

Darwin Initiative Annual Report

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Darwin Project Information

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Project Title	Protecting Key South African Biodiversity Sites through Community-based Conservation
Country(ies)	South Africa
UK Contract Holder Institution	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
UK Partner Institution(s)	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Host country Partner Institution(s)	BirdLife South Africa (BLSA)
Darwin Grant Value	£169,077
Start/End dates of Project	1 July, 2006 to 30 September, 2009
Reporting period (1 Apr 200x to 31 Mar 200y) and annual report number (1,2,3..)	1 July, 2007 to 31 March, 2008 Annual report number 2
Project Leader Name	Paul Buckley
Project website	http://www.birdlife.co.za/index.php?p[IGcms_nodes][IGcms_nodesUID]=ccb18029b28e2f6bc62d6c4b3cec84d0
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1. Project Background

The RSPB has collaborated with BLSA since 1995. Once focused on birdwatching and surveys, BLSA has broadened the scope of its activities to include conservation initiatives during this time. In March of 2007, BLSA created a new division that focuses on community-based conservation projects. Daniel Marnewick, the manager of the current RSPB/BLSA Darwin project, is the manager of this Community Based Conservation Division. The current project is the division's flagship project.

Community-based conservation is internationally recognised as a critical conservation intervention. There has been considerable work in this area in South Africa since 1994, although it has mainly focused on communities around large protected areas. In implementing this project, BLSA is building on experiences and lessons learned elsewhere in the country and sub-region, primarily through membership to IUCN and WWF-SA. It is also building on models developed by BirdLife International, the RSPB and their country partners in Africa. These models offer dynamic and resilient multi-pronged approaches to the integration of conservation and development. These approaches are founded upon BirdLife International's site-support group (SSG) model, which engages local communities in conserving and monitoring critical

sites for birds. Daniel has extensive knowledge of community-based conservation practices, particularly through his prior work with communities living around the Kruger National Park.

The project has thus far been implemented at four sites in Soweto (Gauteng Province), Wakkerstroom (Mpumalanga Province), Cata (Eastern Cape Province) and Ongoye Forest Reserve (Kwa-Zulu Natal). BLSA had already been active in the Soweto and Wakkerstroom areas prior to initiation of the current project. However, the focus of its activities was rather different. The sites in Wakkerstroom, Ongoye and Cata are Important Bird Areas (IBAs). BirdLife International has identified over 10,000 of these IBAs worldwide. Criteria used to designate IBAs are internationally agreed, standardised, quantitative and scientifically defensible. These criteria are based on the occurrence of key bird species that are vulnerable to global extinction or whose populations are otherwise irreplaceable (<http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/index.html>). This project aims to develop links between the conservation of critical bird habitat at the three sites and the livelihoods of local people. Key to the development of these links will be the creation of income-generating activities (IGAs) around the development of small local enterprises and ecotourism, and developing institutions to facilitate the inclusion of all resource users in management and decision making processes.

The Klipspruit Wetland in Soweto in southern Johannesburg is heavily polluted by the goldmines and industries of the Witwatersrand. At the same time, informal settlements on the banks of the wetland in an area of Soweto called Kliptown are a source of human, livestock and solid waste, which empties into the wetland. Despite this there is a wide array of bird life, of interest to visitors. Residents of these informal settlements do not benefit from the tourism industry in Soweto, or enjoy opportunities to market locally produced goods.

The small town of Wakkerstroom, situated about three hours east of Johannesburg in Mpumalanga, is well known as one of the best birding destinations in South Africa. Its large wetland is home to a number of globally threatened bird species, such as the white-winged flufftail, the wattled crane and the blue crane. Inns and Bed & Breakfasts have sprung up to cater for the growing influx of tourists. However, impoverished residents of Wakkerstroom's black township (eSizamaleni) enjoy minimal benefit from the tourist trade. Three of the threats to the wetland include uncontrolled cattle grazing, hunting of birds for protein by residents of eSizamaleni and ad-hoc, unplanned and uncontrolled fires. Threats are expected to increase over time as the impoverished township population grows and exerts increasing pressure on local natural resources.

