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Nimba Western Area Iron
Ore Concentrator Mining
Project, Liberia

**Environmental and
Social Impact
Assessment**

Volume 5, Part 3:
Cultural Heritage
Assessment

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| ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT STRUCTURE | |
|---|---|
| Section | Report Title |
| Volume 1 | Main Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Report |
| Volume 2 | Legal and Administrative Framework |
| Volume 3 | Physical Environment: Baseline Conditions (Supplement to Phase 1 Baseline Only) and Impact Assessments |
| Volume 3, Part 1.1 | Geo-Mapping |
| Volume 3, Part 1.2 | Geology, Soils and Land Use |
| Volume 3, Part 1.3 | Assessment of No Way Camp Disaster and General Considerations for Nimba Western Area Iron Ore Concentrator Mining Project |
| Volume 3, Part 1.4 | Review of Slope Stability and Drainage Conditions During Phase 1 Operations at the Mine Sites |
| Volume 3, Part 1.5 | Review of Slope Stability and Erosion Along the Railway |
| Volume 3, Part 2 | Groundwater Baseline and Impact Assessment |
| Volume 3, Part 3.1 | Hydrology Baseline and Impact Assessment |
| Volume 3, Part 3.2 | Geochemistry and Water Quality (Focusing on The Potential for Acid Rock Drainage (ARD) Formation Arising From Ore, Tailings and Waste Rock Materials) |
| Volume 3, Part 4 | Climate Change Scenarios by Met Office (UK) |
| Volume 3, Part 5 | Air Quality Impact Assessment |
| Volume 3, Part 6 | Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment |
| Volume 3, Part 7 | Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Impact Assessment |
| Volume 4 | Biological Environment: Baseline Conditions (Supplement to Phase 1 Baseline Only) and Ecological Impact Assessment |
| Volume 4, Part 1.1 | Forest Botanical Impact Assessment |
| Volume 4, Part 1.2 | Grassland Botanical Impact Assessment |
| Volume 4, Part 2 | Zoological Impact Assessment, Terrestrial and Coastal and Marine |
| Volume 4, Part 3 | An assessment of freshwater fish and crustacean consumption in Northern Nimba, Liberia |
| Volume 4, Part 4 | Bushmeat and Biomonitoring Studies in the Northern Nimba Conservation Area by Conservation International |
| Volume 5 | Socio-economic Environment: Baseline Conditions (Supplement to Phase 1 Baseline Only) and Social Impact Assessment |
| Volume 5, Part 1 | Socio-Economic Baseline for Buchanan, Greenhill Quarry and Areas in Nimba that will be Affected by TMF Operations. |
| Volume 5, Part 2 | Social Impact Assessment, and Framework Social Management Plan |
| Volume 5, Part 3 | Cultural Heritage Assessment |
| ARCELORMITTAL LIBERIA LTD ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING DOCUMENTATION STRUCTURE | |
| Volume 6 | Environmental Management Planning |
| Volume 6, Part 1 | Framework Resettlement Action Plan for Phase 2 |
| Volume 6, Part 2 | ArcelorMittal Liberia Environmental Standards Manual |
| Volume 6, Part 3.1 | Overall Environmental Management Plan for Phase 2 |
| Volume 6, Part 3.2 | Environmental Management Plan: Construction Works near Mount Tokadeh |
| Volume 6, Part 3.3 | Environmental Management Plan: Operation of Quarries |
| Volume 6, Part 3.4 | Environmental Management Plan: Rehabilitation of Facilities at the Port of Buchanan |
| Volume 6, Part 3.5 | Environmental Management Plan: Operation of the Buchanan-Tokadeh Railway |
| Volume 6, Part 3.6 | Environmental Management Plan: Operation of the Port of Buchanan, including Offshore Transhipment |
| Volume 6, Part 3.7 | Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan for Phase 2 |
| Volume 6, Part 3.8 | Townships Management Plan |
| Volume 7 | Framework of the Proposed Mine and Infrastructure Closure Plan for Phase 2 |
| Volume 8 | Framework of the Proposed Environmental Offset Programme for Phase 2 |
| SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION TO PHASE 2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT | |
| Volume 9 | Assessment of Legacy Environmental Issues in the Former LAMCO Mines and Industrial Areas |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|---|----|
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | 1. | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 6 |
| | 2. | RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS IN LIBERIA | 7 |
| | 2.1 | Literature | 7 |
| | 2.1.1 | Religious Demography | 7 |
| | 2.1.2 | African Traditional Religions (ATRs)..... | 8 |
| | 2.2 | Christian Hegemony..... | 10 |
| | 2.3 | Laws Concerning Religion and Culture..... | 11 |
| | 2.4 | Overview of Religion and Culture in Northern Nimba | 13 |
| | 3. | THE RELEVANCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RELIGION | 15 |
| | 3.1 | Literature | 15 |
| | 3.1.1 | Preservation | 15 |
| | 3.1.2 | Why religion and culture are important | 15 |
| | 4. | OBJECTIVES | 18 |
| | 5. | METHODOLOGY | 19 |
| | 6. | COMMUNITIES SURVEYED | 21 |
| | 6.1 | County Level Administrative Division, Village Structure and Governance..... | 21 |
| | 7. | INFORMANT (DATA) CONSIDERATIONS | 24 |
| | 7.1 | Exaggerating Importance of Traditions and Practices | 24 |
| | 7.2 | Legitimate Leadership..... | 24 |
| | 7.3 | Recommendations | 24 |
| | 8. | ANIMAL PRACTICE..... | 26 |
| | 8.1 | Overview | 26 |
| | 8.2 | Literature Review | 26 |
| | 8.3 | Findings – Worldview | 28 |
| | 8.4 | Findings – Habitat | 31 |
| | 8.5 | Findings – Structure / Governance | 31 |
| | 8.6 | Complications / Considerations | 32 |
| | 8.7 | Recommendations | 33 |
| | 9. | PORO/SANDE | 34 |
| | 9.1 | Literature | 34 |
| | 9.2 | Findings – Worldview | 38 |
| | 9.3 | Findings – Structure / Governance | 38 |
| | 9.4 | Findings - Locations of bushes | 39 |
| | 9.5 | Findings – Initiation Ceremonies..... | 40 |
| | 9.6 | Recommendations | 42 |
| | 10. | SACRED CREEKS, ROCKS AND TREES..... | 43 |
| | 10.1 | Literature | 43 |

| | | |
|--|--|----|
| 10.2 | Findings – Worldview | 43 |
| 10.3 | Findings – Structure / Governance | 50 |
| 10.4 | Findings – Moving Spirits | 50 |
| 10.5 | Recommendations | 51 |
| 11. | OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION | 52 |
| 11.1 | Adhering to World Bank and IFC Guidelines | 52 |
| 11.2 | Community Liaison's Office | 52 |
| 11.3 | Rebuilding and Strengthening Cultural Heritage | 53 |
| APPENDIX A PERTINENT LEGAL DOCUMENTS | | |
| APPENDIX B INTERVIEW GUIDES | | |
| APPENDIX C CONSULTATIONS / INTERVIEWS HELD | | |

| | | |
|------------------|--|----|
| TABLE OF FIGURES | FIGURE 1: COMMUNITIES SURVEYED BY CLAN | 21 |
| | FIGURE 2: NIMBA COUNTY GOVERNANCE..... | 22 |
| | FIGURE 3: NORTHERN NIMBA COUNTY MAP OF SITES SURVEYED | 23 |
| | FIGURE 4: LOCATION OF BUSHES, RELOCATIONS AND DESIRED RITUALS MOVEMENT (AS GIVEN BY PRESENT LEADERS)39 | |
| | FIGURE 5: MOST RECENT INITIATIONS AND EXPLANATIONS FOR TIMING BASED ON INTERVIEWS WITHIN THE COMMUNITIES | 41 |
| | FIGURE 6: SACRED CREEKS: PURPOSES, LAWS AND REPORTED VIOLATIONS | 44 |
| | FIGURE 7: SACRED ROCKS: PURPOSES, LAWS AND VIOLATIONS | 45 |
| | FIGURE 8: SACRED TREES: PURPOSES, LAWS AND VIOLATIONS | 46 |
| | FIGURE 9: RELATIVE IMPORTANCE/ FREQUENCY OF SERVING SACRED CREEKS..... | 48 |
| | FIGURE 10: RELATIVE IMPORTANCE / FREQUENCY OF SERVING SACRED ROCKS..... | 49 |
| | FIGURE 11: RELATIVE IMPORTANCE / FREQUENCY OF SERVING SACRED TREES | 49 |
| | FIGURE 12: TREES, ROCKS, CREEKS AND THEIR MOVES..... | 50 |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The specific objectives of this study are to understand more completely the cultural heritage and religious beliefs of the ArcelorMittal mine-affected areas of West Nimba and recommend culturally sensitive ways to mitigate the potential impact that mining activities could have on the communities' beliefs and practices. This should ensure that the social impact of ArcelorMittal's activities are in line with IFC and World Bank Standards on cultural heritage.

The study has confirmed that those who engage in traditional practices, namely animalism, membership of Poro and Sande societies and the recognition or worship of sacred features (such as rocks, rivers and trees) are willing to have them moved to facilitate mining at Tokadeh, Gangra and Yuelliton as long as sufficient care and resources are invested in the process, including adequate financial compensation. According to IFC and World Bank requirements, these provisions must be implemented in full and in a timely way so as to minimize loss of cultural heritage.

2. RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS IN LIBERIA

2.1 Literature

2.1.1 *Religious Demography*

Statistically, Liberia is predominantly Christian, and increasingly so in the last thirty years, though the most recent figures need elaboration, as does the exact understanding of 'Christian' in the Liberian context. The 2008 census indicates that Liberia is composed of 85.6% Christians, 12.2% Muslims, 0.6% practitioners of exclusively traditional (indigenous) religion, 0.16% 'Other' and 1.46% declaring no religion.¹ Prior to this census, the only figures available were from the 1980s, which indicated that 40% were Christian, 40% were adherents of traditional religion exclusively, and 20% were Muslim.² The apparent conversion of practitioners from ATRs to Christianity is probably due to the major increases in evangelism throughout West Africa, and to the displacement of many Liberians in rural areas during the war, who found themselves in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Monrovia where they encountered Christianity. The census data also clearly indicates that older generations tend to identify as practitioners of ATRs and younger generations as Christians.

Christianity is relatively new to Liberia, compared to other African countries. The Portuguese had some limited contact with the area that is now Liberia as early as the 15th century, but Christianity was only truly established in 1822 when Baptist settlers from the United States arrived and built Providence Baptist Church on the coastal stretch of land they named Christopolis, now Monrovia. Other mainline Protestant denominations - the Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans and Presbyterians - were established in Liberia soon after and formed the religious backdrop for Americo-Liberians, especially those in power under the True Whig Party (TWP)³, who were often ministers or Bishops in these churches in addition to prominent Free Masons. Roman-Catholics have been present since the mid-19th century, but not until 1906 did they establish themselves permanently.⁴ Among the Christian population, the United Methodists and varieties of Baptists were historically the most numerous,⁵ although the many varieties of Pentecostalism, charismatic Christianity and non-mainline evangelical Christianity have been growing significantly since the 1980s.⁶ Also represented are Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses and some Latter-Day Saints. A 2010 Pew survey found that 69% of all Liberians identified as Christians, 19% identified as Muslim and 12% as

¹ 'Traditional religions' are interpreted as those religions that predated the spread of global religions (Christianity, Islam, Ba'hai, etc), also referred to as simply 'animism'. Calculated from data provided by LISGIS, Liberia Census, Released May 2009, 120.

² U.S. State Dept, Religious Freedom, 2007. Based on other sources, these percentages vary widely – for example, in 1986 it was estimated that the percentages of Muslims and Christians was 5% and 15%, respectively. At the same time, many Muslim leaders claimed that 50% of Liberia was Muslim. Paul Gifford, *Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 262.

³ The TWP was the dominant party made up almost exclusively of Americo-Liberians since Liberia's inception as a country, overthrown only in 1979 by a military coup.

⁴ Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, 55-56.

⁵ In 1989, according to estimates, there were 67,109 Methodists, about the same number of Baptists, 75,000 Catholics, 30,000 Lutherans, 20,000 Episcopalians, 3,000 Presbyterians; all of which were claiming to be growing substantially, at this time. Ibid, 51-57. Baptists in 1998 numbered 60,000 members according to the Baptist World Alliance, www.bwanet.org; Roman Catholics in 2004 numbered 170,000 members according to diocese counts reported on www.catholic-hierarchy.org. UMC claims 168,300 members, www.UMCLiberia.org.

⁶ Gwendolyn Heaner, "'Destroying the Destroyer of Your Destiny": The Role(s) of Pentecostalism in Post-Conflict Liberia', SOAS, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2011.

following an ATR. Among the Christian population, 26% identified as Pentecostal; 4% as Episcopalian, 17% as Baptist; 12% as Methodist; 11% as Lutheran, 19% non-Protestant and the remainder some 'other Protestant'.⁷ Gifford (2002) provides a detailed outline of the growth of evangelical churches, of which he writes, 'met a very profound need'.⁸ During Liberian President Samuel Doe's regime (1980-89), there was also a large increase in the number of American missionaries throughout Liberia who assisted with the building of new churches,⁹ though indeed since then independent and break-away churches are still proliferating. A few of this US-based variety, such as African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal-Zion, Church of God in Christ and Assemblies of God, have been in Liberia since the early 1900s, but most are less than thirty years old. In Monrovia, at least, these newer churches account for a large percentage of the Christian population. While historically, Americo-Liberians were closely associated with mainline denominations while indigenous Liberians were only, at most, nominally associated with established churches, today Christian affiliation does not necessarily fall along ethnic lines – all indigenous groups and Americo-Liberians are affiliated with a broad spectrum of Christianity.

Muslims have been in the area that is now Liberia since the 15th century, perhaps earlier, but never in significantly large numbers. The demography of the different types of Islam worshippers is even more complicated, because many Muslims might not identify themselves as belonging to a certain school or sect. They are overwhelmingly found among the Vai of Western Liberia, the Mandingo who are dispersed throughout the country, and the Fulah who have immigrated from surrounding West African countries, especially Mali, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. Most Liberian Muslims are Sunni, of the Maliki school, and syncretism with ATR is relatively common. Ultra-conservative Muslims are few, although Wahhabi Muslims are represented, especially among the Mandingo, in addition to the somewhat militant Iranian-supported National Repentant Muslims.¹⁰ There are a number of Sufi Muslims, specifically from the Tijaniyyah order or the Qadiriyya order; many of these individuals are immigrants from Mali, Guinea or Senegal. There are also a few thousand members of the Ahmadiyya sect, especially among the Vai.¹¹ A small number of Shiite Muslims are among some of the Lebanese community, many of whom have resided in Liberia for up to three generations.

2.1.2 African Traditional Religions (ATRs)

Also known as animism or paganism, African Traditional Religions tend to have similar features across the continent. Generally, according to this religious worldview, all power is considered to have its ultimate source in the spirit world. In order to acquire and thus utilise this power on earth, an individual or community must do something for the spirit from which the power is being granted. Such logic governs all events that happen in the physical world. Robin Horton (1975) described religion in pre-colonial Africa as 'a system of theory and practice guided by the aims of explanation, prediction and control of space-time events'.¹² This definition is still useful today, but specific perceptions about the nature of the spirit world

⁷ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, April 5, 2010, Chapter 1, 23.

⁸ Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, 286.

⁹ Ibid, 235-9.

¹⁰ Ibid, 287.

¹¹ Ibid, 261-263.

¹² Robin Horton, *Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 4.

have fundamentally changed as a result of monotheistic influence, which tends to designate any spirits other than the Supreme Being as 'evil'. According to African traditional religion, the animistic spirit world is not considered to be inherently good or evil; instead, positive events are expected when spirits are appeased, causing the individual or community to experience the 'good life', including wealth, status and fertility. Conversely, such spirits also have the potential to cause great harm and thus attract attention if they are not appeased.¹³ Spiritual leaders and practitioners thus communicate with this world and its gods in order to determine what actions need to be taken. Traditionally, the actions that the gods demanded formed the foundations of social order and it was an essential endeavour to persistently pay attention to the spirit world when trying to understand and make changes in the physical world.¹⁴ Though the idea behind the power of spirits has remained, the importance and form of religious practices within animism have changed greatly.

Many of these changes can be attributed to colonisation, modernisation, globalisation, Christianity and Islam. The African religious worldview is very open to adaptations based on physical realities, and the spiritual plane is one that is constantly being addressed in order to make sense of and act upon modern events.¹⁵ In other words, new methods of 'explanation, prediction and control' are used to deal with new situations.

A popular modern idiom through which ideas concerning the spirit world are expressed is 'witchcraft'. This term carries Western-inspired nuances that witchcraft is purely evil in nature, but any act or accusation of 'witchcraft' has historically been in the context of a much more complex and ambivalent religious framework. The extent to which such practice is considered to be evil depends greatly on the situation in which it is used. Geschiere (1998) highlights the 'surprising ambivalence' of discourses on witchcraft in modern Africa and how witchcraft is used as a 'levelling force, undermining inequalities in wealth and power but the same force is also indispensable for the accumulation of such wealth and power. It is evil but can be controlled and used in a positive way'.¹⁶ However, many authors note the growing tendency for people to be preoccupied with witchcraft in modern life and a growing belief that any such involvement with the spirit world is completely evil.¹⁷

¹³ Stephen Ellis and Gerrie Ter Haar, 'Religion and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36:2, 1998, 177. See also Ellis and Ter Haar, *Worlds*, 54.

¹⁴ For more on traditional African religious systems, see J.D.Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000; Misty L. Bastian, "'The Daughter She Will Eat Agoisie in the World of the Spirits": Witchcraft Confessions in Missionised Onitsha, Nigeria', *Africa*, 72:1, 2002, 83-102; Sandra E. Greene, 'Religion, History and the Supreme Gods of Africa: A Contribution to the Debate', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 26:2, 1996, 122-138; Isak A. Niehaus, 'Witch-Hunting and Political Legitimacy: Continuity and Change in Green Valley, Lebowa, 1930-91', *Africa*, 63:4, 1993, 498-530.

¹⁵ Robin Horton, 'On the Rationality of Conversion, Part I', *Africa*, 45:3, 1975, 221-235.

¹⁶ Peter Geschiere, 'Globalisation and the Power of Indeterminate Meaning: Witchcraft and Spirit Cults in Africa and East Asia', *Development and Change*, 29, 1998, 814.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 812. Ellis and Ter Haar, 'Religion', 177. Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: religion and modernity among the Ewe in Ghana*. International African Library 21, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, for the International African Institute, 1999, 177; Ellis and Ter Haar, *Worlds*, 93-94. Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997, 6-7, 21; Misty L. Bastian, "'Bloodhounds who have no friends": witchcraft and locality in the Nigerian popular press' in Comaroff, J. and J. Comaroff, *Modernity and its Malcontents: ritual and power in postcolonial Africa*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993, 129-166.

The increasing preoccupation with evil is most evident in rampant witchcraft accusations, in popular film and literature, in the media and in rumours and popular discourse concerning the (evil) spiritual dimension of a variety of social and economic matters. There is ample literature available in West Africa that deals specifically with the subject of illicit dealings with inherently evil spirits and the (Christian) ways in which these malevolent forces are overcome. The stories generally describe an individual who had lived a life of relentless search for spiritual power that could be used in the physical world. The spiritual activities of this person, although often resulting in his or her financial reward or discovery of great spiritual secrets, are depicted as rooted in the satanic realm and are blamed for causing a variety of problems for themselves and/or others.¹⁸

There is also widespread concern with unwelcome spirit possession that is the result of angry or restless familial spirits. These spirits are believed to draw attention to themselves by causing problems in people's lives. Sometimes it is unclear which spirit is causing problems and why, so there is confusion regarding how to possibly appease them and thus alleviate the problem.¹⁹ Because of the many problems they seem to be causing, these types of spirits have also come to be considered inherently evil. In response to this perception of rampant evil, many practitioners of ATRs have also embraced monotheistic religions; the absorption of another very powerful god enables them to tap into more spiritual power.

Such is the case in Liberia. While the census has shown that very few Liberians practice traditional religion exclusively, many Liberians hold traditional beliefs and monotheistic beliefs concurrently, and belong to both churches/mosques while also being members in traditional secret societies. Such beliefs are not necessarily different between ethnicities; even Americo-Liberians have absorbed traditional beliefs and some have, over the years, become members of traditional societies for a variety of political or social reasons. Therefore, throughout the discussion presented in this report, it is important to remain aware of the multitude of spiritual beliefs, and the great importance attached to these beliefs and their relationship to the physical world for all Liberians across the social, economic and political spectrum.

2.2 Christian Hegemony

Since its inception as a sovereign state, Liberia has granted legal freedom of religion to everybody. In practice, the country, founded and ruled by the Christian Americo-Liberians, was for many years a de facto Christian state because of its failure to incorporate indigenous Liberians and thus any non-Christians into the government or other significant positions. The original Constitution did not specifically declare Liberia to be a Christian state, but until it was re-written in 1984, neither was it specifically secular. A very lively debate has been going on in Liberia for years regarding religion in public life, and to what extent Liberia can be considered a Christian country.²⁰ Christians will very often point out that 'Liberia was founded on Christian principles', because all the original Americo-Liberian settlers were Christian, the Declaration of Independence was signed in the first Christian church in Liberia (Providence Baptist Church) and all of its presidents, until Samuel Doe, were prominent Christians. There is also a fairly widespread opinion among Christians that Samuel Doe changed the Constitution to make Liberia a secular state against the general consensus, and was only able to do so because of

¹⁸ One of the most popular of these books is Emmanuel Eni, *Delivered From the Powers of Darkness*, Ibadan: Scripture Union, 1987. For a detailed analysis of eleven such books published in West Africa, see Gwendolyn Heaner, 'Charismatic Deliverance', SOAS MA Dissertation, 2005.

¹⁹ Allan Anderson, 'Exorcism and Conversion to African Pentecostalism', *Exchange*, 35:1, 2006, 118; Geschiere, *The Modernity*, 21.

²⁰ Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, 265.

the government that he put in place, which was anti-Americo-Liberian and thus opposed to Christian hegemony.²¹ In addition to Christian hegemony, many of the political elite and other wealthy male Americo-Liberians were Free Masons, an institution that was imported from the US in the mid-19th century. Masonic Lodges were established throughout Liberia until the coup of Samuel Doe, during which he outlawed the group. Today, it remains an institution for the politically influential and wealthy open to all ethnic groups, though because most of the wealthy in Liberia are Americo-Liberians, their membership probably still dominates. They have always been a relatively small group, since Americo-Liberians have never made up more than 5% of the Liberian population.²²

2.3 Laws Concerning Religion and Culture

The 1847 Constitution of Liberia clearly grants freedom to practice any religion, but refers specifically to Christianity twice and does not specify a separation between church and state. Article 1 of the Declaration of Rights reads:

Therefore, we the People of the Commonwealth of Liberia, in Africa, acknowledging with devout gratitude, the goodness of God, in granting to us the blessings of the Christian religion, and political, religious, and civil liberty, do, in order to secure these blessings for ourselves and our posterity, and to establish justice, insure domestic peace, and promote the general welfare, hereby solemnly associate and constitute ourselves a Free, Sovereign and Independent State

and further:

All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship God, according to the dictates of their own consciences, without obstruction or molestation from others: all persons demeaning themselves peaceably, and not obstructing others in their religious worship, are entitled to the protection of law, in the free exercise of their own religion; and no sect of Christians shall have exclusive privileges or preference, over any other sect; but all shall be alike tolerated: and no religious test whatever shall be required as a qualification for civil office, or the exercise of any civil right.

The People's Redemption Council made some key changes to the treatment of religion, removing all mention of Christianity, as in the Preamble, '[a]cknowledging our devout gratitude to God for our existence as a Free, Sovereign and Independent State, and relying on His Divine Guidance for our survival as a Nation ...'²³ Even more importantly, article 14 reads²⁴:

All persons shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment thereof except as may be required by law to protect public safety, order, health or morals or in the fundamental rights and freedoms of others. All persons who, in the practice of their religion, conduct themselves peaceably, not obstructing others and conforming to the standards set out herein, shall be entitled to the protection of the law. No religious denomination or sect shall have any exclusive privilege or preference over any other, but all shall be treated alike; and no religious tests shall be required for any civil or military office or

²¹ Heaner, 'Law, Religion and Human Rights in Post-Conflict Liberia', AHRLJ, 8:2, 2008, 476.

²² Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, 9-10.

²³ Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, Preamble, 1984.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Article 14.

for the exercise of any civil right. Consistent with the principle of separation of religion and state, the Republic shall establish no state religion.

Despite the clear mandate for Liberia to be a secular state and to allow religious freedom and equality, these principles are not actively promoted by the government and much of the Christian population does not acknowledge it as such; if they do, they do not necessarily agree with it. Although non-Christians are not actively persecuted, restricted or treated as lesser citizens by the government, the Christian religion still enjoys evident preference and, historically, the Christian religion has shaped much of the culture, law, government and practices of modern Liberia.

In addition to statutory law, According to article 65 of the Constitution, Liberia recognises customary law, as written in the Revised Rules and Regulations Governing the Hinterland, updated in 2000.⁴⁴ These rules are nearly identical to those of indirect rule used in Anglophone African colonies in the 1930s and 1940s. As International Crisis Group (ICG), an NGO dedicated to conflict resolution, has noted²⁵

Ironically, while Anglophone ex-colonies have mostly revised or abandoned such laws because of their fundamentally anti-democratic logic, Liberia — never a colony — has maintained them.

Because of the perpetual lack of efficiency, reputation and mere access to statutory legal resources, especially in rural areas, customary law is the most often used recourse to justice for Liberians. Customary law is formally overseen by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its representative chiefs (paramount, clan and village), commissioners and local officers. It is informally complemented by Poro and Sande secret societies and councils of elders.²⁶ Statutory circuit courts are legally allowed to review customary law decisions²⁷, but this is very rarely done.²⁸ Article 29, the, General Rule of Administration, states:²⁹

It is the policy of government to administer tribal affairs through tribal chiefs who shall govern freely according to tribal customs and traditions so long as these are not contrary to [statutory] law.

Customary law allows for certain cultural traditions to be practiced, including Poro and Sande³⁰:

(a) The Poro and Sande being cultural societies are permitted but none shall be established until after authority has been obtained from the District Commissioner. No session of these societies shall extend beyond a period of three years

(b) No fee shall be required nor paid for setting up, opening or dissolving any Government-recognized primitive social institution such as the Poro and Sande Societies. Permits are to be granted to recognized heads of such societies only and shall be free of all charges

²⁵ International Crisis Group (ICG), 'Liberia: Resurrecting the Justice System', Africa Report #10, April 2006, 1-2

²⁶ Ibid., 8.

²⁷ GOL, *Liberian Legal Codes Revised*, Judicial Code 3:4, 1986.

²⁸ ICG, 7.

²⁹ GOL, *Rules and Regulations Governing the Hinterland*, MIA, 17.

³⁰ Ibid., 38, 68.

(c) Recognized heads of bush cultural societies shall be responsible through the Tribal Authority for any abuse committed detrimental to public interest. District Commissioners are required to refer all Poro and Sande matters to the Tribal Authority who would be responsible to effect [implement] appropriate adjustment.

Customary law also bans certain traditions³¹:

(a) The Human Leopard Society is declared an illegal organization and members thereof are liable to punishment not exceeding twenty years imprisonment, except where they are convicted of committing a murder, in which case they shall suffer capital punishment.

(b) The Neegee Society, Suska, Toya, Kala, Uama-Yama and all secret societies of a political nature are also declared illegal. The members and organizers thereof are, upon conviction, to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding twenty years.

The groups and practices discussed throughout this report are all legal according to Liberian law; however, certain aspects of some of the groups are contentious, particularly female circumcision, as practiced in the female Sande society. There are no legal instruments banning such practices specifically, but they are worth discussing with respect to the issues being addressed in this report. Each is examined below.

2.4 Overview of Religion and Culture in Northern Nimba

Nimba County is primarily made up of members of the Gio and Mano ethnic group, believed to have migrated into the area that is now Liberia during two major migrations in 1450 and 1650. Today, every ethnic group is represented in Nimba, particularly within towns, though Mano and Gio still dominate (35% and 30%, respectively)³², followed by Sapo (12%), Krahn (10%), Gola (5%) and Bassa (2%); the remainder represent less than 1%: Americo-Liberian, Vai, Kru, Lorma, Kissi, Grebo and Gbandi. Christianity is the dominant (nominal) religion in the area, followed by Islam, though statistics are not available.

Specific information about northern Nimba County's religious demography and cultural heritage is limited. Zetterstrom (1976) undertook the most recent in-depth research in this area.³³ An important aspect of religious worldviews in this area is the relative unimportance of an omnipotent 'god' in relation to the individual spirits within objects. It is argued that prior to the influence of Christianity and Islam, the idea of such a 'god' did not even exist.³⁴ The spirits are individually responsible for certain aspects of daily life, and therefore they require individual attention in order to address a particular problem. It is important to note here that these spirits were never feared, nor viewed as good or evil in nature; rather, they were viewed as ambivalent spirits that had power, and for this reason they deserved respect. People did not fear spirits. This is not to say, however, that malevolent forces do not exist in the Mano religious worldview. Indeed, there is the possibility that certain humans are able to tap into spiritual power to be used for malevolent purposes – witchcraft – and these people and spirits are greatly feared.³⁵

³¹ Ibid., 38, 69.

³² COL, *Nimba County CDA*, 2008, 7.

³³ K Zetterstrom, 'The Yarmein Mano of Northern Liberia'; Occasional Paper VI, Uppsala, Sweden 1976.

³⁴ Zetterstrom, 'Some notes on Mano Belief', *Paideuma*, 18, 1972, 188.

³⁵ Zetterstrom, 'notes', 181-2.

The only recent research in northern Liberia dealing with religion and culture has been commissioned by ArcelorMittal. As is explained in more detail below, preliminary findings indicated the presence and social importance of traditional beliefs such as animism, animal-spirit doubles, and secret societies, in addition to monotheistic religion. Household surveys have indicated that the ethnic makeup of most households in northern Liberia is similar to that of the rest of Nimba – with the exception of Yekepa which has nearly all ethnicities represented, all towns are primarily (over 85%) Mano and Gio.³⁶

³⁶ ArcelorMittal, Socioeconomic Baseline, 22.

3. THE RELEVANCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RELIGION

3.1 Literature

3.1.1 *Preservation*

Africa is home to thousands of years of cultural change and diversity, yet much of the continent has done little to preserve and maintain cultural sites and beliefs. Much of this relative lack of interest surrounding such issues can be attributed to the more 'practical' needs of leaders and citizens across the continent – conflict and survival, development, education, job creation and safety, among others. Liberia is certainly among the countries in Africa that have been faced with problems that have left cultural heritage aside; it is not surprising that these issues might not be priorities when a country is struggling to recover from years of conflict. Nevertheless, cultural heritage is an important part of a country's stability and development and it is important to minimize further loss of whatever cultural heritage still remains and, even better, to help communities to strengthen or rebuild their heritage. As UNESCO has asserted,

Concerns related to the history, to the heritage and its valorization were perceived as a luxury compared to development challenges such as hunger, health or poverty deemed of primary importance. The evolution of people's perceptions, however, indicates that the safeguarding and valorization of the heritage can contribute to development and to combating poverty... it contributes to strengthening the local populations' pride, dignity and feeling of belonging.³⁷

Cultural heritage takes two forms: intangible and tangible; the former is much more difficult to protect as it can disappear along with the person(s) who possess such knowledge; this can be dangerous: 'The loss or the abandon of heritage is a risk that cannot be underestimated, as we see the extent to which many of today's alternatives to the traditional ways of life prove ill adapted and ineffective'.³⁸ Therefore, there is the dual challenge of identifying the people's cultural heritage, and also working the people to help preserve it. This is especially difficult in the context of a modernizing society that is aware of the opportunities that they have which are not dependent on maintenance of their traditional beliefs. There is thus a need to make preservation a practical option for people, especially the young, so that they can benefit directly.

3.1.2 *Why religion and culture are important*

In most literature dealing with socio-political issues, the role of religion is side-lined. This is not surprising, considering the hypothesis that modernisation leads to a decreasing utility and popularity of religion in public life.³⁹ Recently it has become necessary to reconsider the assumptions of the secular viewpoint, given the growth and public role of varieties of Christianity throughout the world, especially Africa. While post-colonial African states adopted Western-style politics, including the rational-legal idea of separation between church and state, there is continued embrace of religion⁴⁰ and a consistent integration of religion, politics

³⁷ Ibid., 26.

³⁸ UNESCO 'Cultural', 26.

³⁹ For comprehensive considerations of secularisation, see Steve Bruce, *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002; David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*, England: Ashgate, 2005.

⁴⁰ Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, 'The Role of Religion in Development: Towards a New Relationship between the European Union and Africa', *European Journal of Development Research*; 18:3, 2006, 351-2. For a discussion of

and public life generally. Many commentators even refer to a recent resurgence of religion in public life, and increasing discourse surrounding witchcraft, sorcery and other 'enchanted' worldviews.⁴¹

Observers of African affairs have dealt with the endurance and strength of religion in many ways. While much of the literature still ignores the importance of religion in Africa altogether, some of it gives a brief comment, usually only to explain the phenomenon as indicative of the continent being 'stuck in the past' because of failed attempts at Western-style progress and modernisation.⁴² In response to these dismissive accounts of religion in Africa, more focused analyses have begun to make deeper points based on the acknowledgement that, as Ellis and ter Haar (2006) note, whether such beliefs are believed to be true or untrue, 'religion, in whatever form it takes, constitutes a social and political reality',⁴³ which cannot be simply dismissed as false consciousness or backwardness. Such commentators point out that modernisation does not necessarily lead to 'Westernisation', and societies might modernise in a number of different ways that are different from, not 'lagging behind' Western models of social progress; the use of religion is one reflection of this different path.⁴⁴

Chabal and Daloz (1999) elaborate on this concept by arguing that belief in the 'irrational' makes a certain sense and has a critical social purpose in African contexts.⁴⁵ Acknowledging its social import, some commentators identify a particular 'rationality' to the practice and form of religion in Africa and seek to 'explain and translate' the religious idioms used with reference to this-worldly changes.⁴⁶ This might have particular relevance in weak states, as Ellis (2003)

these movements and politics before the 1990s, see Terence Ranger, 'Religious Movements and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa', *African Studies Review*, 29:2, 1986, 1-69.

⁴¹ See especially Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, 'Religion and politics in sub-Saharan Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2, 1998.

⁴² Pels has described such analyses as unhelpfully 'reproduc[ing] the imperial stereotype of a dark core posing a threat to the public and civilized world, something against which one needs to protect oneself to safeguard civility and reason'. Peter Pels, 'The Magic of Africa: Reflections on a Western Commonplace', *African Studies Review*, 41:3, 1998, 206. A good example of this type of scholarship can be seen in Kaplan's 'The Coming Anarchy' which has been heavily criticised by most serious observers of African religion, especially Ellis, for its descriptions of African cultures as innately 'barbaric'. Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy, the destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African Civil War*, London: Hurst, 1999, 17-30. See also Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford: James Curry, 1998; Mary Moran, *The Violence of Democracy*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

⁴³ Ellis and ter Haar, "The Role", 353.

⁴⁴ See especially Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Modernity and its Malcontents: ritual and power in postcolonial Africa*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993; Henrietta Moore and Todd Sanders, *Magical Interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, London: Routledge, 2001; Adam Ashforth, 'Reflections on Spiritual Insecurity in a Modern African City (Soweto)', *African Studies Review*, 41:3, 1998, 39-67; Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997; Dirk Kohnert, 'Magic and witchcraft: Implications for democratization and poverty-alleviating aid in Africa', *World Development*, 24:8, 1996, 1347-1355.

⁴⁵ Chabal and Daloz write of the 're-traditionalization' of Africa that combines modernity with 'the irrational' and that witchcraft is 'one of the few means of "indigenous" social responsibility available, however crude its practice may be in reality'. Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, Jean-Pascal, *Africa Works: Disorder As Political Instrument*, Oxford: James Currey, 1999, 63, 76.

