



Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Annual Report 2005-2006

1. Darwin Project Information

Project Ref. Number	162/13/005
Project Title	<i>Community Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Awacachi Corridor, NW Ecuador</i>
Country(ies)	<i>Ecuador</i>
UK Contractor	<i>America Programme, Fauna & Flora International</i>
Partner Organisation(s)	<i>Fundación Sirua</i>
Darwin Grant Value	<i>£174,884</i>
Start/End dates	<i>1 Apr 2004 to 31 Mar 2007</i>
Reporting period (1 Apr 2004 to 31 Mar 2005) and report number (1,2,3..)	<i>1 Apr 2005 to 31 Mar 2006. Report Number 4</i>
Project website	<i>n/a</i>
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2. Project Background

The Awacachi Corridor Project is located in the Ecuadorian Province of Esmeraldas in the Chocó Bio-Region. Over the past 5 years, amongst other things, the Americas Programme of Fauna and Flora International (FFI) has been working in collaboration with NGOs and government institutions to protect the last remnant of the Chocó region in the Northern of Ecuador. FFI in collaboration with its Ecuadorian partner Fundación Sirua aim through the project the creation of an effective biological corridor linking two key protected areas, the Awa indigenous Reserve and the Cotacachi Cayapas National Reserve).

This project try to draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

Fundación Sirua has purchased around 12,000 hectares of forested lands to establish the core area of the Awacachi Corridor which permits the creation and protection of a biological corridor between the Awa Indigenous Reserve and the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve (National protected area) creating a conservation unit of over 250,000 ha.

In the region deforestation is the principal threat to biodiversity. The root cause of poor forest management is disorderly settlement and expansion of the agricultural frontier driven by large extractive industries, poverty, land scarcity, and population growth. The Ecuadorian portion of the Chocó is most acutely threatened, with only 2% of the original lowland forest remaining and has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world.

Forests, river flats, wetlands, and hillsides are being displaced by non-sustainable production of oil palm, among other crops. This trend has been a major cause of habitat and species destruction - particularly in coastal Ecuador, where agricultural activities have caused severe damage to the ecosystem. All these business that not offer sustainable activities have attracted outside capital (foreign and domestic) and displaced Afroecuadorian and indigenous populations from their traditional activities, forcing them to move to towns and cities or occupy national parks and protected areas This has occurred in the Awá Ethnic Reserve and in the Mache Chindul Ecological Reserve in Ecuador. The effects include overexploitation of land,

ecosystem fragmentation, and displacement causing serious conflict over land issues. Oil palm plantations represent the largest monoculture in the province of Esmeraldas creating a negative ecological impact, altering the Chocó landscape as well as polluted air and rivers.

This project funded by Darwin Initiative will help FS to develop and implement environmentally friendly income generation activities work with the communities located in the buffer zone of the Corridor to implement income-generation activities in the area offering income options different than logging and oil palm, preventing the current degrading activities thus assisting communities to develop sustainable alternatives (i.e butterfly farm), and to design a participatory management plan with the communities and an agreement action plan between Cotacachi Cayapas Reserve, Awa Indigenous Reserve and Sirua Foundation to protect this portion of the Chocó Bioregion.

3. Project Purpose and Outputs

Purpose: To secure the biodiversity of the Awacachi Corridor through enhanced local conservation capacity and completion of a participatory management plan for focusing on innovative community income generation projects using non-timber forest products (NTFPs)

Outputs:

- Professional operational arm of FS functioning effectively through capacity building and institutional strengthening.
- Management plan developed and being implemented in key areas within the corridor.
- Biological monitoring system for Awacachi Corridor established and functioning.
- Butterfly farming/ranching facility established and generating income.
- Alternative income generation projects established and yielding income in 2 communities.

Annex 1. Project Logical Framework.

In last year's report it was explained that two products were suffering delays: the first version of the Management Plan; and the construction of the butterfly farm. As it was reported in the half year (October 2005) report these two activities were since then completed.

The outputs or proposed operational plan has not been modified over the last year. However, we have suffered delays on two products that we are confident we can catch up on in a few months. One it is the publication of an article in the magazine "*Tierra incognita*". This article is ready for publication and is only waiting to be included in the next edition. The other output is the production of the marketing plans which are under development and we hope to have them ready in a couple of months.

4. Progress

- ***Please provide a brief history of the project to the beginning of this reporting period. (1 paragraph).***

The present project started in April 2004. The first action taken was the execution of the GIS mapping of the whole corridor as a previous step to the design of the management plan. Next, meetings with community leaders and NGO's representatives were carried out as part of the participatory management plan to establish the Awacachi Support Committee, to sign MoUs and to identify alternative productive livelihoods. In parallel to this, socio-economic and botanical surveys were completed, a first training workshop about biological monitoring techniques for Awacachi's Rangers was delivered and a draft of the management plan started to be developed. The Butterfly Farm feasibility study was completed and a community consciousness workshop programmed. The construction of the butterfly farm was programmed for this period but it suffered some delays and had to be postponed for the beginning of second year. Regarding capacity building and institutional strengthening, Fundacion Sirua (FS) increased its technical staff, equipment, administrative and financial management and improved communications.. Staff received training in NGO management FFI appointed an Americas Projects Manager to offer remote and in-country support to FS. With regards, to the income generation activities, two rapid impact activities (small poultry and swine farms for food security) were established in two communities.

