

Liberia
East Nimba Nature Reserve Forest Conservation Project
News from the Field

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Conservation International

Conservation agreements

Following the successful implementation of phase one in 2017, renegotiations were held with the two communities of Gbopayee and Yolowee to ensure their understanding on the positive effect that continuing biodiversity conservation in the East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNR) has on their sustainable livelihoods. During the renegotiations, commitments by the relevant parties were mutually deliberated and agreed upon..

After fruitful renegotiations, Conservation Agreements were signed. At the signing ceremonies, the respective community leaders signed on behalf of their communities and county authorities in attendance endorsed the agreements.

Conservation Agreement 1: Piggery

Piggery is being promoted in each of the communities as an alternative livelihood for community dwellers who have primarily depended on bush meat for protein and cash to support their families. During this quarter, the 26 community pig care takers (12 in Gbopayee and 14 in Yolowee), received ongoing training in improved pig management including the aspects of feeding, hygiene and sanitation of the pig pen, identification of diseases, treatment and vaccinations, and personal safety. These training sessions have enabled the community caretakers to provide proper care for the pigs and ensure that they are healthy. The total number of pigs in Yolowee is now 15 after the two pregnant pigs gave birth to nine piglets. The other two additional pigs are pregnant and are expected to give birth in two months' time. As well, in Gbopayee the pigs are pregnant and are expected to give birth in the next quarter.

To accommodate the new-born piglets, an extension of the pig pens in each community will be undertaken in the next quarter.



Pregnant pig in Gbopayee



Piglets in Yolowee



Piglets in Yelowee

Conservation Agreement 2: Frontline Conservationists

A total of 24 (12 from Gbopayee and 12 from Yelowee) Frontline Conservationists (FCs) attended a refresher training-workshop from December 16 to 18, 2017 at Forestry Development Authority (FDA) headquarters in Zortapa. The workshop was aimed at building the capacity of the FCs in areas including the following:

- Monitoring forest habitat to ensure compliance with the terms of the conservation agreements and collect important biological data
- Conducting awareness and outreach activities within communities on Liberia's protected species
- Community mapping using GPS
- Patrol methodology and procedures
- Reporting of violations and follow-up procedures

In the workshop, the 24 FCs were able to acquire the target skills they learned. The community maps that they learned how to make will be extremely valuable in patrol and monitoring activities. Also, the FCs now fully understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as the code of conduct to be followed, while performing their work.



An FDA ranger explaining code of conduct and patrol methodology to the FCs



FCs preparing a community map for the Gbopayee community



An FC gives a presentation on the community map during training

Awareness creation

To enable community members to fully understand the concept of biodiversity conservation, especially in and around the ENNR and the community forests within the Northern Nimba Landscape, ongoing awareness creation sessions were held by the 24 Frontline Conservationists in the two communities of Gbopayee and Yolowee. The FCs visited individual homes for these sessions, with a total of 48 households reached during this period. The messages delivered included the following:

- The importance of conserving natural resources
- The importance of the ENNR
- Identification of protected and non-protected species
- Unsustainable fishing methods
- The community as a protector of the ENNR and community forests



Yolowee FCs in an awareness creation session with youth in the community

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