

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	14-024
Project Title	Afro-Asian Elephant Community Conservation Network
Country(ies)	Thailand & Kenya
UK Organisation	Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
Collaborator(s)	(1) Elephant Conservation Network: Kanchanaburi (Thailand) (2) Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (Thailand) (3) Wildlife Conservation Society (Thailand) (4) Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme (Thailand) (5) The Greater Masai Mara Community Scout Programme (Kenya) (6) Friends of Conservation (UK and Kenya) (7) Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (UK)
Report date	October 2005 (covering July-Sept 2005)
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	Half-Year (1)
Project website	Not yet (due to be added to ZSL website Nov 2005)

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).

Project 1st quarter: official start date was postponed one month from June to July because the project was transferred from Friends of Conservation (FOC) to the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) but in effect, this caused a delay of two months.

Progress against agreed milestones for 1st quarter:

- ZSL project leader and local co-ordinators started work
- Field office re-established, its equipment and communications serviced and/or upgraded
- Official permission formalities in process
- TORs developed for project team and community associates.
- Meetings held in 16 villages affected by elephant crop-raiding (increased from 14 villages last year).
- Community co-ordinators and rangers identified.
- Meetings held with new PA personnel to discuss plans and establish good collaborative relations.
- Protocols and forms for the surveys (socio-economic, land-use, elephant distribution) and monitoring procedures (crop-raiding, elephant sightings) are underway.

Activities not included in agreed timetable:

- Produced project pamphlet to distribute to villagers, and other associates at local/national level
- Hired administrative assistant to help run office, organise meetings and workshops, prepare survey and training materials etc. using budget allocation (not now needed) in Yr 1 for Kenya co-ordinator
- Project team participated in, and contributed to, the MIKE patrol-based data collection training (5-days) for the PA station chiefs
- Project team organised and accompanied the Senate Working Group on Elephants (part of its Wildlife Standing Committee) on a human-elephant-conflict (HEC) field trip in the project area to assess the need for elephant corridors
- Field co-ordinators participated in, and gave a presentation at, a 4-day workshop organised by the Thai Senate Elephant Working Group to finalise plans for 3 elephant corridors in Thailand (one in our area) and to tighten laws governing wild & domestic elephants. This workshop was largely instigated by the project leader who enjoys a good working relationship with the chair of the Senate elephant group.
- Field co-ordinators spent two rewarding days with WCS Thailand's HEC project team, learning about measuring different types of crop-damage in order to develop standard approaches.



Milestones not yet reached because of delayed project start:

- Thailand launch press release (with British Embassy): awaiting completion of permission formalities
- Community HEC groups have not yet appraised / agreed the village survey protocols
- Elephant survey protocols not yet finalised / agreed with the PA staff
- Ranger training / survey planning not yet finalised
- Media pieces postponed until field activities fully underway
- MSc course postponed until Sept 2006 (but fees paid in 2005 as planned)

Summary:

In spite of these delays, we expect to be on-track with the field surveys and most of the listed measurable outputs by the end of this project year. But we have postponed the visit by our Kenyan counterparts from Feb 06 (Yr1) to Sept 06 (Yr2). By then we will have conducted baseline monitoring through 3-seasons (the full agricultural year). We will start the mitigation field trials in November 2006.

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 delay in finalising the project transfer to ZSL, and the corresponding delay in receiving funds, had a knock-on effect because we could not buy vehicles or major project equipment, so we could not fix plans for the training or surveys. It also meant delaying the MSc start date so that Namfon could get involved with the field surveys before going away for a year. In the final analysis, none of this will matter.

Three other unexpected developments:

- *fuel prices* increased dramatically in July when the Thai government removed the petrol subsidy. We have taken a bit of money from flight savings to add to the fuel budget, but this will not be enough.
- *admin & field assistants:* when drawing up detailed implementation plans, we realised we could not do this project properly without an admin assistant (to help with admin, enter data, organise meetings/PR) and a field assistant to help with the socio-economic/land-use surveys initially, and then with forest surveys so that s/he can co-ordinate the forest surveys when Namfon goes away to do her MSc.
- *socio-economic survey:* we need help to do this baseline survey. We propose hiring two graduates to work with the community co-ordinator and admin assistant over a 6-week period in the field, and we will hire the short-term help of an experienced local consultant.

To accommodate these developments, the budget has changed by a little over 10% in three categories (salaries, travel, and other) but is unchanged overall.

- we are using £2,457 from the MSc living costs (item 41) to make up Namfon's salary in Yr1 (item 3)
- we will using the Kenyan counterpart amount (item 9) and the corresponding saving on air-tickets and per diems (items 21/22) to hire an admin assistant (£96/month) and a field assistant (£270/month)
- we have increased the vehicle running costs (item 24) by £372 taken from UK staff flights (item 21)
- we have used the rest of the MSc living costs to pay for the socio-economic survey (item 42). We will make up the MSc living expenses in Years 2 & 3 by using other savings, or matching funds, in future. We are in the process of applying for a grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Service Asian Elephant Fund.

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

Transferring the project from FOC to ZSL, postponing the MSc to 2006 but paying the fees in 2005, re-jigging budget summaries to accommodate this change and to add two new line-items (admin assistant and socio-economic survey) in Year 1 using surplus fee of Kenya counterpart have been discussed.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: Every month (by phone or email) from June-Oct 05

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: Delays caused by move from FOC to ZSL, MSc put off to 06, Noah's visit postponed from 2/06 to 9/06

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

No

