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Cape Town, South Africa
June 15th, 2001

Mr Jim Graham
CARPE Program Manager
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Graham:

Attached please find a copy of the first semi-annual report of the CARPE Associate Award: *Conservation Action and Strategy for Equatorial Guinea (CASEG)* as per the requirements set forth in the Associate Cooperative Agreement Award No. AOT-A-00-00-00226-00. We will appreciate your help to disseminate this document to the appropriate officers.

In our opinion, despite some early delays which underline the difficulties of conducting conservation activities in Equatorial Guinea, this first stage of CASEG has already proven to be quite successful in furthering the overall objectives of CARPE.

We will appreciate your comments to the document and hope to meet you personally in the near future.

Sincerely,

Juan Carlos Bonilla
Ecotourism and Business Manager
Africa Program

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CARPE ASSOCIATE AWARD

Global Bureau Leader Cooperative Agreement No. LAG-A-00-99-00046000

Semi Annual Report :

Conservation Action and Strategy for Equatorial Guinea (CASEG)

Associate Award No. AOT-A-00-00-00226-00

I. Summary of Activity Status and Progress

a. Introduction

This report covers the first six-month period of CASEG from September 19th, 2000 through March 31, 2001 for activities completed under the CARPE Associate Award.

CASEG is a three-year project oriented to establish in Equatorial Guinea the foundation for collaboration during the implementation of CARPE activities. Conservation International (CI) is mandated to seek out partnerships with entities conducting conservation work in the country and engage private sector actors, specially upstream energy companies exploiting Equatorial Guinea's oil deposits, to determine the possibility of an alliance to support biodiversity and environmental conservation. In the case this alliance is determined to be feasible, CI is also to establish its nature and to define a strategy to achieve it. There is a built in assumption that learning captured at each stage will determine plans for later stages.

The first year of the project aims to establish initial groundwork in order to determine implementation actions for years two and beyond. During the six-month period covered by this semi-annual report, significant advance has been made, including a successful reconnaissance visit and the development of a work plan to guide further action. Despite the political and logistical complexities of the area, direct contact has been established with the leading organizations engaged in conservation activities in Equatorial Guinea and the challenges and opportunities for cooperation are better understood.

b. Highlights

- An initial reconnaissance trip planned in January was cancelled due to impossibility of establishing contact with forestry authorities and problems with the issue of visas. This forced cancellation highlights the difficulties of operating in the complex political environment in Equatorial Guinea.
- A successful 10-day visit was conducted by Dr.Karen Ross in February, including the island of Bioko and the mainland, Rio Muni. During this visit, contact was established with relevant in-country individuals and organizations. Despite the success of this trip, it also raises issues of safety and security for foreign personnel on the ground.
- As a result of this trip, a work plan was prepared and submitted to CARPE. In a meeting held on March 09, the findings of the reconnaissance visit and the work plan were presented, resulting on the approval of a budget of US\$ 115,000 for the first year.
- CI's CELB has initiated contacts with energy companies working in the area and a second visit has been planned for July to explore potential avenues of cooperation.

c. *Table of Activities Status*

Activity Number	Activity Title	Status	
Reconnaissance and Planning			
1	Dialogue and determine possibilities for collaboration with relevant entities	On-track	
2	Reconnaissance trip	Completed	
3	Aerial videography and remote sensing data compiled	Delayed	
4	Identification of biological and socio-economic RAP experts	On-track	
5	Biological and socio-economic survey design	On-track	
Rapid Biological and Socio-Economic Assessments*			
1	Data compiled and analysed	On-track	
2	RAP training of local conservationists	On-track	
3	Recommendations for conservation articulated	On-track	
4	Role for partners explored and collaborators identified	On-track	
5	Follow-up surveys designed	On-track	
6	Roundtable consultation held to consolidate strategy	On-track	

** All activities related to Rapid Biological and Socio-Economic Assessments are contingent to findings on the reconnaissance activities and are planned for the second part of Year 1. They are all considered on-track at this point in time.*

II. Detailed Description of Progress

a. Key short and long-term program objectives

The overall objectives of CASEG are:

- Seek out partnerships with entities doing conservation work in Equatorial Guinea that will serve as a foundation for collaboration during the implementation of CARPE activities
- Engage private sector actors to determine whether an alliance to support biodiversity and environmental conservation is feasible and, if its is, determine what type of alliance is appropriate.
- Over the full period of three years, develop a strategy and conservation action in Equatorial Guinea. Further, establish a baseline of information, making it possible to monitor the impact of future conservation action.

The short-term activities planned for Year 1 are described in the table presented in I.c above. The period covered by this semi-annual report include only those related to Reconnaissance and Planning. Those activities related to Rapid Biological and Socio-Economic Assessments (see table above) are contingent to findings in the reconnaissance activities and will only be implemented at a later stage; thus they are not discussed in this report. Following is a description of the activities conducted for this report's relevant period.

b. Activity Descriptions:

1. Dialogue and determine possibilities for collaboration with relevant entities

Progress to Date:

Contact has been established with some of the most relevant stakeholder of conservation issues in Equatorial Guinea, by means of email and phone communication as well as by meetings held in both Equatorial Guinea and Washington, DC. In all instances, positive feedback has been obtained with regards to interest in participation in conservation activities in Equatorial Guinea as well as useful insight on the opportunities and challenges of the local situation. Other groups and individuals are in process of being identified and contacted to assess their positions and potential interest in alliances and partnerships.

The following individuals and entities with involvement in conservation in Equatorial Guinea have already been contacted:

EG Government

- Ministerio de Bosques, Pesca y Medio Ambiente. Contacts: Fortunato Ememe Efra, Jefe del Departamento Forestal and Edelmiro Vizantino Castaño, Director General del Medio Ambiente.
- Instituto Nacional de Areas Protegidas. Contact: Bruno Maurach, Technical Assistant, EU representative.
- Proyecto de Conservación y Utilización Racional de los Ecosistemas Forestales de Guinea Ecuatorial (CUREF). Contact: Ing. Forestal Ramón Mituy Abaga, Director Nacional.

Academic:

- Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial (UNGE). Contact: Dr. Federico Edjo Ovono, Rector.
- Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program (BBPP), Beaver College (Arcadia University). Contact: Dr Gail Hearn, Director.
- Department of Anthropology, Hunter College of CUNY, New York. Contact: Dr. John F. Oates.
- Jersey Preservation Society, UK. Contact: Dr. John Fa

Private Sector:

- TRITON Equatorial Guinea, Inc. Contact: Beau Crowder, Community Development Consultant.
- Det Norske Veritas. Peter Hamer, Manager.
- Bioko Business Center. Contact: Yolanda Asumu, Director.

Other:

- European Commission Bureau in Equatorial Guinea. Contact: Rafael Señan Llarena. Resident Consel.
- Asociación Amigos de Doñana. Ramón Castelo Alvarez, Rep in EG.
- Living Earth Foundation, London. Contact: Roger Hammond, Director of Programs.

Problems, Delays, Shortfalls and Proposed Solutions:

Several problems arose during the effort to establish initial contacts. In the case of the Equatorial Guinea government, none of the correspondence addressed to the Ministry of Forests, Fisheries and Environment was answered, for reasons yet unclear. At the time of the field visit, the entire cabinet had been dissolved and no higher level officials were available for meetings. In the case of the private sector, contact has been established with one of the companies exploiting oil concessions in Equatorial Guinea. Further contact is being planned both with the corporate headquarters as well as with the local business units of the other companies.

There is limited NGO presence in Equatorial Guinea. One of the most prominent, the Spanish organization *Amigos de Doñana*, has seen its activities curtailed as the result of allegations of involvement in an attempted coup in 1998. In this political environment, NGO's such as CI must be extremely careful to avoid any misinterpretation of its objectives. This further complicates the advance of the project.

A second trip to Equatorial Guinea is being planned for the second half of Year 1, to further the contacts established in the first visit and to contact higher-level government officials and private sector executives. Staff from both the Africa Program and CELB will participate on it to enrich discussions.

Additionally, it is clear that a face to face meeting of all stakeholders is imperative. While CI's role of contacting all stakeholders one by one has generated a more complete picture of the overall conservation situation in Equatorial Guinea, there is limited communication between stakeholders. CI plans to play a facilitator role to foster this communication and generate more opportunities for discussions to clarify complementary roles, common

objectives and a consensus on the conservation priorities for Equatorial Guinea. It is likely that in the second half of Year 1 a roundtable meeting will be convened to give all or most of this stakeholders the opportunity to discuss this issues.

2. Reconnaissance Trip

Progress to Date:

A first attempt to conduct a reconnaissance trip to Bioko in January was aborted after no response was received for repeated communications with Equatorial Guinea's environmental authorities. This first delegation included Olivier Langrand, CI's Vice President: Africa Program and CASEG program leader, Dr. Rebecca Ham, Senior Director: West Africa Program, and Juan Carlos Bonilla, Business and Ecotourism Manager: Africa Program. Without a letter of invitation from Equatorial Guinea's Government, their Embassy in Washington, DC refused to issue visas and the trip was cancelled.

