

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	Affum Jerry Offei
Project title	Conserving Sacred Forest within the Mafia C landscape of the Sefwi-Wiawso Stool land for social, cultural, ecological and economic benefits
RSG reference	15390-1
Reporting period	May 28, 2015 to May 30, 2016
Amount of grant	£4500
Your email address	jerryaffummzzy@yahoo.co.uk
Date of this report	30 th May, 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
Enhance ecological restoration of the sacred forest for community, regional and global benefits			√	The tools developed have been used to collect data from the project. The tools developed also formed the basis for the training of community members on the ownership and community rights and benefits from conserving sacred forest in Mafia C. A conscious effort was made through the use of requisite participatory methods such as briefing/debriefing sessions, participatory mapping, group discussions, etc. to ensure key stakeholders participation. These approaches were used to enhance ownership of the assessment by all stakeholders. This also provided the background information needed for the development of the management plans.
Strengthen the capacities of the mafia C landscape communities, the traditional authorities and community institutions on the national forestry policies and regulations and empower them to effectively protect the resource.			√	The management plan has been developed for all the ten project communities. Key development issues in the plan has been captured by the decentralised local governance system (District Assembly) for implementation (this is to ensure sustainability of the impacts/outcomes of the project). In the Mafia C traditional area. Community rights manual developed to simplify versions of the relevant forest and wildlife policies with all the 10 communities
Establish and promote a community framework for effective community-based forest protection that will preserve sacred forests			√	All the ten project communities have received information on the sustainable use and conservation of Sacred forest. They have also received information on forest sector policies and laws relevant for the sustainable use of Sacred forest.

sacredness, socio-cultural, economic and socio-ecological benefits			monitoring and evaluation framework, sustainability strategy, further build capacity of the community members has been develop and yet to produce dissemination and replication strategies However dissemination of the final report is yet to be completed. This is expected to be finalised in the coming weeks.
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

No major unforeseen difficulty arose during the implementation of the project. However, there were few protocol issues with ownership, control and management of the Sacred forest at the district level that was handled effectively through the 2012 forest and wildlife policy which recognises the change of management system and focus from a government-led system to a community-government collaboration management approach. If this is not handled properly it could lead to delays in project implementation and sometimes apathy and unwillingness of communities to participate in project meetings. With the vast experience of the team, we managed to convey the message to all stakeholders about the need for the project, their contribution to the successful project implementation in terms of their time and what greater benefits will accrue to them with their effective participation. This was done over a long period of time in order to fully bring everyone on board.

The other issue had to do with the arrangement with the chiefs and district stakeholders for a suitable date and appropriate location for the management plan validation and synthesis workshop at the district level. This was mainly due to the unavailability of some key district stakeholders on many of the agreed dates scheduled. We finally managed to get a favourable date for all the stakeholders including chiefs, district stakeholders and the community members.

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

The most important outcomes of the project are

- i. The adoption of a participatory approach for gaining the outcomes of the project by ensuring that the process is underpinned by extensive stakeholder participation and consultation, and drawing on the widest circle of stakeholders. An important aspect of the project was to ensure that the right information is gathered at the right source and to reflect the implicit expectations of what the project seeks to achieve in all the ten project communities through the use of various tools, processes and systems developed and used through a collaborative and participatory approach to develop management plan for the protection of sacred forest.

- ii. The level of awareness of the community members in the project communities has been enhanced through the implementation of the project and together with the implementation of the management plan this will reduce to the minimal level the encroachment and destruction of Sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape
- iii. A management, synergy building and conflict management plan for the ten project communities in relation to sacred forest conservation in place. This plan has the buy-in of the local government system (the District Assembly) and will be used to feed into broader national level discourse on Mafia C landscape. The plan has enabled communities to identify development approaches and paths that is consistent with their aspirations of economic growth and development and still conserves and maintains the integrity of their respective sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape.
- iv. Report of the project and other relevant information materials produced and distributed to wide range of stakeholders including the communities, NGO coalitions including Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) and government (the District Assembly).

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

Participatory processes of social learning and multi-stakeholder negotiation was institutionalized, including efforts to involve all parts of the community and ensure that the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people and groups are protected or enhanced and local communities benefited from and contributed to the project implementation a number of strategic ways. The communities were main targets of the project and were therefore involved directly as receivers of awareness information or providers of critical information feeding into action planning towards conservation of sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape. Through the baseline survey and community meetings, relevant indigenous information on conservation values, norms, rules and regulations in relation to sacred forest was sourced. The project communities were also directly involved in all the information sharing/awareness creation meetings as recipients. The communities have thus received training on using indigenous knowledge on protected area management and forest protection policies which provided for the involvement of communities in managing wildlife in all forest areas through community Resources Management Areas and for traditional autonomy for the protection and management of sacred forests and community dedicated forest in the Mafia C landscape

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

There is wider populace demand from the communities, the District Assembly and other relevant stakeholders to continue the work. So far the management plan identifies possible collaborations between different stakeholder groups including NGOs to carry on some aspects of the project including the community sensitisation aspects through formation and sensitisation of Community Resources Management

Area committees (CRMCs) one of the key tools identified by the project for effective achievement was the CREMA concept.

The CREMA concept aims at strengthening local governance capacity and enabling engagement with other actors at multiple scales to articulate local interests and aspirations with the aim of achieving linked conservation and development as a key goal. The concept is modelled around the local land tenure systems which are at the core of decision-making around lands in Ghana.

The management plan has also identified a long-term perspective for sustainable development, adapting strategies as needed to address dynamic social and economic changes thus contribute to the conservation and sound use of the sacred forest. The action plan has also tasked implementers of this project and other NGOs to look for additional support (grant funding) to build the technical capacities of community members.

Hopefully in the coming months it is anticipated that other relevant learning experiences and issues from the implementation of this project will be outlined and used to develop grant funding proposals to donors for support.

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

The final report of the project will be shared with all relevant stakeholders. The hardcopies will be distributed to all relevant stakeholders. The soft copy will be made available to Ghana Forestry commission, Sefwi Wiawso Traditional council, Juaboso District Assembly, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Department of Silviculture and Forest Management) and Conservation NGOs to be put on their websites for greater publicity. I will also share the report with the team of consultants working on conservation projects. The study is expected to inform government's long term policy decision on Traditional sacred sites to be considered national protected areas and planning agencies and protected area managers who have to engaged with the custodians of these sacred forest in addition provided a dedicated fund for the sustainable management of the sacred forest which will help improve the ecological integrity of the sacred forests in Ghana

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 grant was used over the period of May 2015 to May 2016 which translates to 12 months. This means the actual project implementation lasted for an exactly 12 months as it was presented in the proposal. This is largely attributed to corporation and effective collaboration with all stakeholders involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project

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
Cost of hiring vehicle	400	400	0	
Per diem for project lead and field associate	300	300		
Tree seedlings	450	480	3	One of the species (mahogany) prices slightly increased due to high demand
Fuel for car hired Community meetings	250	50	5	This was largely due to the hikes in fuel prices and the depreciation of the Ghana currency over the period of the project implementation
Cost of hiring vehicle	800	800		This was largely due to the hikes in fuel prices and the depreciation of the Ghana currency over the period of the project
Per diem for community meetings	600	600	0	
Fuel for car hired	400	450	5	This was largely due to the hikes in fuel prices and the depreciation of the Ghana currency over the period of the project
Project visibility (sign board, banners and some t-shirts for Community members)	150	250	10	This is due to depreciation of the local currency over the period and the high cost of printing services
Cost of venue of meeting	100	100	0	
Snack and other refreshment for meeting	200	200	0	
Transport for meeting participants	650	700	5	This was largely due to the hikes in fuel prices and the depreciation of the Ghana currency over the period of the project affected transportation
Office stationery and communication	200	200	0	
Total	4500	4585	28	

Note: The inter-bank average exchange rate used over the period (May, 2015 to May, 2016) is 5.64 Ghc to 1 GBP.

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

The important next steps include finalising the project report and sharing with all relevant stakeholders including Rufford Foundation. Also the key findings of the report will be incorporated into the recommendations by the Wildlife Bill before parliament and ensure sustainability of the important outcomes/impacts of the project (will use my influence as part of the legal Working group working on position papers to support the Wildlife Bill. It is also important that in order to keep the aspirations of the community in suitable balance, different proposals need to be developed by NGOs and civil society organisations using the information from the project to explore the options of attracting donor funding to implement actions identified in the Management Plan. It is also anticipated that Rufford Foundation as a key and strategic partner will use the information in this report to engage with other donors to streamline and provide funding options for implementing a suit of capacity building,

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?

The project team made a conscious effort to ensure maximum publicity of the Rufford Foundation in the implementation of the project. During all the community meetings, the Rufford Foundation was mentioned as the funder of the project. The project implementation team went ahead to explain the interest of the funders in funding the project and the conservation of ten sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape. In the interactions with other stakeholders at the district level, Rufford Foundation was mentioned as the funding partner of the project. All correspondence to stakeholders especially in the arrangement and implementation of the district stakeholder's workshop mentioned Rufford Foundation as the funder. The T-shirts was given to project communities members with Rufford logo and banner developed for the workshop carried the logo and acknowledgement of the Rufford Foundation for maximum visibility (this is also shown in one picture from the project presented in the project pictures document). The products developed for the project including the reports, information materials carried the logo and acknowledgement of Rufford Foundation.

11. Any other comments?

The Rufford Foundation grant support has been extremely useful in terms of making resources available for the project team to do what it believes in to conserve nature around the world. With the grant we are taking the gradual but important step to conserve all sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape (conserving several hundreds of fauna and flora species) for present and future generations. It is the hope of the project team that Rufford Foundation will continue its enormous work of conserving the world's ecosystems. We look forward to continuous engagement with the foundation.

PICTURE REPORT

Project title/number: Conserving Sacred Forest within the Mafia C landscape of the Sefwi Wiawso stool land for social, cultural, ecological and economic benefits (15390-1)

Funded by: Rufford Foundation



© Project team leader visited Ahantamoe Sacred Forest in Mafia C with Community members



Chief linguist briefing the Project leader (Jerry) and the members on the history behind the conservation of the sacred forest.



Workshop with all stakeholders in the Mafia C during the Management Plan validation



Nursery raised and supply to 10 sacred forest in the Mafia C landscape



Project team members with a pose with Divisional chief of the Sefwi Wiawso Stool land (Mafia Chief)



Traditional chiefs support the project and thanked Rufford Foundation for funding the project



Community sensitization meeting at Asempaneye on the benefits of conserving the sacred forest (Project team leader facilitating the meeting).



Project team leader and Assistant on a project monitoring and evaluation to assess the survival rate of planted trees in the Aphantomoe Sacred forest at Mafia C landscape.