



Conservation Society of Sierra Leone

Connecting people to nature.



From the Executive Director



Dear Readers,

This quarter brought with it so many important conservation interventions across the country. All of these are contributing to other national and global initiatives towards mitigating climate change effects on especially vulnerable populations around the world. Our staff have been very impressive working with communities and schools through School Nature Clubs in our operational areas, all in a bid to ensure community ownership and sustainability of the gains we make in our interventions. This edition sheds light to the strides the Society is making towards replanting and maintaining trees in degraded areas around the Western Area Peninsula and Kambui Hills

Forest Reserve in the Greater Gola Landscape; galvanizing like-minded CSO support to raise a strong voice for the protection of protected areas, especially the Western Area Peninsula National Park; saving species and providing alternative livelihood support to communities. Our special thanks and appreciation to our valuable partners and donors who continue to provide the much needed technical and financial support to CSSL.

Happy reading!

Dr. Sheku Kamara,
Executive Director, CSSL

 : <https://facebook.com/conservations>
 <https://cs-sl.org>

In this issue

TOPIC 1

Kick-Off: Like-Minded Action to Protect the Western Area Peninsula National Park

TOPIC 2

Turtle Rescue at Black Johnson Beach

TOPIC 3

World Environment Day 2022: #OnlyOneEarth Tree Planting Activity with School Nature Clubs

TOPIC 4

PAPFor Celebrates World Environment Day 2022 at Bayama

TOPIC 5

World Parrot Day: Fun Facts about Parrots

TOPIC 6

Interview with CEPF Project Team about the new Yawri Bay Guide

TOPIC 7

BIOPAMA: Alternative livelihood support for Kambui Hills forest edge communities



Kick-Off: Like-Minded Action to Protect the Western Area Peninsula National Park

The Western Area Peninsula National Park (WAPNP) is under great danger. Illegal activities around the park have been visible before all for years. There have been many attempts to protect the forest and to get existing laws enforced. Not all of them were sustainable. This is why Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) has again taken action to call on like-minded individuals, institutions and organisations for all to speak with one voice and act as one body.

Round Table meeting to initiate joint actions.

On 1st June 2022, CSSL engaged like-minded local civil society organizations (CSOs) in a round-table discussion at the Conference Room of the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone (CCSL) in Freetown. The objective was to discuss how civil society and environmentalists could work better together to save the remaining forest of the WAPNP. This was preceded by a bilateral engagement with heads and representatives of these institutions by CSSL to introduce the initiative and seek their support and collaboration.

Representatives from ten organisations followed the call of CSSL. As the discussions continued, the like-minded organisations talked about challenges and threats to the forest.

The biggest threats – of course – are human beings and their activities in and around the Park. The increasing population at the Peninsula was named as one of the biggest challenges, owing to the need for space to build houses and the huge dependence on the forest for livelihood, as all of which is catapulted by weak enforcement of the laws which should protect the forest. Furthermore, communities were also mentioned as some of them sell land and encroach into the National Park

The plenum did share testimonies of the presence of expensive buildings along the Peninsula road which are not built by people who depend on the forest for their livelihood. At the same time, the like-minded institutions did a critical introspection of themselves as civil society and admitted that sometimes the commitment was not strong enough to work together and to put all efforts into trying to reach the ultimate goal. Others mentioned the lack of sustainability of activities as another big challenge.

Together we can reach our goal and stop deforestation.

The most important outcome of the round-table discussion was that this was only the start of many meetings and engagements to follow. It is crystal clear to everyone that we have to work together on this important and crucial topic.

Join us, and stay with us from the beginning onwards. We encourage you and your organisation to be part of this movement to save our environment.

"I believe we all have the same goal. We all know about the man-made threats. I hope we can work together and make sure our environment is safe and we are protected. All we do to the environment, we know it will come back on us. The earlier we act, the better the influence".

Charles Showers,
President of CSSL

text and photo: Kathrin Prinzing

Get more information online:

<https://cs-sl.org/together-for-wap-np/>



: <https://facebook.com/conservations>

<https://cs-sl.org>



Turtle Rescue at Black Johnson Beach

Black Johnson Beach south of Freetown is one of the special places we can find in Sierra Leone. The beach and its forest are the home of many rare species. Sea turtles are found there as well as many birds, reptiles and amphibians. Our friends Tito and Jane who live at Black Johnson shared their amazing adventures of rescuing two turtles and a Cormoran in the last weeks.