The Xhosa community of Cata is approximately an hour and a half north of East London in the Eastern Cape. Indigenous forests in this area provides habitat for the Cape Parrot, one of the most threatened birds in South Africa. There are only approximately 1,300 individuals of this species remaining in the wild. The Cape Parrot depends on yellowwood trees of the *Podocarpus* genus for nesting sites and as a source of food. Diminishing *Podocarpus* forests due to illegal commercial harvesting, and indiscriminate harvesting by impoverished local people for timber and firewood, threaten the Cape Parrot with certain extinction. Cape Parrots are also targeted by the illegal bird trade in South Africa. The Cata community is exploring opportunities to develop an indigenous tree nursery and avitourism industry that enhances their livelihoods, while enabling them to conserve their local indigenous forest and the Cape Parrots that depend upon it.

Finally, the Ongoye forest is a large remnant patch of coastal forest, 3903 ha in extent and lies along a ridge of hills overlooking the Indian Ocean. Ongoye Forest is the only place to see Woodward's Barbet in southern Africa (www.zbr.co.za/sz/ongoye.htm). The Ongoye Forest also forms part of the Zululand Birding route and is an IBA (ZA049). A local bird guide has been contracted to begin preliminary ground work with the local community, starting March 2008. The objective is to evaluate the current interactions between the local community/ies and the forest, and begin planning interventions. One of the first resource user groups to be engaged will be the cattle owners and the medicinal plant collectors/users.

2. Project Partnerships

The relationship between the RSPB and BLSA has been extremely positive. Our partnership is built upon over a decade of collaboration. When this collaboration was first conceived in 1995, BLSA was a scientific birding club primarily focused on servicing its membership. Today, it is a growing conservation organisation implementing a diverse range of relevant and highly effective programmes.

The early years of the RSPB's collaboration with BLSA focused on environmental education. The launch of the groundbreaking *Learning for Sustainable Living* publication, which was distributed to every secondary school in the country, marked a new era in which BLSA evolved to become relevant to a much broader constituency in South Africa, and connected conservation with people's lives and well being. Since then, the RSPB's core support for BLSA has complemented an array of dynamic joint initiatives including, for example, studies of threatened species such as the Southern Bald Ibis in the Eastern Cape and the Free State, and the Rudd's Lark in Wakkerstroom. Together, BLSA and the RSPB are part of the international campaign to save albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds threatened by destructive fishing practices. Our collaboration added a new dimension to BLSA's work in 2006 with the introduction of this Darwin Initiative project. The RSPB-funded policy and advocacy programme has greatly enhance BLSA's influence in promoting policies at the national, regional and international levels that benefit birds and biodiversity. The Community Based Conservation and Policy and Advocacy Divisions have been working closely on issues such as the current mining threat in Wakkerstroom.

As the project leader, Paul Buckley has a supervisory role in the Darwin Initiative project. Daniel Marnewick handles day-to-day project management. Site coordinators in Wakkerstroom, Cata and Soweto are responsible for on-the-ground implementation, and report regularly to Daniel. Daniel reports developments to Paul Buckley via e-mail and telephone on a regular basis.

Some other elements of the BLSA/RSPB partnership in year 2 of the project include the following:

- A visit by Andrea Lockwood and Paul Morling of RSPB in April 2007 to assist especially with socio-economic analysis
- During a visit to the RSPB in May 2007, Carolyn Ah Shene (Policy and Advocacy Manager) delivered a presentation to RSPB staff about the project;
- Paul visited the project sites in November 2007 and attended the BirdLife SA strategic workshop in February 2008;
- Daniel sent regular project reports and financial data to the RSPB;

In partnering with BLSA, the RSPB benefits from the collective expertise of Daniel and the three site coordinators with respect to the project sites and working with local communities in South Africa. The RSPB also has access to BLSA's extensive network of contacts. In return, BLSA benefits from the RSPB's expertise in areas such as project implementation, environmental education, the development of management plans, biological monitoring and socio-economic assessment.

