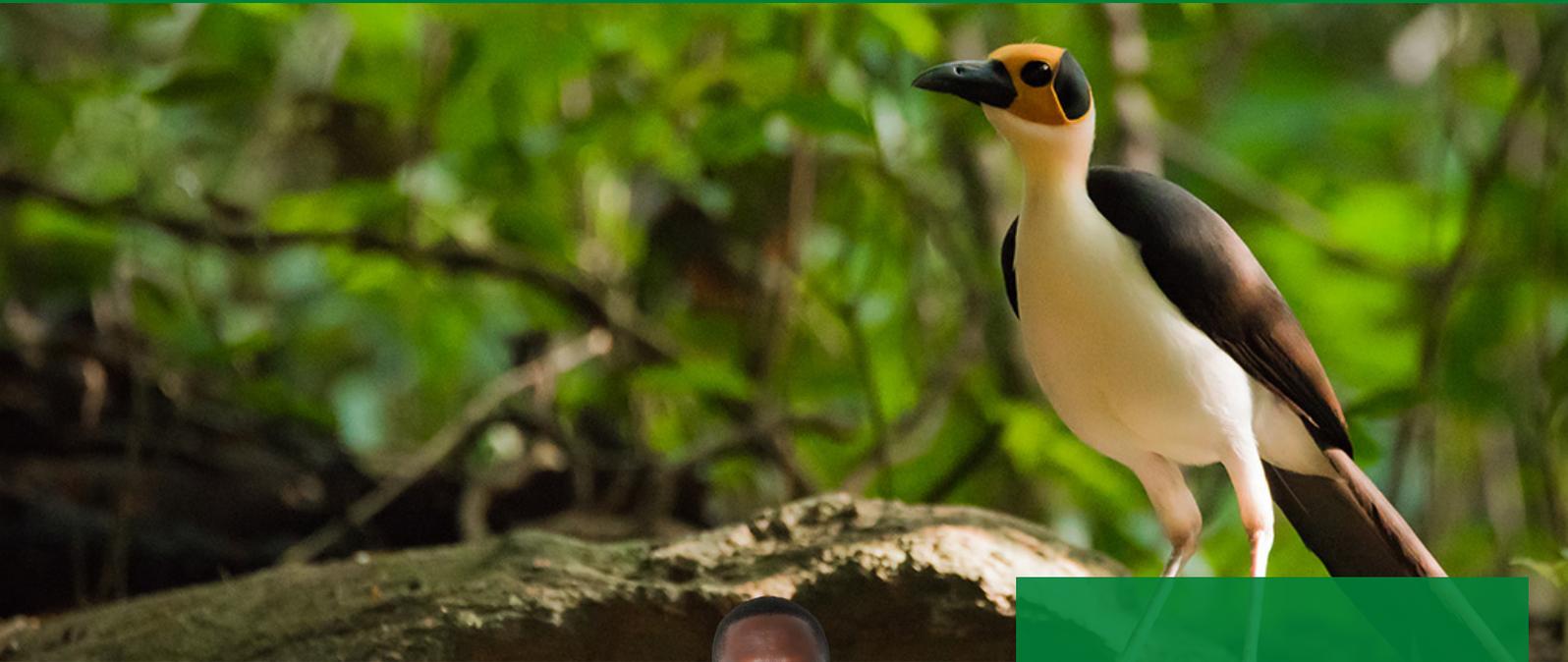


# Conservation Society of Sierra Leone

Connecting people to nature.



## From the Executive Director

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) always finds pleasure to interact with its valued members, friends and partners through provision of regular updates on its key activities. In this edition, we take you through some of the important milestones of the first quarter in 2022.

CSSL started off 2022 in high spirits and with a continued resolve of complementing the invaluable contributions of the government of Sierra Leone and local and international partners towards tackling the negative effects of climate change crises in the country.

This has been through the implementation of various project activities graciously funded by our donors and partners including Bread for the World (BftW) in Germany, European Union, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund,



MAVA Foundation and Darwin Initiative among others. For us as a Society, this is crucial, given Sierra Leone's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, as already manifested in the recent past in different areas across the country. Through our able team and technical support received from Birdlife International and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in UK, CSSL will continue to work with relevant ministries, departments and agencies to support the government's efforts in protecting the environment for a better Sierra Leone and ultimately a better world. Happy reading!

Dr. Sheku Kamara,  
Executive Director

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## CEPF: Waterbird Census Update in January and Visit of the CEPF Supervision Team in March

### Waterbird Census Update

For our colleagues of the CEPF-team the year started with an important fieldtrip: the second phase of the waterbird census. CEPF stands for Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

The team started the monitoring process at Tissanah mudflats down to Banga ground. Several interesting species have been recorded so far including Sacred Ibis, Grey Herons, Pied Kingfisher, Pink-backed Pelicans, Long-tailed Cormorants, Western Reef Herons and several others.

The census is one important step to reach our goal: get the Yawri Bay recognised as a Ramsar Site.

### CEPF Supervision Team Visits Sierra Leone

The activities of our CEPF project are directly supervised by the CEPF Regional Implementation Team (CEPF-RIT). We were very happy to welcome Ms. Mariana Carvalho, Team Leader of the CEPF Regional Implementation Team at Birdlife International and Ms Emmanuelle Mahe, Upper-Guinea Subregional Project Officer at Birdlife International, in March.

On their visit, the team held three meetings which included a meeting with the project staff to review project deliverables and impacts. There was a cross-section of the Yawri Bay Ramsar Site Working Group (YaRSWoG) members to understand their roles and responsibilities and why they chose to be part of the project. In the third meeting our visitors met community stakeholders.

There was a lively exchange to understand why they decided to be part of the project and what benefit they have gained so far in the course of the project implementation.

**"I have gained a lot from the project. The project has contributed to letting me know the importance of conserving the Yawri Bay ecosystem. I learned about the benefits I will gain if I stop illegal activities. One of the benefits includes improving fish catch which will help improve my revenue in the future."**

Mr Woodie B. Koroma, one of the community representatives.



## BIOPAMA Project Concludes Community Consultations on Livelihood Support Options in Kambui Hills Communities

With funds from the EU through IUCN, the BIOPAMA project, implemented by the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), is currently working with key stakeholders to address livelihood needs of forest edge communities in the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (KHFR). This is an important component of the project that serves as an alternative means through which communities around the Gola Landscape including KHFR are expected to make a living by reducing pressure on the forest.

### Reducing pressure on the Kambui Hills

The project completed the conduct of several livelihood consultative meetings for forest edge communities that are within 2km from the reserve. The meetings were held in four clusters between February and March 2022. One of the golas of the project is to reduce the rate of local threats to the KHFR. This can only be achieved through community support. The meetings aim to help communities to choose and implement their preferred livelihood options.

A critical part of the above approach was conscientising communities to understand the relevance of embarking on lowland farming and other activities that ensure forest growth. This was to ensure the implementation of activities that are environmentally and culturally acceptable to

improve the lives of forest edge communities, and at the same time, conserve the reserve. At the end of the engagements, communities were guided to select inland valley swamp (IVS) farming, upland farming (for areas without swamps), tree crops production and animal husbandry as generally accepted livelihood options to be undertaken across the project chiefdoms.

**"I am very hopeful that this livelihood support, if really provided by the BIOPAMA project, will increase the protection of our forest. This is because all the many bad practices that we have been doing in our forest will now stop."**

Madam Kadie Fawundu from Dia community in Koya chiefdom

As a precursor to the consultative meeting, the livelihood needs assessment exercise that kick-started in November 2021, continued and ended in March 2022, targeting a total of 28 forest edge communities in the four project chiefdoms – Niawa,

Small Bo, Koya and Nongowa chiefdoms in Kenema district.

### Livelihood activities are key

This was the first stage of facilitating effective dialogue with communities in consideration of the potential threats to the KHFR. Focus group discussions were held using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods. The results of the assessment suggested the existence of some livelihood activities being practiced in both Kambui north and south, including farming, mining, hunting, harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and charcoal burning/logging. Almost all of these are done within the reserve and buffer zone. The next stages of the project will focus on providing livelihood support and supporting other environmentally friendly activities.

More information:

<https://cs-sl.org/project/biopama-save-kambui-hills/>



## Bird Counting at Outamba-Kilimi National Park

Birds are important indicators for the health of ecosystems. This is one reason why bird counting is an important part of our work as Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL). As there are still many areas in our country for which the species and numbers of birds are not documented yet, we are trying to add our bit to change this situation and to make sure that the state of our environment and our ecosystems are well documented and observed.

### Birds as indicators

One important bird area which is not yet officially recognised as one is the area of Outamba-Kilimi National Park (OKNP) and its surrounding. Through funds of the ABC project (African Bird Clubs), a small team of CSSL went to OKNP, close to the Guinea border to observe and document the birds there. I was lucky to be able to join them. I have to admit, it was my first bird counting experience.

### Birds are everywhere

For me as a beginner in bird watching, it was very amazing to see how many different birds we could spot in a short period of time and how easy my colleagues were able to name them. Just by the shapes of their beaks, their colors, their tails, the way they spread their wings and the bird calls.

At least sometimes they also had to enquire from the book to identify the exact name of the birds. I was very proud that by the end of the first day I already learned some new names and was able to name some of the birds we saw. On a boat tour on the river in the late afternoon, I spotted the Great Blue Turacos again, as well as a Western Grey Plantain Eater, a violet-backed starling, a Yellow-billed Kite, a Long-tailed Cormorant, and a shiny little Kingfisher as well as many other birds who live close to the water.

### The BirdLaserApp

For the documentation of the sightings, we used the BirdLaserApp. This app is very easy to use and helps to document sightings of birds all around the world. All you have to do is to download the app to your smartphone, start a bird counting activity and give it a name. The GPS will find your location.

