

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

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)	Department of Biology, University of Papua New Guinea Department of Environment and Conservation, PNG Government Insect Farming and Trading Agency, Lae/ Bulolo Wau Ecology Institute, Wau
Project Leader	Dr. Tim Bayliss-Smith
Report date	30/10/07
Report No.	HYR 3
Project website	http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/insectfarming/

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).

3/07 to 05/07	Continuation of fieldwork programme in insect farming/collecting communities (East Sepik, Northern, North Solomons and Eastern Highlands Provinces)
<p>There have been ongoing delays with the project timetable due to initial difficulties in obtaining research permissions for Papua New Guinea. These delays have been documented in past annual and half-year reports to the Darwin Initiative. However, within the past six months there has been a significant catch up in the project's research timetable despite the loss of funds that resulted from invoicing and accountancy mistakes in March 2007.</p> <p>Morobe Province Field Trip Field research was conducted in Morobe Province in April/ May, being work rescheduled from 12/05. Over a two-week period interviews were conducted with fifteen insect farmers and collectors from six villages in three of the Province's sub-districts. In addition insights were gained into the illegal trade of butterflies (including CITES listed species), through interviews with a former smuggler in Bulolo. Access to the Wau Bulolo valley by road remains difficult with the towns being intermittently cut off due to severe flooding.</p> <p>Northern Province Field Trip Fieldwork in the Northern Province was rescheduled from May to the end of July. The field trip took place between the 30th July and the 4th August. The project took the opportunity to involve its NGO partners in this trip. Michael Hudson (Manager, Wau Ecology Institute Insect Ranch) and Catherine Aisi (Manageress, Insect Farming and Trading Agency) accompanied Rob Small and Florence Jicki (local counterpart). The involvement of our NGO partners made possible two village workshops on insect ranching in the Voivoro and Kauawoki, both well attended.</p> <p>The insect trade and conservation are sensitive issues in Northern Province as the CITES Appendix I listed butterfly, <i>Ornithoptera alexandrae</i>, is endemic to the Province. In the mid- to late-1990s AusAid implemented in the Province a conservation project for <i>O. alexandrae</i> named the Oro Conservation Project. The fallout from this project, which overall failed to meet many of its aims, combined with local NGO efforts to establish conservation areas in a region that is heavily dependant economically on the conversion of land to Oil Palm plantation, has led to great levels of mistrust between local landowners and outsiders. The involvement of WEI and IFTA enabled Rob Small and Florence Jicki to visit Kauawoki and Voivoro, access that would have been impossible without the incentive of insect ranching training offered by our NGO partners. The training sessions also gave opportunity to use and disperse the training manual that was funded and produced by the DI project.</p> <p>At Voivoro village Rob Small interviewed Russel and David Hauro, two men involved in the illegal smuggling of <i>O. alexandrae</i>. Interviews and a group discussion session at Kauawoki village were held with villagers who had previously been involved with the Oro Conservation Project and insect ranching and collecting.</p> <p>East Sepik Field Trip Fieldwork in the East Sepik Province was rescheduled from April to August. The field trip took place from the 15th</p>	

to 23rd August. Once again the project involved its NGO partners, however due to illness Catherine Aisi of the Insect Farming and Trading Agency was unable to attend. The field team was comprised of Rob Small, Florence Jicki, Michael Hudson and Peter Nano (WEI Insect Ranch Staff).

One-day training workshops were conducted in Maprik and Ambunti. The two workshops combined attracted just under 100 participants, they made use of the project's training manual, and they involved sessions from all members of the field team.

Interviews were conducted with three ranchers and farmers from the Prince Alexander mountains to the north of Maprik, one of whom had been involved in both the legal and illegal trade since 1970.