In year two, Andrea Lockwood and Paul Morling (development economist) visited the three sites for two weeks to assist with identifying economic opportunities. Paul wrote up his findings in "*Protecting Key South African Biodiversity Sites Through Community Based Conservation: A Review of Economic Opportunities*" (Annex 4). The survey and monitoring component is being developed as part of a national programme to establish IBA monitoring throughout South Africa, and training was handled effectively at the national level. We expect that assistance from the RSPB's Management Plans Adviser will be given in developing a management plan for Soweto and Cata and he will therefore visit these sites early in year 3.

Relative to the CBD commitments, this partnership has built BLSA and South Africa's capacity in the following areas: i) community-focused monitoring programmes (Article 7). Daniel and the Project Officers' understanding of site-based ecological and socio-economic monitoring improved through his discussions with experts at the RSPB and through participating in the BirdLife International African Partnership COP meeting ii) *in situ* conservation (Article 8), enhanced understanding of the role that local people can play in the conservation of wetland and indigenous forest habitats; and iii) sustainable use of the components of biodiversity (Article 10). Daniel has passed this knowledge effectively on to other staff working on the project.

The project has linked with the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism's CBD officer through the WWF Community-based Natural Resources Forum, although no official partnership has been established. The CBD officer is aware of this project and relations can be formalised if and when the need arises. BLSA is negotiating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). SANBI is the body responsible for issues relating to biodiversity. The BLSA/SANBI MOU will provide BLSA with an open channel of communication with the new CBD focal point.

BLSA has recently developed a partnership with WWF-SA and the Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc). This partnership currently focuses on the conservation of the eastern Highveld grasslands area, which includes Wakkerstroom. With the imminent threat of coal mining emerging in Wakkerstroom, in February 2008 BLSA called a meeting of interested and affected parties which was attended by representatives from BirdLife SA, Ekangala Grasslands Trust, the Wildlife and Environment Society of SA, WWF-SA, Endangered Wildlife Trust, National Grasslands Programme of the Botanical Society of SA, Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association, Mpumalanga Dept of Agriculture and Land Administration, Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Authority, KZN Wildlife, farmers, Wakkerstroom residents and invited press people. These stakeholders have established the Luneberg/Wakkerstroom Environmental Protection Association.

Progress in year two with partnership established in year one are as follows:

- The Mayibuye Wetlands Programme. The Mayibuye Wetlands Programme ran out of funds in 2007 and was unable to secure further funding to continue paying its staff. Because of BLSA's relationship with the staff from Mayibuye and the work being done by the organisation, BLSA employed Martin Ramothibe, the Environmental Education officer to work under BLSA's Environmental Education Division, and similarly employed Nosiphiwo, the administrative officer as a bird guide at one of BLSA's conservancies. In February 2008, Martin took over the management of the Soweto site under this project, and Nosiphiwo took Martin's positions as the Environmental Education Officer in Soweto.
- The Wakkerstroom Tourism Association (WTA). BLSA is still a member of the association. BLSA has been instrumental in getting black members from Wakkerstroom to join the association;
- Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Authority (MPTA). The MPTA is the provincial authority responsible for protected areas and tourism in Mpumalanga. BLSA was instrumental in establishing the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee, which consists of a multiple stakeholder committee and is chaired by the MPTA, vice-chaired by the Pixley Ka Seme Local Municipality, and administered by BLSA;
- Border Rural Committee (BRC). BRC is a developmental organisation that strives to eradicate poverty from rural areas in the Eastern Cape through rights-based development. A formal MoU has been signed between BLSA and BRC in December 2007;
- Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Rhodes University. In 2007 BLSA and BRC hired a researcher at the ISER to undertake a resource-use assessment in Cata. In March 2008 BLSA contracted a researcher from Rhodes University to facilitate a workshop on Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) for the projects site managers and 6 community members.