- ***Summarise progress over the last year against the agreed baseline timetable for the period and the logical framework (complete Annex 1). Explain differences including any slippage or additional outputs and activities.***

- ***Biological monitoring system established and functioning.***

In 2005/2006 rangers have continued receiving training in biological monitoring techniques. During their daily patrolling activities, they take biological information using a matrix especially designed for this purpose. This information is fed into excel so it can be analysed afterwards. To complete this analysis with a better scientific base, a basic biological survey was contracted with the Ecuadorian National Museum of Natural Sciences during the second half of 2005. Technicians from the museum visited the area of the Corridor and carried out a rapid ecological study in three representative areas of the Corridor to carry out a species census and comment about functionality of zone in terms of animal migration, diversity, presence of endemics etc. During this study (that included mammals, birds, herpetofauna, macroinvertebrates and flora) community rangers and inhabitants from the communities took part in the surveys, supporting the research team and receiving at the same time high quality field training and practice. To date partial results from the surveys have been submitted and the Foundation is waiting for the final results of the consultancy. This information will be an important base for the new monitoring system with improved data collection concentrating in some key species.

Additional to the practical training, the biologist in charged of the butterfly farm has been reinforcing concepts and techniques often to the rangers through mini workshops.

- ***Training workshops and capacity building for local NGO management completed.***

Year 2005 was an important year for Sirua Foundation (SF) in terms of institutional strengthening. After some analysis with FFI staff, FS Board members and the General Coordinator of the Foundation, it was determined that the General Coordinator needed somebody to support him especially regarding institutional relationships and development. The amount of work needed to coordinate activities and maintain and establish relationships was enormous and due to lack of time he was not being able to fulfill both. In order to solve this problem, it was decided to divide the coordination roles into two places: the first one, Operational Director will be in charge of project activities and personnel; and the second one, the development Director will be in charge of keeping and developing inter-institutional relationships, attending to external meetings, fundraising etc. The General Coordinator will take the role of Operations Director and it was necessary to contract another person to fulfill the role of Director of Development. After an evaluation about funding implications, it was decided to contract a part time person (biologist) to be in charge of the second role. This person has been working for six months with the Foundation, time in which the Foundation has improved its administrative performance, it has been possible to submit four proposals to donors (unfortunately 2 were not successful and two are waiting for final decision). Also this strategic change has supported the development of a communication strategy in order to increase FS's profile and to disseminate the importance of the Corridor to the public. It is important to mention that during the whole process FS's Board of Directors have been very enthusiastic and proactive.

Another important part of the institutional strengthening has been training activities: FS's administrative staff had received training in taxation under the Ecuadorian law and NGO management. The Field coordinator has received training in GIS and conflict management. Rangers have received training through workshops especially in: biological monitoring, conflict management, productive alternatives, tourist guidance and security.

Finally, with the support of FFI the staff has improved the capacity to submit proposals. As a result of these efforts SF has recently obtained a direct grant from the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forest which is a sign that the Foundation is improving their fundraising skills.

Income generation projects established in two communities

To date Sirua Foundation has been focussing its activities in three main products: Butterfly farming, native cacao and native bamboo.

Butterfly farming: As it was mentioned in the past half year report the infrastructure of the butterfly farm has been completed. After the construction some improvement has been necessary such as providing it with potable water. Regarding the operations of the unit, the original idea was to have a full time biologist living in the area for a couple of months establishing the unit and training somebody from the community to supervise and manage the whole unit, and coming back to the area only to check the operations and to deliver future training. This idea had proven not to be sufficiently adequate. The people trained are not taking on board knowledge as expected and also it has been determined

that the management of the facility has to continue on the Foundation hands to a really be a productive alternative for them. Thanks to the support of the Dutch Government it was possible to contract a fulltime biologist. This person is in charge of the operations of the butterfly unit, of the training of the community and also of the legal requirements to start with the production. The latter is taking more time than expected due to new legal government requirements. One of them is the production of an Operations Management Plan for operating the unit. This plan has been completed and the documentation is ready to be sent to the suitable government office in the next weeks.