⁴⁶ See especially Ellis and ter Haar: 'Religion is a symbolic language, whose evolution may be compared to that of other languages. Like them, it reflects and communicates people's ideas about the world they live in. All languages change over time. Individual items of vocabulary disappear and new ones appear, invented on the spot or borrowed from abroad. Languages, however, also have a grammar, a structure that changes only slowly. Religion, too, has a vocabulary and a

writes: 'It is not surprising that where the state can no longer convince people of its ability to deliver a prosperous new life through development, other mechanisms of social regulation may be invented or rediscovered.'⁴⁷

Despite these major differences in interpretation and method, many commentators are realising that religion in Africa is something that should not be ignored, and must be more carefully analysed before any conclusions are made concerning its social and political role.⁴⁸ Increasingly, scholars are acknowledging that religious ideas and worldviews, however subtle, are still 'an essential part of politics in Africa at every level'.⁴⁹ Ellis and ter Haar (2007) have devoted an entire book to this idea, explaining how political meanings are expressed in spirit idioms.⁵⁰ They further argue that religion must be treated as any other social factor,⁵¹ and not within its own analytical category⁵². Even some development organisations and governments are beginning to focus on the subject in terms of its role in 'human development', marking a shift away from their usual focus on only the economic aspects.⁵³ In order to understand better the importance of religion in Africa, the various forms, adaptations and potential implications of African religion need to be considered.⁵⁴ This is absolutely the case in Liberia, and it is in any company, government or NGO's best interest to understand as much as possible the religious ideas that people have, and what the potential social and political implications of those beliefs might be.⁵⁵

grammar, both of which change over time and at different speeds'. Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, 'Religion and Politics: Taking African Epistemologies Seriously', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 45, 2007, 388.

⁴⁷ Stephen Ellis, 'Young Soldiers and the Significance of Initiation: Some notes on Liberia', Conference paper presented in Leiden, 2003, available at: <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Pdf/conference24042003-ellis.pdf>, 8.

⁴⁸ Pels recommends a 'genealogy of Western perceptions of the magic of Africa', given such wide variety in interpretation. Pels, 'The magic', 194.

⁴⁹ Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar. *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 18.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁵¹ 'Religion must be apprehended as a social and analytical category, the constitution of which, by the analyst as much as the society in question, requires sociological explanation'. Maia Green citing Asad, 2003, in 'Confronting categorical assumptions about the power of religion in Africa', *Review of African Political Economy*, 33:110, 2006, 636.

⁵² 'The 'religious' must be grasped as a category of analysis and practice which has origins in the political struggles around delimiting the power of certain institutions'. *Ibid.*, 637.

⁵³ For example, the UK government's wing of development, the Department for International Development (DFID) has begun a project called Faiths in Development; the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a Knowledge Forum on Religion and Development Policy. The World Bank and IMF have shown interest in the subject. Ellis and ter Haar, 'The role of religion', 352-3.

⁵⁴ 'A major obstacle to investigating the role of religion in development is a widespread misunderstanding about what religion actually is'. *Ibid.*, 353

⁵⁵ For information surrounding the modern appropriations of traditional beliefs into new forms of Christianity in Liberia, see Gwendolyn Heaner, 'Destroying the Destroyer of Your Destiny: The role(s) of Pentecostalism in Post-Conflict Liberia', Unpublished PhD Thesis, SOAS, 2011.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to understand completely the cultural heritage and religious beliefs of the mine-affected areas and make culturally sensitive recommendations for ways to mitigate the potential impact that mining activities could have on the communities' beliefs and practices. More specifically, the study was required to 'provide adequate information to justify the use of the company's resources in addressing these issues', 'explain...what actions are required to compensate for the effects of the company's activities' and 'propose a strategy for the resolution of the effects on the cultural issues identified'.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ ESIA Phase 2 Contract ToR, 40-1.

5. METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork for this cultural heritage impact assessment was conducted by the Phase 2 ESIA Consultant's team of four. This team comprised an independent researcher, with expertise in cultural and religious issues in Liberia, with assistance from a Liberian researcher with experience conducting research in the area, and two local interpreters speaking Mano and Gio, the local languages of Nimba County. There were a total of twenty-three days of fieldwork conducted during March 2012 in mine-affected towns in addition to three days of targeted interviews in county centres.

Typically, the team visited a community and requested to meet with key community leaders. In most cases, community leaders were available to have a discussion at that time; in a few cases, community leaders were away and a time needed to be scheduled for the team to return. Each initial meeting was conducted with the entire field team, and anywhere from two to eight individuals from the community were present. In every meeting, the town chief (or deputy town chief) was present; there were also usually elders, a women's leader, zoe(s), and a youth leader. During an initial interview, the field team explained the reason for the research, making clear that they did not represent ArcelorMittal, but was instead there to do background research to provide to ArcelorMittal. This would allow ArcelorMittal to be informed about the cultural heritage conditions within the community and thus develop a management strategy to ensure that any negative effects that the community might face would be dealt with appropriately. The team was careful *not* to bring up the issue of possible compensation, and rather insisted that the work was strictly for research purposes. When this point was made clear, the team leader led the questioning according to the prepared interview guide (see Appendix B). Appendix C lists all held consultations.

After introductory community meetings with key leaders, the field team returned, unannounced, to conduct random interviews with community members. In general, the team entered the town or village, greeted the chief, who had already been met, and proceeded house to house to see if anyone was willing to talk. People were generally very accommodating. The findings during these random interviews enabled the team to compare the information with that gained from community meetings. If the findings were verified, The team gained an adequate degree of confidence that, for example, a certain space was considered sacred by a community or that a society was still active. If findings were not confirmed, then further investigation was conducted in order to determine the true utility and modern usage of the sacred spaces/secret societies.

The fieldwork was conducted in every town or village identified as project affected by the Phase 1 ESIA. In addition control communities – those communities which were not considered by ArcelorMittal to be mine-affected – were sampled to enable the team to probe different issues that might only have been found in mine-affected towns. For example, some mine-affected towns might be particularly knowledgeable about ways in which they could get compensation because of past experience with ArcelorMittal or LAMCO) and might already have developed ideas about the extent to which they would be compensated financially for any effects to their area. In control communities where there had been no discussions of compensation possibilities, the extent to which rituals could be performed in order to move sacred spaces or items could be assessed, along with the materials required to perform such rituals. If it was found that in the mine-affected communities, these rituals required significantly more materials or cash than elsewhere, then investigates could be undertaken to determine whether this was a consequence of past interventions.

In order to accurately identify the leaders within certain informal groups, random, individual and unplanned interviews were conducted in houses of normal community members; those who were part of the targeted group were asked to identify their leaders; those leaders were

then approached to find out who their leaders were, and so on. Then, those leaders were asked to name a few individuals who were under them. Through extensive cross-checking, the list of leaders in each community was confirmed to be accurate. Key leaders agreed to their names being recorded in confidential annexes of the report; therefore, names will not be reported in the main body and confidential annexes have been supplied to the ArcelorMittal Management Team for future consultations.

Recommendations in this report were decided upon by first taking into account the requests of the pertinent leaders for each issue under consideration, then cross-checking those requests for legitimacy with other community members, other leaders, and using logic to assess the likelihood of such requests being appropriate. Recommendations also took into account the World Bank and IFC guidelines on protecting culture, ensuring that these standards are met and are also within the capabilities of ArcelorMittal to implement. Areas in which ArcelorMittal cannot or is not legally obliged to meet the demands of key individuals have been highlighted as 'complications' that require further consultation.

6. COMMUNITIES SURVEYED

6.1 County Level Administrative Division, Village Structure and Governance

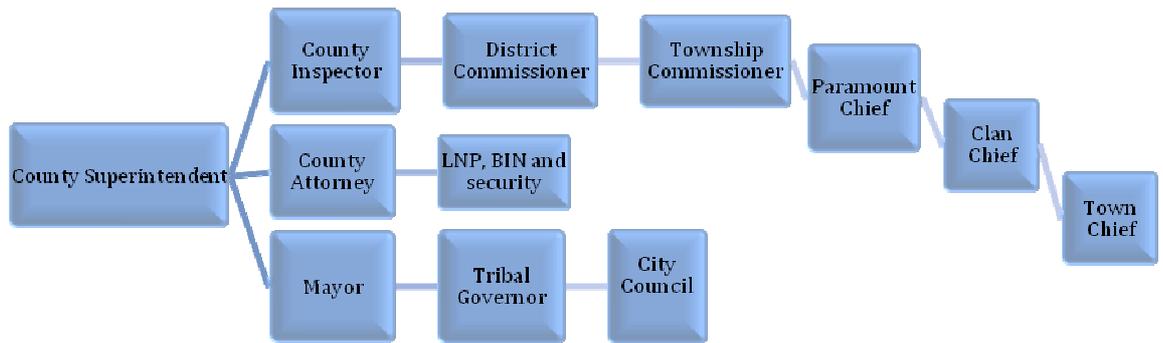
In total, fourteen communities were surveyed by the field team visiting them at least once; most were visited twice or three times for follow-up interviews and for interviews with community members. The communities are located relatively close to one another; therefore, the social and political issues that affect them are similar. The communities lie within a single county, a single district, and two clans – Yarmein and Seh (though Bassa Town and Bolo do not lie within any clan’s jurisdiction being primarily composed of non-Gio and non-Mano immigrants – Figure 1).

Figure 1: Communities Surveyed by Clan

| Seh Clan | Yarmein Clan |
|-----------|--------------|
| Sehyigeh | Gbapa |
| Makinto | Bonlah |
| Zolowee | New Yekepa |
| Vanyampah | New Bapa |
| | Camp 4 |
| | Leagbala |
| | Kanlah |
| | Lugbayee |

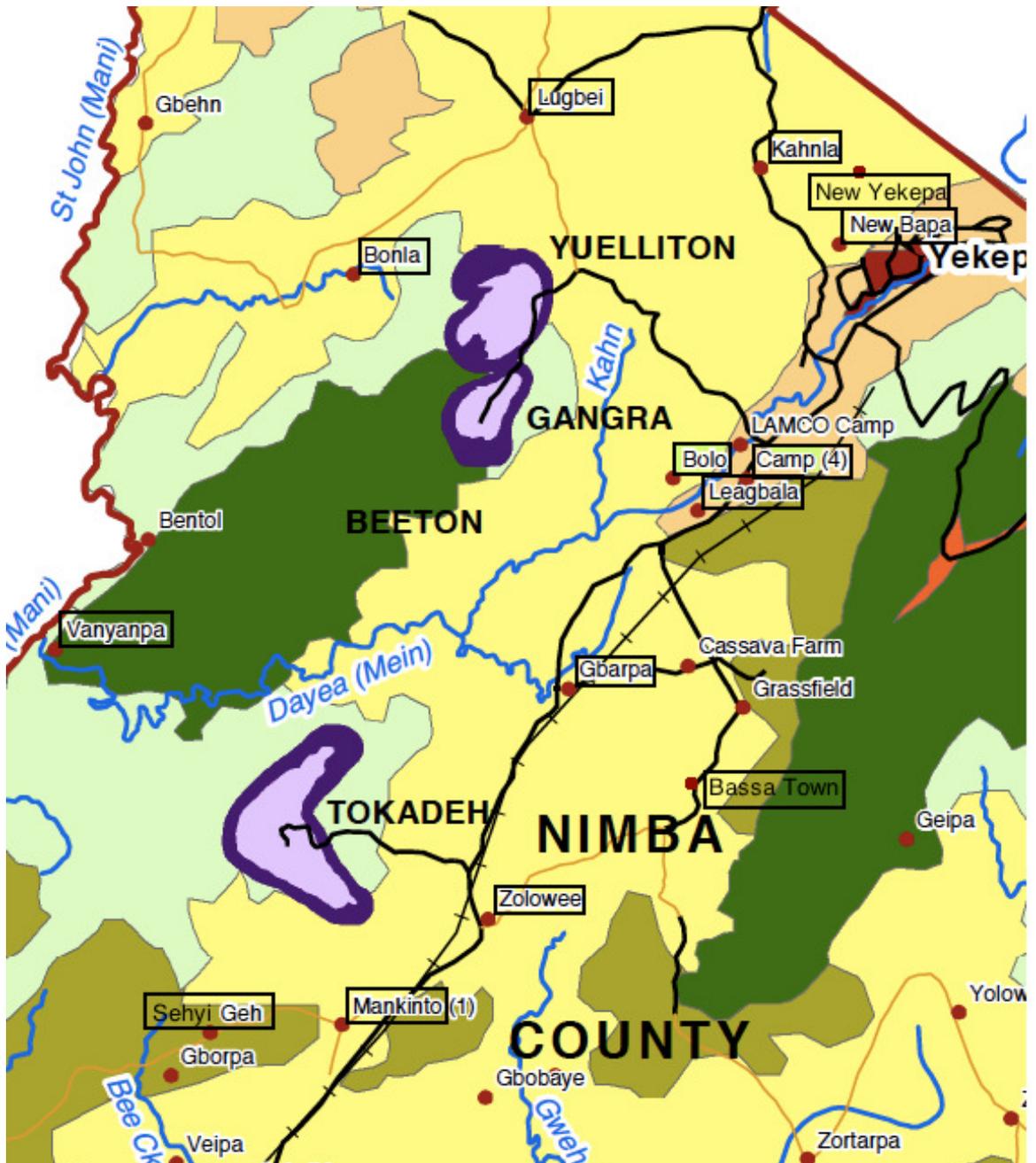
Within each district and town are formal leaders - chiefs, commissioners, mayors and superintendents who work from respective regional centres (see Figure 2 below). Within each town there are also informal leaders who everyone recognizes – village heads, town chiefs, elders, women’s heads, youth leaders, Zoes (religious leaders) and herbalists.

Figure 2: Nimba County Governance



Although the communities are all within the same district, they have limited contact with one another. The communities rely heavily on local leadership, social life and economic opportunities through small businesses and trade in agricultural goods. Each community has a unique history that the key informants were able to describe; with this history comes unique sets of ‘rules’ or ‘laws’ that guide each town. (See Figure 3 for the location of towns).

Figure 3: Northern Nimba County Map of Sites Surveyed⁵⁷



⁵⁷ Adapted from Atkins CI/FRI Liberia Forest Reassessment, UN Humanitarian Information Center, Atkins Geometrics

7. INFORMANT (DATA) CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Exaggerating Importance of Traditions and Practices

As with any household survey fieldwork, one of the most important considerations during this assessment was the truthfulness and therefore reliability of statements collected from informants. It is necessary to consider the potential for misleading statements that are given in order to gain benefit; this often occurs when plans encroach on what a community perceives to be theirs, and when developers are perceived to have innumerable resources and an obligation to provide benefits to those who are affected. Rumors spread quickly, and expectations grow accordingly. This is especially true in areas where ArcelorMittal has already had consultations with community members, and during which the prospect of compensation was presented and/or where compensation has already been given.

Similarly, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not a requested compensation is reasonable, or whether it has been increased/created as a result of rumours surrounding ArcelorMittal's previous payments to other communities.

While this report takes seriously the traditions and cultural practices of communities and individuals in the mine-affected area, it is also acknowledged that people are aware of the potential for benefits and might therefore be untruthful. The research for this report revealed many examples of key informants claiming that a particular ritual or site was 'as important' today as it had been in the past, while community members and other key informants in the same communities were either unaware of such practices or, if they knew about them, claimed that they had lost much of their importance over the years as a result of a variety of factors unrelated to mining operations.

Of course, it is still important to recognise that if influential community members consider a practice to be important – even if it has been 'invented' recently and is not a 'tradition' in the typical sense of the word – then if they are able to convince their communities as such, then it may become an issue that ArcelorMittal will have to deal with anyway. This stresses the importance of having a strong community liaison team.

7.2 Legitimate Leadership

Throughout the research it became clear that certain individuals claimed to be leaders of particular groups or 'owners' of particular sacred sites, while others disagreed with such claims. Therefore, it was necessary to conduct follow-up research to confirm who, indeed, was the legitimate leader and whether there was any danger of creating or exacerbating tensions within and/or between communities during the consultation and compensation processes.

It should be acknowledged that leadership structures can change quickly, and the extent to which tensions might exist cannot be fully ascertained during a relatively short period of fieldwork. Therefore, ArcelorMittal should remain aware of the possibilities of changes and disagreements.

7.3 Recommendations

Taking all of these considerations/complications into account, this report identifies and presents the recommendations as to how to manage cultural heritage issues and deal with communities who expect benefits from ArcelorMittal despite there being little or no evidence of their claimed cultural practice/site existence.

The following are recommended to form the underlying principles for cultural heritage management, given the informant data complications identified above.

It is advisable that ArcelorMittal deals with:

- only those traditions and sites that are confirmed legitimate, in the sense that they have been practiced consistently and still maintain social importance according to most members of the community. This does not mean that they need to have been preserved in their original form –this would be unrealistic – but rather they need to be considered legitimate and important to the communities in whatever form they exist in presently.
- those leaders who are legitimate according to both community members, leaders in other communities and leaders at higher levels.

It is important that ArcelorMittal deals only with legitimate demands for several reasons, including:

- if ArcelorMittal takes seriously ‘invented’ traditions, illegitimate leaders or previously-diffused cultural practices, then this will encourage communities and individuals to continue telling untruthful stories throughout the extent of ArcelorMittal’s operations, and also to other companies that may begin operating in the area.

It is important that community members are aware of which claims are legitimate and which are not; to *not* take seriously illegitimate claims will cause less tension than considering all claims to be true. If a false claim is made and is then ignored, the individual or group who made this claim will have little support in mobilizing others to fight for such a claim. Such claims are best considered as incidents of individuals and groups trying to take advantage of an opportunity and if they are unsuccessful, they will probably do nothing to ‘fight’ for this claim. A true claim, on the other hand, has the potential to disrupt or enrage an entire community if it is ignored and is therefore considered legitimate and worth ‘taking seriously’.

8. ANIMAL PRACTICE

8.1 Overview

There are numerous reports and rumors surrounding the existence of individuals being part of the 'animal practice' in Liberia – a system of beliefs and practices that are neither illegal nor formally recognised by the Liberian government. It is believed that those who are a part of the 'animal practice' have a 'dual spirit' that resides simultaneously in their human form (which lives in the village) and in one or more animals (that live in the mountain forests of their homeland). The human and the animal are spiritually tied together to the extent that if the animal is harmed or killed, the human will experience illness/injury or death. Thus, if there exists a mysterious or sudden illness/injury or death of a person in a village, it might be concluded that this is a result of that person's animal being harmed.

While these stories are familiar to most Liberians, there have been no studies on this practice, and there is very limited existing literature, to the Consultant's knowledge, about this animal practice.

