

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

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
Project Leader	Alex Hipkiss
Report date	31 st October, 2007
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 3
Project website	See NCF Website http://www.ncfnigeria.org/projects.php#p1

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).

More Forest User Groups (FUGs) are now registered as cooperative multi-purpose societies and they have been registered with Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank and National FADAMA Development Programme to enable them access micro-finance facilities.

A new FUG in Yelwa, Natural Medicine Practitioners' Association has been formed. They have been collecting and preserving plant specimens of use in treatment of common diseases. The group is interested in setting up a medicinal plants' garden and as a first step a plot of land is needed. The Dept. of Botany at the University of Lagos has donated a small but adequate sum to the group towards the purchase of land.

The activities of the project have been disseminated nationally through a national TV programme by the National Television Authority on May 27.

We have continued with biodiversity monitoring forest patrols 20 volunteer patrol guards underwent a one-week training programme in patrol techniques, conservation, law enforcement and ballistics. Resource persons were drawn from Gashka Gumti National Park. The state forestry department and NCF staff are getting valuable on the job work experience, but not formal training has taken place in this reporting period.

The Community Forestry Network (CFN) was inaugurated in September 2007 after a one-day training in roles of the network in forest conservation state wide and leadership skills, the CFM aims to 'promote the conservation of plants and animals for the benefits of our communities and future generations through advocacy and local action.' This is comprised of state government forestry staff, community development and women's development units together with the project communities and their Forest Management Committees (FMCs). A state government level PFM committee has also been established to be the think tank behind the long-term sustainability of the programme. Taraba State Laws for governing Forest resources are being reviewed for the inclusion of or the clarification of community roles in Forest management.

At a national scale, the project has developed 2 newsletters about the project.

PFM plans are being drawn by the consultants engaged and it is expected to be ready in

the new quarter.

Four new communities in Donga valley and two in Mambilla have signified their interest in participating in the project activities.

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 Mambilla dam workers have encroached in one of our communities and a nearby hamlet. People have been asked to relocate without alternative places or compensation.

We are not sure to what extent their activities will affect these communities and the nearby Akwazantar Forest Reserve.

NCF has vigorously lobbied for transparency, having met with the State Government and HRH Prince of Wales took the opportunity to lobby the State Governor after meeting him recently.

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**