and how you plan to manage this.

Liberia has a reputation for corruption. While SCNL use normal financial practices to avoid misuse of funds (see question 29) we will take further steps to address corruption by:

- Gradually building trust, entrusting individuals/organisations with small sums before incrementally increasing amounts;
- Scrutinising expense justification documents in Liberia and in the UK;
- Ensuring community-based transactions are carried out in public fora (e.g. loan funds are handed to CFMBs at full community meetings).

Where possible, we will try to incorporate the identification of fraud and how to address it as part of the CFMB training. We also want to explore the possibility of using cross collateralisation among the CFMBs in the same way that individual borrowers do in a loan group.

In relation to a future impact investment fund, Environmental Finance (EF) will act as the fund manager. EF is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and will carry out all of its fiduciary duties accordingly. EF will design and manage the fund to ensure that controls are in place to mitigate the risk of corruption impacting the loan programmes, while ensuring that M&E activities monitor the effectiveness of these controls.

Q23. Safeguarding

Projects funded through the Darwin Initiative must fully protect vulnerable people all of the time, wherever they work. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place. Please confirm the lead organisation has the following policies in place and that these can be available on request:

We have a safeguarding policy, which includes a statement of your commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse	Checked
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We keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and how they were dealt with	Checked
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We have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures to use when allegations and complaints are made, and have clear processes in place for when a disclosure is made	Checked
We have shared our safeguarding policy with downstream partners	Checked
We have a whistle-blowing policy which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised	Checked
We have a Code of Conduct in place for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours - inside and outside the work place - and make clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards	Checked

Section 10 - Funding and Budget

Q24. Funding and budget


Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet. Note that there are different templates for projects requesting over and under £100,000 from the Darwin budget.


- [Budget form for projects under £100,000](#)
- [Budget form for projects over £100,000](#)

Please refer to the [Finance for Darwin/IWT Guidance](#) for more information.

N.B: Please state all costs by financial year (1 April to 31 March) and in GBP. The Darwin Initiative cannot agree any increase in grants once awarded.

Please upload your completed Darwin Budget Form Excel spreadsheet using the field below.

 [SCNL Darwin budget R26S2 1550](#)

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 xlsx 65.38 KB

Q25. Value for Money

Please explain how you worked out your budget and how you will provide value for money through managing a cost effective and efficient project. You should also discuss any significant assumptions you have made when working out your budget.

Budget estimates are based on expenditure in previous and current projects (SCNL/RSPB) and costed day rates (Environmental Finance). 65% of Darwin funds will be spent in Liberia.

The small loan funds at this project's core serve dual purposes, contributing directly to biodiversity

conservation and the sustainability of local community livelihoods. At least 15,000 ha of forest will be managed as Community Conservation Zones (CCZs). The number of loan beneficiaries will increase from 130 to 430, while 42 people will benefit from employment in Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs). Borrowers will be able to build their capacity for sustainable income generation.

Even more importantly, the Darwin funds will lever external impact investment to the Gola region with c.£1.2 million to be raised by the end of the project. This funding will replace the programme’s reliance on future grant funding, and has the potential to ultimately (post project) benefit c.82,500 people and c.50,000 ha of high conservation value forest, increasing the resilience of the Gola Landscape’s biodiversity.

This Darwin project will be implemented at the same as, and be integrated with, a wider three-year programme of support to Community Forests (CFs) across the transboundary Gola Landscape (funded by the Rainforest Trust and the EU, starting January 2020). Some of the activities required for this Darwin project will be funded by the other projects (shown as co-funding in the budget) and will also allow us to make savings in the Darwin budget, for example, by being able to use an EU-funded vehicle.

SCNL (through the previous GolaMA EU-funded project) has already developed management systems for the loan programme and is providing training and support for rainforest-friendly livelihoods, meaning the Darwin project funds can focus on the small loans and ensuring that CFs contribute to biodiversity conservation – and can start core activities immediately.

Q26. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end.

We do not plan to purchase capital items using Darwin funding.

Q27. Match funding (co-financing)

Are you proposing co-financing?

Yes

Q27a. Secured

Provide details of all funding successfully levered (and identified in the Budget) towards the costs of the project, including any income from other public bodies, private sponsorship, donations, trusts, fees or trading activity, as well as any your own organisation(s) will be committing.

Donor Organisation	Amount	Currency code	Comments
RSPB	██████	£	For RSPB staff time and Environmental Finance consultancy. These are our own funds.
Environmental Finance	██████	£	We are covering some of our own costs for this consultancy, using our own funds.

SCNL



£

For SCNL staff time and operational costs, sourced from EU and Rainforest Trust-funded projects.

No Response

0

*No Response**No Response***Q27b. Unsecured**

Provide details of any matched funding where an application has been submitted, or that you intend applying for during the course of the project. This could include matched funding from the private sector, charitable organisations or other public sector schemes. This should also include any additional funds required where a donor has not yet been identified.

Date applied for	Donor Organisation	Amount	Currency code	Comments
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Do you require more fields?

- Yes
 No

Section 11 - Open Access and Financial Risk Management**Q28. Outputs of the project and Open Access**

Please describe the project's Open Access plan and detail any specific funds you are seeking from Darwin to fund this.

All information collected by the project will be made public and freely accessible, except for personal information which will only be available anonymously and if individual consent is provided (e.g. sharing case studies). Project information will be disseminated via several methods, including:

Online media: Progress reports, lessons-learned workshop reports, photographs and communications will be published on partner websites. Partners may use social media to promote projects, lessons learned and achievements in relation to their involvement, potentially tailored to their respective audiences.

Existing databases/portals: We will share all appropriate data through the Global Key Biodiversity Areas database. In addition, over the next two years, partners in the Gola landscape (Liberia and Sierra Leone) will develop a transboundary database (EU-funded), which will be accessible to all and hold relevant data generated by the partners. This will include data to improve accountability, transboundary decision-making and help deliver SDGs across the landscape; for example, derived and raw data on forest cover and land use.

Data collected on bushmeat hunting will be shared through the Global database on bushmeat developed by ZSL in collaboration with the Universities of Sussex and Oxford and UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Finally, we will seek to work with staff in RSPB's Centre for Conservation Science to share data as appropriate through open access journals.

Q29. Financial Risk Management

Explain how you have considered the risks and threats that may be relevant to the success of this project, including the risks of fraud or bribery.

The most significant financial risk is failure of the small loan programme through default, theft or mismanagement. The programmes currently have >98% repayment levels, but under the Darwin programme the capital will increase significantly. To ensure the programme continues to be well-managed as it expands, we will:

- Grow funds incrementally to gradually build trust in individuals and groups;
- Only lend to groups of women initially as women have been found to be more disciplined borrowers, allowing systems to be developed/consolidated before lending to groups of men;
- Repeat training for all participants (CFMBs/community leadership/loan committees/loan groups) on loan management and business development;
- Provide day-to-day mentoring services to committee members; and
- Closely monitor all aspects of the programme.

Regarding project financial management, SCNL deploys standard financial practices to avoid misuse of funds e.g. separating expense approval from preparation; requiring two signatures, one of which is a board member, on cheques; and having regular external audits.

We also address Liberia's reputation for corruption by scrutinising expense justification documents in Liberia and in UK, and by ensuring community-based transactions are carried out in public fora (e.g. loan funds are handed to CFMBs in front of full community meetings).

Section 12 - Logical Framework

Q30. Logical Framework

Darwin projects will be required to report against their progress towards their expected Outputs and Outcome if funded. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

Impact:

82,500 citizens of the Greater Gola Landscape are stewards of c.50,000 ha of High Conservation Value

Community Forest, linking protected areas to conserve the largest remaining area of Guinea Rainforest.

Project summary

Measurable Indicators

Means of verification

**Important
Assumptions**

Outcome:

An evidence-based pilot secures £1,200,000 of social/environmental investment to finance 12 Citizen Conservation Teams through small-loan programmes, enabling community stewardship of High Conservation Value Community Forest and uplifting local economies.

