



DARWIN INITIATIVE



Pre-Project Funding Report

This report should be completed and submitted with a Stage 1 Darwin Application

Project Title	Conserving biodiversity in the modernising farmed landscapes of Uganda
Country(ies)	Uganda and United Kingdom
Project Ref No. (if known)	
UK Organisation	British Trust for Ornithology
Names / Titles of those who travelled to the host country	Dr Phil Atkinson and Dr Paul Donald
Grant Value	£2,650
Start and Finishing Dates	23 February to 5 March 2004
Report Date	1 October 2004

1. Please provide a concise overview of the activities undertaken during the pre-project development visit. (Please also include relevant activities before and after, as appropriate). Please highlight those that were not planned.

After pre-visit discussions with three of the Ugandan partners (Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, MUIENR, NatureUganda NU and the National Agriculture Advisory Service NAADS), we decided the focus of the visit would be a round table discussion (RTD) with potential project partners. At this discussion, the project could be presented to a wide audience, discussed and modified to meet the needs and engage support of stakeholders. The aims were to (i) discuss the importance of biodiversity in Uganda for conservation and sustainable agricultural development, (ii) discuss how agricultural practice may change in the light of Government policy and (iii) discuss and develop this project, especially the mechanisms of delivering the results of the project. The report from the workshop could then be used as a base for drafting a Stage 1 proposal collaboratively between UK and Ugandan institutions.

Twenty people from 13 organisations attended the meeting. Three presentations were given by MUIENR on the current state of knowledge about biodiversity and agriculture and how information from existing projects could be used to guide and enhance future work. Further one-to-one meetings were held with stakeholders identified at the RTD, including Dr Willie Odwongo, Director of the *Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture* (PMA) and Dr Francis Byekwaso (NAADS). These two organisations are key to integrating the results of this project into policy and practice. Meetings were also held with other government departments, including Wetland and Forestry Inspection Divisions and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment (MWLE). It was important to obtain support from these departments, as they are all responsible for natural resource management in the wider countryside. We also met industry representatives (Eastern African Fine Coffee Association) to discuss how changes in agriculture could affect one of Uganda's major agricultural exports and how marketing coffee as 'wildlife friendly' could add value to farmer's crops.

The Ugandan Wildlife Society were approached to develop a strategy for disseminating results from this project to appropriate levels of government as well as farmers, the actual endusers of such advice and we met the Director of Ecotrust, an NGO funding institute to support the conservation of biological diversity and alleviate poverty through sustainable economic development activities.

2. Were any difficulties or setbacks encountered? If so, how did they impact on the intended achievements for the visit, and on the intended Darwin project proposal.

No. All the activities planned went smoothly and all meetings were extremely positive.

3. Briefly explain how the pre-project funding has helped to confirm or change the planned project intervention – what difference did getting the grant make?

The visit to Uganda has ensured the engagement and support of a wide range of stakeholders in the project, including government, farmer organisations and industry. A large amount of information relating to agricultural and biodiversity, that is unavailable in the UK, was obtained. The BTO/RSPB have previous links with NU and MUIENR but the development of the project with other partners (especially government departments) would not have been possible without the visit. Meeting the key people in PMA and NAADS was essential to (a) develop the project so that it is something that fits into current government activities (e.g. using extension workers as a vehicle to provide advice) and (b) tailor the research to answer questions that were relevant to both government and farmers.

Very importantly, Dr Odwongo (Director, PMA) was extremely positive about the project. He said that biodiversity issues were moving up the political agenda and that it was a good and timely idea. PMA is about modernising farming *sustainably*. He stressed that we not only need to think about biodiversity per se but also impacts of biodiversity on farmers – e.g. birds eating crops in rice schemes. He, and Dr Francis Byekwaso from NAADS, was also interested in the goods and services that biodiversity provide in farmland, e.g. bees produce honey and pollinate crops. He emphasised that monitoring was important and is component of the PMA but that indicators should be simple. This discussion really emphasised the need to address these issues in Stage 1 proposal and these were not part of our original project plan.

4. Briefly describe the outcomes and conclusions arising from discussions with the host institution(s). What is the value of the project to the host institution(s) and what will their intended contributions be. Have any other partnerships evolved as a result of the pre-project grant?

The RTD helped refine the broad aims of the project. A key requirement to ensure that the needs of biodiversity are integrated with those of agricultural development (under PMA) is advice to farmers from NAADS (in collaboration with NU and UWS). The proposed work will identify and demonstrate some key best practices that meet both these needs and greatly enhance the advisory capacity of the two conservation NGOs as well as NAADS. MUIENR will benefit as the proposed project builds on two others and will provide trained staff at the end of the project. It will also boost the monitoring capacity of the National Biodiversity Databank (held by MUIENR). UWS's strength lies in advocacy, production of educational materials (through the Darwin Press) whereas NU's skills in community conservation and field-based projects will be essential in setting up demonstration plots where the results of the research can be trialled. These skills will be shared across the two organisations.

5. Conclusion and lessons learned from the Pre-Project Grant

Briefly highlight the main conclusions (positive and negative) gained from the pre-project grant. Please also include any suggestions you may have for improving the impact of this funding scheme.

The pre-project funding provided a unique opportunity to develop the project with people who will carry out the research and implement the findings. Without the visit it would have been impossible for BTO to fully understand the mechanisms through which the results of the research can be translated into policy, and the practical actions needed to implement them. The pre-project visit also allowed consultation with a much wider group of stakeholders than would have been possible by email and has ensured a wide 'ownership' of the project. Without this, the project would have been developed through a small number of individuals and, once the project started other stakeholders would have been approached with a largely 'finished' package. The pre-project funding has done much to foster good relations and is likely to reduce the time needed to set the project up.

Signed:

Name: Dr Juliet Vickery.

Title: Head, Terrestrial Ecology Unit.

Date: 1 October 2004

Please restrict this report to no more than two pages in length and send the completed form to ECTF with your Stage 1 Application Form either via email to darwin-applications@ectf-ed.org.uk or by post to ECTF, Pentlands Science Park, Bush Loan, Edinburgh EH26 0PH.