

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Patrick Armel Mbosso
Project title	Assessment of High Conservation Values in the COPAL Community Forest for Sustainable Adaptive Management.
RSG reference	15210-1
Reporting period	August 2014 – April 2016
Amount of grant	£ 5,825
Your email address	patrick.mbosso@yahoo.com
Date of this report	29 th April 2016

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
To map all high conservation value areas within COPAL community forest;			√	We conducted biological and social surveys within and around the community forest. These allowed us to identify, propose and adopt some key areas as high conservation value within the community forest. Further, a map has been produced.
To train and build the capacity of COPAL community forest staff and local students in order to spearhead conservation initiatives through HCV concept at the grassroots level			√	We conducted two specific on-the-field training activities with local management staff on HCV assessment and monitoring/reporting. A specific education programme on conservation issues was also performed for four primary schools and one secondary school.
To develop an adaptive management plan for the sustainable management of COPAL community forest		√		The project has gathered key data and information regarding the HCV within the community forest. A draft management plan has been designed and discussions are ongoing.
To establish a HCV national network		√		This initiative is in progress. Local HCV networks have been established. Since the National HCV guide (1 st draft for Cameroon) has just been performed (by the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable development with the assistance of WWF and TERE) and launched for public consultation (deadline was March 2016), stakeholders are waiting for the new framework.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

The discovery of caverns where great apes seem to inhabit arose as a particular difficulty for the project team to respect the schedule. Due to the “mythical beliefs”, the project team members could not get access to the forest for some period; but this issue was tackled by adapting the programme activities. More educational visits and sensitisation were conducted during those periods, as well as reinforcing local capacity.

Also, the level of poaching on some parts of the forest led the entire project team (ERMSIC, community forest management staff, volunteers) to conduct anti-poaching activities. This caused delay, but since the community staff had been actively involved in the planning and running of the project, the matter had been tackled.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

i) The elaboration of a high conservation values map: with the aim of identifying and delineating areas of high interest for biological diversity and cultural/social aspects to be particularly protected, the project worked closely with local community and a map of high conservation values was realised. Local staff knew exactly where to focus special attention regarding conservation and how to get access to these areas.

ii) The enhancement of students and local staff skills on biodiversity and tropical forest conservation issues: the project conducted hands-on field training and sensitisation initiatives for local students and community forest management staff members. The participants were trained on the importance of natural forest, the concept of biodiversity, the process of high conservation value (identification, monitoring and reporting) and the role of local community for the conservation of natural forest landscape and biodiversity.

iii) The elaboration of an adaptive management plan: regarding the forest and biodiversity regulations in Cameroon, the needs of local community and the expectations of biodiversity conservation and forest preservation communities, a draft copy of a specific management plan for COPAL community forest was realised in French. Gaps have been highlighted and management propositions are in discussion.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

Local communities suggested the project idea and they have been involved in the project activities planning and implementation. Specific training sessions and sensitisation topics were conducted for/with them. They benefitted through capacity building, skills development on conservation issues. Further, their main preoccupation on how to improve daily activities regarding production (farms, hunting, etc) and conservation (ecosystem services, biodiversity, forest preservation, etc) were discussed throughout the running of the project and they were actually the ones to set decision-making process.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. This project intended to assess high conservation values within COPAL community forest in order to propose a sustainable management plan. It served as a kick-starter to our commitment for conservation “*in situ*” by local forest communities. Fortunately, unexpected discoveries were done (caverns of great apes, bats and snakes) and future interventions are solicited.

The future plans are therefore: to demonstrate and study the behaviour of these great apes using remote-video/camera-traps; continue local capacity building on conservation practices, and perform population assessments of bats and snakes for effective conservation measures.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The results of this work will be shared with others through the national HCV network mailing list in construction. A final report will be made accessible to researchers and conservation practitioners working in the area. Further, a scientific paper will be published in a journal while oral and posters presentations will be given to conferences. Presently, an intern (environmental engineer student) is already evaluating the results in order to perform reliable and pragmatic indicators for the follow-up of environmental and social management plans in forestry sector.

7. Timescale: Over what period was The Rufford Foundation grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The project was to begin in May 2014 and end in June 2015, but we did not fulfil our objectives during this period. The grant was received in August 2014. Due to findings, we could not get access into the forest for some periods (cultural beliefs) and we also had to invest more time on anti-poaching activities which were not planned

(but those activities constituted a concrete component for ensuring the viability of our vision: species and habitats protection). Thus, we ended in April 2016; it took more time than anticipated in the project design.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Communication (phone, internet)	227	300	73	Many project activities were postponed and we had to communicate more on their scheduling
Survey materials printing	126	110	-16	Negotiations occurred due to the quantity of documents
Medical supplies (first-aid and anti-malaria drugs)	20	20	0	
Field manuals printing	53	50	-3	Negotiations' occurred
Vehicle hiring	550	800	250	Rescheduling of activities led to let vehicle many times. The planned global negotiation amount could not been applied again. Thus we had to pay for every mission
Food for team members and local guides	1764	1600	-164	Food items were cheaper in the market
Field equipment and supplies (headlamps)	181	150	-31	Buying many items led to a reduction on prices
Camping equipment (tents)	472	450	-22	Buying many items led to a reduction on prices
Global positioning system (02 GPS)	478	750	272	These items were more high-priced in our local stores than online
Local training materials	126	100	-26	Negotiations' occurred
Trainees' refreshment	96	135	39	10 more specialised trainees were added to the list
Team members accommodation	945	1050	105	We had to conduct more sensitization, and thus the number of days increased
Projector' hiring	189	175	-14	Negotiations' occurred
100 T-shirts	189	225	36	Additional T-shirts were needed
Report and dissemination	409	265	-144	We have not yet fully disseminated the project' results as planned.
Total	5825	6180	355	We obtained a small local grant (£500) to support direct anti-poaching activities.

As of the date we worked on the project budget:
1 GBP (£) = 793.65 XAF (CFA)

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

The project enabled some rare findings and enhanced the capacity of local population to perform decisions for sustainable development. The most important steps now are as follows:

- collect data on ecology and behavioural aspects of great apes in this forest using camera-traps;
- continue work on the establishment of national HCV network;
- publish a scientific paper of this work on a peer-review journal;
- enrich the national high conservation value standards interpretation with local/realistic indicators;
- propose pragmatic bio-indicators to the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development for their follow-up missions in regard of Environmental and Social Management Plans in forestry sector;
- design and implement a conservation project on reptiles/snakes and bats.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes. The Rufford Foundation logo has been used in the materials produced in relation to this project: billboard, t-shirts, etc.

We also acknowledged the RSGF in all our presentations given to meetings and local seminars.

11. Any other comments?

We thank the Rufford Small Grants Foundation for sponsoring this project. This support has enhanced our organisations' profile among our partners and other stakeholders. We are also grateful to the COPAL community forest staff and the local population of Nkol-evodo. The project was successfully completed and key local stakeholders requested the next project phase intervention.

