

# Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

## Half Year Report Form

<b>Project Title</b>	Cross-border conservation strategies in the Altai Mountains (Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan)
<b>Country</b>	Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan
<b>Organisation</b>	University of Sheffield in collaboration with Tomsk State University, Russia, Hovd branch of Mongolia State University and Altai Botanical Gardens, Leninogorsk, Kazakhstan
<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	162/11/025
<b>Report date</b>	October 2002

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

#### Outputs:

##### 1. Publicity:

National press release in the UK (July 2002). A small piece was subsequently noticed in the local Sheffield weekly newspaper, but we were not contacted as a result of the press release. However, we have been contacted independently by two other researchers with an interest in the area, one in the UK and one in USA.

*The following publicity items have been prepared in the host countries:*

- a) Hovd Regional newspaper "Hovdyn Medee" (Mongolia), August, 2002;
- b) Information on the project was submitted to one of the newspapers of Ust-Kamenogorsk, administrative centre of East Kazakhstan;
- c) Information on the project was submitted to Tomsk State University newspaper "Alma Mater";
- d) An article about summer practice of the students (2 weeks training) and field seminar held within the framework of the project in Altai in July, 2002 was passed to the newspaper of Tomsk Pedagogical University "Uchitel" (Teacher) to be published in near future;
- e) A poster introducing the project is displayed in Tomsk State University;
- f) Information about the project (English and Russian) has been placed on the Tomsk University web site in International newsletter section: <http://www.inter.tsu.ru/programs/uk/darwin>;
- g) Development of the official project WEB-site (<http://www.ecos.tsu.ru/altai>) is underway.

*Participation in conferences (with reports) and Publications:*

- a) A report "Information on the project *Cross-border conservation strategies for rare and endemic species in the Altai Mountains (Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan)*" was presented by Dr.A. Ebel at the Fifth Regional scientific-practical conference "Specially protected natural territories of Altai Province and contiguous regions, tactics of preservation of species variety and genofund", which was held in Barnaul, September, 18-19, 2002;
- b) The Third Interregional Ecological Conference devoted to the memory of Yury L'vov was organised and held on September, 22-24, 2002. Two reports on a theme of the project were presented and published:
  - Pyak A.I. *Taxonomic structure and endemic species of petrophyte flora of Russian Altai*. In: *Bulletin of Tomsk State University*. The Appendix, №2. – Tomsk, 2002. p. 51-57
  - Rydaya N.A. *Study of endemics and subendemics of flora of South-East Altai and North of Western Mongolia*. In: *Bulletin of Tomsk State University*. The Appendix, №2. – Tomsk, 2002. p. 3-15.

Applications have been submitted for the 11th Congress of Russian Botanical Society, which is to held in August, 2003 in Barnaul and Novosibirsk.

A poster has been prepared for presentation at the International Year of Mountains conference *Nature and People*, to be held in Pitlochry, Scotland in November 2002.

**July.** UK staff in host country: see milestones.

**August:** Fieldwork undertaken and undergraduates trained: see milestones

## **MILESTONES:**

### **1. Participating scientists held discussions with following local authorities and Regional Ecological Committees:**

- a) Hovd Regional Committee of Ecology and Sustainable Use of Nature (chairman of committee - O. Mungtongtokh), Hovd, Mongolia;
- b) Department of Protection of Environment and Biodiversity of East Kazakhstan (Head of Department – Rishat Zh. Adamov), Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan;
- c) El-Kurultai (Regional Parliament) and Committee on a Science and Education of Republic Altai (Chairman of Committee - Vasili A. Tyudenev), Gorno-Altai, Altai Republic, Russia;
- d) Administration Kosh-Agach Region of Republic Altai (Head of Administration Aulkhan Djatkambaev);
- e) Committee of Ecology of the Altai Region of Altai Province (Chief of the Committee – Alexander G. Suzik), Altai, Altai Province, Russia;
- f) Contacts have been established and arrangements made for cooperation with the work group and coordinator of the recently completed international WWF project "Maintenance of long-term preservation of biodiversity of Altai-Sayan ecological region" Andrei N. Kupriyanov (director of the Kuzbass Branch of Central Siberian Botanical Gardens of Russian Academy of Science (Kemerovo and Barnaul)).

### **2/3. Workshops, field training and fieldwork**

- a) Start-up meeting and workshop were held in Tomsk, July 14-16, 2002. Host country participants from TSU and 25 students (incl. 8 botanists and 14 geographers from Faculty of Biology and Soil Sciences, Faculty of Geology and Geography, TSU), took part in the seminar. Background information on the Altai was presented by TSU staff. UK project participants presented information on the Darwin Initiative, and provided training in UK approaches to biodiversity conservation, including preparation of management plans, and computer modelling techniques to assist in identification of biodiversity hotspots and optimisation of reserve networks;
- b) Some 50 undergraduate students (biologists and geographers) from Tomsk State Pedagogical University (2 groups) received training (2 weeks) at the Tomsk State University Altai Mountain Research Station in July, 2002. Details were described in the University newsletter;
- c) UK project participants lead a one-day field meeting/seminar in the Altai Mountains on 20.07.2002, presenting information about the Darwin Initiative and approaches to biodiversity conservation and leading general discussions on global conservation and environmental issues. A total of 21 students (18 from TSPU and 3 from TSU) were involved;
- d) A total of 3 postgraduate students and 10 undergraduate students involved in the project from host countries received long-term field experience and training during the project field surveys.

*Fieldwork included the following expeditions:*

- a) Expedition to East Kazakhstan in May/June, 2002 (25 days);
- b) Joint excursions with UK project participants to Central and Southeast Altai, July, 2002 (10 days);
- c) Expedition in remote and difficult of access areas Western Tuva adjoining to Altai in August, 2002 (28 days). For the first time during this field survey the flora of ranges of Southern Altai and Tuva was purposefully studied, herbarium specimens and photos of rare and endemic taxa were taken, and field inspections of habitats and features of distribution of such species was carried out.

### **3. Scientific work.** During the last 6 months the following work has been carried out:

- a) All available references on distribution of species in the territory of Altai and in contiguous regions have been collated and critically analysed. Based on this information, a draft list of endemic plant species of Altai Mountains, containing 110 taxa, has been compiled;

- b) A complete (with the exception of Fabaceae) inventory of herbarium samples of Altai endemic species of the Altai held in the Herbarium of South Siberian Botanical Gardens (Barnaul) and most of the collection of the West Siberian Department in the Herbarium of Tomsk State University has been carried out. During this work all available samples of endemic taxa were examined, their correct taxonomic position specified, and herbarium labels for future inclusion in a database have been written out;
- c) Work has begun on the development of the structure of a computer database (MS Access DBMS) with definition of a list of necessary attributes to be registered for each endemic species.

**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 affect 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?**

There has been a change in the proposed work programme to bring the UK visit of Russian participants forward from Year 2 to Year 1 in order for us to attend an international conference "Nature and People" in Pitlochry (Scotland) under the auspices of 'International Year of Mountains'. The Department has been informed, and arrangements made to bring forward part of the budget from Year 2 to Year 1. A poster giving background about the Altai and details of the project will be presented at this conference.

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

*No*