### 40 species in two hours

One of the nice things of the app: In the end you will see which kind of birds you saw that day and how many species you have spotted. And you even don't have to go to the forest. You can do the bird watching and bird counting wherever you are. In the forest, on the street, at the beach, close to a river, when you go for a walk... We spotted nearly 40 species at each activity we conducted.

I am already looking forward to my next bird watching activity and recommend it to all of you who haven't had this experience yet.



# International Day of Forests 2022

## SAVE OUR FORESTS WE NEED THEM

Forests  
provide us  
with  
fresh air.

Forests  
prevent  
floods and  
landslides.

Forests give  
us fruits and  
timber.

Forests  
provide  
shade and  
cool our  
climate.

Forests are  
water  
catchment  
areas.

On 21st of March we celebrated  
International Day of Forests.

To download and print the poster, visit us online:  
<https://cs-sl.org/international-day-of-forest-2022/>



## Coalition on Oil and Gas Pollution on the Environment - important steps forward

**The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) is leading the Coalition on Oil and Gas Pollution on the Environment (COGaPE). In March 2022 we held two important events with our partners to protect our environment from oil and gas pollution.**

### Effectiveness of Petroleum Policy Implementation

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) held a day long engagement with key actors in the oil and gas sector in Sierra Leone at the Hill Valley Hotel in Freetown on 1st March, 2022. The objective was to critically examine the effectiveness of the implementation of the Petroleum Policy for Sierra Leone.

With support from MAVAFoundation, through the Regional Partnership for Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone in Africa (PRCM), CSSL collaborated with the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) to roll out activities to mitigate the negative impacts of imminent oil pollution on the marine coastal environment and nearby communities.

Participants were drawn from state and non-state actors, including the media across the country to give meaningful inputs as the country prepares to start oil exploitation activities anytime in the future in identified areas.

At the end of the engagement, major gaps were identified in the policy, and recommendations proffered for actions.

### Training on tackling challenges

With support from MAVAFoundation through PRCM, CSSL concluded a one-day training for environmental CSOs and media practitioners on the challenges of oil and gas activities and environmental risks in Freetown.

The training, which was held on Friday 18th March, 2022, was co-facilitated by Mustapha Koroma from the Petroleum Directorate and Abdul Kaprr Dumbuya, Communications Officer at CSSL. In addition to oil and gas issues, participants were also introduced to advocacy and public awareness as key approaches to apply in trying to mitigate the negative impacts of oil and gas pollution on the environment.

**"I'm happy to have received this training from CSSL. Knowledge gained here will help me and my organization in sensitizing our communities about particularly environmental risks of oil and gas pollution on marine life."**

Daniel Macauley from Responsible Eco-tourism (RECTOUR)

Learn more about our engagement against oil and gas pollution: <https://cs-sl.org/project/cogape>



## Reflecting on Peace Practices: a golden path to positive peace in communities

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) is part of the Civil Peace Service (CPS) network of Bread for the World (BftW) in Germany. Through the CPS programme BftW supports partner organisations in different countries around the world – one of them is Sierra Leone. One part of their support is trainings for partner organisations on skills related to peace building, conflict sensitivity and working in and on conflict situations.

### Positive and Negative Peace

On the 21st March a group of 23 men and women came together at Bureh Town for a five-day workshop. All of them have at least one thing in common: they are part of the CPS network of Bread for the World in Sierra Leone.

We often think, we are living in peace because there are no gun shots in the streets. During the workshop, participants learned about the different concepts of peace. There is “negative peace” – which means a violent conflict was stopped, but the two parties are only separated; the conflict itself is not settled and can break out into violence again very easy. We talk about “positive peace” when a conflict is ended and sorted. The former conflict parties learned to understand each other and found a peaceful solution for their conflict.

As CPS-network we are aiming for, “positive peace”. Most of us are working in a situation where there are tensions in the society, even though there might be no open violence. In the first days of the workshop, we learned a lot about the different situations other partners are working on through using tools for conflict analysis.

### From Knowledge to action

To reach “positive peace”, we have to work on the conflicts in society. We have to try to identify the conflict and find a peaceful and generally accepted solution. Mostly this is only possible with a change in attitude and behaviour. How can we bring conflict parties together and how can we reach our goals through change of attitude in our communities and in our country? These were the most important questions to be answered during the workshop. We have to go further than implementation of an activities but follow up whether the intended change can be observed.

The feedback round showed that the workshop was a great success. The participants went home with a lot of new knowledge how to develop their proposals and strategies, new tools for their work in and on conflict situations, and plans for working closer together as a network in the future.

**"The workshop was very educational and informative in the different aspects of conflicts and peace practices. For the first time I learnt about negative and positive peace, levels of approaches in conflict, and the different tools used for conflict analysis."**

Samira Halloway-Jarfoi,  
Project Officer, CSSL

The CPS network of Sierra Leone is very grateful to BftW for this workshop and their efforts to support us in creating “positive peace” in our society.

Read the whole article on:  
<https://cs-sl.org/rpp-workshop/>



# 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](mailto:info@cs-sl.org)  
or whatsapp 076 325732

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

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



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