

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Building capacity for biodiversity monitoring and assessment in Nepal
Country	Nepal
Organisation	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
Project Ref. No.	162/11/020
Report date	31 October 2002

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

Siddhartha Bajracharya conducted fieldwork in the Annapurna Conservation Area, surveying forest quality and evidence of key wildlife species in transects in relation to distance from villages. This data will be used in subsequent training by the project in biodiversity assessment techniques to support the village-level management plans in the protected area. Arrangements were made for training of Siddhartha Bajracharya at the University of Edinburgh and UNEP-WCMC from November 2002.

Prof. Peter Furley, University of Edinburgh, visited Nepal from 20 – 31 August 2002. He established contacts with the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) and visited the Annapurna field sites. Discussions were held to identify the aims of the training to be provided by UNEP-WCMC and the University of Edinburgh, including GIS capacity and the content of the manual of assessment techniques to be developed by the project. Meetings were also held with a number of NGOs and the DFID representative in Nepal, to introduce them to the project and obtain their support.

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 Project started with Darwin Initiative funding in August 2002. The training course in the UK for five KMTNC staff has been re-scheduled from November 2002 to March 2003, to allow for sufficient preparation time and the selection of the most appropriate participants. This will not affect the budget. The field work in Nepal has been affected but not prevented by the conflict in Nepal between Maoist groups and the government. The staff of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation have worked in the Annapurna area for 16 years and are careful in selecting sites for the fieldwork where the security situation is assured. The security situation is not expected to affect the future training workshops in Nepal in 2003.

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

No.