

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Ethnobiology of proposed traditional use zones of Crocker Range Park
Country	Malaysia
Organisation	The Global Diversity Foundation
Project Ref. No.	162/13/009
Report date	31 October 2004

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months 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).

We started our project on 1 August 2004 (and have thus asked for the project end date to be extended to 31 July 2007). The first step was to recruit the project personnel – consisting of Agnes Lee Agama (project coordinator), Rachel Chua (associate project coordinator), James Wong (field coordinator), Yassin Miki (assistant field coordinator) – and to establish their work programme. The project coordinators have set up the Darwin office at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah and the field office at the Inobong Substation of Crocker Range Park, including purchase of equipment. There has been an exchange of letters of agreement that outline the terms and conditions of the collaboration between The Global Diversity Foundation and Sabah Parks, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, and PACOS (a Sabah-based NGO). The field team made the first trip to Buayan and Kionop (the selected Dusun communities in Crocker Range Park) from 16 – 23 October to discuss project goals, prior informed consent and research protocols with community members. This should allow the team to proceed with the participatory ethnobiological inventory in November 2004 – February 2005. We expect to complete the interim report prepared on animal and plant resources used by local people in Kionop and Buayan on time (31 March 2005).

Because of the late start of the project, the series of taught modules and methods workshops that was to begin in September-October has been postponed until April 2004. The six 5-day modules will be given as five 6-day courses, ensuring that all material will be presented. The five workshops will be similarly expanded.

For the first module and workshop, Prof. Stuart Harrop and Dr. Rajindra Puri of University of Kent will present intensive sessions on biodiversity law and environmental anthropology.

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?

Already resolved is the late date of approval from the Darwin Initiative, which resulted in a delay in launching the project. We have arranged a modified timetable and budget with DEFRA.

Of more interest is UMS commitment to create a MSc programme in 'Conservation and Ethnobiology' based on the series of modules and workshops that will be delivered through the

project. Although administrative approval will take some time, this is likely to be a collaborative effort between the Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ITBC), the School of Social Sciences and the School of International Tropical Forestry. The MSc course, which will be open to students throughout Southeast Asia, will leave a lasting legacy in the region.

In another positive development, Prof. Maryati Mohamed will request fee waivers for the eight local UMS students who will receive their MSc degrees through the project. Several candidates have been identified, including James Wong and Yassin Miki of the Darwin field team.

The launching of the Darwin project has also attracted interest from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Malaysia, particularly in the context of two major WWF Malaysia projects that include the Crocker Range Park. These projects, entitled The Highlands of Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak) and the Heart of Borneo, are scheduled to start at the end of 2004 and will assess the conservation and sustainable development status of areas of biodiversity significance including Crocker Range Park. We have been approached by WWF Malaysia to explore potential avenues of collaboration with the Darwin project. As part of this, James Wong who was previously employed under WWF Malaysia, has been granted a secondment package to GDF for the purposes of the Darwin project.

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

As a small organisation, the main difficulty of The Global Diversity Foundation is ensuring cash flow to run the project. DEFRA's system of reimbursement for expenses is a burden that we have resolved in various ways: (1) our partner Sabah Parks will advance money for salaries for some members of the project team; (2) the project leader is advancing funds for some costs, and agrees to be repaid by GDF as monthly reimbursements are received by DEFRA; and (3) DEFRA has agreed to accept monthly rather than quarterly claim forms and to make reimbursements as quickly as possible.

In practice, DEFRA is reimbursing funds 30 days after claim forms are approved. If possible, we would like to have this reduced to 15 days. In addition, it would help immensely if we could claim for lump sums that we send, for example, to the Sabah-based NGO PACOS which will be employing community organisers who will work on our project. These funds will leave the GDF Co-operative account, so they will be "spent" from our perspective, even if the funds will be used for purchases or stipends over a period of several months. This situation will arise again in the case of MSc student research grants. GDF will send the funds to the student before he/she leaves for the field (about April), and then we will receive itemised accounting upon return (about July). Ideally, GDF could claim these 'grants' as expenses once they leave our Co-op Bank account.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year by email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, Email: stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk