

## Final Evaluation Report

---

Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Ambrose Bockarie Kanneh
<b>Project Title</b>	Impact of human activities on the population status of three threatened primates in Jaibui Island, Sierra Leone, significance for ecotourism and livelihood
<b>Application ID</b>	34997-1
<b>Date of this Report</b>	05_12_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
<p>Determine the abundance and distribution of the three primate species within the Island, and the impact level of human activities</p>				<p>This objective which forms the basis of the study was fully achieved. However, due to the season of the research (rainy season), direct detection and counting of the monkeys was difficult. Also, it was observed that some groups of the target monkey species were blocked by high river tides thereby living outside the Jaibui Island boundary in small island patches formed by the tributaries of the Moa River. Similarly, observation was made for the chimpanzee as few nests were encountered. In all the survey team heard the vocalisation of the target monkey species and chimpanzee from outside the Jaibui Island boundary during the survey, confirming that some groups of the population were not resident within the main Jaibui Island at the time of the survey. Therefore, repeating similar survey protocols in the dry season is a feature consideration for comparison purpose.</p>
<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing policies for the long-term conservation of the species</p>				<p>This was also achieved. Stakeholders were frank with providing significant gaps in the existing policy document governing the conservation of the species and proposed a future pathway towards the amendment of existing policy gaps for the long-term conservation of the primates in the county. The findings from the study provided relevant information to support the ongoing species acts (wildlife and forestry acts) review process. However, engagement with multiple stakeholders across different sectors of the society is needed for more detailed review process as this</p>

			study was limited to few actors in the environment and conservation sector.
Explore new opportunities for the promotion of ecotourism and its potential benefits for the local livelihood in the study area			The study confirmed the willingness from the community members to conserve the primates for ecotourism intervention in Jaibui Island and identified the existing skills and new livelihood opportunities that can be achieved through the effort of conserving the species. However, new livelihood opportunities and other benefit options may continue to arise along the process of ecotourism establishment as there are still more to discover in terms of local culture and other associated tourism initiatives that can enhance more benefit for the local human population.
Enhance the capacity of local community volunteers on primate biomonitoring methods and the use of survey equipment			The knowledge and skills of the six community volunteers was improved through this study. The community volunteers participated fully in the entire aspect of the ecological survey. This was accompanied by theoretical and practical training from an experienced field technician prior to the start of the survey and even during the survey.
Promote local knowledge on the importance and benefits of conserving primate through conservation education with school pupils			This was achieved as a targeted number of approximately 400 primary school pupils were taught in classrooms on the importance and varied benefits communities will receive through promoting wildlife species, forest and associated natural resources conservation in their communities. The pupils were also mobilised to reach their parents and relatives in the community with conservation messages on printed posters with images of key endangered species occurring at the study area. Five schools were targeted with this objective – National Islamic Primary School in Sahun Village; Ahmadiyya Primary School in Konia Village; Pujehun District Education Community School in Grima Village; Roman Catholic Primary School in Mano Village and Roman

			Catholic Primary School in Waima Village.
--	--	--	---

**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

**a).** Knowledge enhancement of six community volunteers on bio-monitoring of primates and other large mammals. The fact that community volunteers are now able to use survey equipment and have knowledge in wildlife monitoring methods (transect survey and camera trapping) is a gradual transformation process to community interest in conservation programmes and guarantee sustainability of the conservation programme with future hope of community led species conservation programmes implementation and management of their own natural resources.

**b).** The study provided baseline findings of the primate status (population, distribution and threats) within the study area. This is important to guide management planning for the conservation of the primates and other wildlife present in the Jaibui Island. The information can serve as a major underlying driver to the establishment and success of the sustainable ecotourism structures at the study area and hence provide a gain to species conservation efforts.

**c).** The study showcases the need to establish and support ecotourism intervention in Jaibui Island. Identified Jaibui Island as an important site for setting up ecotourism ventures that support local livelihood development through species conservation. This provides a paradigm shift towards local knowledge of the non-benefit associated with wildlife conservation as through the findings of this study, local communities around Jaibui Island and other places with similar settings of people living close to wildlife habitats will support wildlife conservation with the knowledge that wildlife conservation offers varied livelihood benefits.

The information, education, communication and knowledge foundation that has been popularised and established among the local population at the study area and other relevant stakeholders on the status: population, distribution, threats and related policies measures of the primates to inform proper conservation planning for primates and other threatened species conservation in Sierra Leone.

**3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

- The unexpected changes in the prices of goods, fuel, transportation and food items were a challenge in terms of budget. This was however overcome with cutting down on cost on other budget lines to create a balance while operating in the overall project budget.
- The timing of ecological research and interviews: the ecological research and community interviews were conducted at the peak of the rainy season. That posed a challenge to movement especially when crossing on the island to collect data and reach creating communities. This was overcome with persistence and determination to reach the planned target of the project.

- Engagement with the stakeholders individually was difficult. Difficult not because they don't want to participate but because of their busy schedules. A constant follow-up on appointment was done until a conclusion of the right time and day was reached to finally engage them.
- Managing community expectation also was difficult. Community members assumed that conservation projects are designed to take care of all their needs and that posed a challenge to this very small-scale project unlike other large-scale projects that have been implemented around the site. However, with constant communication with the stakeholders they were able to understand the long-term vision of the project and that was overcome.
- Official engagement of other team members. It was difficult to match the project timeline with the engagement of other team members. Because their presence and inputs were required on certain activities, activities were always pushed to fit their free schedule. For instance, the team member to lead on the sensitisation activity was pregnant and at the time of the activity her pregnancy was due, and the activity had to be shifted until her delivery and possible stability of the child before we finally implemented the activity.
- Theft of personal computer: Just at the completion of the ecological data collection and community interview in the process of data analysis, my computer was stolen with the raw data collected. I had to stay for a month without a personal computer until I finally secure one. What was helpful was that I backed up most of the collected data on a hard drive, and I was able to retrieve the information as soon as I got a computer. Also, I used a data sheet during the data collection process. The data sheets were all safe with the information and that was used to compile other data that were not on the drive.

#### **4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.**

Local communities have been an integral part of this project from the onset to the last project output. The execution of the project has been hinged on the concept that conservation goals cannot be achieved without the participation and involvement of the local communities and the sustainability of conservation projects required ownership by the communities. Therefore, for all the planned project activities, the local community members were involved. The ecological data collection was done with the full collaboration and involvement of the local community youths as data collectors. The education activities were coordinated with the teachers at the schools who are members of the project communities and the community heads together with the school pupils who are the future environmental stewards and ambassadors for conservation of biodiversity and other natural resources occurring at the project area. Most of the information that constitutes the findings from this study were provided by the local community members to have their ideas and thoughts represented in the project.

## **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, there are plans to continue working on this project with the local communities and the host institution (Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary) of the fund. This project has provided insight into the many potentials of the study area for ecotourism ventures and as a site for the conservation of endangered and endemic biodiversity. Several conservation gaps were observed and documented during the execution of this project and need to be addressed to complement what has been achieved over the last 16 months of this project life cycle. Through the implementation of this project, a concept has not been approved for the conservation of pygmy hippopotamus in the Jaibui Island and nearby forest patches. That shows a pathway for continuity of conservation targets in the study area. Besides, other existing gaps for the conservation of the primates and other threatened species have been identified that are to be addressed for the long-term conservation of biodiversity. Hunting, which accounted for the highest human impact, needs further investigation to understand the source(s) and purpose(s) among the local population not only for primates but for other wild fauna conservation at the study area. To continue with the ecotourism intervention, there is the need for capacity building on various skill sets that has been uncovered among a small proportion of the human population living in the study area. Also, introducing new skills that are essential to drive the ecotourism process as a community led initiative is keen for the sustainability of the project and conservation of threatened species occurring at the study area. There is the need to expand on the study area among the three forest blocks of the study site to understand the movement pattern of the species and document how it is influenced by the two seasons (dry and rainy seasons) that alternate in Sierra Leone. There are several other gaps that need to be investigated in relation to the primate's survival and human long-term coexistence with the primates.

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

The finding from the project was compiled into a dissertation for the award for a master's degree in Climate Change Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The hard and soft copy of the thesis are available at the university and the host institution for the use by other researchers. The dissertation will be shared as an attachment to this evaluation form for the benefit of other who might want to undertake similar research. In addition, a draft manuscript has been developed and is under internal review by my close cycles and mentors, after which it will be submitted to a journal for publication.

## **7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

Secure funding to start the ecotourism intervention based on the baseline findings established by this project. Diversify conservation targets in the study area and promote community lead conservation initiatives thereby recognising the Jaibui Island as a site for biodiversity conservation, research and training centre for early career conservationists. Also, continue to engage a good number of stakeholders to lobby for updated wildlife and forestry acts and incorporate the findings from this project.

8. 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?

The Rufford Foundation logo was used on the posters designed for the community sensitization by school pupils (see the bottom of the poster inserted below). Also, it was used during the stakeholder workshop recognising the Foundation as the sole donor of the project. In addition, during my public thesis defence, the logo was presented acknowledging the foundation to a house of conservationists as the financial donor of the work. The foundation has not received any publication now, but there are plans to reach that demand.



9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

**Ambrose Bockarie Kanneh:** Lead project applicant. I supported and coordinated the implementation of all the planned project activities. Compiled the project findings into a dissertation and in producing the final project evaluation report.

**Esther Chukwu Anyechae:** She led in the sensitization activity with the teachers, school pupils and in the communities with the community members. Supported the design of the poster and other learning materials for the activity while revising the Tacugama Kids environmental Education Program workbook (TKEEP) with the school pupils in five schools.

Academic supervisor whose name is referenced in the dissertation I will attach to this form. He supported in revising the methodologies used in the data collection and analysis. Did technical inputs to present the work as a good document for other readers.

**Edward K. Marah:** A field officer working for Tacugama. With his support the transect survey was conducted and the training of the community volunteers was achieved.

**Mustapha Sesay:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Ansu Kallon:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Vandi Kallon:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Abudlharman Sesay:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Sengbeh Massaquoi:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Mohamed Sesay:** He is one of the community volunteers who participated in the transect survey and benefitted from the training on ecological survey methods and use of survey equipment.

**Mikalú Mansaray:** Field assistance from one of the project communities – Sahun. He assisted in coordinating with the teachers from the various schools and mobilising the school pupils for the sensitization component of the project.

## **10. Any other comments?**

It is my wish to continue with this project, on a different perspective as the Jaibui Island represents a site for biodiversity conservation while supporting local livelihood and career development. At present Basel Zoo has opted to support pilot research on pygmy hippo and again a concept note submitted to Programme de Petites Initiatives 6 has been validated requesting for a full proposal for conservation intervention at the site. All of which is to ensure the sustainability of conservation activities at the site that has been made possible through this project and previous intervention by Tacugama at the site. I must acknowledge that The Rufford Foundation remains a relevant source to support early career conservationists in building their capacity and species conservation at the brink of extinction. This I have witnessed through the cycle of this project.