To address this lack of information the research conducted for this cultural heritage study has explored both rumours and stories from those outside the animal practice, and from those claiming to be a part of this practice. While the practice is a 'secret', in that the details surrounding the rituals and worldviews of the animal practice are only known to practitioners, the informants were nonetheless willing to reveal information. Therefore, the society was broadly understood, particularly with respect to its hierarchical structure and governance, so that ArcelorMittal's interactions can be targeted towards key leaders of the practice who are represent all other members.

This section outlines the literature that deals with these types of societies in Africa, including important examples of these societies' social importance. A general account of the worldviews of those people that are in the animal societies are given, followed by detailed information surrounding the structure and governance of these groups, and the influence that members and leaders have in their communities.

It will become clear that protection of these societies is important both in terms of ArcelorMittal's commitment to protecting cultural practices according to the IFC performance standards and the World Bank's safeguards policies, but also in terms of preventing any potential issues and tense relationships between ArcelorMittal and the mine-affected population, therefore, improving the efficiency of ArcelorMittal operations.

8.2 Literature Review

Anecdotes surrounding the West African belief that human spirits can enter animal bodies – referred to as "animal double", "animal-human double"; "bush soul", "multiple souls", "spirit double" and "participation mystique" – have been recorded in ethnographies as early as the mid-19th century. However detailed accounts were only recorded from the early 20th century, and these are few.

One of the earliest accounts in West Africa was given by British traveller and writer Mary Kingsley, who identified the plurality of souls among those she lived with during her travels: "These are commonly held to be four: the human soul; the soul in an animal, never in a plant, in the bush; the shadow on the path; and the dream soul".⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Mary Kingsley, 'The Fetish View of the Human Soul', *Folklore*, 8:2, 1897, 144.

All of the first-hand accounts of the animal practice come from early 20th century missionaries, explorers and colonial representatives. KL Beatty (1915), a barrister who resided in Sierra Leone in the 1910s writes extensively on the existence of Human Leopard Society in Sierra Leone. TJ Alldridge (1901) was one of the earliest observers of this society and estimated that it originated in the mid-19th century or that if it was older, then it was not socially prominent enough to be known by residents of the region who were in contact with Europeans.⁵⁹ By the end of the 19th century, however, reports of cannibals who wore leopard skins and carried a 'three-pronged knife' and native medicine known as 'Borfima' were becoming more commonplace. These cannibals became known as 'Human Leopards' and, in response, local authorities began executing those suspected of being members of the Human Leopard Society. To deal with the situation, the colonial government enacted the Human Leopard Society ordinance. Soon after, the government also outlawed the Human Alligator Society, a suspected offshoot of the Human Leopard Society.⁶⁰ Beatty (1915) also alludes to the existence of a Human Baboon Society, also considered to be malevolent.⁶¹

More recent research has found different appropriations of the belief that humans can 'be in' animals. Sapir (1977) writes of 'animal doubles' among the Diola in Senegal:

A double will always be of the same sex as its correspondent and will always be some kind of common wild animal, an antelope, leopard, monkey, snake, lizard and rarely a hyena or a crocodile. The only bird ever mentioned as being an ewuum is said to be a vulture, and the only fish reported is the egonyong, a small biting fish that inhabits the inundated rice fields. Men generally have leopards, antelopes and monkeys, and women generally have antelopes, lizards and snakes. At no time will a woman have a leopard nor a man a lizard or snake. The reason given is that a woman's ewuum normally lives in the residential compound, while a man's occupies the surrounding bush.... Throughout the course of his life a person can have a succession of different animals... conceptually occupy a position intermediate between wild and domestic animals.⁶²

Previous research in Nimba County has indicated the existence of the belief in animal-human doubles. One of the earliest accounts comes from anthropologist H. Dieter Seibel (date) who taught in Liberia in the 1960s, who noticed people behaving as animals – on all fours, eating uncooked rice and worms, howling and digging with their hands – while tending to their farm:

⁵⁹ T.J. Alldridge, *The Sherbro and Its Hinterland*. Macmillan, 1901.

⁶⁰ Beatty, *Human Leopards*, 8-9.

⁶¹ "During the investigation connected with the death of a child, it came to light that a number of persons in the vicinity... had banded themselves together and had formed a society which has since become known as the Human Baboon Society... no evidence could be obtained to corroborate the statements of the informers, and the accused were found not guilty...according to statements...this Society was formed about six years ago and consists of twenty-one members made up of eleven men and ten women; that seven victims all young children, had been provided at various times for the Society; that at their meetings one of the members of the Society dresses himself in a Baboon skin and attacks the victim with his teeth; that the spirit of all members of the Society becomes centered in the person who is for the time wearing the Baboon skin, which, when not in use, is kept in a small forest, where it is guarded by an evil spirit, and that the "Baboon" bites pieces out of the victim which the other members of the Society devour. [it was founded because] the founder of it had quarreled with his tribal ruler, who he alleged liberated one of the founders' slaves and placed him in authority over him; that he, the owner of the slave, became so incensed that he turned himself into a "witch" and induced others to join him in doing "evil things." Beatty, *Human Leopards*, 86-7.

⁶² J David Sapir, "Fecal Animals: An example of complementary totemism", *Man*, 12:1, 1977, 2.

Behind this is the belief that some people are born as animals in the bush, while others just want to imitate them because animals are strong in fighting and in looking for food, and do not get quickly tired. This imitation is believed to transmit the animals' strength to the workers.⁶³

Previous ArcelorMittal reports describe the existence of an "animist group"⁶⁴. The socio-economic baseline study explains it as 'the belief that human souls can also live in animals, a process known as human-animal transformation...both one of acquiring the attributes of the animal but also a way of honouring the animal in supporting human existence and invoking the spirit to assist the living populations'⁶⁵.

A Conservation International report written for ArcelorMittal indicated the existence of 'mythological' animals. Although the report does not refer to animism specifically, it comments on animals with totemistic value (either for a family or an entire town), that hunters were forbidden from killing:

- Gbapa – Chimpanzee, leopard
- Zolowee – Chimpanzee, leopard
- Zortapa – Chimpanzee, leopard
- Bonlah – Honey Badger, leopard, African Civet, chimpanzees

In total, it was found that 10% of hunters avoided hunting these animals for mystical reasons and 36% avoided them because they represented a family totem. 25% avoided them because they were dangerous.⁶⁶

The significance of these animal groups has been debated by anthropologists over the last century. French ethnologist Lucien Levy-Brahl (date) explained the phenomenon as "mystical participation"⁶⁷. Jung (1964) similarly observed that 'an individual may have such an unconscious identity with some other person or object'.⁶⁸

8.3 Findings – Worldview

In many of the most recent reports for ArcelorMittal, this practice is misleadingly described in contrast to other groups as the 'animist group'.⁶⁹ 'Animist' is a term that more accurately describes the belief that there exist spirits of ancestors or deities in both living and non-living objects – a belief system that is widespread throughout Liberia and certainly not limited to those who also believe themselves to have animal-human doubles. Further, animism implies that *another* spirit than one's own spirit resides in these objects or animals, while the practice being discussed here is that of a dual spirit that resides in both human and animal at the same

⁶³ Siebel, 'Labor', 56.

⁶⁴ Making Enterprises, 'Social Impact Assessment – Draft Final Report (May 09), 35-6; ArcelorMittal Phase 2 ESIA Scoping Report, January 2011, 48; ArcelorMittal, 'Moving Cultural Sites', October 2009, 4, ArcelorMittal, Socio-economic Baseline Study, Volume 5, Part 1.1, September 2010, 76-82; ArcelorMittal, Social Impact Assessment/ Social Management Plan, Volume 5, Part 1.2, September 2010, 34-5.

⁶⁵ ArcelorMittal, Socio-economic Baseline Study, 8.

⁶⁶ Conservation International, 74-5.

⁶⁷ Lucien Levy-Brahl,

⁶⁸ Carl Jung (ed.), *Man and His Symbols*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1964, 23.

⁶⁹ "...there are two predominant traditional belief systems in the project area: the Poro and Sande societies and the Animist group, who carry out cultural practices". Vol 5 Part 1.1 76-7.

time. Those in the communities describe this belief system as the 'animal practice' and those who are involved, as described by others and themselves, are explained to be 'in animal'.

Most of the details surrounding the worldview and activities surrounding the animal practices are secrets only revealed to those who are members. However, key informants were able to give certain details surrounding the practice. Many informants were reluctant to speak about the practice in the presence of other people, especially those who were not also 'in animal'. Therefore, the key interviews were conducted privately or with small groups of people who were close friends, of the same gender and/or in the same family.

The existence of the 'animal practice' in this part of Nimba County was found to be relatively widespread. Though membership is a secret, it was not difficult to talk to people about it, particularly those who were involved in it themselves. This information was best gathered in one-to-one interviews that were conducted without notice and at random. The team found evidence of people who were 'in animal' in every community; it is likely that additional people were also 'in animal', but were reluctant to discuss it because, as they explained, if potential (human) enemies knew that they were 'in animal', then that enemy might go into the forest to kill the person's animal double if they ever had a disagreement – a more subtle way of harming their enemy. Therefore, it can be concluded that this practice is pervasive and based on interviews with those 'in animal'; it has a significant social importance that should not be overlooked.

The Phase 1 ESIA related studies have described this practice as involving 'transfiguration' specifically – when a human form turns *into* an animal form; therefore the human form disappears while the person is 'in animal'. While some informants explained that they 'turned into' an animal, upon further probing it was found that they believed their human form remained while their spirit moved from consciousness as a human to consciousness as an animal. In this situation, the human will be sleeping, in a trance, or simply 'not themselves' while working, talking or otherwise fully conscious. The person, however, will not remember whatever happens during the time that they are conscious as an animal. An example was given by a young man who was 'in baboon', who explained that,

Sometimes when I am going somewhere, I can turn into baboon and get to the place faster... My human is still moving slow but I can go to my baboon and then move very fast. Then my human body can get there later but my spirit has been there ever since [for a long time].⁷⁰

Though most informants claimed that the types of animals that humans could enter were limited to those animals that lived in the forest (ie, not domestic animals), the animals that were reported were red deer, baboons (Liberian's term for chimpanzees), boa constrictor (Liberian's term for python), hog (wild boar), eagle, leopard, lion and water buffalo.

These are the names of animals as reported by informants; many of them likely refer to different animals that can be found in the Liberian forest. The zoological survey consultant reports that "Red Deer" refers to Bushbuck, "Hog" or "Wild Boar" should be translated as Red River Hog. It is unclear which animal "Lion" refers to. "Water Buffalo" is likely the African Forest Buffalo; the python that "Boa Constrictor" refers to the African Rock Python.

There also reportedly exist dwarves, who are more powerful than any animal, and jin, who are the most powerful of all. The term 'jin' in this case should not be confused with 'jini' or 'genie'

⁷⁰ Interview in Sehyigeh, 12 March 2012.

which are similarly powerful, but are not part of the animal practice and are considered to be malevolent spirits, while jin in the animal practice are extremely powerful, though ambivalent.

Being 'in animal' is typically an inherited trait in that some, but not all, children or grandchildren of a member of the animal practice will also be 'in' that same type of animal. The type of animal that a child becomes typically follows the male's lineage if both parents are animals though there are cases in which a child will be 'in' the animal of the grandfather instead of either the mother or father. Children are also born with a certain level of spiritual power that can be manipulated so that they may develop the ability to be 'in' multiple animals. In these cases, if this spiritual power is recognized by the parent(s) or grandparent(s) who is/are 'in animal' and/or other leaders within the animal practice, then with proper nurturing within the animal practice, this person can develop the ability to be 'in' these additional animals by being initiated by leaders of each particular animal.⁷¹ Initiation for those who are spiritually powerful was considered to be an important part of the animal practice – the more animals that a person could be 'in', the better.

While initiations into multiple animals are desirable for those born with exceptional spiritual power, initiations also occurred among people who were 'normal'; these individuals were then considered to be somewhat weaker than those who had inherited the animal. An initiate into the animal practice can only take the type of animal of the person who does the initiation, and this person must be a part of the person's extended family. While a person who has inherited the animal has a natural ability to defend themselves in the forest, those who are initiated are considered to be disadvantaged because they need to learn the skills to protect themselves and find food – something they will never be able to do as well as those who have inherited the ability. A person who is initiated, but who does not have the requisite (inherited) spiritual power, will not survive as an animal and will thus not survive as a human.

There are further disadvantages to becoming initiated into the animal practice without having the requisite inherited spiritual power. A person who is initiated is bound to the one who conducted the initiation in that only the initiator can remove the animal tie. There are some reports of individuals being initiated against their will – usually through their unknowingly or forcefully being given a liquid drop in their eye – though most initiates report their desire to join the society as a fulfillment of their curiosity of what they've heard about, and also they hear from friends and family members that there are benefits to being 'in animal'.

Those who are 'in animal' explain that the primary benefits of being part of this practice are that it helps them in their daily lives. Boa constrictors, for example, explained that they were able to catch fish more effectively; chimpanzees moved fast through the forest to gather food; eagles were able to pick plants from the tops of mountains; leopards were good hunters; red deer were 'beautiful' to others in the community; hogs were good at digging on their farm.

There is some indication that plants are an important part of the animal practice⁷², and therefore reduced NTFPs and / or access to them may have an impact on the animal practice; and this should be addressed as part of a Community Development programme (please also see Volume 1, Volume 4, Part 1.1 and Volume 5, Part 2.

⁷¹ Though most informants explained that initiation was the only way to acquire additional animals, a few informants insisted that a person could be born with multiple animals.

⁷² Observations: the female Zoe from one of the project affected communities took the field team to the place where she gathered plants and touched one leaf and 'went into eagle' where she later reported that she had flown (as an eagle) to the top of the mountain to gather herbal plants. The team was not able to observe those plants, as they were being 'carried by the eagle' nor could the Zoe describe them. The area in which she, in eagle form, gathered them, was on an area of the mountain where it was highly unlikely a human could climb.

8.4 Findings – Habitat

These positive aspects of being ‘in animal’, however, are increasingly being overshadowed by the dangers of being ‘in animal’ as a result of ArcelorMittal operations on the mountains in which they live. Prior to ArcelorMittal operations each animal had its own area on the mountain that was safe from hunters and other animals because it was known to be an ‘occupied’ forest. Those individuals who were initiated into the animal practice were allowed to stay on the land of the person who initiated them and were relatively safe there. To move from one area to another was considered dangerous for the animal; reportedly there have been incidents in the past in which the animal double has been forced to move and it has resulted in injury or death (to the human and the animal). A woman in New Yekepa, for example, explained that during LAMCOs operations, many people in New Yekepa mysteriously died at the same time the mountain on which their animals lived (near Old Yekepa) was being mined.

Because Mt. Tokadeh is already being mined, those communities that are close to this mountain are particularly worried because they have already lost their habitat. Every informant who claimed to be ‘in animal’ also complained that they had lost their habitat and they were in ‘serious danger’, ‘between life and death’, ‘hungry’, and/or ‘hiding and running away’. They report incidents of flying rocks, loud noises, other animals attacking them, and inability to find food because the forest has been destroyed. Informants whose animals resided in Gangra or Yuelliton, explained that they had heard what was going to happen on the mountains, and had since moved their animals down the mountain, and were similarly in ‘serious danger’, unsure of where to go. They became especially fearful when they heard noises of drills on the mountain during the exploration phase. Some of the animals in this area have voluntarily moved to nearby mountains, especially Beeton, but they are unsure of the safety of this new habitat and still others are waiting at the bottom of Gangra and Yuelliton to be advised where to go.

In these consultations, it became clear that there existed a leadership structure within the animal practice. As explained above, certain animals have more power than others and therefore are the leaders. These differences in power are thus manifest in a structure and governance in which those who are less powerful are bound to listen to their leaders, but also one in which the leaders are responsible for hearing the concerns of their members. Due to this structure that is described below, it is relatively easy to communicate with all of those within the animal practice without knowing the full details of what they do or who they are.

8.5 Findings – Structure / Governance

Leadership typically is determined through generations – for succession, a leader will first look to his or her extended family in assigning a replacement. A suitable leader will need to exhibit good leadership qualities, and also have the necessary amount of spiritual power in order to lead the animals – a trait that is inherited and needs to be appropriately nurtured. The most powerful individuals in the animal practice are those who are able to enter the most animals, especially those who are able to enter the most powerful ‘animal’ –the jin.

If there is not a suitable leader within the family, the leader will look elsewhere. In order to determine the relative power of an animal, a series of transformations occurs during meetings. During these meetings, all the animals will ‘show’ each other how many forms they can take. Everybody transforms into their first animal, then the second, then the third and so on, until only one remains who continues to transform. This person is considered to be the most powerful and through this demonstration, will have commanded the respect from the others and therefore becomes the legitimate leader.

Messages are transmitted to everybody within the animal practice through their leaders. Each type of animal, in each village, has a leader. Those leaders meet with other leaders (of other animals) within the village; they have an overall leader. Those overall leaders meet with other overall leaders from other villages, and have one leader (hereafter referred to as the Leader). It was reported by the Leader and other members of the animal practice (leaders and others) that he was the head of all the animals in the entire region of Nimba, Grand Gedeh and parts of Guinea. His name was given by leaders and less powerful members of the animal practice in all of the communities surveyed. Further, the Leader listed the animal leaders in each village; all of these names were confirmed by interviews within those communities using the methodology described above.

Because this is in the manner for determining leadership within the animal practice, it is not necessarily the case that the Zoe is the leader of those involved in the animal practice, as reported in the Baseline Study.⁷³ Indeed, the most powerful individuals in the animal kingdom may have no leadership positions at all in their communities. For example, the Leader of all animals has no position in his home village; another of the most powerful individuals in the animal practice in another village is a young boy. It was confirmed that any message that it was communicated to the animal leader in each town would quickly be transmitted to every person in the animal practice within the region.

The list of confirmed leaders of the animal practice was provided in a Confidential Note to ArcelorMittal management and does not appear in this report due to the sensitivity of the data.

8.6 Complications / Considerations

In a few of the communities, there were certain individuals who claimed to be leaders of the animal practice, and who were later confirmed not to be legitimate leaders. Some of these individuals were indeed in the animal practice, while others were not.

