

Liberia
East Nimba Nature Reserve Forest Conservation Project

News from the Field

October 2015
Conservation International

Conservation Agreements

Conservation agreements are a way of managing natural resources that obligate the community to carry out conservation activities in return for certain benefits derived from such conservation. We are currently negotiating the conditions of Conservation Agreements with communities, but it is not easy to get everyone to agree on the types of benefits: some members of the communities are interested in receiving benefits in the form of cash payments, while others are interested in livelihood projects such as rice farming and livestock keeping. Ideas for conservation activities include stopping slash and burn agriculture and ending the hunting of protected species. The negotiation process with communities takes time. As we have mentioned in previous news bulletins, each step along the way CI uses the concept of 'Free, Prior and Informed Consent' (FPIC) to ensure that communities can opt out of the negotiation process at any point. We are hopeful that the negotiation process will conclude soon and that the Conservation Agreements can be signed.



Community meeting based on the FPIC concept
©Conservation International/photo by Liam Walsh

Education and Awareness around the East Nimba Nature Reserve

A primary focus this quarter has been to increase our education and awareness activities as the negotiation of Conservation Agreements continues to gather momentum.

Environmental Clubs within the Primary Schools

CI has established environmental clubs in 10 schools around East Nimba Nature Reserve, where children have learned about a range of topics including ecosystems, biodiversity and pollution. Many of the students are about to graduate. We hope that these youngsters will go on to study natural resource management and eventually be the core of a new generation leading environmental conservation.

Theatre Troops Deliver Conservation Message

Theatre is a major tool for conveying important messages in Liberia, and this project is no exception. CI has partnered with a local theatre troop and developed a series of plays that convey messages through singing, dancing and storytelling. The theatre troop has taken its performance to 18 villages in this quarter and has now covered the majority of settlements in Northern Nimba. In each town it visited, the theatre troop performed stories touching on biodiversity, illegal mining, pollution and protected species. Performances will be taken to villages in Southern Nimba over the next two months.



A theatre troop delivers an environmental message
©Conservation International/photo by Liam Walsh

Conservation Forum in association with Nimba County Community College

This quarter, CI is continuing its partnership with Nimba County Community College (NCCC) in conservation forums held for the most part every week. We invited instructors from around Liberia, some from as far away as the capital of Monrovia, to speak on a variety of topics including protected area management, community forestry and coastal environmental management. College students have taken part enthusiastically in these forums and plans call for the continuation of these weekly events in the next quarter.



College students at a conservation forum
©Conservation International/photo by Liam Walsh

Note: Unauthorized copying of the images and text used here is prohibited.