

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	14-049
Project Title	Participatory Management of Priority Biodiversity Sites in Taraba State
Country(ies)	Nigeria
UK Organisation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Collaborator(s)	Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) Taraba State Government, Nigeria
Report date	27th October 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	None. NCF is however in the process of updating its website and will add the project to it.

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).

General progress

The first steering committee and setup planning meetings were held in Nigeria with RSPB, NCF and the state government in July. The steering committee discussed the staffing and setup delay issues and agreed a term of reference. A new setup plan also put in place for the remainder of the FY and the need to review budget implications was raised.

Contract and legal documentation between the RSPB and NCF were signed on 1 August. These documents spell out the terms of the collaboration towards the project.

Key milestone: June 05 – Project Staff Recruitment

This has taken longer than planned. Adverts were sent out in June, and initial interviews were held in early July for all posts. Five of the seven positions were filled in that particular round. We therefore had to re-advertise the posts in August and interviews were done in early September. The final positions have all now been filled and contracts were issued for all staff as of 1st October. The part time staffs have been working hard to set up the project since August.

Key milestone: July 05 – Biodiversity Surveys

The setback of recruitment delayed the project by at least 3 months. Biodiversity surveys will now take place in November.

Key milestone: August 05 – Establish Project Presence at each site

As above will follow the site surveys that will lead to selection of project sites.

Key milestone: August 05 – Project procurement and site infrastructure.

Equipment procurement began in late September but was not completed before the end of the

month.

Key milestone: September 05 – Forest User Groups and Forest Management Committees established at each site.

As above will follow the site surveys that will lead to selection of project sites.

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.

It has taken much longer to get project established than initially planned. This is partly due difficulties in recruiting experienced staff but also to delays in agreeing a funding contract with the projects second donor DFID (see 3). The DFID funding forms a major part of the project, and we were not confident to initiate the project until the contractual formalities were completed. The DFID contract was eventually signed on 16 August. The subsequent contract between RSPB and NCF was signed in the same month.

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

An email request to amend the budget and work plan was sent on 15th September. Approval in principle was sent on 12th October. We are in the finishing stages of work plan and budget revision.

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?

As stated in the project document (section 10.) we hoped that we would obtain further funding from DFIDs Civil Society Challenge Fund. This was successful and they are contributing £394,220 to this project over 5 years.

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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.**