

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise

Project Ref. No.	14-003
Project Title	Sustainable insect collecting and farming in Papua New Guinea
Country(ies)	Papua New Guinea
UK Organisation	University of Cambridge
Collaborator(s)	(1) Department of Biology, University of Papua New Guinea, (2) Department of Environment & Conservation, PNG Government, (3) Insect Farming & Trading Agency, Bulolo, (4) Wau Ecology Institute, Wau.
Report date	25 October 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	Under construction

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).

AGREED BASELINE TIMETABLE	PROGRESS IN MEETING TARGET
7/05 Establish base in Madang. c	A project base in Madang (bungalow with office in secure compound) was established in September.
8/05 Liaise with DEC and UPNG ...	Began by fax and email in April, and continued thro' personal negotiations by R. Small in September.
9/05 Work with IFTA in Bulolo	Work begun, despite difficulties with new IFTA Acting Manager

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.

We began negotiations to obtain Research Visas for Rob Small (Research Assistant) and Tim Bayliss-Smith (Principal Investigator) as soon as DI funding was agreed in April. However, because of delays we could not launch the project with a field visit to Papua New Guinea (PNG) by Small in July 2005. After emailing, faxing, and writing letters to our various partners, all of whom had signalled agreement in June 2004 during our Pre-Project Funded visit, it became clear that a Research Visa with written agreement from all partners was going to be problematic:

- Department of Environment (DEC), PNG Government, failed to respond to initial messages, and eventually requested that we re-negotiate terms of reference.
- There were delays in response from Department of Biology, University of PNG, for understandable academic reasons (riots on campus, absence of key persons, etc.).
- Changes had taken place in the management of Insect Farming and Trading Agency (IFTA) in Lae, a key partner. Mr Jeffrey Juju had replaced Mr Esekia Warvi as Executive Manager of UNITECH Development & Consultancy Ltd., which de facto 'owns' IFTA. On 2nd June 2005 Juju emailed his willingness to help with the visa. Unfortunately at IFTA itself a new acting manager, Dr Harry Sakulas, had been appointed in place of Mr David Whittaker (V.S.O.) with whom we had negotiated collaboration in June 2004, and he signalled his intention to be unco-operative with our research objectives.

- Wau Ecology Institute, a struggling NGO previously mismanaged by Sakulas and now being rescued by Mr Michael Hudson, de facto Director, was also doubtful. Hudson signalled his unease (he used stronger language) about any project that involved his institute cooperating with Dr Sakulas.

In the light of these developments, the situation for a research permit being possible looked unpromising. Ms Jean Kekedo, the PNG High Commissioner in London, advised that in the circumstances she would not object to Rob Small visiting PNG on a tourist visa to try to sort out these problems.

Small's visit took place from 30 August to 2 October 2005, when he returned to UK to await a Research Permit, which was granted on 24 October. He will now fly to PNG in early November, while Bayliss-Smith will make a two-week visit in December. Small's negotiations in September were largely successful:

- The National Research Institute in Port Moresby is sponsoring our application to PNG Foreign Affairs for research permits etc. Since DEC had signalled that it would take them six months (!) to process our application if they needed to be involved, the application to Foreign Affairs is for a project on 'Socio-Economics of Insect Trading', cutting out the ambiguous reference to 'Sustainable Insect Collecting' in the original title. If there is any suspicion that collecting insects is part of our project, then DEC would have to be involved, and the project's timetable would therefore collapse, so we felt this sleight of hand was desirable. In fact, except from the point of view of the research permit/visa application, there seems no reason for us to actually re-title the project.
- A project headquarters in Madang (a bungalow in a secure shared compound) has been acquired for rent, and a second-hand vehicle in good condition has been purchased. Madang Province has already signalled its permission to allow us to carry out research (other provinces will follow, we hope).
- Most important, all the original partners including DEC are now willing to collaborate with (and, we hope, benefit from) the project. A possible exception is Dr Sakulas in Lae, but we feel he can be avoided. IFTA is only one of Sakulas's managerial responsibilities, and he has visited the Bulolo office just once in the past six months. Bulolo is where the insect trading records are kept to which we need access, and the IFTA staff there are keen to collaborate, fearful their jobs may disappear if IFTA collapses. Moreover the UNITECH management are not even talking about revoking the agreement that we reached with them last year. On this basis we feel that we can proceed.
- Rob Small gave a successful seminar at UPNG on 28 September attended by over 40 people, including we hope the two students that we will select for Honours year scholarships funded by the project. The Department of Biology (Prof. Lance Hill in particular) has been supportive.

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

I alerted Sarah Moon (DI, Defra) to these developments in early October, signalling that it may become necessary in future to scale down the original proposal, and/or request an under-spend for financial year 2005-06. Up to now no changes have been requested or made to the original agreement.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: yes, in October 2005.

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures? no

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 planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not 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, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**