Helping to protect animals of Sierra Leone

My name is Tommy Gbandewa, everyone calls me Tito. I would like to tell everybody about our rescuing project and just how good it feels to succeed in releasing a beautiful animal back into the wild. It's one of the best feelings in this world.

I am a fisherman and I have also been working with tourists in Sierra Leone even before the war. I was born and grew up in Bureh Town, then moved and worked in Kent doing tourism and fishing before finally getting my own place and boat at Black Johnson beach which is part of Whale Bay in 2009.

Being a fisherman, I know what different species are in the water. I have seen all five of the protected turtles that come to Sierra Leone.

Earlier this year, I became a volunteer monitor for the Reptile and Amphibian Program - Sierra Leone (RAP-SL). My boss is Mr. Eddie Aruna, Sierra Leone's turtle expert without doubt. I attended a training course at RAP-SL's office.

In the early morning, the fishing boat from John Obey had come. I had already put the fishing boats that work on this bay on turtle alert. This was the day it happened. I went out to help with the final draw of the fishing, to examine the catch for turtles as well as buying fish for us and our visitors.

When the "cotocou" (the small bag at the very end of the draw chain) was finally landed, it was clear that a turtle was part of the catch. This was a critical moment. Although it's illegal to kill or injure turtles in Sierra Leone, they are still very sellable because people buy and eat them.

We managed to get the turtle from the fishermen and were able to carry it back to the sea. At first it had some problems when the first waves hit it. My friend and I gave it a little help.

Rescue, Respect, Release

Then it revived and sped away, making amazing roaring noises as it rejoined the ocean. The noise was like it was scared and also it was happy to be back in the sea.

Finally, we filmed it as it swam into the sea, down, down, down and away. I felt so good when I saw it swim off. To save a life, animal or human being, you must be proud of that.

If you want to visit Tito and Jane at Black Johnson Beach to enjoy the wonderful nature, contact Jane: +232 77 248268

text and photo: Tommy Tito Gbandewa



World Environment Day 2022: #OnlyOneEarth Tree Planting Activity with School Nature Clubs

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) celebrated World Environment Day with the theme #OnlyOneEarth along with School Nature Clubs in the Western Area and Bayama community in the Greater Gola Landscape. The celebrations were accompanied by tree planting activities and environmental education about the importance of trees and the services they provide to human beings.

It's not only about tree planting - it is also about taking care of the trees.

In the last week of May, CSSL engaged Teacher Coordinators drawn from 14 School Nature Clubs across Western Area Urban and Rural districts at the WAM Collegiate School in Freetown.

During this meeting they received information about the trees which CSSL intended to provide for planting in their respective schools.

Representatives of the CSSL Board of Trustees shared their experiences with participants about the importance of children's involvement in conservation activities.

On 2nd of June, the first seedlings were planted at the Sierra Leone Grammar School compound in Freetown. It was very exciting to see teachers and pupils being actively involved in this activity!

Information sheets about trees were distributed among participants.

Under the supervision of CSSL, all 14 schools undertook tree planting activities in their various schools on the 6th June, 2022. Principals of the targeted junior and senior secondary schools fully participated in the exercise, much to the motivation of their pupils.

"We are very grateful to CSSL for this engagement. We will always teach our children about the importance of trees in theory and practice, and we know the many benefits we derive from the trees in our compound."

Principal of Russells Secondary School, Western Rural



Read the full article online:
<https://cs-sl.org/onlyoneearth/>



<https://facebook.com/conservations>

<https://cs-sl.org>



PAPFor Celebrates World Environment Day at Bayama



The World Environment Day (WED) was declared in 1972 by the United Nations to make the need for a healthier Environment in our world an utmost priority. This year's celebration was staged in Sweden and replicated across the world with the theme #OnlyOneEarth. The CSSL-PAPFor team celebrated the day with community members at Bayama, a forest-edge community in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve in Kenema district.

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), through its EU funded PAPFor project, joined the world to commemorate the day in one of the projects operational communities of Bayama in Small Bo chiefdom, Kenema district.

The Senior Town Chief at Kamboma section in Small Bo chiefdom, Chief Bockarie Lansana, represented the Paramount Chief, PC Dafie Banya. He said he was happy to welcome participants at the site and continued that, their chiefdom always works hand in glove with the government of Sierra Leone and partners in protecting the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve. The day therefore, meant a lot to them, he assured the assembly. Chief Lansana said, CSSL as a conservation entity, always involves community people in project implementation, and

also consults them on matters relating to the protection of Kambui Hills. He furthered that, the community was happy about the Society's initiative to nurture a long term relationship with the Bayama community through the eco-lodge.