Organic Cacao Plantations: Cacao is native plant very familiar to the communities. Some decades ago there were some small scale plantation in the area but with the boom of the timber extraction in the area the majority were destroyed. During community meetings the topic of the Cacao plantations was often mentioned for some people. In order to determine if this activity could have the potential to be incorporated into the activities of the Awacahi Programme a feasibility study was carried out with the result that the cacao plantations would be a good alternative in the area. These cacao plantations are been established under agroforestry systems (cacao, fruit trees and native trees) and using organic ways to fertilize and control pests. This work is being carried out in lands owned by the communities, in areas without forest cover with the purpose of offering alternatives for getting income and at the same time to increase the vegetation cover around the Corridor to prevent soil degradation. The project aims to recover some of the old plantations left and to establish new ones. The production of these plantations is commercialised directly by them with the networking support from the Foundation. During the last two years a community cacao nursery has been established, 8 hectares of old plantations have been recovered and 32 hectares of new ones established. The plantations recovered are almost ready for production. As part of the productive circle an agreement with APROCANE (Community Growers of Cacao in the North of Esmeraldas) has been signed. This agreement includes technical assistance and possibility of making use of their post-harvest installations as well as the support in order to include the cacao production in the cacao exported each year. Also an exchange visit was carried to other similar projects in Ecuador with the attendance of people from the communities of Durango and San Francisco. This visit created an enormous interest in the area and some people started to develop their own plantations (also under agroforestry) by their own initiative, requesting advice only when necessary. This activities in the long term will improve the landscape and improve degraded pasture lands benefiting the fauna in the area.

Guadua (native bamboo): Guadua is a native plant with very large stems that grows to 30 metres tall and it has close cultural connections with the peoples of many parts of Latin America. Currently in Ecuador it is mainly used for household objects, such as bowls and furniture and the construction of houses. Communities have been very interested in having the possibility and support of establishing some guadua plantations. They have strong connections with it because it is a resource that they are used to exploiting (they consider it as a kind of timber and timber extraction has been an activity well know for them). In order to determine the potential of this plantation as income alternative in the region contacts were established with INBAR (International Network for Bamboo and Rattan) following by their contraction to carry out a feasibility economic study in the region. This study strongly recommended the support of this activity in the area. Since the initial contacts with INBAR they have been very interested in supporting activities related with Guadua in the region in partnerships with Sirua Foundation. In January 2006, the workshop "Guadua: cultivation and uses" was delivered by INBAR in the Municipality of San Lorenzo with the collaboration of Sirua Foundation. Additional to this, INBAR has been supporting Sirua's activities such as low cost community training, community nursery, technical advice for the establishment of the plantations, and support in the agreement with the Municipality of San Lorenzo in order to implement a project in the area.

During the last year the following training activities have been delivered: Guadua: plantations and uses; Guadua cultivation techniques. Also there have been exchange visits to other projects within Ecuador. The rangers received some training in low cost guadua constructions. Finally, a guadua nursery was established, counting at the moment with 400 mother plant (plants used to produce the new ones called "chusquines") offering a production of 14,400 saplings per year (at the moment 24 plants per plant per year at this stage but when the mother plants are fully grown they can produce up to 100 saplings per year). This production will be used to establish 2-2.5 ha each month in the next six months, after that 3-3.5 ha per month will be established in the following six month aiming

a total of 30 ha in a year. Each beneficiary will receive plants to establish approximately 0.5 ha. The plantation activities will commence in the first week of June 2006.

- **Production and dissemination of draft management plan.**

Two versions of the management plan have been produced. The first one is a condensed version containing minimum information about the Corridor. This version was elaborated with the purpose of being used as a supporting document in the legalization process of some of the areas in the corridor. A detailed version contains an action plan for the implementation of the Management Plan and this is the version that will be complemented and revised before the completion of the Darwin project.

The principal actors are the communities located in the buffer zone: the FECAE (Awá Federation) and the Cotacachi Reserve Authorities. Currently the elaboration of the Management Plan of the Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve is being carried out and FS has been designated as part of the community committee, which will collaborate with the design of the new management plan for the Cotacachi Cayapas Reserve. This fact offers the opportunity to continue the revision of FS's Management Plan for a longer period of time, incorporating new ideas and activities and ensuring that the two management plans are complementary guaranteeing the strengthening of the conservation activities for the whole area.

• ***Discuss any significant difficulties encountered during the year and steps taken to overcome them.***

- The FCAE (Ecuadorian Federation of Awa Centres) has a strong political influence under the Awa communities, affecting positive or negatively the relationships between an Awa community and any institution. During the last meeting with the new Directors they had explained to FS that they were open to mutual collaboration but that they think it is necessary to have a process of approach before signing any agreement. This process could include mutual invitations to workshops, activities and if possible economical support to some specific Awa productive initiatives. FS is currently researching about their activities needing support and evaluation which can then be covered by existing funding (if any) and which one can be included in future proposals. However, it has to be taken into account that this year is an electoral year in Ecuador, and based on past experiences this can delay the process.
- The process of training in Biological Monitoring techniques has been successful in terms of number of workshops and topics covered. However, it is a fact that the level of literacy of some rangers imposes a challenge when they collect data. FS had analyzed the convenience of continued data collection in the way that has been done because some conclusions and observations of some rangers does not reflect reality, due to the fact that they have their own interpretation of the information. In order to improve the data collection, it has been planned to select from the team the ones that have better understanding of the Biological Monitoring and these rangers will receive the support of young people from the communities conforming teams of students supporting data collection activities.
- Levels of insecurity are arising in the area as a result of Plan Colombia in the neighbouring country. This is affecting the implementation of productive alternatives. Some communities are reluctant to collaborate with the project because they are receiving economics promises from miners, timber companies and palm companies if they invade areas of the Corridor. During the last year there have been some attempts of mining inside of the corridor. These attempts have been prevented through direct negotiation with the miners and in some cases supported by the authorities. Although until now there have been only attempts this is an increasing problem due to the fact that under Ecuadorian Law subterranean mineral resources are property of the state. In this circumstances it is possible for a mining company to get legal permission from the government and to exploit a protected area and extract gold, minerals, petroleum or others subterranean natural resources. FS is researching concessions for mineral extraction in the area of the corridor (within and around) and if necessary will look for governmental support to stop them. In any case, it is a serious problem that requires immediate attention and requires economic resources to cover the legal fees.