Dr. Gail Hearn from Beaver College advised of the possibility of entering Malabo without a previously issued visa, under the umbrella of an oil company delegation arriving in Swiss Air's flight from Zurich. The company's in-country representatives arrange for entry stamps issued on arrival. Due to the uncertain nature of this arrangement, the CI CASEG delegation was reduced to one person and Dr. Karen Ross was assigned to attempt the visit in February.

Dr Ross' visit was conducted between February 18th and 28th. Despite the limitations it was a successful visit, establishing contact with public, academic and private sector individuals and institutions involved in conservation issues in Equatorial Guinea. This visit also underlines the challenges and difficulties of establishing work in the country. A full trip report is available.

The 10-day visit included Malabo, Equatorial Guinea's capital located in Bioko; a field visit to Moca near the Gran Caldera protected area; and Bata, a provincial city located in the mainland (Rio Muni). Meetings with officers of the Ministry of Forests, Fisheries and Environment, The National University, The EU mission and some private sector representatives were conducted. Unfortunately, no high-level government officials were available due to the dissolution of the cabinet at the time of the visit.

After the field visit, Dr. Ross held meetings in Washington, DC with the Executive Director of CI's CABS, Dr. Gustavo Fonseca, members of the CELB team, Amy Sckotzlas and Michael Totten and with Dr. Claude Gascon, head of CI's Field Support Division to discuss potential avenues of inter-departmental technical cooperation in EG. Meetings were also held with the Executive Directors of the two funding mechanisms within CI, the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), Jorgen Thomsen and the Global Conservation Fund (GCF), Cherri Sugal, in order to explore potential sources of additional funding for conservation efforts in the area.

With the quite large amount of information gathered in the field trip, a Progress Report and Work Plan were prepared and presented to CARPE (available on request). On March 09, a meeting was held at the World Resources Institute and Dr. Ross presented the results of the exercise. As a result, the work plan has been accepted and a total of US\$ 115,000 have been committed to fund its implementation.

Problems, Delays, Shortfalls and Proposed Solutions:

From the cancellation of the first visit in January to problems with the acceptance in Bata of the entry visa issued to Dr. Ross in Malabo, this activity underlines the practical difficulties to be face in the implementation of CASEG. While the reconnaissance visit was a complete success, further visits should assure the legal safety of visitors by initiating the visa process with a letter of invitation by local organizations. It is also apparent that under the policy of

heightened security and restricted mobility within the country, additional support from security and military institutions needs to be obtained.

3. Aerial Videography and remote sensing data compiled

Progress to Date:

Given the early stage of the project, it is sensible to delay this component of the project. Although CI has in-house expertise to manage remote sensing technologies, including low-cost aerial videography, this kind of work relies on strong local partnerships. With the complex security issues in Equatorial Guinea, any low-flying photography work would need to be closely coordinated with government institutions.

Problems, Delays, Shortfalls and Proposed Solutions:

As mentioned, this activity cannot be initiated until strong support is obtained from the authorities. It is unlikely the level of coordination necessary will be achieved in Year 1; therefore, it is expected this topic will be discussed in a further stage with the relevant authorities.

3. Identification of biological and socio-economic RAP experts

Progress to Date:

The initial contacts have established a baseline database of the expertise available to conduct ulterior studies in Bioko. It is clear that research in the region must include experts from the Ministry of Forests, Fisheries and Environment, UNGE, Beaver College-Arcadia University, Hunter College of CUNY and Jersey Preservation Trust. CI's own expert base in the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science (CABS) and the Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB) would also be involved in studies conducted in Equatorial Guinea. Other sources of expertise are in process of being identified.

Problems, Delays, Shortfalls and Proposed Solutions:

No problems have been experienced in this activity. All academics contacted have expressed interest and enthusiasm on continuing involvement in conservation efforts in Equatorial Guinea. Although significant funding limitations exist, it is likely strong scientific arguments can be presented for additional fundraising efforts.

4. Biological and socio-economic survey design

Progress to Date:

The survey design will only be possible once activity 3 is completed and will also be based on the discussions to be held as part of Activity 1. It is expected a protocol for both the socio-economic and biological assessments will be ready by the end of the second half of Year 1 of the project. Discussions are being held on this subject with the Corridor Design Team at CI's Field Support Division.