Julius Sama from the District Forestry Department of the Ministry of Environment delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Resident Minister, East. He said, this year's World Environment Day was symbolic as it marks the 50th anniversary of the declaration of the day by the UN.

The activity was climaxed by the planting of 200 seedlings of different varieties supplied by the Forestry Department in Kenema. Representatives from government institutions and community people including school children participated in the tree planting exercise.

I am happy that the communities are learning from experts about future generations that will also depend on this forest for their livelihood. Therefore, we should work with government and its partners to protect it.

Chief Bockarie Lansana

"I encourage communities to undertake tree planting practices after harvesting rice from their farms. Swamp rice cultivation is also another method to reduce deforestation, and can be very profitable".

Julius Sama, District Forest Officer, Ministry of Environment

text: Alice Kofi-Asare / photo: CSSL-PAPFor

Read the full article online:
<https://cs-sl.org/wed-2022-papfor/>

 : <https://facebook.com/conservations>
 <https://cs-sl.org>



Fun Facts about Parrots.

World Parrot Day is celebrated on 31st May every year.

Many parrots live in forests and tropical rain forests. As more and more of their habitat is destroyed most of the parrots in the world are under serious threat.

Let us help to protect this colorful and amazing animals through protecting their natural environment and habitat!

DID YOU KNOW?

Parrots are incredibly intelligent - some even use tools.

The male Palm Cockatoo makes "drumsticks", which he uses to rhythmically drum on hollow tree trunks to attract a mate!



© Neil Boyman, Getty Images

DID YOU KNOW?

Not all parrots can fly.

The Kākāpō is the world's only flightless parrot!



Fischer's Lovebirds © Bianca Vuculescu, Getty Images

DID YOU KNOW?

Hyacinth Macaws have incredibly strong jaws.

They are able to easily crack tough nuts like macadamia - even coconuts!



Most parrots choose their mate for life.

Parrots are mostly monogamous, bonding with one partner for their whole lives!



Fischer's Lovebirds © Bianca Vuculescu, Getty Images

DID YOU KNOW?

Parrots are "zygodactyls"



They have 2 toes pointing to the front and 2 toes pointing to the back.

BONUS They are also the only birds that will lift food to their mouths using their feet!



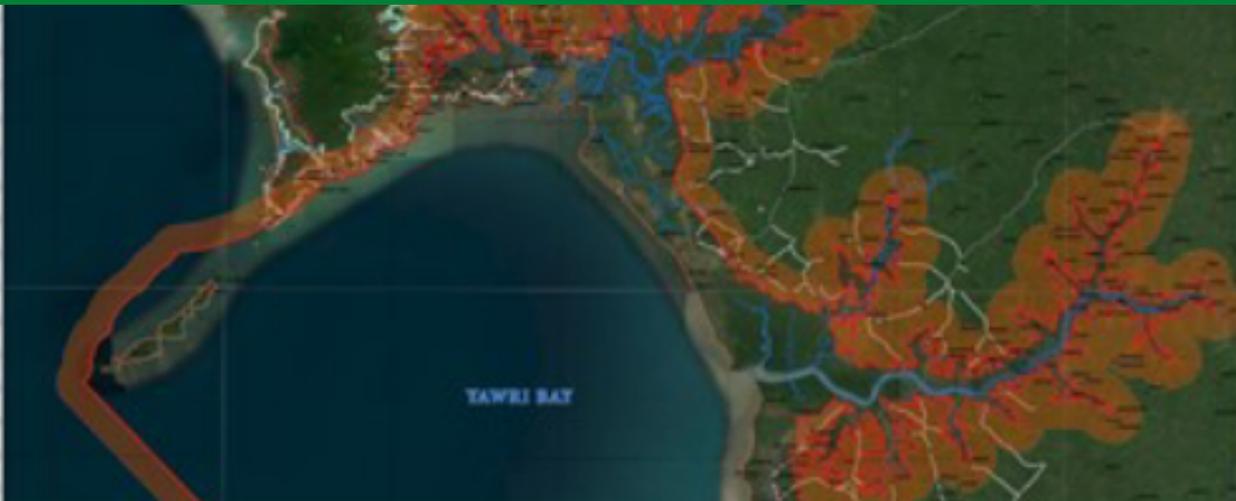
OW?