- The UNEP/GEF Wings over Wetlands Programme. The programme has selected the wetland in Wakkerstroom as a demonstration project site, and has provided BLSA with funding in the amount of US\$248,000 (2006-2010) for work at this site. This funding serves as co-funding for the Darwin Initiative's funding. The project objectives that BLSA has developed with Wings over Wetlands complement and enhance the objectives of this project (www.wingsoverwetlands.org). In January 2008 Daniel and Hansco Banda attended an international workshop attended by the WOW stakeholders held in the Netherlands. 45 international participants attended to share ideas about their sites. The workshop also gave Daniel and Hansco the opportunity to establish contact with lead people from Wetlands International, African-Eurasian Flyways Programme, RAMSAR, and the Netherlands Government (the later resulting in a partnership between BLSA and the Netherlands South African Consulate Councillor for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality);
- Vogelbescherming Nederland (VBN). VBN is the Dutch BirdLife International partner. In year 1, VBN provided BLSA with £11,818 to develop a sustainable indigenous tree-planting project. BLSA used these funds in year 2 to plant 250 pecan nut trees in Cata, thereby potentially providing community members and Cape Parrots living in the area with a sustainable source of food in the future. Again, the objectives of the BLSA/VBN project complemented the BLSA/RSPB objectives in the Eastern Cape. This partnership concluded in January 2008;
- National/International conservation fora. In year 1, Daniel became a member of the IUCN's Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG) and WWF-Southern Africa's community-based natural resource management forum. In year 2 Daniel attended the SASUSG's AGM and management meeting, and the WWF CBNRM enterprises workshops.
- Other BirdLife International partners. Daniel's attendance in October 2007 at the BirdLife Africa Conference of the African Partnership (CAP) resulted in discussion around a southern Africa SSG network, and a South African community based conservation data base. Daniel will begin establishing these partnership initiatives in year 3.

New partnerships established in year two:

- The Soweto Kliptown Youth (SKY) is a community based organisation in the heart of Kliptown, Soweto. It works with young people on life skills and livelihood improvement, and also acts a community lobbying group. Up to now SKY have not had an environmental focus and therefore welcomes a partnership with BLSA. This project's Soweto site office is based on the SKY premises in Kliptown. The partnership includes a joint programme developing their existing library, working with their youth club, the tourism arts and craft market (POST 77, which is focused on the visual arts and are interested to developing a gallery that include wetland and birds portrait).
- The Soweto project site has built a relationship with four local schools (Lilydale primary school, Lakeview Primary, Nka-thuto primary and A.B Xuma primary school). Three of the schools are registered Eco-schools which uses environmental themes (Nature and Biodiversity, Resource use, Local and Global Issues).
- The Soweto site has been struggling to develop a partnership with Johannesburg City Parks (JCP) who is the key role player in Soweto regarding wetland use and management. A formal meeting with executive managers was called in March, which was used to cement the importance and potential of a partnership between JCP and BLSA. The follow up is the development of a MoU and Business plan. Due to the bureaucracy in local government departments, it is predicted that this process will further delay progress in a partnership with JCP.
- Department of Water Affairs and Forests (DWAF) is the national department managing the national forests around the Cata community. BLSA is developing a partnership with DWAF around the conservation of the endangered Cape Parrot and working with the Cata community to establish a Participatory Forest Management Committee, and develop tree planting initiatives to generate income and increase forest habitat.
- The Cata Communal Property Association (CPA) is a legal, registered community representative association elected by the community. BLSA's relationship with the

association is of vital importance in that this community relies partly on natural resources for their livelihood and we provide them with skills that will elicit support to generate income through the use of natural resources.

