Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	14-061
Project Title	Important Bird Area conservation and capacity building in Central Asia
Country(ies)	Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan
UK Organisation	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), UK
Collaborator(s)	Kazakhstan : The Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity in Kazakhstan (ACBK)
	Uzbekistan: The Uzbekistan Zoological Society (UZS)
	Turkmenistan : Ministry of Nature Protection of Turkmenistan / Turkmenistan Society for Nature Conservation
Report date	31.10.2006
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1 (project start was 1 st November 2005)
Project website	<u>www.iba.uz</u> for Uzbekistan and soon (late autumn 2006) <u>www.acbk.kz</u>

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 past 6 months the project continued to develop as planned and almost all activities have been implemented according to the baseline timetable for the project.

- An "IBA criteria and methods application manual" has been compiled in Russian and English, printed and disseminated to project collaborators
- The first 18 IBA data sets have been sent for approval to the BirdLife Secretariat in Cambridge.
- About 40 Percent (106 sites) of candidate sites (216 sites) are already confirmed as IBA's, the IBA data sheets are currently translated into English and will be inserted in new (online based) version of the BirdLife IBA database in December 06 and January 07
- 50 students are part of a regular training programme and 20 of them already take part in
 professional fieldwork (2 as part of the Sociable Lapwing Darwin Project on various trips and
 expeditions. The Uzbekistan partner produced a film to attract students to field work training and
 conducted a number of information and training events to inform about IBA work at university
 level. As part of the IBA project already two ornithological student groups emerged in
 Uzbekistan at Samarkand and Tashkent university.
- Large-scale fieldwork has been conducted throughout all seasons of 2006 to complete gaps of knowledge on IBA candidate sites delivering high-quality new data
- The Kazakhstani part of the IBA project was officially presented (together with the Sociable Lapwing Darwin Project) as part of the Queen's birthday celebrations at an highly official event organised by the British Embassy in Astana, Kazakhstan. The event was attended by key project staff. At the event the British Ambassador, Paul Brummell, supported the project by taking part in an official press conference at an ACBK reception in Almaty.

• The pocket field guides for all three countries are in the final stages of preparation and will be printed in December 2006 (according to the time plan print should have been in June 06 but fieldwork preparation has been very time consuming which has led to a slight delay.

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 implementation is going ahead as planned and no notable problems or unexpected developments have occurred or are foreseen. A slight delay still occurs with signing a MoU between the project partner in Uzbekistan and the key conservation authority of the country. The MoU has been finalized and had to be forwarded to the "Cabinet of Ministers" for approval. Nevertheless this procedure until now has had no negative affect to the successful project implementation of the project.

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 <u>planned</u> modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should <u>not</u> 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, <u>stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk</u>. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. <u>Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.</u>