

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Education and training for restoring tropical forest biodiversity
Country	Thailand
Organisation	Horticulture Research International
Project Ref. No.	162/11/023
Report date	<i>October 30 2002</i>

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

Four persons were recruited to form the Forest Restoration Extension Team, and training commenced immediately and has progressed well. In May 2002, Dr Blakesley visited the project, and the structure and format of the Forest Restoration Manual were compiled, and the training programme was planned. Work on the Manual has commenced. The first edition of the reforestation newsletter has been compiled, printed and distributed to more than 300 individuals/organisations. Participants for the Inaugural Workshop (19-20 September) to launch the extension programme included 26 school teachers and 27 representatives from NGOs and community leaders. At this workshop, all the new Darwin education services and facilities developed by the trainees were showcased, including; a video; AV show; posters; teaching modules which cover: classroom activities, nursery work stations, nature trails and activities at a hilltribe village and in the field plots. Variations of the modules were designed to suit different age groups and backgrounds. Participants were invited to submit their requirements for education events and training for the future. The first school visits took place on September 24, 26 and 27, which catered for three different groups from Paharathai School. The first workshop for visiting Yunanese foresters and a local NGO, Upland Holistic Development Programme was planned for 03-06 November. The database of groups involved in forest restoration is now up to 900.

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?

Demand for educational activities has surpassed expectation, and a wider format of education training events has been requested, including day visits by non-schools groups, and provision of student work experience.

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

Funding three months in arrears creates considerable problems for the Thai partner, who are forced to borrow money to cover salaries and running costs of the Darwin programme. In addition, the initial payment was received 5 months in arrears, causing considerable financial and administrative difficulties for the Thai partner, who do not have capital reserves to fall back on. Consequently, our Thai partner has asked if it is possible to receive payments in advance please?