

# Darwin Initiative

## Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

**PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise**

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	Ref 14-059
<b>Project Title</b>	Certification to Support Conservation of Endangered Mexican Cacti
<b>Country(ies)</b>	UK; Mexico
<b>UK Organisation</b>	University of Reading
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Principle collaborator: University of Queretero,
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2005
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 1
<b>Project website</b>	In prep

### **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).**

In the first quarter we planned to achieve the following: Mexican technician appointed. Equipment purchased. Initial stakeholders' workshop (3 days). Plant collecting programme finalised. Ongoing programme of plant collecting and molecular work initiated. First two two-week collecting trips to Chihuahuan desert carried out. Target species for SSR maternity/paternity testing demonstrator identified.

The reporting period covers the first month of the project, not the first quarter of the first year; therefore not all of the project objectives listed were to be achieved in one month. The advances towards meeting the project goals for the first month are as follows: the UK RAIA has been identified and appointed and the Mexican technician identified but not appointed yet. I am travelling to Mexico next week with the UK RAIA for the stakeholders' meeting and for a meeting to plan the collecting schedule. Collecting will start when I am in Mexico, and the first trip to the Chihuahuan desert will be carried out as soon as the Mexican technician's contract is signed. We will hold meetings to identify the species for SSR work in Mexico in November. Additionally we have an article describing our project in press in PlantTalk magazine.

### **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 project got off to a slower start than we had hoped, and many of the Year 1 first quarter objectives will have to be met in the last two months of the quarter. The problems we have experienced relate in large part to problems with contracts and agreements with University of Queretero (UAQ). At the end of the reporting period (end Sept) the Mexican PI Dr Rolando Barcenas Luna was not yet salaried at the University. As a consequence of the PI's status there were delays in signing the MoUs between Reading and Queretero. These were not signed at the end of the reporting period. In the absence of the MoUs UAQ could not appoint the technician or claim the costs of the equipment needed to set up the lab. We expect that these changes will not effect the budget or timetabled activities because Rolando is now salaried at UAQ and the MoUs are now signed (I'm told I haven't seen them) in Mexico and I

can bring them back to Reading for UoR signatures in the next two weeks.	
<b>Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b>	
Because the problems in the first month have now been rectified I have not discussed the problems with the DI. I expect we can keep to schedule.	
<b>Discussed with the DI Secretariat:</b>	<b>no/yes, in..... (month/yr)</b>
<b>Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)</b>	
The stakeholders' meeting will be held next week, one month after originally planned but still within the first quarter of year 1, as stated in the project plan. We plan to complete the report on the meeting in November 2005.	

<b>3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b>
no

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](mailto: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.**