Some parrots can live to be up to 80 years of age.

Cockatoos, Macaws and Amazon parrots can live well into their 70s and 80s!



Salihur-creator



An Interview with Andrea Haffner about the New Yawri Bay Guide



Which are the most important information in the guide?

I cannot pinpoint one particular item that surpasses the rest in terms of importance. It is important that when the guide is picked up, someone can identify the location of Yawri Bay, understand the people and their livelihood activities being undertaken, whilst also visualizing why the bay is so important for protection and identifying the current threats that need to be controlled. Put together, every itemized paragraph makes complete sense in terms of conceptualizing the bay, its people and on-going activities without even having an initial visit to the site.

With funds from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) project, CSSL developed a guide on Yawri Bay. The two-page document is essentially a summary of different aspects of Yawri Bay. These include a map and brief geography, demography and economy of the bay. It also captures the environmental importance, especially relating to ecotourism, and the current threats and management interventions by CSSL to attempt to curb the negative impacts of the threats on the site. To learn more about the Yawri Bay Guide, Andrea Haffner, a member of the CEPF project team, explains in this interview.

How and when should the guide be used?

The guide can be used by all Sierra Leoneans as it broadens our knowledge by providing key information about an important protected area and proposed RAMSAR site within our country. It gives information that otherwise would have been left unknown. This has been a gap and serious challenge that has negatively influenced bad practices within our environment. It is important for foreign and local tourists who may want to visit areas within the bay as it provides informed knowledge about the site. In short, the guide paints a picture of what is to be expected beforehand. This document will effectively guide the plans of a tourist so the visit can be enjoyed to the fullest.

Why should all of us have a look into the guide?

Sierra Leone is a beautiful country but there is little publicity about these sites and the dire need of conserving them for the benefit of present and future generations. This guide briefly presents the story of a beautiful site, what it hosts that makes it important to everyone and not just the inhabitants of the bay, the on-going and potential threats and all that has been and needs to be done for its protection. Protecting our environment is everyone's business and action must start now.

Have a look at the Yawri Bay Guide yourself:
<https://cs-sl.org/yawri-bay-guide/>



BIOPAMA: Alternative livelihood support for Kambui Hills forest edge communities

Alternative livelihoods have been hailed as a way to promote both conservation and foster development among forest edge communities of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve. This attempt has been made to check further degradation of forests to elevate miseries of the rural poor. It has been realized that policy makers along with government and the people including their various institutions are the real stakeholders in forest management. Therefore, unless opportunities for rural livelihoods are created, protection of forest would be extremely difficult.

To achieve the objective of the BIOPAMA project (to provide alternative livelihood to forest edge communities in order to reduce the rate of local threats to Kambui Hills Forest Reserve), Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) through BIOPAMA project, engaged forest edge communities within the four targeted chiefdoms (Nongowa, Small Bo, Niawa and Koya). These are within 2km away from the Reserve.

The communities were tasked to select their preferred alternative livelihood options. as agreed during earlier consultative meetings held by the Society,

Working with and for communities

Currently, there is significant evidence that good progress is being made towards achieving the project's outcome. This strategy is considered as a fruitful means of securing the future of the Kambui Hills as most communities now embark on inland valley swamp (IVS) farming, animal husbandry, groundnut, cassava plantation among others.

Furthermore, as the project directly supports communities with alternative livelihood options, there has also been increased engagement with Paramount Chiefs and other stakeholders so that they could send a clear voice to all forest edge communities for them to stop illegal practices that are threatening the existence of the Reserve.



Learn more about our work:
<https://cs-sl.org/project/biopama-save-kambui-hills/>

 : <https://facebook.com/conservations>
 <https://cs-sl.org>



JOIN US AND HELP TO SAVE NATURE!

Do you want to support our work and help to protect nature?
Call us or write to us and become a member of CSSL!

Contact us via Email info@cs-sl.org
or whatsapp 076 325732

**WE FOR NATURE.
NATURE FOR US.**

**We thank our partners
for their support!**



Contact us:

Visit us:

Email: info@cs-sl.org
Phone: +232-33237894/+23276643546
Whatsapp: +232-76604331

Office: 86 Main Road, Congo Town, Freetown
Web: <https://cs-sl.org>
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/conservationsl>