Similarly, there were a number of incidents in which people claimed to be animals only after hearing that it might be a source of compensation for them. It was confirmed that such individuals were not truthful through reports from other community members, or through questioning surrounding the animal practice to confirm whether or not these individuals shared a similar worldview. One young man, for example, approached the team after it had spent an hour doing random interviews with 'normal' citizens, and told the team in front of many others that he was a raccoon – an animal the team had yet to encounter in the research. When he said this, everyone laughed, and the individual was questioned further. After just a few minutes of being unable to tell the team the same details that other confirmed members of the practice had provided, he admitted that he was not actually 'in animal'. In another community, individuals began approaching the team in the vehicle to tell them that they were animals. Just prior to this it was observed that informants were going house to house to tell the people about the team's presence. In these cases, the team agreed that it was time to stop doing fieldwork at that site.

The team also encountered problems in certain communities that requested that the team return for follow-up interviews to hear from the animals surrounding 'their demands' in case of relocation. In Zolowee, for example, one of the town leaders who claimed to be the head of the

⁷³ "These consultations revealed that a ritual led by the Zoe would assist the Animists to move and after a few days it was reported that they will have migrated to the new area". ESIA Volume 5, Part 1.1, 78

animals in the area (a claim that was later found to be untrue), requested \$6000 USD, 1 cow, 1 rooster and 7 bags of rice for relocation.⁷⁴

It is important to note here that the Leader warned the team about other people pretending to be 'in animal', particularly community leaders such as Zoes and chiefs, in an attempt to be compensated for moving their animals. He specified that a legitimate animal leader would make no excessive demands and would be unlikely to declare himself or herself a leader of animals in front of others. Indeed, the team experienced such interactions with certain Zoes and chiefs in some villages and it was later confirmed that such Zoes were not actually part of the animal practice. This includes the lion from Sehyigeh who declared himself as such during a community meeting with ArcelorMittal.

8.7 Recommendations

ArcelorMittal is required to protect this cultural practice from possible outcomes arising from its mining and related operations because, while it is not a legally recognized practice, animal practice has been demonstrated to be socially and culturally important during preliminary and follow-up investigations. Recommendations to protect this cultural practice are given below, as guided by IFC standards.⁷⁵ One problem that could be anticipated is that there will be reports from the communities that people are dying as a result of their animals being harmed on the mountains. It is recommended that future consultations with the Leader of all the 'animals' be conducted whenever such reports arise. As described above, the Leader is aware of the incidents in which people claim to be animals who are not; the Leader has the legitimacy and power within this society to counter such claims. According to the Leader, he will be able to facilitate the movement of all the 'animals' from the affected areas. This can only be achieved if a rapport with the Leader is established. It was confirmed that a meeting could be held between the Leader and other relevant members of the community and ArcelorMittal to discuss such matters. The ArcelorMittal representation should include a 'person from the area' and a 'white person for transparency', as recommended by the Leader. If people perceive their animals to have been effectively moved, then reports of people dying as a result of ArcelorMittal's activities should be minimal.

⁷⁴ Interview with [name taken our due to the sensitivity of this information], elder, Zolowee, 10 March 2012.

⁷⁵ See especially, IFC Guidelines, Items 8,11, 15, 16.

9. PORO/SANDE

9.1 Literature

Fragmentary accounts suggest that Poro society existed up to 400 years ago⁷⁶. A common theory to explain their emergence describes political upheaval and migration among Mande-speaking people along the Guinea Coast region. Those who belonged to this society early on were typically from powerful landowning families; being a member and going into stranger territory could ensure the host that the visitor would be loyal.⁷⁷ Some of the more detailed accounts of Poro and Sande secret societies can be found in the journals of late 19th century missionaries and explorers in the regions that are now Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire. One of the earliest and fullest accounts speculates the importance of the Poro in Sierra Leone before colonization,

Here the boys are taught and trained and initiated, here they dance and sing after dark, and here they are imbued with the idea of the power and authority of the Poro. After some months of training the boys is placed in (1) The messenger or servant class; or, (2) The Mohammedan Mori or the Devil men class; or, (3) The Chiefs' class; when further initiation and instruction suitable to his class are given... the government of the country was practically in the hands of the third class. The chiefs would assemble in the Poro bush, they would be sworn to secrecy, and then would discuss the matter in hand; their orders would be issued and carried out by the whole society; any member in default could be tried by a Poro tribunal inside the Poro bush, condemned, and there put away.⁷⁸

Sande, the female counterpart to Poro, also exists throughout the region.⁷⁹ A Sande initiate will have received practical training in how to care for the home, children and her future husband. They also learn about the 'mysteries of fertility and reproduction', secret Sande songs and dances, and how to make medicines 'to influence or even kill their husbands'. An important aspect of the Sande society is the reported 'sense of comradeship' that is imparted in the ordeal of the initiation, during which some initiates may die from the circumcision.⁸⁰

One common finding in much of the literature is the secrecy surrounding Poro and Sande societies. Researchers comment on the death penalty as a punishment for a Poro or Sande member revealing details about the practices. Siebel writes:

[It] was not possible to get such detailed information about masks; usually, people were too frightened to talk about them, because their secret society keeps masks and their names secret under penalty, which was formerly the death penalty under certain circumstances.⁸¹

Zetterstrom (1976) similarly describes an encounter he had in the 1970s:

It is extremely difficult to get any information on these societies in this area as they are still active, powerful and secretive. It is not as among the Vai near the coast

⁷⁶ Little, "Poro I", 350 no date no ref

⁷⁷ Bledsoe, 'Sande', 456-7. No date no ref

⁷⁸ KJ Beatty, *Human Leopards*, London: Hugh Rees, 1915.

⁷⁹ In Sierra Leone, the society is known as Bundu. Beatty, *Human Leopards*, 111.

⁸⁰ Bledsoe, 'Political', 458 no date no ref

⁸¹ Siebel, 'Labor', 9.

where one can see Poro devils performing in public. When I once told my Mano informants that I had seen Poro devils performing in the open they could hardly believe it. To them, even today, the most serious crime is the exposing of society secrets. When being asked what would happen to a person who had committed such a crime, they always made a motion as if they were cutting off somebody's throat which is obviously the punishment for such a crime.⁸²

Despite their self-proclaimed secrecy, Poro and Sande societies had an important political function until at least the 1970s. Little (1965) describes their relevance:

In West Africa they are concerned mainly with the ownership and use of supposedly supernatural medicines and the propagation of certain cults. These are the functions of other associations, but what principally distinguishes secret societies from the ordinary medicine society or cult is the esoteric basis of their activities. Not only do the secret societies employ particular rituals, signs, symbols and forms of knowledge which are withheld from non-initiates, but these things are regarded a special source of power through being kept private. Associations of this kind are prevalent ... They are not secret in any other respect. On the contrary, not only is the existence and general purpose of these societies known to every grown-up person, but in many places the wide range of their activities makes them a dominant social force.⁸³

Ellis (1999) describes traditional Poro and Sande society in Liberia, in which 'there is no absolute good or evil but instead, an ambivalent power which is given moral meaning through ritual action'.⁸⁴ The methods used for obtaining power were within a very organised and rigid structure of spiritual authority that translated into authority in society at large. The spirit of the forest, known as the 'Poro Master' or the 'Bush Devil'⁸⁵, was an ambivalent but particularly powerful deity that needed to be supplied with blood from sacrifice in order to 'keep people in their proper places in society, to prevent individuals from transforming in ways which are dangerous to others and to ensure orderly progress from one phase of life to another, such as from childhood to adulthood.'⁸⁶ Because this concept was a 'mainstay of culture order',⁸⁷ it was considered deeply problematic when the necessary sacrifices were not made according to Poro tradition by those who were of an appropriate spiritual rank.⁸⁸

The traditional structure of Poro was described by Harley (1941) to consist of the junior members (the great majority of initiates, who have few rights and without political voice), the 'inner circle' (top group of Poro elders who were the executive council and tribunal of the society) and the head of the Poro (a Zoe, one in each 'chapter' or group of Poro). Within the junior ranks and inner circle were various grades and divisions (judges, ceremonial priests, messengers) with specific roles, indicated by different types of scars marked on the body for each increase in grade.⁸⁹ There is no solid evidence that there was a 'supreme council' or

⁸² Zetterstrom, *Yarwein Mano*, 99.

⁸³ Little, "The Political Function of the Poro", *Africa*, 35:4, 1965, 349.

⁸⁴ Ellis, *The Mask*, 273-274.

⁸⁵ It is important to point out that the term 'devil' was likely assigned by early missionaries who felt such practices were demonic in nature. In actuality, the spirit of this 'Poro Master' is regarded with ambivalence – it is not necessarily good or evil, simply very powerful.

⁸⁶ Ellis, *The Mask*, 278

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 279

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 278-279.

⁸⁹ George W. Harley, 'Notes on the Poro in Liberia.' *Peabody Museum Papers*, Vol 19:2, Cambridge, MA, 1941.

central administration of Poro, though there may have been periodic meetings between heads of Poro that may have been ultimately chaired by particularly powerful families in the region. It is likely that various Poro groups communicated with one another through messengers, and it is likely that a Poro initiate with a high grade would be accepted 'according to his rank'.⁹⁰ The Sande hierarchy is similar, though the 'inner circle' within the Sande is never as powerful as that of the Poro. There still exist high-ranking females in the Sande who have complete control over their female initiates, and also have a degree of authority over men, and are involved in important decisions within the societies and thus the community as a whole.⁹¹

Masking is an important aspect of Poro and Sande⁹². It is believed that certain masks are imbued with spiritual powers; human beings who are spiritually capable of harnessing this power will wear the masks and during this time, effectively become the spirit of the mask. Different masks are used for different occasions; some are more serious than others. One of the most powerful masks is that 'Poro Master'; others are used for medicinal purposes and still others for festivities. An important role of the Poro and Sande was the leaders' role in fighting witchcraft attacks; for this, specific masks were used('All masks are regarded as property of the secret society... it has a monopoly on all anti-witchcraft medicines.')⁹³

The Poro and Sande's political importance is inextricably linked to the power it is believed to harness, and specifically the bush in which this power is believed to reside. Also within the forest are medicinal and sacred plants that Zoe's use in initiations and other secretive rituals. The exact plants used were often not revealed, nor were there specific purposes. It was revealed, however, that many of these plants grew in areas of the forest that would be affected by the mining activities. One Zoe in Zolowee had begun her own garden to try to grow some of the plants she found in the forest, but not all of them were successful. More than that, some plants simply needed to come from the sacred space of the Poro/Sande bush in order to be powerful.

Also important within the bush are the initiations. It is within the sacred bushes, where the Bush Devil lives, where initiations occur during 'bush school' or Poro/Sande school:

The procedure is partly ceremonial and symbolical and partly instructional, and it is designed, first and foremost, to turn the initiated into a good Poro man. In addition to various practical techniques tribal history is taught, and training for the position that a person will hold in tribal life is also given; but all this is secondary to the main function of initiation which is to impress upon the new member the sacredness of his duty to Poro. This is done psychologically by subjecting the youths to a number of terrifying experiences during which they are symbolically 'eaten' by the Poro spirit and are ultimately shown that their 're-birth' is due to the same spiritual force. They also take part in a series of ceremonies, involving the killing of a fowl by brutal methods. The object is to demonstrate how the initiates, too, would be treated should they ever divulge any Poro secrets... They are taught the meaning of various signs and symbols and to use certain passwords which are secret to Poro.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Little, 'Poro I', 363.

⁹¹ Bledsoe, 'Political', 459

⁹² Siebel, Labor, 9

⁹³ Siebel, 'Labor', 55

⁹⁴ Zetterstrom, 'Yarmein', 107

Traditionally, the bush was controlled by either the Poro or the Sande at a given time – the devil could only reside in one bush at a time – and usually the Poro would have the bush for four years and the Sande for three.⁹⁵

It was expected that all boys and girls in Poro and Sande areas would be initiated into the society; a male who did not join would be called ‘small boy’ and ‘stupid’; he would be unable to marry, have children, own property, hold office or even be considered a citizen.⁹⁶ Similarly, an uninitiated female would be unlikely to ever be married or well-cared for in the community because of the belief that she was not a grown woman. The most important ritual aspect of the Sande initiation was the circumcision in which the clitoris – considered to be a small penis – was removed; this removal was considered to endow the woman with fertility.⁹⁷

Recent literature has indicated that the structure and function of Poro and Sande has changed greatly over the years; much of this can be attributed to Western education, monotheistic religion and other aspects of modernisation. Consequently, the traditional Poro leaders have lost much of their exclusive authority to deal with spirits and the power they offer. Ellis (1999) argues that they lost even more control during the war when these institutions became disrupted by violence, destruction and displacement. Low-ranking initiates-turned-fighters, aware of certain rituals that enabled a person to tap into the spirit world but which were off-limits to them, attempted to access the power directly through blood sacrifice and, according to some rumours, cannibalism.⁹⁸ It has also been argued that fewer children in Liberia are initiated into Poro or Sande, and in most cases, if they are initiated, the process has been shortened from three years to about three months, and sometimes even as little as a few weeks⁹⁹. Many young people are given the choice as to whether they want to be initiated or not; non-initiates are not necessarily outcast within their communities any more.

Regarding female circumcision, often referred to as female genital mutilation (FGM), formal moves have been made to put a stop to the practice, though there is increasingly more debate in the media and even from government that moves should and will be made to stop the practice. There was some confusion regarding the legality of the practice during early 2012, when the Assistant Minister of Culture claimed to have written a letter to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), insisting that they temporarily refuse to issue permits to Sande leaders to conduct these initiations. The Assistant Minister of Culture claimed that MIA had agreed and stopped issuing licenses; the culture ministry was to investigate and punish anybody found initiating girls. This declaration was met with fierce resistance from traditional leaders around the country that the government had no right to ban their practices.¹⁰⁰ No laws were introduced, however, to formalise this ban. By mid-2012, the Minister of Culture insisted that they had not, in fact, asked the MIA to stop issuing licenses specifically because they wanted to stop FGM, but rather that the Sande school had been ‘let out’ for four years so that the men could go into the bush; therefore the practice was effectively stopped.¹⁰¹ At the time of research (March 2012), Sande and all its practices were still legal, though this changed soon after fieldwork was completed as described below.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 107

⁹⁶ Bledsoe, “Political”, 457

⁹⁷ Ibid., 457-258

⁹⁸ Ibid., 223-237; 259-266.

⁹⁹ Bledsoe, “Political”, 458. See also Zetterstrom, *Yarmein*, 108-9.

¹⁰⁰ PRI’s The Word, ‘Female Circumcision Temporarily Stopped in Liberia’, 29 March 2012.

¹⁰¹ Ministry of Internal Affairs, ‘No Plans to Abolish Poro, Sande Societies – Says GOL’, MICAT website, 04 June 2012.

9.2 Findings – Worldview

Most of the beliefs and rituals of Poro and Sande society are kept secret by initiates, so it is difficult to gather information as an outsider and even an insider would be forbidden to report on the practices.¹⁰² Nevertheless,, everybody in the communities studied were well aware of the existence of the Poro and Sande society. Older people, whether members or not, were able to speak in depth about its social importance and history, while many of the younger people simply knew it ‘used to exist but hasn’t in a long time’ or that ‘it is existing but I’m not a part of it’ or ‘I am a member but I cannot talk about it’.

The older generations explained that one of the most important aspects of the Poro and Sande was that it taught children how to respect their elders; since it had become less common for children to go into the Sande or Poro school, they had little respect. The older generations also explained that within these Sande and Poro schools, children learned basic skills to help the community – men learned to hunt and build huts; women learned to weave, cook and be good wives. It was also clear that the bush devil used to have a major social importance – if anything ever needed to be announced to the community or if there were disagreements or crimes being conducted, the bush devil would ‘appear’ – a masked figured who embodied the most powerful spirit of the forest – to let the community know what needed to change. When the bush devil comes out, he first sends a dancer to signify to the community that he will appear; at this point those who are not initiated into Poro have to hide, so as to not see the devil. Increasingly, however, there are fewer persons in the communities that adhere to these traditional laws, and do not go inside when the devil is to appear. Therefore, the devil often only appears in the middle of the night reportedly, so that fewer people who are not initiates will happen to see him. Another change that has occurred has to do with the choice that the young have when it comes to their initiation into Poro or Sande – most informants expressed that even if they considered Poro or Sande important for their child’s well-being, they would not force them to join if the child did not want to, and preferred Western education. Some initiates of Poro/Sande expressed that they wish they hadn’t been a part of it.

9.3 Findings – Structure / Governance

The structure and governance of Poro and Sande is outlined in customary law and is overseen by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Ministry licenses head Zoes (one for Sande and one for Poro) in each district, clan and town who are responsible for licensing initiation ceremonies, mapping out bushes and keeping track of other related activities. While this is the legal procedure for conducting Poro and Sande activities, in practice the process is much less formal (see below). In addition to the head Poro Zoe and head Sande Zoe, there can be assistant Zoes in each village. These Zoes can serve as administrators for Poro/Sande activities, assisting during initiations and taking over activities if the head Zoe is unavailable. There is also a designated person who ‘closes’ the bush – he or she is responsible for performing the final procedures in the initiation and becomes the ‘symbol’ of that session. In practice, it was found that there was very little coherent leadership structure, particularly within the Sande society. Head Zoes in many of the towns or villages were unable to name their leader within the clan and the district; they were also totally unaware of any future Sande initiations that might take place and, in some cases, the head Zoes had not yet been trained to do initiations. The names of the Leaders in each community were provided in a Confidential Note to ArcelorMittal management. The Note does not appear in this report due to the sensitivity of the data.

¹⁰² Some informants who had been initiated as children and who had since converted to Christianity were not afraid to describe the details of their initiation, claiming that, ‘Jesus will protect me from the devil’, who is believed to kill any initiates who reveal the secrets of the bush.