0.1 By end of project, conservation by-laws governing at least the 15,000 ha of conservation zones of the Normon Community Forest and Tonglay Community Forest are respected and enforced by community members.

0.2 By end of project, conservation goals (e.g. no loss of primary forest, no illegal activities including illegal hunting) for the conservation zones of the Normon and Tonglay Community Forests are attained and threats to biodiversity (e.g. commercial bushmeat hunting) are decreasing compared to baselines.

0.3 By the end of project, direct loan beneficiaries have increased in total from 130 to at least 430. 42 people benefit from employment in 2 pilot Citizen Conservation Teams. 24 people will be employed on a permanent basis, and 18 (6/year) will be employed annually.

0.4 A social/environmental investment fund of £1.2 million by end of project is available to support small-loan programmes and aligned CCTs in 12 CFs (7 in Liberia, 5 in Sierra Leone).

0.1 Biomonitoring and patrolling reports from CCTs.

0.2 Reports and analysis of satellite data; biomonitoring and patrolling reports from CCTs; reports and analysis of sensitive interviews (e.g. regarding bushmeat hunting).

0.3 Reports of benchmark and end-of-project household surveys, and individual interviews.

0.4 Meeting notes from investor engagement activities; copies of investor commitments.

The Government of Liberia maintains its commitment to biodiversity conservation. We think this will hold true because despite a recent change in government, Government policies with respect to biodiversity conservation have not changed and Government staff continue to support conservation measures.

The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) or other authorities will support the Tonglay and Normon Clans in enforcing CF bylaws. We think this will hold true because FDA are doing so now to a limited extent and part of the approach to establishing a CF is to strengthen the relationship between communities and the FDA.

There is a market for a social /environmental investment fund for the Gola region, and investors are willing to commit funds to the programme. We think this will hold true because Environmental Finance, a leading investment advisor, expects investor interest in this project (at relatively low rates of interest) would be high.

This assumption is supported by the June 2019 report released by the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)'s, detailing a survey of impact investors: investment in projects delivering environmental and social impact totalled US\$13.6bn in 2018, a 40% increase from 2014. EF will engage with its existing network of impact investors to inform the design and development of a funding model that works for the Gola forest, Gola communities and investors alike.

The interest rate charged on the loans can be set at an affordable rate for borrowers whilst generating sufficient funds to cover operating costs, CCT stipends and an appropriate return to future impact investors. To date borrowers have repaid 10% interest rates with confidence. Using best practice to reduce operating costs we believe that if communities have the capacity to absorb enough loan capital, the interest payments should generate enough to cover CCT stipends and an appropriate return for investors. This community capacity is the key assumption. If

we do not have enough individuals with the capacity to take out and repay loan principal and interest, the model will struggle to make sufficient financial surpluses to fund the stipends. i.e. the capital will exist but loans will not be taken out in the volumes required to create sufficient surpluses. To mitigate against this, loans will be coupled with a 'menu' of livelihood training programmes e.g. 'business in a box' whereby borrowers are supported with training in a proven business model such as rice, honey and cocoa. This will help grow the borrowers capacity to borrow and repay larger loans.
(Detail provided in response letter to stage 1 feedback)

Output 1:

Normon and Tonglay Community Forest Management Bodies each demonstrate they have the capacity to run expanded small-loan schemes that reduce poverty through encouraging rainforest-friendly livelihoods.

1.1 The two loan schemes continue to be managed well throughout the project period.

1.2 Loan groups are able to absorb incrementally larger loan amounts over the life of the project, leading to a loan portfolio size of £20,000 for each Clan.

1.3 The number of individuals participating in the loan scheme increases incrementally from 130 to at least 430 over the life of the project.

1.4 90% of the 430 loan scheme beneficiaries report a significant positive impact on their own/their household's wellbeing (e.g. being able to pay school or medical fees, make improvements to accommodation, pay for labour to rehabilitate cocoa farms or plant and harvest more crops) as a result of engaging in the loan scheme.

1.1 -1.3 Ledgers kept by the CFMBs, loan groups, individual members of loan groups; CFMB bank account statements (publicly available).

1.4 Annual surveys of loan scheme beneficiaries and CCT members.

SCNL and external partners are able to continue to provide aligned training for the CFMBs and the borrowers. We think this will hold true because SCNL has a strong team able to deliver this work. Currently the small loans schemes are successful. Also, the Darwin funds (and eventually the investment fund) will enable SCNL to continue to provide aligned training that will enable all the CFMBs and the borrowers to build their capacity to manage a larger fund.

Loan schemes benefiting women's groups continue to have a positive social impact. We think this will hold true because communities value the contribution the loan schemes are making to address gender inequality in education and literacy rates. If they so chose, during the further large expansion of the programme under the Darwin project or later, they can also develop men's loan groups, or mixed groups. (More detail provided in response letter to stage 1 feedback)

Output 2:

Normon and Tonglay CCTs successfully implement conservation/ monitoring activities agreed by the Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs), the Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) and other community members, in return for a stipend that reduces poverty.

- 2.1 CCT members (12 permanent and 3 annual for each of two teams) are selected by communities using a transparent process with clear criteria by Month 4 of the project.
- 2.2 All CCT members (24 permanent and 6 annual) are trained in biomonitoring, patrolling, conservation education and awareness-raising by the end of Year 1.
- 2.3 By the end of the project, CCT members are implementing a scientifically robust but locally appropriate programme of biomonitoring, patrolling, conservation education and awareness-raising activities.
- 2.4 By end of project 90% of the 30 CCT members report a significant positive impact on their/their household's wellbeing as a result of engaging in the loan scheme.

- 2.1 A list of CCT members from each Clan; testimonies from each CCT member.
- 2.2 Training workshop reports.
- 2.3 Reports from CFMBs, CCTs, FDA; focus group discussions with community members; by-laws.
- 2.4 Annual surveys of loan scheme beneficiaries and CCT members.

There are sufficient numbers of individuals (both men and women) who are willing to be members of a CCT. There are sufficient literacy skills within each CCT to be able to carry out the required activities and prepare appropriate reports/communication. We think this will hold true because we have been working with the clans for five years and this has included a literacy programme. Consequently, we know there are enough literate people willing to take up employment on the CCTs.

Loans do not drive bushmeat hunting.

We think this will hold true because although women traders drive the commercial bushmeat trade (the biggest threat to biodiversity in the Gola Forest) the small loan programme provides a valuable intervention by providing women with alternative sustainable livelihoods. Of the 130 women participants in the programme to date, only one was found to have broken the terms of the loan by engaging in bushmeat trading, leading to the disqualification of her group from the programme. (For more detail see

Output 3:

A social /environmental investment fund of at least £1,200,000 is secured to fund the combined small-loan and livelihood support programme at a scale that is capable of generating sufficient funds to sustainably support 12 Citizen Conservation Teams (CCTs) (including the pilot areas of Tonglay and Normon)

3.1 An Investment Case for investors is available at the end of Year 2 of the project, based on evidence of outputs 1 and 2.

3.2 At the beginning of Year 3 of the project, the Investment Case is being marketed to investors.

3.3 By end of project, investor commitments are secured into the social/ environmental investment fund.

3.1 Final version of the Investment Case.

3.2 Investor marketing materials; meeting notes from investor engagement activities.

3.3 Formalised investor commitments with documentary proof; funds available in the investment fund.

The Investment Case is sufficiently robust to attract investment from targeted investors.

We think this will hold true because EF is a leading investment advisor with extensive experience in structuring and implementing social and environmental impact funds, with a team track record of raising over £50 million of such funding structures. This assumption is supported by the June 2019 report released by the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)'s, detailing a survey of impact investors: investment in projects delivering environmental and social impact totalled US\$13.6bn in 2018, a 40% increase from 2014. EF will engage with its existing network of impact investors to inform the design and development of a funding model that works for the Gola forest, Gola communities and investors alike.

