

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building for Guyana's Protected Areas Suystem
Country	Guyana
Organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Project Ref. No.	162/11/016
Report date	<i>April 1 - September 30, 2003 submitted October 31, 2003</i>

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

A series of workshops have been carried out, with intended deliverables. The outline is based on the revised time-line of deliverables submitted to DEFRA subsequent to the Annual Report. Deliverables carried out in the past 6 months are:

- Project proposal preparation (April)
- Project Management /administration and Team Dynamics workshop (April)
- Community Consultation and Outreach Workshop and on-site application (May)
- Photographer to photograph Shell Beach for awareness materials (May)
- Annual Review of project with project partners (July)
- Protected Areas Technical Workshop on Management (end Sept/early Oct)

All of these workshop inputs have been well-attended by relevant stakeholders with active participation. Each workshop has produced a training manual for workshop participants, a workshop report for lead institutions, donors and workshop participants (with input on content) with a set of conclusions/recommendations. Also each workshop has been assessed with an evaluation form to provide organisers with a tool for monitoring progress and impact. The annual review was very productive and resulted in some considerable progress to the project, which involved a monthly joint review team being formed with other groups involved in protected area work at Shell Beach (WWF), the formation of an in-country technical team to train under Darwin deliverables, an institutional MoU with FFI and WWF, and some changes to ease management and administration of the project. The outcome of the annual meeting was also to review the Darwin time-line for deliverables and make adaptive changes to maximise its efficacy. The past 6 months have also enjoyed exposure to public media in the form of newspaper articles and radio and television coverage.

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?

Problems to the project have largely been communications with partner institutions, however, this was addressed in the Annual Report and in the follow-up to the queries that ECTF had. The situation is now improving well since our Annual visit. The communications problem was a symptom to the pressures that the EPA is suffering due to poor human and financial resources resulting from an exodus of skilled personnel from the country and the very heavy workloads they have. The Darwin project partners have, however, faced these problems and are tackling them through collaborative support in order to find sustainable solutions i.e. the formation of in-country technical team or “pool of experts”, and the sharing of workloads between EPA, GMTCS and FFI (with constant increments in technical inputs given to EPA and GMTCS supervised under FFI). This situation underscores difficulties with the reality of country situations but it also highlights the importance of the Darwin funding, and the skills/capacity it is building up in young professionals. There has already been encouraging impacts of the project, as participants have indicated through evaluations of events but through observations in their proactive involvement of the project and what it aims to achieve.

Based on the very original Darwin time-line of deliverables, the project has had some delays and changes in the deliverables as outlined in email correspondence to ECTF and DEFRA recently, along with a revised time-line. One reason for this was the two-month delay in project start (resulting in a 1-2 month delay of workshops), and the other reason was to adjust for a more logical placement of some workshops (bringing forward Community Consultation and Outreach, delaying the Environmental Trust Fund workshop, and delaying the Environmental Awareness workshop now taking place in Nov 3 –5). I am in touch with Carrie Haloun and will be sending her a revised budget to account for it and if, and how, funds will need to be carried over between financial years (and if this is possible). We are waiting to hear if these changes are approved.

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

The project is running well and according to plan (aside from some changes to the schedule and possible implications for carrying over funds) and there is a very positive attitude towards this project in-country. It is also fostering better collaboration with other institutions active at Shell Beach and brings together a diverse group of local to international stakeholders to learn about and/or address some very key protected areas issues.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, Email: stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk