

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No: 162/12/003

Project Title: Flamingo conservation and Ramsar Site Management at Lake Bogoria , Kenya

Country(ies): Kenya

UK Organisation: Earthwatch Institute (Europe) and University of Leicester

Collaborator(s): Lake Bogoria National Reserve, University of Nairobi, National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, WWF

Report date: November 2004

Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4): 2

Project website:-

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) 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).

The second workshop was held in Lake Bogoria over 6 days in early April for 30 Kenyans, entitled ‘Taxonomy for Biodiversity Conservation’. The tutors on this were Professor John (EWI project scientist; taxonomy principles) with Mrs Margaret Cooper (legal aspects). They were followed by three, 1.5-day components - Insects (Mr Tony Drane (EWI PI) and Laban Njoroge (NMK)); Birds (Mr Kariuki, Ornithology Dept NMK;) and Flowering plants (Dr Mwasa, Herbarium NMK;). The project has now trained 50% of the objective numbers in two workshops rather than three because of the use of practical ‘circuses’ in sub-groups.

Continuous monitoring of the Spirulina populations in Lake Bogoria has been undertaken from March to present, by Earthwatch teams followed by undergraduate and postgraduate student assistants. This underpins the soda lake surveys carried out in May and September yielding valuable data about a population crash which reached a trough in August, causing very few flamingos to be present. Consequences of this were a whole-lake deoxygenation so that few chironomids were found and this was linked to the almost total absence of Cape teal and black-necked grebes. The surveys are more costly than planned in the proposal, so run at a bi-monthly rather than monthly frequency.

Preparation of educational materials for the schools in the educational catchment and the Reserve leaflet is proceeding well. Each of 6 schools now have a new logo, with an animal species featuring in it and 1000 sheets of headed notepaper featuring this (plus the Darwin logo). Draft designs of the school posters (based on reserve habitats) and the Reserve Guidebook have been produced by Debra Bardowicks, a Leicester graduate for her M.Sc. in Biological Photography at Nottingham University (received a 1st class dissertation mark) and approved by stakeholders in the Councils and schools. Two childrens stories featuring lesser flamingos have been written by Claire Parsons, a children’s drama teacher in Leicester, well received in the schools and are being illustrated by a Tugen artist in Bogoria..

Three interns from the National Museums of Kenya (Entomology & Ornithology) joined the Earthwatch team in March & April for intensive field training.

Progress by Shell International to ship the mobile laboratory to Kenya from Amsterdam are proceeding slowly but it is confidently expected that it will be there by the end of the year.

The higher education of two Kenyan partners has proceeded in unexpected but beneficial directions. Mr Nicodemus Nalianya (NMK Ornithology) who was to be given a Distance Learning course in ecology combined with a Diploma at the KWS Institute in Naivasha, was offered a 2-year Diploma at the African College of Wildlife Management in Mweka, Tanzania and started this in August, with part-funding from this project. Mr Laban Njoroge (NMK, Entomology) is sponsored by payment of his fees on an M.Sc. Medical Entomology at Jomo

Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

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.

There were no problems or unexpected developments

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

We would like to take advantage of the choice of Nairobi as the venue for the 11th International Lakes Conference in 2005, "*Management of Lake Basins for Their Sustainable Use : Global Experiences and African Issues*" (31 October - 4 November 2005) to use this as the main publicity for the project instead of the conference which we originally proposed to hold at Bogoria in early 2006.