

## Project Update: August 2014

The Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment (FACE) has been seeking international support to protect the West African manatee since 2009. In 2010, FACE received a financial support from Rufford Small Grant (RSG) and investigated the presence of the animal in the Lake Piso basin. Upon confirming this, the organisation received second RSG funding in 2014 to do further work on the animal's presence in the area. Thus the intent of the current RSG project is to work with local communities to reduce threats to manatee in the area and to provide concrete evidence on the presence of the animal in the area.



*Group photo along Lake Piso*

Based on the above, FACE hired a consultant to conduct bio-monitoring training in the project area. The purpose of the bio-monitoring training is to build the capacity of selected local community members to help monitor the presence of the animal and take ownership of its protection. Those trained included 11 males and four females from eight communities. The training was conducted in a period of 2 days in Tosor, near Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount County.

### Objective of the training



*Hand compass training*

- Camera trapping.
- Baseline data collection (filling/recording on data sheet).
- GPS operation.
- Bio monitoring.

One of the major activities of the RSG project is to gather information on the Lake Piso region manatee for enhancement of biodiversity database of the area. In order to involve the local people in this work, the project will have to develop their technical capacity in bio monitoring to work with local communities to reduce threats to manatee in the area. Thus a major RSG activity is training on bio monitoring. According to the project document, the training will include the following:



*GPS training*

This activity is intended purposely to prepare a local team to collect information on manatee in the project area.

### **Consultant terms of reference**

The consultant's terms of reference (ToR) requires submission of a bio-monitoring training itinerary based on the objectives of the RSG project. The training elements should also be developed on the basis of the Sapu National Park (SNP) bio-monitoring protocol and should be easily adapted by the trainees. Based on these requirements, the consultant developed a manatee bio-monitoring protocol, which is a modified version of the SNP bio-monitoring protocol of 2009. The TOR also required the consultant to identify potential community members for the training based on the training purpose.

### **Manatee bio monitoring protocol**

The manatee bio-monitoring training protocol was based on the bio-monitoring training elements in the RSG project document and developed from the SNP version of bio-monitoring. The manatee bio monitoring protocol submitted includes:

- GPS handling and operation.
- Hand compass handling and navigation.
- Snapshot camera handling and operation.
- Camera trap handling and operation.
- Understanding measurement with linear tape.
- Animal identification using certain signs/observations.
- Transect monitoring techniques.
- Bio monitoring data recording.

### **Training methodology**

Based on the consultant's TOR and the training protocol developed, the following method was applied:

- A manatee bio-monitoring protocol developed.
- A manatee bio-monitoring training scheme developed based on the manatee bio-monitoring protocol; the scheme included a training outline and a field data collection sheet.

The town chiefs of eight manatee communities requested to identify and submit names of local community members known to have local knowledge of manatee in their area, the names were submitted and the FACE Field Officer recruited the trainees for the training. Materials for the training were acquired and delivered to the training site (Tosor); the materials included training equipment (three GPS's, two hand compasses, two binoculars, two camera traps, one linear tape, one pack flipchart sheet, a park of markers, a park of

pens and plain sheets of 8 x 4 sheets) and food materials. The trainees were assembled at the training site and hosted in the dormitories of FACE in Tosor (the training base); they were divided into two groups to ensure proper organisation for presenting the training materials. The training was conducted using indoor-outdoor lecture followed by outdoor practice for each subject area.

During the course of the training, the facilitator (Richard Sambolah) and his assistant (Boakai Kiawen) observed and took note of the enthusiasm, level of participation and performance of each trainee. Based on these observations, the trainees were placed in three categories (category one, two and three with category one being the best and category three the least). The intent of this categorisation is to plan placement of the participants when planning the manatee management activities such as bio-monitoring and community outreach.

On the third day, each trainee group carried out non-straight line transect walk during which they practiced observation and data recording on field data sheet. At the end of the 3rd day, categories two and three (consisting of a total of 10 trainees) were provided their transportation reimbursement and partial DSA, released from the training exercise and sent back home (these categories of trainees would be used for awareness raising and other community engagement activities). Category one remained for intensive practices on the 4th day, these practices included GPS operation; transect data recording using engine boat, etc. At the end of the 4th day, the category one trainees (five in number) were provided their transportation reimbursement and partial DSA, released from the training exercise and sent back home (this category of trainees would receive further capacity enhancement and be used for continuous bio monitoring in the FACE operational area). At the end of the field activities, the facilitator produced financial and technical report on the training for submission to the project coordinator.