• ***Has the design of the project been enhanced over the last year, e.g. refining methods, indicators for measuring achievements, exit strategy?***

- Gathering of biological data has been improved through increasing training activities with the rangers. Although it is better, it still needs more refinement to find a better way for the rangers to do it. The matrix used to gather the information has been changed updating it with a more user friendly version, requiring less writing so the rangers do not have to spend too much time filling it in. Also, it has been determined that it is necessary to periodically reinforce some basic concepts, the importance of the data gathered (the data has to be completely accurate) and the necessity of collecting the data in an impartial way (some of the rangers tend to record their interpretation of the data and not the “raw” data)
- FS considered that a communication strategy for the project was essential to improve the dissemination of information for communities and general public about the importance and benefits of conserving the Corridor and also to present to the public opinion the advances of the project. The first version of the strategy has been developed and is under comments by the FS Board of Directors. This strategy includes activities and products such as leaflets, posters, newsletter, web page, interviews, magazine articles etc. To date an institutional leaflet, newsletter, and an article for the magazine “tierra incognita” have been produced. Currently thanks to the financial support of the Flemish Fund, FS’s web page is under construction.

Present a timetable (workplan) for the next reporting period.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Financial year:</i>	<i>Key milestones</i>
<i>31 December 2006</i>	<i>Apr-Mar 2005/6</i>	<i>Revision and evaluation of management plan and dissemination (revised version if appropriate)</i>
<i>31 Jan 2007</i>	<i>Apr-Mar 2005/6</i>	<i>Evaluation of potential long-term sustainable use projects and community development strategy produced</i>
<i>31 Mar 2007</i>	<i>Apr-Mar 2005/6</i>	<i>Final report completed</i>

5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

- ***Have you responded to issues raised in the review of your last year’s annual report?***

In the past half year report, clarifications about issues raised by the reviewer were provided. Following is a small resumé of the main points:

- It was advised to attach some materials produced during the project in order to evaluate the quality. The following materials are attached: maps of the corridor and guadua feasibility study. Other materials will sent to the Secretariat by post .
- General publicity and planned bi-annual newsletter: institutional leaflet and newsletter have been produced. An article about the corridor has been submitted to “Tierra Incognita”. FS’s web page is under construction. An interview in the local radio has been scheduled for next month.
- FFI evaluation visits: Periodic in-country evaluation visits have taken place
- Political instability: The principal problem of this fact was creates delays in all procedures requiring their input or approval and the rotation of public servants sometimes makes it difficult to maintain long term agreements.

- ***Have you discussed the review with your collaborators?***

FFI and FS keep have permanent and quite close communication. It can be said that this communication is on a daily basis so reviews, reports, activities are discussed using Skype and email, and if possible decisions made in previous agreement.

Regarding specifically last year’s review, it was sent to and discussed with FS.

- ***Briefly describe what actions have been taken as a result of recommendations from last year’s review.***

- As a way to assess the training of the FS staff a professional evaluation has been done each semester.

- The project has been developed in a participatory way. This does not mean that everything is running smoothly and that there are not problems and misunderstanding with some communities. These misunderstandings and problems are dealt with on a daily basis. Also, during the implementation of the project it has been determined that the communities are still not prepared to manage the productive alternatives and more training is needed before they can take this roles. Besides training such as financial skills, accounting, marketing and business capacity it is necessary to increase support on their internal organization. For this reason, FS will be supporting the communities with this guidance and directly managing some of the activities during the span of project and after it, as long as it is necessary until the communities are ready to do it by their own. This is a strong commitment that the Foundation has with the project and with the communities

6. Partnerships

- ***Describe collaboration between UK and host country partner(s) over the last year. Are there difficulties or unforeseen problems or advantages of these relationships?***

The relation between FFI and FS during the past year has been excellent. As it was explained above FFI UK keeps constant contact with FS supporting them on a daily basis in order to improve their administrative capabilities and improve their NGO management. FFI Americas Project Manager and FS Operations Director are in permanent communication in order to follow the activities of the entire program. This constant support encompasses: general activities advise, accounts support, reporting, donor relationship, proposals writing etc. As a result of this support FS has obtained a grant from Flemish Fund, this proposal was developed entirely by Sirua staff with minimum input from the UK.

Additionally to this day to day contact, the technical staff of FS has been receiving during FFI's visits in situ training through institutional reviews, donor visits, accounting training, strategy development and internal workshops. A special emphasis has been made in supporting the accounting system of the Foundation due to the resignation and subsequent recruitment of a new accountant.

Also with the economic support of FFI (see explanation in progress section above) it was possible to support the recruitment of a part time FS Development Director.

- ***Has the project been able to collaborate with similar projects (Darwin or other) in the host country or other regions, or establish new links with/between local or international organisations involved in biodiversity conservation?***

As part of the Awacachi Program, FS has been able to collaborate with the following projects developed in the Awacachi Corridor like: CEPF and GCF from Conservation International, Barbara Delano Foundation from UK, Ruffords Maurice Laing Foundation, and DGIS. All those funds had permitted to complement activities related with biological monitoring, productive alternatives, administrative and staff support etc.

Following are among others the main collaboration during the past year:

- FS just got approved a proposal from the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forest. This new funding will contribute towards activities of the communication strategy and ranger training.
- FS has been collaborating with another Darwin's Initiative Project in Ecuador developed by Gaia Foundation. The collaboration from FS to Gaia has been based on the exchange of biological information in the Corridor Area, and support in logistics of a field visit from Gaia to FS in the support in the publication of an article about the corridor in the Terra Incognita Magazine in the next issue.
- The relationship between FS and San Lorenzo Municipality has been improving immensely, to the point that they have been taking into account and really involving Sirua in all the meetings and workshops related with environmental issues in the area.
- Relationships with the British Embassy in Ecuador continue been excellent. The Embassy has been supporting the activities in the Corridor through institutional awareness and networking.
- RARE is working in partnership with Conservation International supporting the Environment Education Campaign in San Lorenzo. They have asked for FS's support in

managing some funds for this campaign as a result of Conservation International recommending FS as a serious NGO in the area. FS has agreed to support RARE.

- As a result of the establishment of income generating alternatives such as native bamboo, INBAR is considering Sirua as a strategy partner to develop different activities related with guadua (native bamboo) in the Province of Esmeraldas.
- WWF Colombia has invited FS to participate in a working group to commence the territorial design for the north zone of Ecuador and the South of Colombia in order to define Critical Areas for Conservation. This group includes other local NGO's, government institutions and private companies such oil palm and login companies.

7. Impact and Sustainability

- ***Discuss the profile of the project within the country and what efforts have been made during the year to promote the work. What evidence is there for increasing interest and capacity for biodiversity resulting from the project? Is there a satisfactory exit strategy for the project in place?***

During this year efforts have been made to increase the profile of the Foundation and its work. For this purpose a communications strategy has been developed targeting different audiences with different activities, meetings and products. Also regular meetings are held with government institutions and NGO, in order to establish alliances and to show FS's work. As a result of this FS has been positioning as a serious NGO that works for the conservation of the regional natural resources and that it is committed to take into consideration and to support local communities offering environmentally friendly alternative of generating income working without the devastation of the forest. Following there some examples of attitudes from organization towards FS and results that support this increasing institutional profile:

- The Municipality of San Lorenzo has been frequently inviting FS to participate in meetings related with environmental issues in the area.
- Conservation International recommended FS to manage some RARE funds due to its commitment and work in the area of the corridor.
- The inclusion of FS in the Environment Campaign activities in San Lorenzo.
- The signature of an agreement with APROCANE
- INBAR considers FS an strategic partner to develop activities related to native bamboo in the Province.
- GTZ has been in contact with FS to explore possible sources of collaboration.
- Sirua participated in a public tender in consortium with other NGO in order to develop the Management Plan of the Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve. FS's consortium got the highest score in the technical qualifications but unfortunately there was another consortium that could develop the Plan to a lower price, being the grantee of the contract,
- The invitation of WWF to be part of this working group to determine Critical Conservation Areas, offers the possibility of interacting with some of the private companies (palm and logging) in an impartial atmosphere, situation that normally would not be possible. This opportunity can be canalised towards agreements with these companies to respect and support conservation activities in the Corridor area.

8. Post-Project Follow up Activities (max 300 words)

This section should be completed ONLY if your project is nearing completion (penultimate or final year) and you wish to be considered to be invited to apply for Post Project Funding. Each year, a small number of Darwin projects will be invited to apply for funding. Selection of these projects will be based on promising project work, reviews to date, and your suggestions within this section. Further information on this scheme introduced in 2003 is available from the Darwin website.

- ***From project progress so far, what follow-up activities would help to embed or consolidate the results of your project, and why would you consider these as suitable for Darwin Post Project Funding?***

This section will be address in the penultimate report (next half year report)

- ***What evidence is there of strong commitment and capacity by host country partners to enable them to play a major role in follow-up activities?***

FS was established with the purpose of establishing the corridor, being the legal custody of the corridor (the land is owned by the Foundation) and to develop activities to consolidate and manage it (biological and livelihoods). This is one of the strongest reasons supporting the long term commitment with the corridor and to the activities developed there. Sirua Foundation has been gaining experience and capacity to develop better the activities related with the Awacachi Corridor. The work developed to date has been more and more recognised by government and other NGOs. This shows and increasing capacity of the Foundation. Also FFI's philosophy is to have long term relationships with its local partners, ensuring that they are able to deliver and maintain conservation activities by their own. In order to ensure the latter FFI will continue supporting and strengthening FS after the completion of the Darwin funded project.

9. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

- ***Explain differences in actual outputs against those agreed in the initial 'Project Implementation Timetable' and the 'Project Outputs Schedule', i.e. what outputs were not or only partly achieved? Were additional outputs achieved?***

Almost all the he outputs agreed in the initial project implementation timetable have been fulfilled except: the publication of the article in the local magazine and the elaboration of the marketing plans for the income alternatives. The first one is ready for publication in "Terra Incognita", and the marketing plans are still under development. We expect to have them finished in the next months

Following are the main products achieved during this year:

- ***Awacachi Foundation staff to receive training in NGO management (fundraising, strategy development, communications, administration) and technical subjects such as GIS, PRA:***

Training has been delivered in the following topics: Ecuadorian Taxation Law (accountant and administrative staff); Ecuadorian Social Security Rules for FS staff in charge of this activity (accountant, administrative assistants, coordinator); Conflict management, productive alternatives, biological monitoring, tourist guidance and security (Field coordinator and rangers team); GIS (all FS staff but accountant and administrative assistants); on going training related with fundraising, proposal writing, accounting systems, NGO management etc

Community members trained in butterfly farming/ranching operations and business planning

Members of the community have been trained in general procedures for butterfly farming, biological cycle of the butterflies, feeding in captivity and establishment of plants in the enclosures. An exchange visit to Butterfly Farm in Belize was carried out by the Director of Operations.

- ***Community members trained for alternative livelihood projects***

Cacao workshops: Implementation of Nurseries, Prune techniques, organic control of insects and diseases in cacao.

Cacao Exchange visits: From Belize and Ecuador to FFI projects that have successful experiences and mutual collaboration. Local exchanges visit from communities located in the buffer zone to other experiences in Esmeraldas Province.

Cacao agreements: Additional to the local agreement a regional agreement was signed with APROCANE (Association of Community Cacao Producers in the Northern Esmeraldas). This agreement includes mutual collaboration, technical support and use of the post harvest installations of APROCANE once the cacao of the community plantations in the buffer zone starts the production

Bamboo workshops: Guadua: plantations and uses; Guadua cultivation techniques. Local exchange visits from communities located in the buffer zone to other experiences in Esmeraldas Province. A regional workshop on incentives for the cultivation of native bamboo was carried out in San Lorenzo with the support of

INBAR with the attendance of general public, community representatives and government staff.

- **community manuals on alternative income generation projects (2)**

During the second year of the project 2 community manuals on alternative income generation projects were produced. The first one relates to a community swine production and the second one is a community extension interactive manual called Mincas developed by INBAR with support of UE and FS to manage all the productive steps in the production of native bamboo.

Additionally, two DVDs were produced based on the regional workshop to incentive the cultivation of native bamboo.

- local NGO management manual (1)
- manual for community butterfly farming/ranching (1)
- local magazine release (1)
- newsletter produced (1)
- feasibility study for alternative livelihood project

A feasibility study for the cultivation of native bamboo in the area of the corridor was carried out by INBAR.

- FS's internet page under construction www.sirua.org

- **Provide details of dissemination activities in the host country during the year, including information on target audiences. Will dissemination activities be continued by the host country when the project finishes, and how will this be funded and implemented?**

Dissemination activities are important in order to raise awareness and to receive the support of the different organization for the activities in the area. The dissemination activities have been linked to a communication strategy which will be applied at a national level as well as a local level. Some of the activities stated in the strategy have been implemented such as institutional leaflets, newsletter, web page (under construction), magazine articles, attendance to meetings and events, etc. Others have programmed radio interviews. And others will need fundraising activities (proposal or donations) to be implemented. All those activities will continue after the completion of the Darwin project.

- *Please expand and complete Table 1. Quantify project outputs over the last year using the coding and format from the Darwin Initiative Standard Output Measures (see website for details) and give a brief description. Please list and report on appropriate Code Nos. only. The level of detail required is specified in the Guidance notes on Output Definitions, which accompanies the List of Standard Output Measures*

Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures)

CODE No	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION
6A	5	Awacachi Foundation staff to receive training in NGO management (fundraising, strategy development, communications, administration) and technical subjects such as GIS, PRA
6A	10	community members trained in butterfly farming/ranching operations and business planning
6A	30	community members (depending on selected projects) trained for alternative livelihood project management.
6A	12	training weeks for alternative livelihood projects.
6A	2	community manuals on alternative income generation projects (MINGAS (native bamboo cultivation and swine nutrition)
6A	1	manual for community butterfly farming/ranching

6A	1	<i>local NGO management manual</i>
15D	1	<i>local magazine article ready for publication</i>
16B	1	<i>newsletter produced</i>
Other	1	<i>Feasibility studies for alternative livelihood projects</i>

- In Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Details will be recorded on the Darwin Monitoring Website Publications Database. Mark (*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

Type * (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (title, author, year)	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. contact address, website)	Selling price US\$
Manual	Manejo de Guaduales Naturales, INBAR, 2005	Soboc Grafic, Quito		50
DVD	Cana Guadua, cultivo, aprovechamiento y Usos (2 DVD), INBAR-SIRUA, 2005			25

10. Project Expenditure

Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 02 April to 31 March)

ITEM	BUDGET (Original budget plus authorised carry forward of £5,363)	EXPENDITURE	BALANCE

<i>SALARIES*</i>	<i>BUDGET</i>	<i>EXPENDITURE</i>	<i>BALANCE</i>

At the end of the first year of this grant (2004/2005) a carry forward of £5,363 was authorised by Margaret Okot, resulting for the second year (2005/2006) the amount of £59,381.

In communication with Margaret Okot, £9,500 was requested as carry forward (corresponding to £5,500 Capital Items, £2,000 training workshops and £2,000 technical management planning workshops).

11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

- ***Discuss methods employed to monitor and evaluate the project this year. How can you demonstrate that the outputs and outcomes of the project actually contribute to the project purpose? i.e. what are the indicators of achievements (both qualitative and quantitative) and how are you measuring these?***

- *Output/Outcome:* Population of key species recovering and illegal resource extraction reduced:

Indicators: reduction in logging infractions and increase in fauna sightings

During the last year a daily data collection was carried out by the Community Rangers. This reports show an increase of sightings of animals in some areas of the corridor. Also the number of logging infractions has been diminishing. In order to improve this info a new matrix for collecting data was designed in order to obtain better and more specific information.

- *Output/Outcome:* Increased capacity for the local NGO to manage the Corridor.

Indicators: quality of FS products, effective responses to emergencies, fundraising effort and success, increase networking capabilities, increase willingness of working together with FS , increase in the involvement into regional conservation activities etc.

The quality of reports submitted to FFI has been monitored by the increase in networking capacity shown by the Foundation staff, by the agility in responding to

emergency situations in the corridor and by fundraising effort (contacts and submission of proposals).

Also the increase in institutional capacity can be demonstrated by the number of proposals submitted to donors. During the second half of 2005 two proposals were written by FS staff and submitted to donors (Toyota Fund and Flemish Fund) with one approved (Flemish Fund for Tropical Forest). In the first half of 2006, 3 proposals have been submitted as part of consortiums (two to participate as a part of a consortium in Ecuadorian tenders and one to the Italo-Ecuadorian Fund). The first two were not successful and the last one is still under consideration. All three consortiums have been organised by FS.

- *Output/Outcome:* Communities involved in successful alternative income generation:

Indicators: Number of communities involved in income generating activities, number of hectares of cacao and native bamboo planted, number of families/people benefiting from income generating activities, number of alternatives, increased interest on benefiting from the alternatives, change in people's perceptions

Currently two communities are effectively working with alternative income generating projects. The San Francisco Community is actively working with Guadua and Cacao plantations. Durango community and San Francisco are involved in the Butterfly activity. There are plans to expand cacao and guadua activities to Durango.

- *Output/Outcome:* Training:

Indicators: Number of training sessions and duration of them to staff and communities. Variety and appropriateness of the training delivered. Number of people trained.

Effective community and staff training has been provided. Communities have been increasing their involvement in the Corridor activities and requesting additional training and support.

- *Output/Outcome:* Production of manuals, studies, reports, article etc.

Indicators: Number of manual, feasibility studies, reports, strategies produced. Coverage of the activities by the documents.

- ***What lessons have you learned from this year's work, and can you build this learning into future plans?***

Additional to the support from FFI, the collaboration between the different organizations has been a positive factor to develop initiatives related with fundraising, consultancy and mutual training.

The identification of community leaders (even if there are not the legal ones) is important to obtain the support of the communities. This is specially important in areas where it is very difficult to change the idea of some people who see the NGO only as money or as an 'activities provider' and not as a partner/associate.

It is important to differentiate the real expectations of the communities and the personal interest of pseudo leaders that are trying to obtain economic benefit from these kinds of projects the community interest.

The collaboration of the British Embassy to this project has been very important in order to obtain political support to the initiatives.

12. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum)

■ I agree for ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section

In this section you have the chance to let us know about outstanding achievements of your project over the year that you consider worth highlighting to ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat. This could relate to achievements already mentioned in this report, on which you would like to expand further, or achievements that were in addition to the ones planned and deserve particular attention e.g. in terms of best practice. The idea is to use this section for various promotion and dissemination purposes, including e.g. publication in the Defra Annual Report, Darwin promotion material, or on the Darwin website. As we will not be able to ask projects on an individual basis for their consent to publish the content of this section, please note the above agreement clause.

