

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	162/14/034
Project Title	A biodiversity conservation training programme for the Yabotí Biosphere Reserve
Country(ies)	Argentina
UK Organisation	Eden Project
Collaborator(s)	University of Misiones, Instituto de Botanica Darwinion, Ministry of Ecology, UNDP, Guaraní people, Fundacion Vida Silvestre, CEIBA Ecological Investigation Laboratory Las Yungas, National University of Tucuman
Project Leader	Prof. Sir Ghillean Prance
Report date	31 October 2007
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 3
Project website	www.edenproject.com/foundation/darwin-initiative.html

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 progress over the last six months has been good.

All activities, involving specimen collecting and information inputting into the Iris database, with Instituto Botanica Darwinion are on schedule. The database of plants is growing steadily.

One Argentinean (Fernando Niella from the University of Misiones) completed the RBG, Kew Plant Conservation Strategies Course in the summer of 2007. This, once again, proved to be a great success. Further, Hector Keller, the project's ethnobotanist, is currently in the UK. Hector is training at the Eden Project (as well as informing the messaging), utilising the herbarium facilities at Kew, presenting to various institutions, including the ethnobiology department at University of Kent, Canterbury. He is also working with Prof. Prance on the final draft of his doctorate.

The project continues to support Hector Keller. His work is progressing as expected and he hopes to complete his doctorate before the end of 2007

Cooperative initiatives with AMIRBY (Area Manejo Integral Reserva Biosfera Yabotí) have been developed and contact with ARAUCARIA (a Spanish foundation) for agreements in working with Guaraní people has been made. Park guards working with AMIRBY will be trained with the assistance of the project and work closely with the project team.

Dr Mario DiBittetti and his network of young scientists (CEIBA) continue to research the fauna of Yabotí and publish the results. The project funds 2 scholarships for researchers within this network.

One female jaguar (Sureña) from a conflict zone on the border of a Provincial Park in the South was captured, fitted with a radio collar, and trans-located to the vicinity of the field station in Yabotí where she is being monitored.

It is envisaged all travel and subsistence funding will be used in this financial 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 political situation in the pre-electoral times froze some important initiatives. However, recent news of the results means that the continuity of the same party in government will help to foster the project's initiatives. A meeting with the new elected authorities will be programmed into the visit to Misiones by Prof. Prance in November 2007.

The restoration workshop, planned for Nov/Dec 2007, has been postponed until March 2008. Dr Peter Whitbread-Abrutat is expected to visit to Argentina in late 2007, to ensure the workshop in March 2008 runs smoothly and there is wide agreement of its goals and suitable preparation. This trip and the following workshop will mainly be coordinated in partnership with AMIRBY.

Dr Bittetti has struggled to find funding elsewhere for ongoing work and so the zoological work has not been as extensive as in previous years. This will not affect budget or timetable.

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

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 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**