9.4 Findings - Locations of bushes

Traditionally, the Poro bush was located far away from the village and took up hundreds of acres of land, while the Sande bush was located near the village and was significantly smaller. The bush devil would traditionally live within this area, close to the bottom of the mountain. In many of the communities over the last fifty years, however, the bushes have already been moved or reduced in size. The reasons for the relocations vary (Figure 4), though it is common among all communities who have been forced or requested to move their bush that they are unhappy about it being either too small, too close to roads/other villages or continually threatened by FDA or various mining operations. Though there are examples of communities being forced to move their bushes, some communities have voluntarily relocated them as a result of unsuitable geographical features or when moving to another town. Even when the bushes are reduced in size or are far from the mountain, the bush devil still lives close to the bottom of the mountain and has to travel to the individual bushes and/or communities during certain ceremonies. The most important factors in establishing a suitable bush is that the area must be appropriately large, geographically suitable, ritually cleansed of witchcraft activities, and the devil must be content to move. The latter two factors involve rituals and materials that were fairly consistent across communities, except those three who had already received compensation for moving their Poro bush (Zolowee, Bonlah, Gbapa)

Figure 4: Location of bushes, relocations and desired rituals movement (as given by present leaders)

| Community | Poro/Sande | Relocation Date | Relocation Reason | Ritual Needed for Relocation |
|------------|------------|---------------------|---|---|
| Bapa | Sande Poro | 1970s | LAMCO moved entire town | Kola nut shared and explanation |
| Bolo | Sande Poro | 2003 2003 | FDA asked them to leave | Sacrifice and cleansing |
| Bonlah | Sande Poro | Never moved 2011 | Not Applicable (N/A) ArcelorMittal activities (unclear if actually moved) | Cleanse area; sacrifice; \$3000 |
| Camp 4 | Sande Poro | 1970s None | LAMCO N/A | None needed |
| Gbapa | Sande Poro | 1940s 2011 | Area too swampy ArcelorMittal Operations | \$3000 USD given |
| Gbeleyee | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A | |
| Kanlah | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A | Kola, rooster, sheep, cows, cash |
| Leagbala | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A | Kola, roosters, sheep, cow, dog, \$2500 |
| Lugbayee | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A | |
| Makinto | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A | |
| New Yekepa | Sande Poro | 1970s 1970s | LAMCO moved entire town | |
| Sehyigeh | Sande Poro | Never Never | N/A N/A (reportedly asked to leave Poro by ArcelorMittal) | Cows, rice and chickens |
| Vanyampah | Sande Poro | 1990s 1990s | War War | |
| Zolowee | Sande Poro | Never 2011 | N/A ArcelorMittal | \$3000 |

Most communities explained that it was critical for them to own a bush for their men and women to go to, but were open to the possibility of sharing a communal bush with their clan for the purpose of initiation ceremonies (explained below). However, they they still desired a 'smaller' bush for meetings and privacy nearby their towns, and where the bush devil could reside outside of initiations.

9.5 Findings – Initiation Ceremonies

As explained above, traditionally, the bush (Poro/Sande) school would last up to four years and each town had its own large area, its own Zoes who were well-trained and widely respected in the community, and regular initiations so that no children would grow up having not been initiated. Initiations were a major event in the communities – prior to and after the entrance of boys or girls into the bush, the entire community would take part in festivities. Up to twenty bush devils would appear for the initiation of boys into Poro. Over time, however, as a result of many factors not necessarily related to ArcelorMittal operations (as these observations had been made prior to their arrival in the area) Poro and Sande in Northern Nimba County has lost much of its social importance. Consequently, there have been far less frequent, less public (i.e. no community festivities for the return of initiates) and much shorter initiation ceremonies occurring in all of the towns.

This is especially the case with the girls' Sande activities – in most towns it was found that no activities had taken place since 1989 (Figure 5). Some communities reported that this was because 'the men have been in the bush since the war'; others reported that they had heard that 'the government said we couldn't do it'; still others reported that they had girls who needed to go into the bush, but there was no trained Zoe in the town to do the initiations, or if there was a trained Zoe, no clan or district Zoe was available to give the town Zoe the license to do initiations.

According to the Poro leaders, the women have been restricted from entering the Sande bush because the men are already there, and have been since the end of the war in 2003. While it is traditional that only one bush school occurs at a time, it is not traditional for men to stay in the bush for so many years (typically if was 4 years for each) This doesn't make sense, ie cannot be understood If Sande society was stronger, and if Zoes put more pressure on traditional authorities to hand the bush over, i.e. from Poro to Sande, then perhaps there would be more Sande initiations. Because of the lack of leadership, though, and combined with the rumour that the government was going to outlaw Sande activities (which, incidentally, they did just one week after fieldwork was completed), most young women in the communities surveyed had not been initiated into the Sande school and even if they expressed that they would like to go, did not consider it to be necessary, as they traditionally would have.

Further, younger girls expressed no desire to enter Sande school and instead remarked on the importance of their attending 'regular' school. In one village, the appointed and licensed female Zoe admitted that she had converted to Christianity many years previously and had no desire to push for any initiation in the village; if a head Zoe asked her to, then she would refuse. Many villagers also did not know who the Sande Zoe was, or whether there even was one in town. In some cases, the reported Sande Zoe of the town was unaware of who her leader was, or whether there even was one.

Figure 5: Most recent initiations and explanations for timing based on interviews within the communities

| Community | Poro or Sande | Last initiation | Explanation for timing of initiation |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|---|
| Bapa | Sande Poro | 1989 unknown | War came to area |
| Bolo | Sande Poro | 1989 1989 | No appropriate bush and no leaders |
| Bonlah | Sande Poro | 2012 2011 | Tradition is strong |
| Camp 4 | Sande Poro | 1989 Never | 'no respect for devil' No bush – they go to Gbapa |
| Gbapa | Sande Poro | 1989 2012 | Men inside the bush Small initiation (3 people) |
| Gbeleyee | Sande Poro | 1989 2000 | Men inside |
| Kanlah | Sande Poro | 1989 2004 | Men inside |
| Leagbala | Sande Poro | 1989 2011 | Men inside; no area |
| Lugbayee | Sande Poro | 1989 2004 | Men inside; no plants |
| Makinto | Sande Poro | 1994 2002 | Men inside; no female Zoe No bush area |
| New Yekepa | Sande Poro | 1998 2003 | Men inside Unsuitable bush area |
| Sehyigeh | Sande Poro | 1994 2002 | Men inside; Government said stop |
| Vanyampah | Sande Poro | 2006 None | Government said stop; new Zoe No bush – go to Sehyigeh |
| Zolowee | Sande Poro | 1992 2001 | Men inside |

Poro maintains significantly more social importance than Sande in the sense that Poro leaders are still respected and recognized by traditional authorities, and initiations have been occurring far more regularly. These initiations are considered quite short, however, usually lasting no more than three months. One young man who had been recently initiated explained that he'd been in the bush for just a month and a half with three other boys. He had travelled from another village to attend the school.¹⁰³

Although Poro is losing its wider social significance, it is still important for many people who are finding their own ways to maintain this cultural practice. For example, some young men have travelled to other towns in order to take part in an initiation which, it seemed, was not going to happen in their own town in the near future. Because the Poro/Sande structure is governed within the clans, prospective initiates see no problem with taking part in initiations in other towns. It is also important to pay close attention to the types of plants that Zoes use and where they are found in the bush. If it is possible to protect some of the most critical areas where Zoes gather these plants, this should be done. Alternatively, further research into how to grow specific plants in home gardens could be explored, with inputs from the Zoes as to whether they will still be imbued with their magical properties (Please also see volume 1, Volume 4, Part 1.1 and Volume 5, Part 2).

¹⁰³ Interview on 15 March 2012 in Gbapa.

9.6 Recommendations

Relocation of the Poro and Sande sacred area is required according to IFC Standards.¹⁰⁴ Each traditional leader gave his or her requests in the event that a Poro or Sande bush needed to be moved; to ensure legitimacy their requests were cross-checked with traditional leaders in other areas, community members and district leaders. Based on this, some recommendations can be made. The major complication lies with the location of the Poro bush, since it is traditionally far outside of the village and encompasses a much larger landmass than the Sande. One possibility, if there is an expected unavoidable land take of several Poro bushes, is to consolidate the Poro bushes for each clan into a larger, and more geographically appropriate area that will knowingly be protected from mining and forestry activities. This area would ideally have the same geographical features as the existing bushes, taking into account the importance of certain plants that are required for initiation ceremonies. Implementing this recommendation will alleviate the problems with regards to the lack of space for bushes for each town, and the prospect of their bushes being affected by future operations.

Through consultations with the Poro/Sande leaders in the areas, it is not clear whether it would be more appropriate for there to be one large initiation for all towns in the clan, or whether the area should be used by each town independently, at agreed-upon times. Some villages insisted that they needed to have their own bush with their own initiation, while others expressed a desire to consolidate all the activities into one larger space. It was confirmed that even if initiations did not occur in each village, each village needed at least two small areas for Sande and Poro. Therefore, relocation of larger bushes is a matter to be dealt with in cooperation with the traditional leaders, facilitated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs who oversee Poro and Sande operations, in consultation with ArcelorMittal in the event that more bushes need to be moved.

One complication that could arise in these negotiations could be the \$3000 compensation precedent that has been paid by ArcelorMittal as advised by the Community Liason's Office, to three communities – Bonlah, Gbapa and Zolowee – for the relocation of their Poro bushes. Leaders in other villages are aware of this compensation, and it is likely that they will demand similar amounts if they are asked to move their bushes. This amount is likely to be accepted as 'standard' thus far. Demands for more money should be carefully negotiated out.

Relocation of the Sande bushes should be less difficult, unless the entire town is relocated. Because the Sande bush is typically adjacent to the town or village, and is in a small area, the mining operations are unlikely to affect it. If the entire town is moved, then it would be advisable to assume that the Sande bush is affected, and a compensation package, similar to that given for Poro relocation, should be considered.

Another complication arises with respect to the plants that Zoes use for Poro/Sande activities and for traditional medicines. One viable option is to assist Zoes in each area with cultivating their own gardens to grow those plants that are not altitude/climate specific. One Zoe, in Gbapa, has such a garden that she uses. There are some plants, however, that are climate and altitude-specific. In order to facilitate the Zoes use of these plants, it would be acceptable to them if an allotted area on a mountain was given for their collection, and certain times given for different town Zoes to collect their plants. Having a dispensary of some sort would be unacceptable, as much of the power of the plants comes from the actions and rituals conducted while they are being picked.

¹⁰⁴ See especially IFC Guidelines, Item 11, 15, 16.

10. SACRED CREEKS, ROCKS AND TREES

10.1 Literature

The importance of sacred natural features in West Africa is well-documented; it is believed that certain features have spirits living within them that control the fortune of certain aspects of the community; these spirits must be 'served' in order for good fortune. If they are not appeased, then there could be consequences.

There is very little literature explaining the importance of sacred sites and objects in Liberia; the work that has been done concerns sacred objects such as bracelets and masks.

A Conservation International report examining hunting practices in the area identified sacred sites in each of the towns they worked in: Gbapa, Zolowee, Zortapa and Bonlah. They prescribed the following guidelines for these sites:

It is unlawful for any person to hunt or fish in the sacred places that include:

- Gbapa (Guele Gbeih, Gnimgbini, Goue-Gbah, Guebehi, Golo-Gleh, Gouanpah)
- Gbeayee, Douopah Louapah)
- Zolowee (Dimi, Gouegbahee, Dimibleen, Blei)
- Zortapa (Guegbableen, Zoweguebleen, Tohgouo, Vehi)
- Bonlah (Zowedah, Puldeh, Bleen, Lozilee, Gbarglan, Gueoah douapah)

10.2 Findings – Worldview

In each community there exists at least one sacred site in the form of a tree, rock or stream/creek/river; it is believed that a particular spirit resides in these sacred sites or objects. According to tradition, regular sacrifices needed to be made to the spirits. Special sacrifices can also be made by individuals for particular blessings. Each of these sites is 'owned' by a family within the village; typically this is the family that founded the site or in the case of creeks, first identified that a spirit was present in it. In other cases, certain individuals were found to have particular power over the site and were thus given authority to be in charge of it. Therefore, in general, any sacrifice requires the assistance of the 'owner' of the site, who is 'able to speak to the spirits'.

The rocks and trees mark the locations of certain events in the town's history; in most towns one of these markers signifies the location in which the town was founded. In some cases, young trees were brought from the founder's homeland and planted and have since grown large. In other cases trees have been identified in the area and designated to be the town tree; still in others, rocks were found and designated or brought from the previous town of the founder(s) and placed. Other sacred trees are those that are believed to have spirits residing inside that serve certain groups of people in the community.

The sacred creeks (Figure 6) are those in which it is believed a spirit resides and, if appeased, can give the town or individual good fortune or conversely, can cause bad fortune if the spirit is not appeased. There will generally be a sign that indicates a sacrifice has been successful and that the request will be granted. In some creeks, for example, catfish are said to 'turn around' in the water and come close to the surface; in others, white kola nuts should float with a certain side upwards; in others, a white chalky residue appears on the rocks in the water. In the case of some trees, when the sacrificial animal's throat is cut, the blood should come out in a stream. In the case of one rock, when a sacrifice is successful, a piece of that same rock will appear in the household of whoever it is going to bless. These signs are very important for

the community's faith that the ritual has worked; if the signs do not occur, then it is believed that the spirit is not appeased and they are doing something else wrong.

Because of this, the potential impacts of ArcelorMittal activities on these sites could be perceived to be expressions of an angry spirit, if the spirit is not first moved to a safe location where these features will not be changed. If a creek gets dirty, for example, the catfish in the water will not be able to be seen or if the creek runs dry, then the catfish will die, eliminating the possibility that people will perceive a positive result from their sacrifice. It is not necessarily a concern that by polluting a creek, or removing a tree or rock that the spirit will punish the community – instead, it is believed that the individual(s) who violated the laws of the feature would be punished (i.e. ArcelorMittal) by the spirit. The problem for the community would be that they would not know where the spirit resided, and would be unable to make sacrifices to it for blessings (both personal and for the village). Similarly, if a tree is cut down or falls down as a result of falling debris, or if a rock is moved and not put back in its place, then this could indicate an angry spirit. Though it would be possible to 'apologize' to the spirit for one of these features being harmed, the sacrifice required for the spirit's forgiveness would be greater than that required to move the spirit in the first place upon explaining why the spirit needed to move.

Figure 6: Sacred creeks: purposes, laws and reported violations

| Community | Creek name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported violations and consequences |
|-----------|------------------|---|--|
| Bapa | Glenyee | For blessings; Do not eat anything in/near it | Visitors do not follow laws; for forgiveness: white chicken, kola, rice; otherwise they will go crazy |
| Bolo | "Konneh" | Do not kill animals in it | No violations |
| Bonlah | Behn Pute Zondah | All for blessings; Do not fish, wash clothes, kill snails, toilet | Christians violate often; they have the look of a guilty person; they will suffer the wounds, fly swarms, women will give birth to disfigured offspring, be accused as witches, unless they apologize / sacrifice white chicken to river(s) with owner of creek. |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Yangbeh Gwehbah | Both – For individual and town blessings; do not fish in the water or hunt nearby | Christians and strangers violate often, openly. Punishment is on them |
| Gbeleyee | "Poro" river | | |
| Kanlah | Lakpor Neigbohn | Both – Do not catch fish in the area; don't spoil the water | Christians violate sometimes. Women can't have children; other children will be born without skin. Injuries. |
| Leagbala | Leagbala | No fishing | Moved from the area long ago – other people use it now; Christians don't care |
| Lugbayee | Yitti | No fishing in creek | Creek is being polluted by ArcelorMittal access road construction and is less powerful. Also, many people fish in it since there are farms nearby. If someone fishes in it, when the net is thrown in, a live baby will come up in it instead of a fish |

| Community | Creek name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported violations and consequences |
|------------|--------------------|--|---|
| Makinto | Bei Velleh | Both – For individual and town blessings, especially to help women become pregnant. Laws - Don't fish in it or catch animals around it. Respect laws of town (no honey, black snakes, full palm head or uncut wood) | Respected except by Christians; ArcelorMittal activities have polluted them so their power is reduced. Those who violate will get a mark on their face. If creeks are not regularly served then it causes problems in town (fights, broken handpump). |
| New Yekepa | Zanzolo Zanetee | Both – for individual and town blessings; good fortune for town. Creeks must be served regularly | Laws are not at all respected because creeks' spirits were improperly transferred. |
| Sehyigeh | Bei Velleh Yitti | Do not do anything except sacrifice at the particular spot of each creek ie wash clothes, bathe, drink. Downstream of each creek you can only drink and bathe. Do not fish or take snails from anywhere in creek; do not bring back sticks from creek. Respect laws of town (no entering with palm head, honey, black snake, uncut wood) | Bei and Velleh have been ignored; no longer powerful. Yitti still powerful and respected. If laws violated, wife of violator will die or if woman violates, her child will die. Violation of town laws will cause curse on individual and town. |
| Vanyampah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Zolowee | Gbayabgu Gueh Demi | All for blessings; don't fish, don't cut weeds, don't remove snails | Christians and strangers often violate at night. Others take snails from area so now people don't go anymore to sacrifice. Many people fish without consequence |

Figure 7: Sacred Rocks: Purposes, Laws and Violations

| Community | Rock Name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported Violations and Consequences |
|-----------|-------------------|--|---|
| Bapa | Deagleah | Blessings / protection for townspeople; do not move it | No violations |
| Bolo | Doweh family rock | Marks fallen tree; don't move | No violations |
| Bonlah | Biaglen | Blessings, pregnancy omen; resolves disputes. Can take stones away for good fortune. Do not hit two rocks together or play with them | Christians don't respect it; only the owner continues to serve it. Violators will have bad fortune. |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Glo (in Glogleh) | Helps residents move from one place to another; must be moved with people to new town | No violations |
| Gbeleyee | None | N/A | N/A |

| Community | Rock Name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported Violations and Consequences |
|------------|---------------------|--|--|
| Kanlah | Gbaingbelleh | Marks where sacred tree fell; do not move it. Sacrifice must be made using special knife of owner | No violations |
| Leagbala | Tree rock | Marks fallen tree | No longer served; Christians do not care |
| Lugbayee | Guengleh | Marks fallen tree; do not move it or kick it | Generally respected; those who do not respect it are plagued with itchy bodies |
| | Salamah Gleh | Jesus' hand print to point to sacred plants | Ignored by most people because it is so far; mountains affected |
| Makinto | Begblar family rock | Marks town; blessings. Helps change weather for better harvest. Laws – Do not move it. Follow town laws – no black snakes in town, no uncut wood in town, no full palm heads in town, no honey in town | Town laws are generally respected except by strangers, but many people do not know about the rock. |
| New Yekepa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Sehyigeh | Pororock | For Pororituals; women can't see | Respected by Pororituals |
| Vanyampah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Zolowee | Gweebaye | Blessings; do not move it or violate the river it's in | Most people ignore it today |