- Student Worldwide Partnership (SPW) is focusing on capacitating youth from Cata in different skills so that they have a sense of the meaningful role that they can play in their community. BLSA has partnered with SPW to encourage youth from Cata to participate in educating other youth members and elders about the importance of caring for our environment. At the moment members of SPW and PRA participants are busy preparing a theatre play for the community over Cape Parrot Counting Day (3-4th May). This drama intends to raise awareness about the importance of Cape Parrots for the environment and eco-tourism.
- The Luneberg/Wakkerstroom Environmental Protection Association (LWEPA) was established in February 2008 in partnership between BLSA, Botanical Society of South Africa, WWF-SA, other conservation NGOs, local & national government departments and local residents and land owners in response to a mining threat in the Wakkerstroom area. This is a membership based association that intends to oppose any mining land use in the area.
- The Pixley KaSeme local municipality is responsible for administering Wakkerstroom. During 2007 BLSA was successful in developing a partnership with the municipality, especially around developing income generating projects in Wakkerstroom. However, the municipality have seen the potential of mining in the area as a job creation opportunity, which has created tensions with BLSA who is fighting this mining in the area.
- South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). SANBI has a wetland rehabilitation programme which is called Working for Wetlands (WfW). The partnership between BLSA and WfW is about incorporating erosion control into awareness raising in Wakkerstroom.
- Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT). EWT hosts the South African Crane Working Group (SACWG). SACWG is responsible for monitoring cranes and doing cranes education and awareness programmes in Wakkerstroom. The partnership between BLSA and SACWG is about teaching communities, more especially farm workers and farm school learners, about cranes and the broader bird conservation issues like habitat loss, illegal hunting of birds, poisoning of birds and migratory birds in Wakkerstroom.
- Wakkerstroom Bird Club (WBC). WBC is a community based bird club which is affiliated to BirdLife South Africa. The partnership with BLSA is around bird monitoring and also Important Bird Areas (IBA) monitoring.
- Indwe Environment Club (IEC). IEC is a youth based environment club. Its members are predominantly black and reside at eSizameleni Township, Wakkerstroom. The partnership between BLSA and IEC is around Environmental Education which includes bird conservation and wetland management issues.
- Mpumalanga Department of Education (MDoE). MDoE is a state department which responsible for the smooth running of education in Mpumalanga province. The partnership with BLSA is around Environmental Education in Wakkerstroom which includes introducing bird conservation issues to the learners, Eco-schools programme and also integrating Environmental Education programmes into the school curriculum.
- National/International conservation fora. In year 2 Daniel was invited to become a member of the IUCN's international World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and Conservation International's (CI) national Good Food Alliance.

For the most part, these partnerships have added value to the project. The collaboration with the Wakkerstroom residents and concerned NGOs around the mining threat has been particularly strong and led to new alliances with BotSoc and WWF-SA. Unfortunately, BLSA's partnership with the Mayibuye Wetlands Programme in year 1 & 2 has been less effective. However BLSA was able to continue supporting two of the group's staff and therefore maintain much of the momentum of the group's work.

When this project was conceived, the RSPB and BLSA anticipated the formation of a national advisory group comprising representatives of government and NGO stakeholders in South

Africa. The expectation was that the expert members of this advisory group would assist in guiding the project's implementation. A decision was made in year 1 to delay the formation of this advisory group. It has become clear that such a group would not be the most valuable mechanism for accessing expertise, but rather, as Daniel now sits on the IUCN specialist groups SASUSG and WCPA, the WWF's CBNRM working group and CI's Good Food Alliance, it is expected that these national and international groups will lend the necessary expertise and networks. They will also provide mechanisms through which to promote the work at the individual sites and disseminate lessons learned elsewhere.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Activities in year 2 were mainly carried out in the manner planned.

Our progress in implementing the planned activities in year 2 is detailed in the following table. Additional detail is provided in Annex 1:

Project Implementation Timetable		
Date	Key Milestones	Progress
<i>Regular milestones (not listed here) include meetings of advisory groups and area project groups, visits by RSPB programme manager, reports to donors, annual project newsletter.</i>		
Year 2	April – March 2007/8	
May 2007	Local stakeholder meetings and awareness raising activities continue.	Local stakeholders meetings are ongoing at all three sites. Awareness raising activities are underway although formal activities delayed due to teachers strikes.
By June 2007	Socio-economic assessments completed at three sites.	Assessment completed at all three sites (see Annex 4)
November 2007	Training in conservation monitoring, and training of trainers completed.	Neil Smith (BLSA) has trained three site coordinators and 2 community members from each site in conservation monitoring. Each site coordinator is organising similar training for their respective local bird clubs. These clubs will then work closely with local bird guides and communities to assist them with IBA monitoring. Daniel has trained all site coordinators in 'training of trainers'.