### **Results of the training exercise**

- Fifteen community members consisting of 11 males and four females were selected from eight local communities of the Lake Piso basin and trained in manatee bio-monitoring techniques.
- During the course of the training, six individuals were singled out of the 15 trainees for further capacity building in bio monitoring. The six individuals were observed to have the potential for bio-monitoring if their capacity can be further developed.
- Nine of the 15 trainees were placed into a biodiversity conservation/protection awareness group for the Lake Piso region.

### **Conclusion**

The training was successfully conducted and identified six local community members whose potential can be further developed for bio-monitoring in the Lake Piso region. A second achievement was the identification of local community members for awareness raising.

<b>Annex One: Manatee Bio monitoring Trainees List</b>					
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Destination/ Home</b>	<b>Date of training</b>	<b>Phone #: code=+231 (0)</b>
1	Momo Sambola	M	Jorni Sambola	Aug 1-4/14	
2	Boakai Fahnbulleh	M	Jorni Sambola	Aug 1-3/14	770237161
3	Lansana Sombai	M	Kebah	Aug 1-4/14	777484690
4	Sando Sherriff	F	Kpallan	Aug 1-3/14	886276676
5	Adama Perry	M	Kpallan	Aug 1-4/14	886293015
6	Dao Watson	M	Madiana	Aug 1-3/14	888342526
7	Muneratu Pabai	F	Madiana	Aug 1-3/14	770240044
8	Omaru Sambola	M	Sawelor	Aug 1-3/14	
9	Massa Sambola	F	Sawelor	Aug 1-3/14	886477475
10	Henry Pusah	M	Sembehun	Aug 1-4/14	776436328
11	Sando Sombai	M	Sembehun	Aug 1-3/14	
12	Momo Senwah	M	Tosor	Aug 1-4/14	886659048
13	Haji Senwah	M	Tosor	Aug 1-4/14	886422964
14	Zenibu Sambola	F	Waima	Aug 1-3/14	
15	Tonie Sombai	M	Waima	Aug 1-3/14	

<b>Annex two: Categorization of Manatee Bio monitoring Trainees as a result from the training</b>					
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Destination/ Home</b>	<b>Date of training</b>	<b>Phone #: code=+231 (0)</b>
A	Momo Sambola	M	Jorni Sambola	Aug 1-4/14	
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B	Sando Sombai	M	Sembehun	Aug 1-3/14	
B	Zenibu Sambola	F	Waima	Aug 1-3/14	
B	Tonie Sombai	M	Waima	Aug 1-3/14	

Manatee Bio monitoring Datasheet									
<b>Monitor (s):</b> Group 1							<b>Location of site:</b> Along the bank of the Lake Piso		
WP	Observation	No. of obs	Age of obs	29N	UTM	Description of site	Time of obs	Date of obs	Comments
271	Red Deer dropping	1	3 days	241642	746089	Near Lake Piso	10:54 AM	Aug. 3, 2014	
274	Red Deer dropping	1	3 days	241085	746648	Near Lake Piso	11:28 AM	Aug. 3, 2014	
276	Squirrel	1	5 years	241084	746646	Car road	11:56 AM	Aug. 3, 2014	Seeing
146	Foot print	4	Recent	241244	746265	Savannah grass	10:54 AM	Aug.3, 2014	Deer foot print
147	Dropping	1	Recent	241277	746254	Savannah grass	11:05 AM	Aug.3, 2014	Deer dropping
148	Feeding	1	Stay long	241217	746366	Swamp area	11:24 AM	Aug.3, 2014	Foot print of deer was also seen
149	nesting	2	Newly	241140	746417	Swamp area	11:32 AM	Aug.3, 2014	Foot print of deer was also seen
150	Trail	1		241051	746354	Swamp area close to the savannah area	11:40 AM	Aug.3, 2014	Dropping of deer was also seen