The isolated Upper Sepik, of which Ambunti is the district administrative centre, is a new area for insect ranching and collecting, although for many years the area has been involved in the sustainable use of crocodiles. There has been a running dialogue between our project and Mainland Holdings since the project's Sustainable Use of Wildlife workshop held in February. Mainland run the large crocodile farm in Lae and also maintains the crocodile SU project in Ambunti. Mainland is now willing to assist the Wau Ecology Institute Insect Ranch in insect trading in the Upper Sepik with transport and logistical support, a positive outcome for which the project can take credit.

Postponed and cancelled fieldtrips

North Solomons: due to budgetary constraints trips the field trip has been rescheduled to May of next year.

Eastern Highlands: due to budgetary constraints and concerns about safety and criminality associated with the Papua New Guinea general election in July/ August 2007, the field trip to the Eastern Highlands was cancelled.

7/07

Investigation of other insect-trading NGOs and the illicit sector

Since the submission of the project timetable all other insect trading NGOs have had their export licenses revoked by the Department of Environment and Conservation. An individual, Hais Wassel, from Madang Province still has permission to export. Rob Small has interviewed him on a number of occasions.

Investigations into the illegal sector of the trade were conducted as part of the field trips to Morobe, Northern and East Sepik Provinces, as described above.

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.

Rob Small was able to attend the CITES Conference of the Parties in The Hague at the start of June. This allowed the Project to offer support to the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) delegation as well as offering a valuable research opportunity for the project. He met with Carlos Solana of the CITES Animals Committee to discuss the possible down listing of *Ornithoptera alexandrae* from Appendix I to II for trade.

Additionally Rob participated in the Working Group set up for Revision of Resolution Conf. 11.16 on 'Ranching and trade in ranches specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II'. The members of the PNG delegation to the Conference of the Parties are yet to submit a report to DEC, but Rob Small has already briefed (in August) the Department's Deputy Secretary for Conservation of the pertinent outcomes of the CoP. Small has met with the Chair (Prof. G. Webb) and Regional Chair (C. Manolis) of the IUCN Crocodile Specialist Group to advise them of DEC's lingering misunderstandings about CITES and its current lack of capacity to meet CITES's reporting needs.

Completion of the Department of Environment and Conservation's website is still awaiting final written approval from the Secretary of the department, even though we have provided them with a dummy draft version. We are told that final DEC approval, for unknown reasons, is not likely to be forthcoming. After three years of trying, the project has still not been granted an interview with Mr Wari Iamo, Permanent Secretary of DEC.

Florence Jicki was hired in April 2007 as Rob Small's counterpart for a six-month period. Florence was previously one the project's University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) Honours scholarship students. This post, in which she worked closely with Rob Small, has allowed her to enhance her research skills, both desk based and in the field. For example she has done further courses in GIS at UPNG, and she has developed IT and project management skills. Her main work was the compilation of material for a revised Management Plan for PNG CITES-listed butterflies as agreed at the Workshop for the Sustainable Use of Wildlife in PNG that we organised in February 2007.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? Yes, and no changes have been made to original agreement.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: Yes, unavoidable delays to project timetable have featured in all previous reports. We have also explained to Darwin Secretariat in emails the negative effects on our activities of their refusal of our request to carry forward £4K of unexpended project money from 2006-07 to 2007-08.

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: Yes, as discussed in previous reports.

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

The project incurred substantial expenditure in February 2007 connected to the SU of Wildlife Workshop we organised in Madang, and also in March to pay for the Insect Farming training manual. It proved impossible, because of various delays, to process all the paperwork for this expenditure before the end of the financial year, 31st March 2007. As a result the project under-spent by £7321.66 in 2006-07, mainly because of delays in submitting invoices by certain organisations in PNG and New Zealand, and delays in the response by accountants in Cambridge University. Of this under-spend we have been permitted to carry-over only £3,000 to this financial year.

The project is therefore under-resourced for the remainder of its expected life, and this has affected activities in the last half-year, as detailed above. If the missing £4K were to be reimbursed to us, it would make possible a meaningful final fieldwork phase in 2008; without it, much less can be achieved.

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.

See attachment.

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 email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report.**