

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Boris Polycarpe Yehouenou Tessi
Project Title	Dogo-Ketou Forest (Benin): Contribution to its conservation through resources status assessment, training and local community empowerment
Application ID	32092-1
Grant Amount	£6000
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Date of this Report	March 21, 2022

1. 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
Investigation and description of population dynamics and structure of the most important NTFPs of the forest in relation to the degree of anthropogenic disturbances				The forest inventory allowed us to install 20 plots of 1 ha and to evaluate the population of threatened species.
Evaluation and promotion of different Agroforestry practices in the region				An ethnobotanical survey was conducted to identify the species and agroforestry practices of the riparian populations of the natural forest.
Restoration of deforested and degraded forests with a view to restoring the forest ecosystem through natural regeneration or tree planting				We have not been able to plant trees in the forest because of new restrictions from the forestry administration. Nevertheless, 3,000 <i>Acacia auriculaformis</i> seedlings have been planted in the areas bordering the forest. These plants are maintained by local populations in a system of association with food crops.
Work closely with communities to develop alternative livelihood activities				Local communities living near the forest were informed about beekeeping practices and trained in plant production and agroforestry.
Execution of forest protection and conservation awareness campaign in the region				Awareness sessions were held with various local actors (farmers, women, schoolchildren) sometimes in the presence of local foresters.

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

- The first difficulty was to be able to involve forest authorities in our activities. But in the end, following the presentation of the project and its objectives, we were accompanied by them in the field planning of several activities.

- The second major difficulty is related to the global and local health crisis (COVID-19) which caused us to postpone several activities and delays in the execution of the project. Nevertheless, the activities were carried out and finalized without any health incidents.
- Another difficulty was, at the beginning, to be able to mobilize the local authorities for the sensitisation and training activities given their availability. But in the end, we were able to involve them in each activity.

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

- The current population status of the three threatened species targeted in this project is known.
- The ethnobotanical survey on the adoption of agroforestry has allowed a better understanding of the mindset of the local population as well as the important elements to consider for a full involvement of the locals in agroforestry practices.
- Awareness raising on the importance of biodiversity conservation reached several layers of the community and was successful in getting the population more involved.



Environmental education in a school on the project site with the presence of the parents' association.



Meeting to discuss the project's activities and the expectations of local communities



Evolution of the trees planted in one of the village fields (75% success rate)

4. What do you consider to be the most significant achievement of this work?

5. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

The local communities were involved in the inventory activities in the forest for the evaluation of the status of the remaining populations of threatened species, in the establishment of tree nurseries and the planting phase of the produced trees. They

have been very interested actors during the information activities on beekeeping and other potential income activities.

6. Are there any plans to continue this work?

In fact, this first project allowed us to notice that there are still activities to be developed based on the needs of the local community for a real involvement in conservation activities and their socio-economic development. During the exchanges, local communities living near the forest expressed the need for capacity building and equipment in income-generating activities such as beekeeping. It would be interesting to program in the near future.

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

All the activities carried out within the framework of this project were published on the various communication channels of the NGO SOS Biodiversity:

<https://web.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin/posts/1875507889264320>

<https://web.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin/posts/1955845837897191>

<https://web.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin/posts/1836758156472627>

<https://sosbiodiversity.org/2021/06/17/journee-mondiale-de-lutte-contre-ladesertification-et-la-secheresse-2021-avec-sos-biodiversity/>

<https://web.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin/posts/2143781109103662>

<https://web.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin/posts/2150068538474919>

https://explorer.land/x/project/dogo-ketou_forest/about

We will also produce a scientific publication on information related to the perception of local communities regarding the adoption of agroforestry in this environment as well as on the current status of the populations of the threatened plant species studied.

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

The initial duration of the project was 1 year, but because of some difficulties mentioned in question 2, we had about 3 months of delay. But the main thing is that all the activities have been carried out in good conditions.

9. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Emergencies (accident/injury)	100	150	+50	Money used to pay for the treatment of malaria cases of some team members during fieldwork
Redaction and article publication in a peer review fees	200	200		Writing ongoing
Conception of pamphlets/Sensitization/ Awareness education	240	290	+50	We made more T shirts to share with some locals
Office utility items (Papers, pens, external hard disk of 500 GB, memory stick) and printing of questions sheets	150	100	-50	We spent less in office furniture
Inventory equipment (Pi ruban, making tape)	50	50		
Communication (Internet, telephone...)	150	200	+50	More expenses to reach local leaders, authorities to organize the field activities
Tree planting	270	300	+30	More expenses due to the invitation of local forest authorities
Tree nursery activities	600	600		
Agroforestry training activities	1040	900	-140	We spent less in activities implementation
Accommodation and food on the field	960	960		
Rent of field engine and fuel buying for travel within the field	1200	1200		
Field assistant	840	700	-140	We negotiated a better price
Travels cost to the field	200	300	+100	We made a lot of travel due to activities postponement, local authorities missing, and the extension of the project duration
TOTAL	6000	6000		

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

We plan to continue working with this community on aspects of capacity building with a focus on income generating activities that they have expressed a need for. An important focus would also be the study of regeneration of targeted endangered species and their production and planting for ex situ conservation.

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

During this project, leaflets and posters were produced, all featuring the foundation's logo. T-shirts printed with the Rufford logo were used during the performance of all activities. Reports submitted online on our platforms always made reference to the foundation to show our gratitude for your support.

12. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Boris P. Yehouenou Tessi (project coordinator): I coordinated all field activities, field data collection, and monitoring. I wrote the activity reports and managed the project budget.

Sunday Berlioz KAKPO: As leader of the NGO SOS Biodiversity spared no effort to support us in the planning and execution of all project activities. He was a key player in the success of this project thanks to institutional and technical support, supervision and field visits.

Vincent Adjibode, Koukoudou Arielle, Goudou Merveille, Egounlety Eudoxie: They have participated in the various phases of sensitizing local populations on the importance of Biodiversity and the need to conserve the natural forest of Niaouli, but also in inventory and ethnobotanical activities.

13. Any other comments?

We would like to sincerely thank all the people who facilitated our access to the field, participated in the various project activities, and supported us so that the project was a success (SOS Biodiversity, the Ouémé-Plateau Forestry Inspection, Circonscription Kétou School).

We are especially grateful to the Rufford Foundation for this funding, which will have impacted both the project members in terms of project management and field experience. The local community also had the chance to benefit from several activities that will help improve their living conditions and strengthen their contribution to the sustainable management of the Dogo-Kétou forest.

We would also like to thank our references who accompanied us in the process of submitting our project.