

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Action Plans for the Conservation of Globally Threatened Birds in Africa
Country	Africa
Organisation	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Project Ref. No.	162/10/019
Report date	April 2002-September 2002

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

The project is making good progress against the revised 2002/03 workplan. Following extensive consultation with various specialists, two major analyses have been completed:

- African bird species which urgently require a species action plan
- Priority countries for bird conservation in Africa

Additionally, two databases have been established and are continuously being populated:

- Database on species experts
- Funding database

As planned, three International (cross-border) stakeholder workshops (Blue swallow, White-necked Picathartes and Grey-necked Picathartes) were held. A total of 50 people from 18 out of the 19 targeted countries participated. The first workshop was facilitated by the IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, using the CBSG format. Subsequent workshops followed the format developed by this project, which proved to be superior. Following the above workshops, the format was fine-tuned and is now finalised. Workshop reports for all three workshops have been drafted; one report was finalised and distributed.

The format developed by this project was used (with slight modification) as the standard for the Africa Eurasian Waterfowl Agreement under the international Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention).

A Species Interest Group for each of the 3 species has been inaugurated. Terms of reference were agreed and office bearers have been appointed. An email discussion group involving all national species co-ordinators has been initiated and email groups for each of the 3 species interest groups are presently being created.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments, that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will effect the budget and timetable of project activities. Have any of these issues been discussed with the Department and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The problems in terms of communication with some country co-ordinators, lack of staff in some partners and political instability remain valid, but have not significantly hindered progress. However, there has been some delay, particularly in the production of the workshop documents although they will be produced shortly. Flight costs within Africa, particularly from and to West Africa are often higher than expected and therefore restrict the number of workshop participants and will probably lead to an overspend in expenditure for travel and subsistence.

It emerged over the past few months that the African Species Working Group Coordinator will find it difficult to drive all aspects of the project forward, particularly in terms of workshop facilitation and ensuring long-term sustainability. As a consequence, the RSPB project leader had to spend significantly more time on the project than expected. In order to address this problem RSPB will consider using its own funds to contract the chair of the Africa Species Working Group to work alongside the co-ordinator. A final decision will be taken during the next Steering Committee meeting in October 2002.

Given the delay in the first international species action plan, national action plan workshops have been delayed but it is expected that the first workshops will be held during the next reporting period.

Overall, we expect that all project objectives will be achieved, although the overall budget will probably be higher than anticipated. RSPB will continue to cover additional costs as appropriate. Additional fundraising might be necessary.

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

Completed forms to: Rose Clarkson, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, John Muir Building, Kings Buildings, University of Edinburgh, Mayfield