<p>January 2008</p>	<p>Community based fora in place and functioning and regular programme of activities at all four sites.</p>	<p>The main forum in Wakkerstroom is the Wakkerstroom wetland reserve management committee which held 4 meetings in 2007-2008.</p> <p>Soweto is an urban township with 3 million residents. There are many fora, but the project is working primarily with SKY. BLSA is also in process of engaging other community user groups who could become potential sub-fora, linking into a larger user group forum.</p> <p>Cata: The Cata Participatory Forest Management Forum will hold its first meeting in April 2008.</p> <p>Ongoye; This site has only recently been engaged and therefore has no fora in place as yet. It is foreseen that a forum will begin being established in 2009.</p>
<p>February 2008</p>	<p>First consultative workshops to develop management plans.</p>	<p>Wakkerstroom has a management plan developed by MTPA in consultation with other stakeholders. This management plan is being implemented by the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee.</p> <p>Soweto Klipspruit has a management plan developed by local government on a macro-scale. The RSPB's management plans adviser will visit during 2008 to assist the preparation of a plan for the heritage-birding trail.</p> <p>Cata has no Participatory Forest Management Plan. Once the PFM forum is established in April 08, the management plan for the PFM will be developed in accordance with the national forest act.</p>
	<p>Training in awareness raising completed.</p>	<p>Joe Peu has conducted a one day workshop with the site coordinators. Joe will be visiting each site separately in April 08 to conduct teacher workshops.</p>
<p>March 2008</p>	<p>Training in fundraising and business planning delivered to project coordinators and key partners.</p>	<p>Dr Gerhard Verdoorn (BLSA CEO) conducted a fund raising and media workshop with all BLSA staff in February 08.</p>

	Resource Use Assessment completed at three sites. PRA & BLI monitoring framework.	<p>A resource use assessment was completed at Cata in June 07.</p> <p>A consultant from Rhodes University conducted a workshop in March 08 with all three site coordinators and 6 community members on using PRA's as a research tool. The PRA methodology will now be used to conduct long term Resource Use Assessments and Poverty Monitoring at each site (planned to begin in April 08, ongoing).</p>
	Complete bird guide training programme for 10 persons and craft and other income generating programmes.	<p>Two guides were trained in Wakkerstroom in September 07, year 2. This brings the total number of guides to 6. In September 2008 three guides from Cata and one from Soweto will be trained.</p> <p>In April/May 2008 nine community members will be trained in business management.</p>
	Local training in IGA/SSG group operations and project management completed at three sites.	Project management training was conducted in three workshops, April 07, September 07, January 08. Participants were the three site managers and 6 community representatives (3sites x 2).
	Management planning protocols and format agreed.	Incomplete
	Awareness programme planned and underway at three sites.	Awareness programmes are planned and underway at all three sites, and ongoing.
	Education materials produced and school programmes established.	<p>Soweto has registered four Eco-Schools.</p> <p>Wakkerstroom has engaged five schools but is still to register Eco-Schools upon completion of teach training.</p> <p>Cata has not engaged schools yet but plans to begin in April 08.</p> <p>All the above schools programmes will be using the Wildlife & Environment Society of SA (WESSA) Eco-School material, and the 'Learning for Sustainable Living' material developed by BLSA.</p>

	First national network meeting.	Two co-ordinator meetings where conducted in September 07 and February 08 to share ideas and experiences. 6 community members (2 from each site) where also present to share ideas and present their respective sites.
	Socio-economic assessments completed at fourth site.	Incomplete.

Certain activities planned for year 2 were delayed for various reasons, below are the issues and the responses developed to these delays:

- i) Engaging government departments is an ongoing challenge affecting all three sites in general. Government officials often do not attend appointments or are late in responding to requests. As government departments are often the land owners or responsible body, such problems can end up slowing progress.
- ii) Due to strikes by government teachers, no external workshops with teachers have been allowed by the national Department of Education until schools have caught up with school syllabus. Therefore it was decided that Joe Peu (BLSA Environmental Education Division Manager) would first hold a three day workshop with the site coordinators (linked to the planned Participatory Poverty Assessment and Training for Trainers workshop) and then to follow up with teachers workshops at each site. This was considered a sound method but did lead to delays in activities.