Figure 8: Sacred Trees: Purposes, Laws and Violations

| Community | Tree name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported Violations and consequences |
|------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Bapa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bolo | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bonlah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Gbainyelee "rice tree" | For good fortune and guidance in the town especially diamond-finding. Tree should not be cut down, only trimmed | Not everybody takes part in town sacrifices, especially Christians and strangers |
| Gbeleyee | Central tree | Marks town | None |
| Kanlah | Town tree | Marked town; fell down and rock put in its place | N/A |
| Leagbala | Seimoh family tree | Marked town; fell down and rock put in its place | Not served anymore – Christians don't care |
| Lugbayee | Gbeylah | Marked town; fell down and rock put in its place. Prior, wood could not be used for coal | If violated, person would be sick and itchy |
| Makinto | None | N/A | N/A |
| New Yekepa | None | N/A | N/A |

| Community | Tree name(s) | Purpose and Laws | Reported Violations and consequences |
|-----------|--------------|---|---|
| Sehyigeh | Zo Deh | For Poro – only male Zoes can serve. Do not cut the tree with a knife | If cut, blood will come out and person will be cursed for life unless makes apology |
| | Zwagba | For the town – respect town laws (do not enter town with palm head, honey, black snake or uncut wood) | Curse upon the individual and town, and general misunderstanding in town; they will know who did it |
| Vanyampah | Vanyam tree | Holds the town together. Laws – do not sharpen objects on it or make any mark. | If violated, must sacrifice a sheep; otherwise, you will be cursed. |
| Zolowee | Zolo tree | For Poro; protects town from attacks | Sacrifice by Poro master; if no sacrifice then confusion in town |

Still important are the town's laws about bringing in certain things such as honey or snakes which, while most people cannot explain the root of – 'It has always been so' – such laws presumably reduce the likelihood of bee sting and/or snake bites. Other less practical town laws, however, were losing their legitimacy and another common finding in the communities was the lessening of importance of these sacred sites and objects in people's daily lives. For example, it was found that the traditionally very-important and frequent sacrifices, "serving the creek/rock/tree" had not happened for many years and/or were now relatively infrequent. It was also found that members of the communities were known to desecrate the sites by violating the rules that had been observed since the sites were identified as sacred; most often this desecration was attributed to Christians, who no longer believed in the sacredness of these sites, and also to 'foreigners' who either did not know about the laws of the site, or knew of them but did not respect them because they felt they were not bound by the laws. Many informants in the towns were unaware of the names of these features, their owners, and the rituals required of them; this was even the case with people who were born in that town and whose families had lived there for generations, as one older woman, an owner of a sacred creek in Gbapa, explained,

They [my family] used to make sacrifices but they don't do it anymore. The water is my family's but since I was small, I don't hear or any sacrifices anymore... I am a Christian, I don't even go there any more... There was a sacrifice to the tree, a general sacrifice, but I didn't take part... I don't even know who owns it.¹⁰⁵

There are also indications that the traditional beliefs that people had regarding these sites have been changed by Christianity, as one woman explained,

During the war everybody left the area to go to Guinea, and we just left them [the spirits of the rock and water] there... [In Guinea] we just prayed to the Almighty God, then the rock and then the creek... From Guinea I would make a prayer directly to the Christian God that He should help the rock and the water. It is the same God who made the rock and the creek [so] God agreed.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Interview in Gbapa on 15 March 2012 with GH.

¹⁰⁶ Interview in Bapa on 8 March 2012 with GH

Thus, there are many indications that the traditional knowledge is not being passed down. Nevertheless, while many are aware of the lessening importance of these sites for others, in every community there are people who maintain their beliefs. As explained above, it is believed that if an individual desecrates the sacred site – as people are increasingly doing today – then only the individual will be punished for his or her actions; the town will not be affected. Therefore, while those who maintain their beliefs are disappointed that their traditions are losing importance, they do not fear being personally affected as a result, nor do they fear that the community will be affected as a result of an individual’s actions.

The community *can* be hurt, however, if it fails to make sufficient sacrifices to the creek when given indications that it should (ie dreams, misfortune or disagreements in the community); the appropriate response in this case is to carry out the required traditional sacrifice. Figures 9, 10 and 11 indicates the frequency in which each sacred creek, rock or tree is served verses the frequency it was traditionally served, and also the laws of each site and the reported incidents of desecration, and by whom.

Figure 9: Relative importance/ frequency of serving sacred creeks

| Community | Creek | Most recent sacrifice | Sacrifice details |
|------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| Bapa | Glenyee | 2011 | None |
| Bolo | “Konneh” | | |
| Bonlah | Behn Pute Zondah | 2011 2012 2012 | Rice collected from townspeople ; sheep, chicken, rice, kola to serve it |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Yangbeh Gwehbah | 2007 1980 | White sheep and white chicken; blood spilled into water. Positive result indicated by 4 kola nuts split in half floating open-side up on water; white chalk; blood from animal shoots in one direction |
| Gbeleyee | “Poro” river | | |
| Kanlah | Lakpor Neigbohn | 2010 2011 | Anybody can do it if they call the name of the owner – requires white sheep, soaked rice, kola, white chicken. Sacrifices done when someone has a dream about the creeks |
| Leagbala | Leagbala | 1960s | They served the creek with sacrifices before LAMCO drove them from the area; they have not returned. The creek is not sacred anymore. |
| Lugbayee | Yitti | 2011 2010 | White chicken and prayer to say thank you. General sacrifice for the town. |
| Makinto | Bei Velleh | 2011 1995 | Both – chicken, sheep, rice, oil, fish with kills, white kola. |
| New Yekepa | Zanzolo Zanetee | 1970s 1970s | The old creeks’ spirits were never transferred and nobody has returned to the area to do sacrifices since |
| Sehyigeh | Bei Velleh Yitti | 2008, 2007 1989, 1988 2011, 2010 | General sacrifice General sacrifice General sacrifice – white chicken if available; otherwise egg and white kola and rice |
| Vanyampah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Zolowee | Gbayabgu Gueh Demi | 1984, 1983 1972, 1971 1972, 1971 | General sacrifices in past; now law are violated frequently and “nobody cares about the creeks anymore” |

Figure 10: Relative importance / Frequency of serving sacred rocks

| Communi- nity | Rock | Most recent 2 sacrifices | Sacrifice Details |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Bapa | Deagleah | 2011 2010 | Sacrifice – white chicken; owner must speak to it |
| Bolo | Dowehe family rock | 2010 2009 | Sacrifice |
| Bonlah | Biaglen | 2011 2010 | Take leaf from area and make soup; pat leaf on rock. Women cover with mat and red dust; take pieces with you for fortune |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Glo | 1900s – founding of town. | When movement occurs, cow must be killed for a feast. Movement in past allegedly required 4 cows, 1 ram, 2 roosters, for entire journey. |
| Gbeleyee | None | N/A | N/A |
| Kanlah | Gbaingbelleh | 2002 1989 | Sacrifice by owner with special knife (*knife cannot be located at time) |
| Leagbala | Tree rock | 1960s | Replaced fallen sacred tree marking town; not served because LAMCO ruined area. |
| Lugbayee | Guengleh | 2011 2010 | White kola on first day; white sheep, rice and chicken on second. People were getting sick in the town. Sacrifice white chicken. For help in finding sacred plants in the forest. |
| | Salamah Gleh | 2011 2010 | |
| Makinto | Begblar family rock | 2011 2010 | General sacrifice for the town – white chicken, oil, rice. For individual sacrifice only red dust is needed. |
| New Yekepa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Sehyigeh | Poro rock | 2002, 1989 | Secret |
| Vanyampah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Zolowee | Gbyagbu | 1972 | Nobody remembers |

Figure 11: Relative importance / Frequency of serving sacred trees

| Community | Tree | Most recent 2 sacrifices | Sacrifice details |
|------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Bapa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bolo | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bonlah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |
| Gbapa | Gbainyelee | 2009 | Town sacrifice for more diamonds. Cow was sacrificed and people contributed rice. Not everybody took part. Before that, sacrifice was before the war. |
| | | 1989 | |
| Gbeleyee | Central tree | | None |
| Kanlah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Leagbala | Seimoh family tree | 1950s | Tree fell down and rock put in its place; not served since. |
| Lugbayee | Gbeylah | 1950s | Tree fell down; Rock put in its place |
| Makinto | None | N/A | N/A |
| New Yekepa | None | N/A | N/A |

| Community | Tree | Most recent 2 sacrifices | Sacrifice details |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------------|---|
| Sehyigeh | Zo Deh | 1990 | Sheep, chicken, kola, prayer |
| | Zwagba | 1990; 1989 | General - Cows, sheep, chicken, stay in town 1 wk |
| | | 2011 (trim) | To trim – chicken and kola |
| Vanyampah | Vanyam tree | 2011 | Annual sacrifice |
| Zolowee | Zolo tree | 2010 | Sacrifice (secret) by Poro master for protection |

Even in the communities in which most people knew about sacred sites and continued to ‘serve’ the gods of those sites, most people acknowledged that the sites were losing their importance. Many individuals commented on their preference for development, as one midwife and daughter of the town Zoe [religious leader] in Zolowee explained when asked what would happen if their sacred creek was spoiled,

My personal opinion is that God put it there, and for human being to speak to it, it does not do anything. If there were a hand pump there, I’d be okay. There are plenty of Christians here. I don’t think many people would care if we replaced the creek with a hand pump. The Papi [town leader] would be vexed but that’s it. (Zolowee, 7 March 2012)

10.3 Findings – Structure / Governance

Each of the objects or sites has an ‘owner’ who is or are the family members who typically must be present during any sacrifice conducted, even if the sacrifice is for an individual with a specific request. However, there are some cases in which the owner does not need to be present or even notified about the sacrifice, while in others it is believed that the spirit will not respond to anybody but the owner’s family. The owner/family names of each feature were provided in a Confidential Note to ArcelorMittal management, and these do not appear in this report due to the sensitivity of the data.

10.4 Findings – Moving Spirits

In discussing the sacred sites or objects with respect to the town’s history, it was apparent that the spirits within could be moved. In many cases, they had already been moved or, in the event of a tree falling, for example, a rock was laid in its place that became the new site of sacrifices. Therefore, it is possible to move these sites (Figure 12).

In all cases involving the sacred objects or sites, the owners were interviewed to determine the proper procedure should the site need to be moved. For every object, it was believed to be possible to move the spirit with specific rituals and materials. In general, it was believed that the spirit would be ‘understanding that it needs to move’, and would agree as long as the requisite procedure was done. The procedures were relatively simple and required few material objects.

Figure 12: Trees, rocks, creeks and their moves

| Community | Tree | Most recent 2 sacrifices | Sacrifice details |
|-----------|------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Bapa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bolo | None | N/A | N/A |
| Bonlah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Camp 4 | None | N/A | N/A |

| Community | Tree | Most recent 2 sacrifices | Sacrifice details |
|------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Gbapa | Gbainyelee | 2009 1989 | Town sacrifice for more diamonds. Cow was sacrificed and people contributed rice. Not everybody took part. Before that, sacrifice was before the war. |
| Gbeleyee | Central tree | | None |
| Kanlah | None | N/A | N/A |
| Leagbala | Seimoh family tree | 1950s | Tree fell down and rock put in its place; not served since. |
| Lugbayee | Gbeylah | 1950s | Tree fell down; Rock put in its place |
| Makinto | None | N/A | N/A |
| New Yekepa | None | N/A | N/A |
| Sehyigeh | Zo Deh | 1990 | Sheep, chicken, kola, prayer |
| | Zwagba | 1990; 1989 2011 (trim) | General - Cows, sheep, chicken, stay in town 1 week To trim – chicken and kola |
| Vanyampah | Vanyam tree | 2011 | Annual sacrifice |
| Zolowee | Zolo tree | 2010 | Sacrifice (secret) by Poro master for protection |

10.5 Recommendations

If the impact is unavoidable, it is possible to move the spirits in any of the rocks, trees or creeks that may be affected by ArcelorMittal operations, as advised in IFC guidelines¹⁰⁷. As recorded above, as long as the requisite materials are given, and enough time allowed, then any of these sites/objects can be moved, with cooperation from the owners.

¹⁰⁷ See especially IFC Standards, Item 11, 2.

11. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION

11.1 Adhering to World Bank and IFC Guidelines

Many of the specific recommendations have been outlined above, according to the pertinent subject area. In general, in order for ArcelorMittal to adhere to the 2012 IFC Performance Standard 8 on Cultural Heritage and World Bank Cultural Heritage Safeguards, the company must:

- Protect cultural heritage from the adverse impacts of project activities and support its preservation
- Promote the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of cultural heritage

The first point is more relevant for ArcelorMittal's purposes, as the company will need to ensure that the animal practice, Poro/Sande, and sacred features are perceived to be protected by the people who consider such aspects of their culture to be important. This includes practices and sacred groups that are already recognized by the government (i.e. Poro and Sande) and also those identified in any assessments conducted for the purposes of the company's work (see Appendix A for pertinent guidelines).

The recommendations given below were determined by considering the information provided and requests made by the local communities during consultations. ArcelorMittal should ensure such requirements are followed according to the above specifications.

11.2 Community Liaison's Office

It is important that community members feel that they have an outlet in which they can express their grievances with regards to cultural heritage, as required by IFC standards¹⁰⁸. The most sensible office within ArcelorMittal through which this can be done is the Community Liaison's Office, which already receives complaints and requests from community members and is the first point of contact for any community member's grievances. Though this resource exists, and the Consultant's team observed examples of the CLO listening to complaints, the community members themselves feel that there are not enough opportunities for them to communicate with the CLO. The CLO seemed sensitive to the cultural beliefs of the people, but could benefit from in-depth training on cultural sensitivity, particularly so that they can understand the social, economic, and legal relevance of such beliefs. It would be beneficial to include in the CLO more local staff that speak Mano and Gio, and who are familiar with these cultural and religious ideas.

Once properly trained, it is important for the CLO to have regular consultations with community leaders, who themselves should hold regular consultations with their community members. In addition to this, to avoid the possibility that community leaders are not misrepresenting the interests of their people, the CLO should make periodic visits to the communities to hold small, private meetings with random community members, and also with representatives of key leaders that span most groups – women's leaders, youth leaders, religious leaders, elders, midwives, etc. Dealings with the animal practice should be conducted through the Leader and the respective animal leaders in each community.

¹⁰⁸ See particularly Item 8, IFC Performance Standard 8, 2.

In addition to ensuring that the people in communities feel that they have a venue in which to engage with ArcelorMittal, it is also important that ArcelorMittal conducts regular events during which they explain to the community what they can expect, in response to demands that have been made. The management of expectation is an indispensable element of any intervention in which a community hears of the possibility of compensation. Rumours can develop quickly, and unreasonable expectations can develop accordingly, so that when such expectations are not realized, communities can become disenchanted with ArcelorMittal operations. This can lead to significant problems in the long-term. If communities are kept informed of potential operations, rather than being momentarily appeased by the promise that 'your demands will be compensated for', then relations will continue to be cordial. Many community members complained that even if they did make complaints or requests, 'nobody ever comes back to help us'. Therefore, even if those requests are unrealistic, it is important that ArcelorMittal returns to the communities to explain why such requests cannot be granted, and try to negotiate more realistic outcomes. In the end, it is most important that 'both parties are content'. Even when communities or leaders have unrealistic expectations surrounding compensation, it is not difficult to have conversations to inform them of the opportunities that they do have. They will then be more open to compromise because they realize, as has happened to them in the past, that by compromising they will at least receive some benefit.

11.3 Rebuilding and Strengthening Cultural Heritage

Though not necessarily required according to IFC guidelines, but based on requests made by communities and advice from the Consultant, it would be worth exploring whether it would be in ArcelorMittal's interests to not only mitigate harm to existing cultural traditions and religious beliefs, but also to work with community leaders to help strengthen them (to the extent to which they are not, at the same time, inconsistent with a progressive community. The benefit for ArcelorMittal in this respect would be both the positive relationship that could grow, and also that the overall livelihoods of people in mine-affected areas would be improved. ArcelorMittal is in a unique position to work within these communities and the programming required to train local leaders for this task would be minimal. This could further add to ArcelorMittal's efforts to demonstrate to the communities that their land and people are respected. Given the negative perception of LAMCO that most people have with respect to the company's destruction of their sacred spaces, this is important.

At this stage in the mining operations, many of the people are hopeful that ArcelorMittal will improve the lives of everybody; expectations are very high. In order to mitigate the inevitable disappointment that will result when not every person is employed by ArcelorMittal, and when not every child gets free education, At the very least it is important for AML to respect these traditions and beliefs and make adequate provision for their accommodation and sustainability through careful and advised preservation, controlled movement and compensation.

APPENDIX A PERTINENT LEGAL DOCUMENTS

International Finance Corporation



Performance Standard 8 Cultural Heritage

January 1, 2012

Introduction

1. Performance Standard 8 recognizes the importance of cultural heritage for current and future generations. Consistent with the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, this Performance Standard aims to ensure that clients protect cultural heritage in the course of their project activities. In addition, the requirements of this Performance Standard on a project's use of cultural heritage are based in part on standards set by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Objectives

- To protect cultural heritage from the adverse impacts of project activities and support its preservation.
- To promote the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of cultural heritage.

Scope of Application

2. The applicability of this Performance Standard is established during the environmental and social risks and impacts identification process. The implementation of the actions necessary to meet the requirements of this Performance Standard is managed through the client's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), the elements of which are outlined in Performance Standard 1. During the project life-cycle, the client will consider potential project impacts to cultural heritage and will apply the provisions of this Performance Standard.

3. For the purposes of this Performance Standard, cultural heritage refers to (i) tangible forms of cultural heritage, such as tangible moveable or immovable objects, property, sites, structures, or groups of structures, having archaeological (prehistoric), paleontological, historical, cultural, artistic, and religious values; (ii) unique natural features or tangible objects that embody cultural values, such as sacred groves, rocks, lakes, and waterfalls; and (iii) certain instances of intangible forms of culture that are proposed to be used for commercial purposes, such as cultural knowledge, innovations, and practices of communities embodying traditional lifestyles.

4. Requirements with respect to tangible forms of cultural heritage are contained in paragraphs 6–16. For requirements with respect to specific instances of intangible forms of cultural heritage described in paragraph 3 (iii) see paragraph 16.

5. The requirements of this Performance Standard apply to cultural heritage regardless of whether or not it has been legally protected or previously disturbed. The requirements of this Performance Standard do not apply to cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples; Performance Standard 7 describes those requirements.

Requirements

Protection of Cultural Heritage in Project Design and Execution

6. In addition to complying with applicable law on the protection of cultural heritage, including national law implementing the host country's obligations under the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the client will identify and protect cultural heritage by ensuring that internationally recognized practices for the protection, field-based study, and documentation of cultural heritage are implemented.

