

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Conservation and Management of Malagasy Microchiroptera and their Habitats
Country	Madagascar
Organisation	School of Biological Sciences, University of Aberdeen
Project Ref. No.	162/10/024
Report date	October 2002

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project. Darwin Fellow arrived in Madagascar in June (delay of 2.5 months against revised timetable submitted in Annual Report). Progress includes: establishment of project office in Antananarivo, research permission obtained, three Malagasy assistants appointed, one Malagasy student appointed, inaugural newsletter submitted and awaiting publication in Malagasy conservation magazine (Vintsy), radio broadcast on Radio National Madagascar (31/8/02). Field visits have included reconnaissance of two protected areas (July), training 10 days in August and four weeks of surveys in rainforest north of Antananarivo (September). Weekly monitoring of bat activity and monthly collection of faecal pellets organised for Parc National Mantadia. Successfully attracted £12k from RTZ via FFI for training students and £1.8k from The Royal Society to support Professor Racey's visit.

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? Madagascar went through a considerable period of political unrest between January and July 2002 as a result of disputed general election results. Following FCO advice, the Darwin Fellow delayed arriving in Madagascar until June 11th. There were sporadic military clashes in the north during July and the capital was seriously short of fuel. The situation improved in August and has now returned to normal. Overall, these problems caused a four-month delay in setting up the project in Madagascar and this will affect the schedule of field surveys. A possible consequence is an extension of fieldwork activities beyond June 2004 that may result in a delay to the end-products (e.g. National Action Plan) and we are presently planning how this will be funded.

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

No