Soweto:

- iii) The site coordinator for Soweto, Raymond Rampolokeng was under performing in 2007 and resigned in October 2007. In November a workshop was held, which included Paul Buckley and key BLSA staff, to discuss the way forward for Soweto and to set realistic objectives. It was decided that Martin Ramothibe (formerly with Mayibuye Wetlands Programme) would move from Environmental Education to Community Based Conservation. Martin lives in Kliptown and has been working at a community level for many years. Upon approval from WWF, Martin began working as the Soweto coordinator in earnest from February 2008. This has delayed progress at the site.
- iv) The Soweto project site has worked effectively with four local schools (Lilydale primary school, Lakeview Primary, Nka-thuto primary and A.B Xuma primary school). Three of the schools are registered Eco-schools which uses environmental themes (Nature and Biodiversity, Resource use, Local and Global Issues).
- v) Lack of cooperation from the Johannesburg City Parks (JCP is a local government agency) has further hampered BLSA implementing it project objectives in Soweto. JCP is responsible for managing the wetland and are in the process of implementing a Soweto Greening project. BLSA feels it is critical to partner with JCP on this project and finally arranged a meeting with the Managing Director of JCP in April 2008 to cement a partnership. This will also give BLSA the sanction to begin implementing certain projects on the ground, such as the development of a 'heritage-birding trail'.

Wakkerstroom:

- vi) Delta Mining Corporation applied for mining prospecting permits in the Wakkerstroom region. This has caused unrest and divisions within the local population. As BLSA is one of the main organisations opposing the mining, proponents of mining are now spreading anti-BLSA sentiments. This has unravelled some of the relationships Hansco has built up in year 1 &2 and because he is the local face of the organisation it is hard for him not to get diverted into other matters.

- vii) This mining issue has however led to closer collaboration between key role players and partner organisations (WWFSA, EWT, BotSoc), and between the BLSA Policy and Advocacy Division and this project. This mining issue has also become a case study for a BirdLife African Secretariat project, funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI), which looks at livelihood strategies linked to conservation, and policy, advocacy and lobbying. This process once again fits in well and compliments the Darwin Programme and Wings Over Wetlands project, with little duplication but rather mutualism.
- viii) The Pixley KaSeme local municipality had originally sought to include BirdLife in the 'Bee-Hive' projects. This is a municipal managed, government funded project that has developed small business enterprises with impoverished community members from eSizamaleni, the very group this Darwin project is targeting. BirdLife intended to collaborate with this Bee-Hive project on enterprises that use natural resources and or targeted local tourists. However, the local municipality have been in turmoil and seen a high turn over of staff. It therefore no longer seems viable for BirdLife to work with this Bee-Hive project. Instead BirdLife intends to develop new economic opportunities, some based on the same products as sold by the Bee-Hive. We need to ensure that any products sold by both operations complement and support each other rather than creating any duplication or complication. This has however created delays in developing more IGA's in Wakkerstroom.
- ix) It took Hansco Banda, the Wakkerstroom site manager, considerable time to establish a strong partnerships with different stakeholders,
 - a. Due to social tensions in Wakkerstroom, Hansco had to diverge from the set project objectives to work on uniting divided communities in order to have a similar vision and understanding about the project,
 - b. To identify key informants within the community was a process because Hansco had to set up new community structures that were to support the project objectives. For example Hansco had to facilitate the formation of Indwe Environment Club and also the Reed Harvesters Association,
 - c. The majority of the black adult population in Wakkerstroom are illiterate so Hansco had to take some time to verbally explain the importance of the project in Wakkerstroom and also to convince them to be part of the stakeholder groups, and
 - d. The majority of the stakeholders did not honour their appointments and it took Hansco a lot of time and energy to engage them.

Cata:

- x) A challenge was Monde Ntshudu's, Cata site manager, acceptance by the community since he is not originally from this Cata community. The start-up period for this site was therefore longer than anticipated as Monde needed to do more ground work towards gaining community acceptance and trust. However, the Cata community is now happy that he is working in the village, thanks to community leaders and the partnership with BRC.

The selection of Site 4 was delayed by the need to stabilise progress at the first three sites. In early 2008 we decided to work at Ongoye Forest, an important Bird Area in Kwa Zulu Natal. We wanted Site 4 to closely link with existing projects to develop birding routes and local bird guides. Ongoye Forest Reserve has been selected based on these criteria and other factors such as social intervention needs. A local bird guide has been contracted to begin preliminary ground work with the local community, starting March 2008. The objective is to evaluate the current interactions between the local community/ies and the forest, and begin planning interventions. Two of the first resource user groups to be engaged will be the cattle owners and the medicinal plant collectors/users.

