

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report

Project Ref. No.	14-013
Project Title	Community Management of NTFPs in Kangchenjunga Conservation Area, Nepal
Country(ies)	Nepal
UK Organisation	WWF UK
Collaborator(s)	WWF Nepal Program
Report date	November 2006
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HY2
Project website	

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).

A) The following section contains a summary of progress from project initiation in April – October 2006.

I) Re-establishment of KCAP and KCAMC Office in Lelep Head Office Building

The office of KCAP and KCAMC has been re-established in Lelep after the completion of renovation works since September 2006. Likewise, all the sector offices have been re-established in all the four sectors after the KCAP was opened to work and implement its activities that were disturbed due to escalated insurgency in mid 2002 and shifted to district head quarter.

Re-establishment of KCAP and KCAMC office in Lelep Head Office Building has enabled the project staff to have more close interaction with communities and speed up the completion of the initiated activities in the last reporting period.

II) Project Inception Workshop

An inception workshop was held on 30th of August 2006 in Lelep specifically for representatives of 7 Conservation Area Users Committees (CAUCs). Altogether, 21 members of 7 CAUC in workshop identified several NTFPs and NTFPs based enterprises for sustainable management, utilization and income generation in the KCA.

During the workshop, participants were also briefed on the introduction, importance, objectives and expected outputs of the “Community Management of NTFP's for Conservation and Livelihoods in KCA” program funded by Darwin Initiative and WWF.

III) NTFPs (Chiraito - *Swertia chirayita*) Survey

Two teams comprising members of *Himali Samrakshan Manch* (HSM) in Tapethok and Lelep VDC during the month of July/August 2006 completed the ecological survey of NTFPs (Chiraito- *Swertia chirayita*). The inventory work was conducted for 15 days in the field and also

established 7 permanent monitoring plots in Lelep and Tapethok. The survey was basically done to explore the growth rate, harvestable stock, the productivity, the area and land of availability and cultivation, harvesting and cultivation practices, etc.

IV) Participatory research and training on ecological monitoring of NTFPs:

Two researchers, Bal Krishna Nepal and Dr Suresh K. Ghimire have completed study on ecological monitoring of NTFPS that was initiated in last reporting period. The study identified 13 species on the basis of their economic potential, socio-cultural values and local health care importance. Among these 13 species, 5 (*Saussure* sp., *Daphne bholua*, *Edgeworthia gardneri*, *Swertia chirayita* and *Neopicrorhiza scrophulariiflora*) are harvested in high amount for trade in KCA.

V) Hand over of community forest:

Altogether sixteen community forests in KCA, including one to be managed entirely by a women's group, were handed over to user groups through the user committees. This process has handed over 4771 hectares of forest benefiting 668 Household of 16 CFUGs. During the process of handover, 45 members were provided forest management training.

VI) Feasibility study for NTFP enterprises:

In March 2006, a feasibility study for NTFP enterprises was carried out by an entrepreneurial development organization, Women Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal (WEAN). Focus group discussions were organized with local communities with the objective of gaining an overview of the resources and skills available and the local market situation for feasibility of NTFP enterprises. Target groups were identified and community planning was carried out. In addition a sub-sector analysis of NTFPs was initiated by Lotus Intellect, an organization providing business development services for NTFPs, to identify the key constraints to and provide recommendations for sustainable harvest and commercialization of NTFPs in KCA.

VII) KCA Handover to KCAMC

In September 2006, Government of Nepal took a bold step by handing KCA to KCAMC in facilitation of World Wildlife Fund Nepal /Department of National Park Wetland Conservation (DNPWC), establishing a model for the first time in Nepal and the globe as a whole. Late Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Mr. Gopal Rai handed over the KCA Management to Late Chairperson of KCAMC Mr. Dawa Tshering Sherpa in a special handover ceremony held on September 22, 2006 in Taplejung district headquarter. The handover ceremony was conducted in presence of donors from different countries, Secretary of MFSC, Directors of DNPWC and DoF, Country Representative of WWF Nepal, Government Line Agencies of the district, Local NGOs/Projects, Local CBOs, members of KCAMC, CAUC, UGs and Mothers Group.

The handover has been a grand success and achievement for the project and communities as well. It is envisaged that handover of KCA to KCAMC will enhance community for community management of protected areas and strengthened the role of communities in protected area management. In this regards, KCAMC and affiliated institutions have prepared a Management Plan and WWF Nepal Program through Darwin Initiative capacitate community to manage NTFPs for conservation and sustainable livelihood.

VIII) Planning and monitoring:

Project staff are conducting periodic field visits for review and planning for the next year. In June 2006, a review and planning meeting was held in KCA to finalize the work plan for FY 07.

B) The following activities are planned up to March 2007:

1. Completion of NTFP inventory in remaining CFUGS and sensitization training

Researchers recruited by WWF Nepal Program are working on development of community-

based monitoring system of NTFPs since October 2005. They have established plots for long term monitoring and developed community indicators for monitoring in support of local community for CFUGS. NTFP inventories have been prepared for some of the CFUGS and will be completed for the remaining CFUGS. Along with enterprise development specialists, sensitization training for local harvesters, traders and other members of the community will be conducted in December 2006.

2. Sustainable NTFP management

Enterprise development specialists are already working with the local communities and have identified and prioritised community-based NTFP enterprises. Related to this activity, they will be providing enterprise development training to the community institutions during December 2006 and February 2007.

3. Capacity building

Exchange visits will be organized for community members to visit successful NTFP projects and learn from their experiences.

4. Project publications and media articles

Technical reports and media articles covering the project implementation will be produced and disseminated to a wider audience.

5. Planning and monitoring

Based on the ongoing work in KCA, project staff will make field visits for reviewing and planning for the next fiscal year.

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.

The Darwin Project in KCA went through about 2 months of transition period due to the tragic helicopter crash on September 23, 2006 in which 24 renowned conservationist were on board. WWF lost 7 prominent senior official staff in the tragic crash. They were on way back to Taplejung from Ghunsa after handing over of KCA to KCAMC. All the field activities were affected during this period of time, both because WWF field and central staff had to undertake rescue efforts and manage the aftermaths of the tragedy. In addition, the local communities took some time to recover from the tragedy of having lost their conservation patrons including the chairman of KCA Management Council. From November onwards, the project has taken up pace with the planned activities. It's likely that the two months transition period will reflect in delaying, however not much, of some of the planned activities the next reporting period.

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

NA

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

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 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.**