Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No. 162/12/034

Project Title South East Asian Wetlands Restoration Initiative

Country(ies) Vietnam

UK Organisation Royal Holloway Institute for Environmental Research

Collaborator(s) Can Tho University, An Giang University

Report date 31/10/04

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Report No. (HYR

1/2/3/4)

Project website http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Environmental-

research/Research/Darwin/Darwin.html

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 key milestones in this reporting period in the original project implementation timetable were:

04/2004 - Biophysical and socio-economic surveys completed

05/2004 - Training workshop for local staff on data analysis

05/2004 - Website updated

07/2004 – Data analysis completed, reports submitted for peer reviewed publication

As agreed with the Darwin Secretariat, the original survey schedule has been modified so that surveys are carried out bi-monthly rather than monthly. This allows the data collection a full flooding cycle, picking up annual changes, and is a more scientifically useful sampling strategy than the original proposal. For this reason the biophysical and socio-economic surveys have not been completed but are progressing according to the revised schedule. Water quality data were collected in April, June and August. The April and June samples have been processed. Analysis of the August samples is not yet complete. Two socio-economic surveys have been completed.

As a result of this change to the project and changes in project staff just before the reporting period, the training workshop for local staff on data analysis was postponed from June to November, so that it occurs at the end of the data collection period. Preparations for the workshop in November have been underway for the past two months.

In place of the June workshop, the new project co-ordinator, Dr Conor Linstead, visited the Vietnamese partners. Meetings were held with Dr Ni of Can Tho University and Dr Thanh at An Giang University to review the progress with the data collection. Some of the field sites were visited for familiarisation. Hoa An research station, which will play an important role in later deliverables was also visited. As a result of the discussions and field visits held during this trip it was decided that additional field data collection was needed to ensure the integration of the socio-economic and biophysical data. This is reported on in more detail in the following section.

Dr Ni from Can Tho University visited RHIER from 15-8-04 to 19-8-04 as part of a trip to Europe for a conference and meetings. This gave the opportunity for the RHIER project team (Prof Maltby, Dr Sollars and Dr Linstead) to discuss in more detail progress with the revised fieldwork schedule.

In response to comments made in the review of the previous project annual report, the website has been

substantially updated. The website now contains all the presentations from the November 2003 Ecosystem Approach and Start-up workshops and the outputs from the group discussions. It also contains a selection of photographs from these events.

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.

As discussed above, the field data collection in Vietnam has been extended until October 2004 with surveys taking place in alternate months rather than consecutive months as included in the original proposal.

The data analysis training workshop scheduled for June this year was postponed until November, when the fieldwork is completed. The impact of the staff changes meant that there was insufficient time to organise it properly and find a socio-economic expert to replace the staff member who left Royal Holloway and was providing this role. In place of the workshop Dr Linstead travelled to Vietnam in June to meet the project partners and ensure that the data collection is going according to plan. This change to the project will not affect the project budget or impact on the timing of deliverables as determined by the new agreed fieldwork schedule.

As a result of the discussions held in Vietnam in June, it became clear that the fieldwork programme would result in two separate strands of activity – socio-economic surveys and biophysical surveys – with little information to connect the two. Consequently, additional data collection activities were devised that specifically deal with this issue and provide the necessary information to link the two sets of surveys. This change will have no impact on the timing of the project activities as the surveys are being carried out simultaneously with the current data collection activities. There has been an additional transfer of £1827 from the RHIER budget to the Vietnamese partners to cover their additional costs.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The changes to the project, in terms of the justification for the new work programme, the rescheduling of the data analysis workshop and the associated budgetary changes were discussed and approved by the secretariat.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: yes, in April and August 2004

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: yes, in April 2004

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

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any <u>planned</u> modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should <u>not</u> be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, <u>stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk</u>. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. <u>Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.</u>