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2005/2006

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2005-Mar 2006	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Goal: To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation of biological diversity, • The sustainable use of its components, and • The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources 			
<p>Purpose To secure the biodiversity of the Awacachi Corridor through enhanced local conservation capacity and completion of a participatory management plan for focusing on innovative community income generation projects using non-timber forest products (NTFPs)</p>	<p>Populations of key species recovering and illegal resource extraction reduced Increased capacity for local NGO, communities and authorities to manage the Awacachi Corridor. At least two communities involved in successful alternative income generation projects by yr 3</p>	<p>Base line information and preliminary biological data through ranger reports First version of Management Plan produced, agreements & MoUs Butterfly farming Infrastructure completed. Native bamboo feasibility study produced. Two income generation activities established (butterfly farming, cacao) and one ready to be implemented (native bamboo). Communication strategy developed.</p>	<p>Lessons: It is necessary to continue reinforcing the biological monitoring training given to date, and to evaluate results of new format. It is very important to identify bad leaders in the communities than can prejudice activities and communities. Often the community expectations change during time so it is very important to be reinforce objectives and products expected from the project frequently.</p> <p>Actions for next period: The main actions planned are: to refine management plan, to continue with the implementation of the Action Plan, to continue with the implementing income generation activities(more activities, training and market studies); and to finish with the biological monitoring training and to implement the monitoring system;</p>
<p>Outputs</p>			
<p><i>Professional operational arm of Awacachi Foundation functioning effectively through capacity building and</i></p>	<p>Strategic review of Awacachi Foundation (now Sirua Foundation) and key staff trained in NGO management</p>	<p>Additional staff contracted Training delivered to staff: taxation, NGO management, GIS, conflict</p>	<p>Lessons: Constant training and periodic evaluation is a key for improving team work.</p>

<i>institutional strengthening</i>	and PRA techniques, CSC established. Organisation generating own income	resolution, income generation activities. Approval of the first proposal written entirely by FS staff. Submission of 5 proposal by FS do potential donors	Actions for next period: To deliver more practical training to staff from FS. To implement the communication strategy to show FS' work as a conservationist organization in Ecuador; and To continue developing proposals to support the implementation of the management plan.
Management plan developed and being implemented in key areas within the corridor	Participatory management planning process completed and key Awacachi staff trained in PRA	Final version of the Management Plan produced. Action Plan for the management plan is being implemented	Lesson: Time and effort to develop a Participatory management plan is always underestimated. Unforeseen events and problems caused by external actors interfere with the activities and products Actions Planned: Implementation of the Action plan and update and refinement of Management Plan
Biological monitoring system for Awacachi Corridor established and functioning	5 rangers trained in species identification, classification and other biological monitoring techniques, ranger field guide produced	Additional biological monitoring theory training delivered. Base line information produced. Field training by the Ecuadorian Natural Sciences Museum. Data collection format redesigned Training in alternative income alternatives workshops in conflict resolution. 1 workshop in field and tourist guidance.	Lesson: There needs to be special considerations to help change Ranger's perceptions of what should be vs what have to be achieved in term of monitoring (given the very local context of low education level and strong cultural links) Actions planned: To continue delivering training to the Rangers, refining procedures and production of a rangers field guide for monitoring purposes.

<p>Butterfly farming/ranching facility established and generating income</p>	<p>Community members trained in operating butterfly farming/ranching business, production of manual</p>	<p>Infrastructure for the butterfly breeding completed</p> <p>3 people in process of training in management of a Butterfly farm.</p> <p>Biologist contracted to manage the farm and deliver training</p> <p>Manual of procedures for the butterfly farming completed</p> <p>Management Plan for the running of the farm produced.</p> <p>Documentation submitted to get running permits to environment Ministry</p>	<p>Lesson:</p> <p>Establishment of a breeding facility is taking more time than expected. Legal National requirements can change very fast needing extra time to comply to them</p> <p>Actions planned:</p> <p>Continue with the establishment of the farm, deliver more training to communities. To finish with legal requirements for running the farm and to start pilot production of butterflies.</p>
<p>Alternative income generation projects established and yielding income in 2 communities</p>	<p>Feasibility studies completed for alternative income-generation projects</p> <p>Community manuals for alternative income generation projects produced</p> <p>Long-term strategy for community development produced</p>	<p>Feasibility studies for native bamboo produced</p> <p>Feasibility study for long term income generation project produced (aromatic cacao)</p> <p>30 ha of aromatic cacao planted, 8ha of old plantations recovered</p> <p>Exchange visits carried out</p> <p>Training in cacao production, diseases control delivered</p> <p>Manuals about bamboo plantations produced and workshops to train and incentive its cultivation delivered.</p> <p>Swine production manual produced</p> <p>MoU with INBAR and APROCANE.</p> <p>MoU with Communities</p>	<p>Actions Planned:</p> <p>Continue with the implementation of the alternatives; begin with the plantation of native bamboo; and to finish the elaboration and implementation of marketing plans.</p>