EF will remain engaged with SCNL and RSPB throughout the expansion and scaling of the small loan scheme and CCT programme to ensure that evidence of the effectiveness of the loan scheme and CCT environmental stipends is sufficiently robust to support the Investment

Case of a larger impact fund. To the extent required, EF will work with SCNL and RSPB to determine and implement appropriate adjustments to the scheme (e.g. interest payment obligations, environmental stipend levels) in order to establish the optimum structure of the programmes that will support repayable investments in the long-term.

To the extent the Investment Case is not considered sufficiently robust to fully capitalise the fund with repayable capital from impact investors, EF will adjust the proposed fund structure or target further concessionary and/or grant funding that can be blended into the capital structure to ensure a suitably-sized fund can be raised.

The concept that interest paid by some individuals in the community is used to pay others in the community has been demonstrated not to be divisive in the pilot scheme.

We think this will continue to be the case in a scaled-up loan scheme because: (i) 97% of the target group understand the community forest concept and 70% of households benefit from

it; (ii) participants in the small loan programme fully understand that the interest generated from their loans is used to feed back into community and conservation initiatives in their Community Forest; and (iii) individuals value the loan scheme because it provides community benefits (83% of those surveyed found the small loan programme very useful or useful to the community.

In the unlikely event that divisions arise and cannot be addressed through ongoing dialogue, communities can raise concerns through an established grievance process.

Finally, we will ensure that the M&E process identifies and records any such issues to inform future development of this and other similar programmes.

(See response letter to stage 1 feedback).

Output 4:

Results of the demonstrations and the Investment Case for social-environmental investment is shared with the conservation and development community across Liberia and Sierra Leone, including with other communities in the Gola Landscape, the FDA, and across Africa through the BirdLife International partnership.

4.1 Lessons learned report prepared by 2 months before the end of the project.

4.2 Lessons learned report presented at a workshop of c.100 people for the Liberian conservation community (including the government, civil society) 1 month before the end of the project.

4.3. Reports detailing lessons learned at key milestones throughout the project made available to stakeholders in the Gola Landscape throughout project (including with the Sierra Leone and Liberia governments, other civil society organisations).

4.4 Lessons learned report shared at presentation specifically for relevant FDA staff 1 months before the end of the project.

4.5 Lessons learned report will be shared online 1 month before the end of the project via RSPB, SCNL, CSSL, GRC LG and BLI websites.

4.6 Lessons learned report will be shared within the BirdLife International partnership at a regional meeting 1-2 months before the end of the project.

4.1 Lessons learned report.

4.2 Workshop presentation and report.

4.3 Interim lessons learned reports.

4.4. Meeting presentation and report.

4.5 Website pages containing details of key findings from the report.

4.6 Workshop and webinar presentation and report.

Liberian conservation groups, the FDA and Birdlife International are amenable to workshops for learning about the project and lessons learned. We think this will hold true because incentivising communities to steward areas of High Conservation Community Forest is a problem faced by all conservation groups working to protect Liberian forests and globally. Incentives can be provided through various forms of conservation agreement, but finding a finance tool that can provide sustainable incentives would be a significant breakthrough and of interest to the whole community

Output 5:

SCNL staff capacity to lead the Darwin Initiative project and future projects is strengthened and broadened.

5.1 A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is put in place by Month 3 of the project.

5.2 A project implementation committee is established to guide and support the project.

5.3 The implementation committee meets biannually, or more frequently as requested by committee members.

5.4 SCNL prepares regular (biannual) internal notes for the steering committee and for future records on the progress of the project.

5.5 A financial reporting system is in place by the end of Month 1 and financial expenditure remains within contractual limits.

5.6 Technical and financial reports are submitted on time to Darwin.

5.1 M&E plan.

5.2 Committee minutes of the first meeting.

5.3 Implementation committee minutes.

5.4 SCNL steering committee notes.

5.5 Financial reports.

5.6 Technical and financial reports and receipt notes

National conditions in Liberia continue to allow SCNL to operate effectively. Social and economic conditions are currently deteriorating in Liberia and there is rising political tension. To date this has led to peaceful protests. Thus far, SCNL has been able to continue to carry out its work throughout the country.

