

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report (31 October 2005)

Project Ref. No.	14-038
Project Title	Ha Long Bay Environmental Awareness Programme
Country(ies)	Vietnam
UK Organisation	Fauna and Flora International
Collaborator(s)	None
Report date	October 28, 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	Not yet established; FFI's Asia-Pacific website is www.fauna-flora.org/asia_pacific/asia_pacific.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).

Since the August 1, 2005 start up of the programme, several staff (Programme Director (PD), Educational Programmes Director (EPD), Institutional Liaison Officer and full-time student intern) have been recruited. They have elaborated a workplan and have initiated discussion of the workplan with the principal Vietnamese Government partner, the Ha Long Bay Management Authority. PD has studied programme budget and proposed modifications to the Secretariat. Vigorous efforts have begun to recruit local (Ha Long Bay region) staff and to locate a suitable programme office site in Ha Long City. EPD is developing experiential education cruise modules for discussion with staff of several international schools in Hanoi. We are on track to field-test and demonstrate the viability of the EcoBoat concept in March-May 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.

After the principal designer and presumptive head of the Ha Long Bay Environmental Awareness Programme unexpectedly tendered her resignation, FFI requested and was granted a delay in the start-up of the programme from June 1 to August 1, 2005. A new programme director was on board in mid-September. His review of the budget revealed (a) prospective overfunding in Year 1 as a consequence of the delayed start and front-loading, (b) a large prospective shortfall in following years as a consequence of a calculation error on FFI's part, and (c) prospective savings on salaries that can be effectively reprogrammed to programme delivery activities. *If these budget issues are uncorrected, or alternative funding in the second and third years of the programme cannot be secured, they are a very real threat to the viability of the programme.*

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

The delay occasioned by recruitment of a new director and budget issues (A) and (B) above were the

subject of e-mail exchanges between Project Coordinator Birchenough and Ms Sarah Moon of the Darwin Secretariat. Permission was given to delay the start of the project until August 1; it was agreed that the budget estimates would be revised to reflect the later start. Structural issues only became evident during the new PD's close review, and were communicated to Ms Moon late in October.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: in part,, in June-September 2005

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: delayed start approved in June 2005.

Changes to budget discussed but not resolved in June-September; more substantial revisions have been proposed to the Darwin Secretariat in October 2005.

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

No