7. Where the risk and identification process determines that there is a chance of impacts to cultural heritage, the client will retain competent professionals to assist in the identification and protection of cultural heritage. The removal of nonreplicable cultural heritage is subject to the additional requirements of paragraph 10 below. In the case of critical cultural heritage, the requirements of paragraphs 13–15 will apply.

Chance Find Procedures

8. The client is responsible for siting and designing a project to avoid significant adverse impacts to cultural heritage. The environmental and social risks and impacts identification process should determine whether the proposed location of a project is in areas where cultural heritage is expected to be found, either during construction or operations. In such cases, as part of the client's ESMS, the client will develop provisions for managing chance finds¹ through a chance find procedure² which will be applied in the event that cultural heritage is subsequently discovered. The client will not disturb any chance find further until an assessment by competent professionals is made and actions consistent with the requirements of this Performance Standard are identified.

Consultation

9. Where a project may affect cultural heritage, the client will consult with Affected Communities within the host country who use, or have used within living memory, the cultural heritage for long-standing cultural purposes. The client will consult with the Affected Communities to identify cultural heritage of importance, and to incorporate into the client's decision-making process the views of the Affected Communities on such cultural heritage. Consultation will also involve the relevant national or local regulatory agencies that are entrusted with the protection of cultural heritage.

Community Access

10. Where the client's project site contains cultural heritage or prevents access to previously accessible cultural heritage sites being used by, or that have been used by, Affected Communities within living memory for long-standing cultural purposes, the client will, based on consultations under paragraph 9, allow continued access to the cultural site or will provide an alternative access route, subject to overriding health, safety, and security considerations.

Removal of Replicable Cultural Heritage

11. Where the client has encountered tangible cultural heritage that is replicable³ and not critical, the client will apply mitigation measures that favor avoidance. Where avoidance is not feasible, the client will apply a mitigation hierarchy as follows:

- Minimize adverse impacts and implement restoration measures, in situ, that ensure maintenance of the value and functionality of the cultural heritage, including maintaining or restoring any ecosystem processes⁴ needed to support it;
- Where restoration in situ is not possible, restore the functionality of the cultural heritage, in a different location, including the ecosystem processes needed to support it;

¹ Tangible cultural heritage encountered unexpectedly during project construction or operation.

² A chance find procedure is a project-specific procedure that outlines the actions to be taken if previously unknown cultural heritage is encountered.

³ Replicable cultural heritage is defined as tangible forms of cultural heritage that can themselves be moved to another location or that can be replaced by a similar structure or natural features to which the cultural values can be transferred by appropriate measures. Archeological or historical sites may be considered replicable where the particular eras and cultural values they represent are well represented by other sites and/or structures.

⁴ Consistent with requirements in Performance Standard 6 related to ecosystem services and conservation of biodiversity.



Performance Standard 8 Cultural Heritage

January 1, 2012

- The permanent removal of historical and archeological artifacts and structures is carried out according to the principles of paragraphs 6 and 7 above; and
- Only where minimization of adverse impacts and restoration to ensure maintenance of the value and functionality of the cultural heritage are demonstrably not feasible, and where the Affected Communities are using the tangible cultural heritage for long-standing cultural purposes, compensate for loss of that tangible cultural heritage.

Removal of Non-Replicable Cultural Heritage

12. Most cultural heritage is best protected by preservation in its place, since removal is likely to result in irreparable damage or destruction of the cultural heritage. The client will not remove any nonreplicable cultural heritage,⁵ unless all of the following conditions are met:

- There are no technically or financially feasible alternatives to removal;
- The overall benefits of the project conclusively outweigh the anticipated cultural heritage loss from removal; and
- Any removal of cultural heritage is conducted using the best available technique.

Critical Cultural Heritage

13. Critical cultural heritage consists of one or both of the following types of cultural heritage: (i) the internationally recognized heritage of communities who use, or have used within living memory the cultural heritage for long-standing cultural purposes; or (ii) legally protected cultural heritage areas, including those proposed by host governments for such designation.

14. The client should not remove, significantly alter, or damage critical cultural heritage. In exceptional circumstances when impacts on critical cultural heritage are unavoidable, the client will use a process of Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) of the Affected Communities as described in Performance Standard 1 and which uses a good faith negotiation process that results in a documented outcome. The client will retain external experts to assist in the assessment and protection of critical cultural heritage.

15. Legally protected cultural heritage areas⁶ are important for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage, and additional measures are needed for any projects that would be permitted under the applicable national law in these areas. In circumstances where a proposed project is located within a legally protected area or a legally defined buffer zone, the client, in addition to the requirements for critical cultural heritage cited in paragraph 14 above, will meet the following requirements:

- Comply with defined national or local cultural heritage regulations or the protected area management plans;
- Consult the protected area sponsors and managers, local communities and other key stakeholders on the proposed project; and
- Implement additional programs, as appropriate, to promote and enhance the conservation aims of the protected area.

⁵ Nonreplicable cultural heritage may relate to the social, economic, cultural, environmental, and climatic conditions of past peoples, their evolving ecologies, adaptive strategies, and early forms of environmental management, where the (i) cultural heritage is unique or relatively unique for the period it represents, or (ii) cultural heritage is unique or relatively unique in linking several periods in the same site.

⁶ Examples include world heritage sites and nationally protected areas.



Performance Standard 8 Cultural Heritage

January 1, 2012

Project's Use of Cultural Heritage

16. Where a project proposes to use the cultural heritage, including knowledge, innovations, or practices of local communities for commercial purposes,⁷ the client will inform these communities of (i) their rights under national law; (ii) the scope and nature of the proposed commercial development; and (iii) the potential consequences of such development. The client will not proceed with such commercialization unless it (i) enters into a process of ICP as described in Performance Standard 1 and which uses a good faith negotiation process that results in a documented outcome and (ii) provides for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from commercialization of such knowledge, innovation, or practice, consistent with their customs and traditions.



C. Recommendations for Risk Planning, Response and Recovery⁹

14. Internationally accepted frameworks and procedures for Environmental Assessment can be applied to the protection of Cultural Heritage. In planning for reconstruction this method can be used.

- *Analysis of risks and assessments of cultural heritage* should begin by preparing national inventories which will serve as the key instrument necessary for effective emergency planning. These inventories should be up to date, easily accessible and spatially related by using geographic information systems (GIS). GIS enables policy makers and planners to create an accurate picture during emergency operations regarding threats to cultural assets from floods, fire or landslides often triggered by earthquakes. Often national inventories also document previous incidents related to disasters and maintain a record regarding structural condition of the individual asset and its historic significance.
- *Mitigation procedures* should be put into place such as to ensure that museum display cases have been adapted for seismic conditions or important collections are not stored in basements in flood prone areas. In addition, the buildings whether they house important collections or are of heritage value themselves, must be properly maintained to adequate building codes standards.
- *Heritage staff and professionals* should be included in the national, provincial or local disaster planning exercises and should be informed of imminent natural disasters. Planning on the heritage site level requires that these professionals are trained in emergency management and they are able to communicate and train their own staff and communities.
- The international community benefits from *sharing of knowledge and promotion of the principles of risk preparedness* for cultural heritage as countries become more aware of the danger of permanent loss of these treasures to natural and man made disasters. In effect, cultural heritage should be considered in all aspects of disaster management planning including preparedness and recovery. Risk preparedness should not be conceived only in emergency situations but interwoven into the routine management of cultural heritage resources.
- *Heritage can also play a catalytic role when it comes to economic recovery* after a major disaster. While tourism is often one of the first industries to feel the direct effects of a natural disaster, it is also the most resilient after a disaster. Getting tourism back on track, including cultural tourism, brings much need revenues and opportunities for recovery for a country. Reconstruction should bear in mind that local communities are dependent on tourism revenues and that as tourism facilities are rebuilt these communities need the support to survive.

⁹ Stovel, Herb, Risk Preparedness: A Management Manual for World Cultural Heritage, ICCROM, Rome, 1998.

Rules and Regulations Governing the Hinterland

ARTICLE 68: CULTURAL SOCIETIES

(a) The Poro and Sande being cultural societies are permitted but none shall be established until after authority has been obtained from the District Commissioner. No Session of these societies shall extend beyond a period of three years.

(b) No fee shall be required nor paid for setting up, opening or dissolving any Government recognized primitive social institution such as the Poro and Sande Societies. Permits are to be granted to recognized heads of such societies only and shall be free of all charges.

(c) Recognized heads of bush cultural societies shall be responsible through the Tribal Authority for any abuse committed detrimental to public interest. District Commissioners are required to refer all Poro and Sande matters to the Tribal Authority who would be responsible to effect appropriate adjustment.

ARTICLE 69: UNLAWFUL SOCIETIES

(a) The Human Leopard Society is declared as illegal organization and members thereof are liable to punishment not exceeding twenty years imprisonment, except where they are convicted of committing a murder, in which case they shall suffer capital punishment.

(b) The Neegee Society, Suska, Toya, Kala, Uama-Yama and all secret societies of a political nature are also declared illegal. The members and organizers thereof are, upon conviction to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding twenty years.

Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, 1847

ARTICLE 1, Declaration of Rights

Therefore, we the People of the Commonwealth of Liberia, in Africa, acknowledging with devout gratitude, the goodness of God, in granting to us the blessings of the Christian religion, and political, religious, and civil liberty, do, in order to secure these blessings for ourselves and our posterity, and to establish justice, insure domestic peace, and promote the general welfare, hereby solemnly associate and constitute ourselves a Free, Sovereign and Independent State... All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship God, according to the dictates of their own consciences, without obstruction or molestation from others: all persons demeaning themselves peaceably, and not obstructing others in their religious worship, are entitled to the protection of law, in the free exercise of their own religion; and no sect of Christians

shall have exclusive privileges or preference, over any other sect; but all shall be alike tolerated: and no religious test whatever shall be required as a qualification for civil office, or the exercise of any civil right.

Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, 1984

ARTICLE 1:

Acknowledging our devout gratitude to God for our existence as a Free, Sovereign and Independent State, and relying on His Divine Guidance for our survival as a Nation..."

ARTICLE 14:

All persons shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment thereof except as may be required by law to protect public safety, order, health or morals or in the fundamental rights and freedoms of others. All persons who, in the practice of their religion, conduct themselves peaceably, not obstructing others and conforming to the standards set out herein, shall be entitled to the protection of the law. No religious denomination or sect shall have any exclusive privilege or preference over any other, but all shall be treated alike; and no religious tests shall be required for any civil or military office or for the exercise of any civil right. Consistent with the principle of separation of religion and state, the Republic shall establish no state religion.

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW GUIDES

*note – these were used as a guide, and not followed strictly. Exact questions can be seen in the field notes; often many of the informants discussed the issues before being asked about them.

1. Tell us about your community. What are some recent developments? Has this community ever moved locations?
2. Do you have any cultural practices or traditions that you do here?
3. What kind of religion do you practice here? How has it changed?
4. What groups exist here? Who are the leaders? (can we talk to them?)
5. Do you know of any sacred objects or areas? Where are they? Have they always existed? Have they ever moved?
6. Do you, your community or anyone you know do any special rituals? For what?
7. Do you know about the bush schools/ Poro / Sande (asked by men in men's groups; women in women's groups). Have these bushes ever moved? How and where?
8. What other groups are around here? What groups existed in the past?
9. Do you know anything about animals in the area?
10. Have you heard of the animal practice? (if so, follow up)
11. What animals are there?
12. What do they do?
13. Why are they secret?
14. Are there any leaders? Who are they?
15. Tell me more...
16. (in follow-ups with leaders regarding sacred sites): What would be required to move the object/site/spirit? Who would be the people that are in charge? Who would they need to talk to?

APPENDIX C CONSULTATIONS / INTERVIEWS HELD

| Date | Community | Informants | Interview Type (GH – Gwen Heaner; DD – Duke Davies) |
|--------|------------|--|---|
| 6-Mar | Bonlah | Town chief, Women's Head, Youth leader, Elder, Chief assistant | Group interview |
| 6-Mar | Bonlah | Town chief, elder | Key males - DD |
| 6-Mar | Bonlah | Elder, women's leader, zo, citizen | Key females – GH |
| 7-Mar | Zolowee | Town chief, youth chairman, town head (founders relative) | Group interview |
| 7-Mar | Zolowee | Midwife | Female GH |
| 7-Mar | Zolowee | Town chief | Male DD |
| 7-Mar | Gbapa | Town leader, elder | Group interview |
| 7-Mar | Gbapa | Town leader | Male DD |
| 7-Mar | Gbapa | Women's leader | Female GH |
| 8-Mar | Bapa | 4 male elders | Group interview |
| 8-Mar | Bapa | Male elder | DD |
| 8-Mar | Bapa | Midwife, elderly woman | GH |
| 8-Mar | New Yekepa | town chief, 2 elders, youth leader, male zoe | Group interview |
| 8-Mar | New Yekepa | town chief, zoe | DD |
| 8-Mar | New Yekepa | 4 elderly women, midwife, midwife/zoe | GH |
| 9-Mar | Sehyigeh | acting town chief, 2 zoes, 2 elders | group |
| 9-Mar | Sehyigeh | town chief | DD |
| 9-Mar | Sehyigeh | citizen, midwife, women chair/midwife/zo | GH |
| 9-Mar | Makinto | 7 men, 1 woman | group |
| 9-Mar | Makinto | assistant chairlady, chairlady, zo, citizen, assistant midwife | GH |
| 9-Mar | Makinto | elder, chief, 2 zoes, citizen | DD |
| 10-Mar | Kanlah | head of elders, youth leader, acting chief, teacher, development chairman, citizen | group |
| 10-Mar | Kanlah | chief and elder | DD |
| 10-Mar | Kanlah | female chairlady, town owner, zoe, midwife, citizen | GH |
| 10-Mar | Kanlah | community interview - young woman | GH |
| 10-Mar | Zolowee | Community interview - young female | GH |
| 10-Mar | Zolowee | Follow-up with animal leaders (4) | DD |

| Date | Community | Informants | Interview Type (GH – Gwen Heaner; DD – Duke Davies) |
|--------|--------------|--|---|
| 10-Mar | Lugbayee | zoe chief, youth chairman, town chief, elder, acting chief, elder, female midwife/zo | Group interview |
| 10-Mar | Lugbayee | chairlady, midwife/zo, citizen | GH |
| 10-Mar | Lugbayee | town chief, elder council, general town chief, youth leader | DD |
| 12-Mar | Liagbala | town chief, 2 elders, youth leader, women's chair, head zoe | group |
| 12-Mar | Liagbala | town chief and zoe | DD |
| 12-Mar | Liagbala | six women - including head female zoe | GH |
| 12-Mar | Liagbala | community interivew - 1 woman | GH |
| 12-Mar | Sehyigeh | follow-up with female zoe | GH |
| 12-Mar | Sehyigeh | community interviews - 6 young men | DD |
| 12-Mar | Sehyigeh | community interview - 1 young man | GH |
| 12-Mar | cassava farm | 4 community members including town chief | group |
| 12-Mar | Gbapa | Former Supreme Zo; now Christian | Group Interview |
| 13-Mar | camp 4 | town chief, 2 elders, old woman, youth leader, zo chairman, zone chiefs | group interview |
| 13-Mar | camp 4 | chairlady/head zo; oldest woman | GH |
| 13-Mar | camp 4 | towm chief | DD |
| 13-Mar | new yekepa | community interviews with 3 women | GH |
| 13-Mar | new yekepa | community interviews | DD |
| 14-Mar | Gbleyee | Former female zoes/midwives | GH |
| 14-Mar | Gbleyee | | DD |
| 14-Mar | Lugbayee | Follow-up with animal leader / female zo | GH |
| 14-Mar | Lugbayee | Community interview - witch doctor | DD |
| 14-Mar | Lugbayee | Follow-up with animal leaders | DD |
| 14-Mar | Bonlah | First meeting with Nyah Gayekpeh | Group |
| 15-Mar | Gbapa | Community interview - middle aged woman | GH |
| 15-Mar | Gbapa | Community interview - middle aged woman | GH |
| 15-Mar | Gbapa | Community interview - younger woman | GH |
| 15-Mar | Gbapa | Community interview - 2 young men | GH |
| 15-Mar | Gbapa | Community interview - middle aged man | DD |
| 15-Mar | Zolowee | Community interview - older man | DD |
| 15-Mar | Zolowee | community interview - elder | DD |
| 15-Mar | Zolowee | Community interview - 2 young women | DD |

| Date | Community | Informants | Interview Type (GH – Gwen Heaner; DD – Duke Davies) |
|--------|-------------|--|---|
| 15-Mar | Bolo | community interview - 4 men 1 woman | group |
| 16-Mar | Vanyampa | chief/town owner, youth chairman, elder, female zoe, citizen | group |
| 16-Mar | Vanyampa | female zoe and citizen | GH |
| 16-Mar | Vanyampa | town owner, elder, youth chairman | DD |
| 16-Mar | Makinto | Animal group leaders | DD |
| 16-Mar | Makinto | Community interview - 1 man | DD |
| 16-Mar | Makinto | Community interview followup - Assistant midwife | GH |
| 19-Mar | Makinto | Community interview - young boy / powerful animal | GH |
| 19-Mar | Sehyigeh | Community interview - 3 women | GH |
| 19-Mar | Sehyigeh | community interview - 1 woman | GH |
| 19-Mar | Sehyigeh | follow-up interview - head zo | DD |
| 20-Mar | Bonlah | follow up meeting with nyah gayekpeh | group |
| 21-Mar | Yekepa | CLO - jerry funbah and james jallah | GH and DD |
| 21-Mar | Yekepa | Peter Paye | GH |
| 22-Mar | Sannequille | willie tokpah - clan chief; district chairman of traditional society | DD and GH |
| 23-Mar | Kanlah | Community interviews - 2 females separately | GH |
| 23-Mar | Kanlah | community interviews - males | DD |
| 23-Mar | Sannequille | eugene yormie - cultural advisor to nimba superintendant | GH and DD |
| 25-Mar | Sehyikimpa | clan chief of S.eh clan; town leaders, 2 elders | GH and DD |
| 25-Mar | Sannequille | peter barloun - head of traditional society | GH and DD |
| 26-Mar | Monrovia | alfred kulah - PhD | GH |

NB The consultation Notes can be provided by request.