Should protests become violent the movement of SCNL staff within Monrovia is likely to become restricted although fieldwork should not be affected.

We will mitigate against this by holding key meetings outside the capital and working out of the field office as much as possible.

We will keep Darwin informed should this situation change.

Do you require more Output fields?

It is advised to have less than 6 Outputs since this level of detail can be provided at the Activity level.

No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

Output 1: Normon and Tonglay CFMBs each demonstrate they have the capacity to run expanded small-loan schemes that reduce poverty through encouraging rainforest-friendly livelihoods.

- 1.1 Project coordinator and CMOs continue regular training for CFMBs, community leadership, and loan groups on the small loan programme, incorporating elements related to CCTs.
- 1.2 Every 6 months, project coordinator/CMOs work with CFMBs/community leadership to start a new round of loans with new groups, including adapting loan modalities as necessary/training members of new groups.
- 1.3 Project leader, co-leader and coordinator work with Environmental Finance to design and test the interest rate mechanism, using financial data collected by CMOs/M&E officer.
- 1.4 By month 6, project coordinator, with CFMBs/Clan leadership, develop and agree modalities on use of loan interest to pay CCT stipends and other costs.
- 1.5 Project coordinator and CMOs provide training to the CFMBs and CFMB loan committees on implementation of agreed modalities.
- 1.6 CMOs monitor and support CFMBs, loan committees, and loan groups in managing the loans and managing the interest generated.
- 1.7 CMOs provide training to borrowers to increase their capacity to run a business and access the loan scheme to increase their well-being.
- 1.8 CMOs provide training to and work with borrowers to increase capacity for forest-friendly livelihoods activities.
- 1.9 Project leader, co-leader and coordinator work with Environmental Finance to test and design optimum livelihood training programmes and test livelihood programmes to grow borrowing capacity.

Output 2 Normon and Tonglay CCTs successfully implement conservation/monitoring activities agreed by the CFMBs, the CCTs and other community members, in return for a stipend that reduces poverty

- 2.1 SCNL field staff inform/discuss Darwin-funded pilot Citizen Conservation Teams with community members (women/men/youth/occupational groups), community/clan leaders, and CFMBs via meetings and written announcements.
- 2.2 SCNL field staff support the CFMBs and community leadership to develop and implement selection criteria and selection process for Citizen Conservation Teams.
- 2.3 SCNL research technician, with support from the project leaders, train all 24 permanent CCT members and at least 24 potential annual members in biomonitoring.
- 2.4 Project coordinator works with community members to develop patrolling tools. SCNL field staff train 24 permanent CCT members and at least 24 potential annual members in patrolling.
- 2.5 Project coordinator develops conservation education/awareness-raising materials; train all 24 permanent CCT members and at least 24 potential annual members in conservation education and awareness-raising.
- 2.6 SCNL field staff support CFMBs to identify, schedule and manage the work of CCT members, including reporting by CCT members
- 2.7 SCNL field staff support CFMBs to develop and implement system for paying CCT stipends.
- 2.8 Project leader, co-leader and coordinator work with Environmental Finance to design and implement tests of the CCT membership profile and stipend amounts.

Output 3: A social/environmental investment fund of at least £1,200,000 is secured to fund the small-loan programme at a scale that is capable of generating sufficient funds to sustainably support 12 CCTs (including the pilot areas of Tonglay and Normon).

- 3.1 Environmental Finance hold regular update calls with SCNL/RSPB to feedback on programme testing/data gathering processes undertaken through Outputs 1 and 2.
- 3.2 Environmental Finance will compile all financial, impact and risk data gathered by SCNL and its partners for Outputs 1 and 2.
- 3.3 Environmental Finance analyse and assess project data from Outputs 1 and 2, culminating in the creation of an Investment Case at the end of Year 2 of the project.

- 3.4 Environmental Finance compiles list of potential funders/investors for preliminary market testing to establish appetite for social/environmental impact investment into Gola small loan-CCT project.
- 3.5 Environmental Finance prepares marketing materials for investors, including a presentation, detailed "Teaser" or "Information Memorandum", and financial model (with input from SCNL and RSPB).
- 3.6 Environmental Finance engages with target funders on a preliminary basis / market testing.
- 3.7 Environmental Finance refines the Investment Case and fund structure in line with investor feedback.
- 3.8 Environmental Finance engages third-party legal and financial/tax advisors to advise on fund structure (advice provided pro-bono and not included in the Darwin budget).
- 3.9 Environmental Finance continues to engage with target funders and new network contacts.
- 3.10 Environmental Finance undertakes final due diligence processes with preferred funder(s);
- 3.11 Environmental Finance manages the drafting of legal documentation relating to fund investment;
- 3.12 Environmental Finance obtains signed commitment(s) from funder(s).

Output 4: Results of the demonstrations and the Investment case for social-environmental investment shared with the conservation and development community across Liberia and Sierra Leone.

- 4.1 Project leader engages external consultant to work with staff and communities to identify lessons learned and produce report.
- 4.2 Project leader organises workshop to share lessons learned with Liberia conservation community.
- 4.3 Project coordinator organises exchange visits and/or workshops as appropriate to share lessons learned with other communities in the Gola Landscape.
- 4.4 Project staff post lessons learned report and relevant explanations on relevant websites (RSPB, SCNL, GRNP, FDA, BirdLife International)
- 4.5 SCNL staff present lessons learned at relevant regional meetings of the BirdLife International partnership.

Output 5 SCNL staff capacity to lead the Darwin Initiative project and future projects is strengthened and broadened.

- 5.1 SCNL project coordinator, with support from project leader and co-leader, develops annual and quarterly workplans.
- 5.2 SCNL project coordinator, with support from project leader and co-leader, reviews workplans quarterly with all staff and revises as needed.
- 5.3 SCNL project coordinator develops M&E plan with support from project leader and co-leader
- 5.4. SCNL project co-ordinator presents project results at annual meetings of the Gola Forest Bilateral Coordination Committee.
- 5.5 SCNL finance staff develop finance reporting tools specific to this project and produce relevant financial reports on time with support from project leader and co-leader.
- 5.6 Project leader and co-leader produce required technical reports with input from project coordinator. By Year 3, project coordinator produces technical reports with support from project leader and co-leader as needed.
- 5.7 Project coordinator regularly reviews biomonitoring reports with CFMBs and CCTs.
- 5.8 CCTs, together with SCNL research technician, collect biomonitoring data (e.g. loss of primary forest, signs of illegal activities including illegal hunting).
- 5.9 SCNL research technician, with support from project leader and co-leader, conduct sensitive interviews about bushmeat hunting.
- 5.10 SCNL field staff, under technical guidance of the project leader and co-leader conduct household survey and individual interviews at start and end of project.
- 5.11 Project leader and co-leader work with SCNL staff to analyse all data.
- 5.12 Environmental Finance Provide quarterly progress reports of development of investment fund

Section 13 - Implementation Timetable


Q31. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities

Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the Excel spreadsheet template as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project.

Implementation Timetable Template

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and fill/shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

 [SCNL Darwin workplan R26S2 1550 final](#)

 05/12/2019

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 xlsx 16.95 KB

Section 14 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q32. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan

Describe, referring to the Indicators above, how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E (see [Finance Guidance for Darwin/IWT](#)).

Robust M&E is critical to developing an Investment Case that will attract sufficient investment to support and maintain the long-term expansion of the small-loan programme. Consequently, the M&E programme will be designed to run alongside the impact fund operation.

M&E activities in relation to biodiversity will include:

- Measuring the area allocated as community conservation zones (CCZs) acting as wildlife corridors between protected areas. The research technician will use GPS and satellite-data maps to measure areas.
- Monitoring and evaluating progress in attaining conservation goals for CCZs (including no loss of primary forest, no illegal activities such as illegal hunting). Project staff will assess progress of by-law development through review of management plans (MPs). The project coordinator will measure the effectiveness of Citizen Conservation Team (CCT) enforcement by reviewing CCT patrolling reports with the Community

Forest Management Bodies/CCTs and collectively determining ways to improve enforcement, obtaining FDA support where necessary.

- Various indicators for conservation goals, including signs of illegal bushmeat hunting and forest encroachment using existing Community Forest monitoring methodology. Hunting levels will be assessed with interview-based methods which have been trialled and for which baseline data exists. Data will be collected by Citizen Conservation Team (CCT) members with support from SCNL research technician. SCNL staff will analyse data and feedback to communities.

M&E activities in relation to reducing poverty will include:

- Household and individual questionnaires at project start to determine how communities benefit from the expanded loan fund. These will be repeated at project end and supplemented with focus group discussions with relevant community member groups (e.g. borrowers, women, hunters). Data will be collected by SCNL staff under guidance of the project leader.

Specific M&E activities in relation to creating a robust Investment Case for an impact investment fund will include:

- Assessing the ability of loan programme interest to support CCT stipends;
- Assessing the ability of CCT stipends to support effective CF conservation activities;
- Reviewing risks and challenges to investment identified through Outputs 1 and 2;
- Reviewing initial feedback from potential investors;
- Measuring investor commitments to the fund.

EF will provide at least quarterly reports to the project leaders on fund development progress.

At output level:

The project coordinator and M&E officer will lead M&E of the development and implementation of:

- Conservation goals within MPs through review of MPs, focus group discussions with these groups.
- The CCTs through review of training reports, interviews with CCTs/CFMBs and FDA staff every three months, annual focus group discussions with community members
- The small loan programmes through monthly review of all ledgers and bank statements, bi-annual focus group discussions with small loan groups, annual interviews with individual borrowers.
- Lessons learnt through focus group discussions.

The project co-ordinator and SCNL's finance team, (supported by an RSPB Senior Finance Officer), will monitor and evaluate project expenditure, review technical/financial report.

M&E will feed into project management through:

- review of M&E data at regular staff meetings
- review of M&E results with relevant community members

Total project budget for M&E in GBP (this may include Staff, Travel and Subsistence costs)	£ [REDACTED]
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Number of days planned for M&E	2,300
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Percentage of total project budget set aside for M&E (%)	18
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Section 15 - FCO Notifications

Q33. FCO Notifications

Please state whether there are sensitivities that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will need to be aware of should they want to publicise the project's success in the Darwin competition in the host country.

No

Please indicate whether you have contacted your Foreign Ministry or the local embassy or High Commission (or equivalent) directly to discuss security issues (see [Guidance Notes](#)) and attach details of any advice you have received from them.

Yes (no written advice)

Section 16 - Certification

Q34. Certification

On behalf of the

Trustees

of

Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)

I apply for a grant of

£409,994.00

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for key project personnel, letters of support, budget and project implementation timetable (uploaded at appropriate points in application).
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report are also enclosed.

Checked





Name





Michael Garbo





Position in the organisation

Executive Director

Signature (please upload e-signature)

 [SCNL Financial Statement Audit Report 2017](#)
 05/12/2019
 11:09:42
 pdf 3.69 MB

 [SCNL Financial Audit Report 2016](#)
 05/12/2019
 11:09:29
 pdf 3.63 MB

 [Michael's Signature](#)
 05/12/2019
 11:09:07
 pdf 93.38 KB

Date 05 December 2019

Section 17 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance, including "Guidance Notes for Applicants" and "Finance Guidance".	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked
I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April - 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have included a 1 page CV or job description for all the key project personnel identified at Question 10, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a letter of support from the the Lead Organisation and main partner organisation(s) identified at Question 9, or an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a cover letter from the Lead Organisation, outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant.	Checked

I have been in contact with the FCO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts for the Lead Organisation, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on GOV.UK.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in this application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the latest copy of the Privacy Notice for Darwin, Darwin Plus and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund available [here](#). This Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information, but not personal data, may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead organisation, location, and total grant value) on the GOV.UK and other websites.

Information relating to the project or its results may also be released on request, including under the 2004 Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Defra will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).