The forest lies about 150km north of Durban, between Mtunzini, Eshowe and Empangeni. It is a large remnant patch of coastal forest, 3903 ha in extent and lies along a ridge of hills overlooking the Indian Ocean. This beautiful forest is interspersed with patches of rolling grasslands between granite outcrops. Ongoye Forest is the only place to see Woodward's Barbet in southern Africa (www.zbr.co.za/sz/ongoye.htm). The Ongoye Forest also forms part of the Zululand Birding route and is an IBA (ZA049). The probable reason that the Barbet is found only in Ngoye, and not in other apparently similar forests in the vicinity, is a function of fig *Ficus* diversity. Ngoye has eight species, while few other forests have more than three. Figs are the staple diet for both adults and young, and diversity of fig species guarantees a year-round food supply. Two fig species brought to nestlings come from the bush clumps outside the forest proper. This suggests that the barbets are not afraid to cross open space, and are not 'trapped' in remnant habitat.

This reserve is state land, administered by the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Service. In principle it is run as a reserve, but in practice there is not much control over casual exploitation. Cattle graze the grassland, and adversely affect forest undergrowth in places. Collection of firewood has been implicated as a potential reason for the absence of breeding hole-nesters, such as barbets and woodpeckers, from forestedge habitat, and this needs closer analysis. Because *Stactolaema (olivacea) woodwardi* is globally restricted to Ngoye, it is essential that the forest be properly managed as a reserve, with some management action being planned around the barbets.

3.2 Progress towards Project Outputs

This project's activity targets in year 1 were overly ambitious, however the project has been able to catch up on many of the project's activities in year 2. As mentioned in year 1 report, it was critical for us to spend time confirming the first three project sites, identifying and liaising with key stakeholders at each site, recruiting the appropriate site coordinators and integrating ourselves into existing processes at each site. Solid work in these areas in year 1 laid the foundation for strong achievements in years 2. In this way, overall progress toward the project outputs has been strong and the likelihood of achieving these outputs by the end of year 3 is high.

Specific areas of progress towards the project outputs include the following:

Wakkerstroom:

- Wakkerstroom has been extremely successful in terms of partner cooperation. This led the establishment of the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee (WWRMC) consisting of a multi-stakeholder group representative of most of the community. Hansco facilitated the formation of WWRMC where BLSA is a secretary, MPTA is a chairperson and PKSLM is a deputy chairperson. The WWRMC is responsible for co-managing the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve.
- We achieved a major success with the establishment of the Reed Cutters Association. They were given an initial area to work in, cutting 400 bundles. This was one of the few parts of the reserve which did not suffer from burning during the winter dry season since this group regularly patrolled it.
- Hansco is engaging Pixley ka Seme Municipality on an ongoing basis. Hansco attended a Local Economic Development (LED) summit and he explained in detail about the aims of the project. Hansco also listed the project with the Pixley ka Seme Local Municipality – Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for the period of the year 2008 to 2010.
- Hansco together with community members attended the following workshops:
 - Socio-Economic Audit,
 - Participatory Rural Appraisal,
 - Entrepreneurial skills and
 - Eco-Schools and Learning for Sustainable Living programme
 - Hansco also attended a National Conference on Wetlands.

Soweto:

- Martin was selected in February 2008 to fill the position of the resigned coordinator to implement the community based project and he brings a strong presence in the community, environmental education experience and bird guiding.
- The project site is renting an office in Kliptown informal settlement within the SKY premises.
- BLSA made a presentation to Councillor Mandla Mtshali and the environmental sector of the ward.
- We identified and worked with key stakeholders in Soweto. These include, for example, Ward 19 (councillor Mtshali) and Ward 33 (councillor Lutya), Soweto Kliptown Youth (SKY), Johannesburg City Parks, POST 77, four primary school (Lakeview, Lilydale, Nka- thuto, and A.B Xuma) and the Soweto conservancy. There was thorough liaison with these and other stakeholders aimed at building awareness about and support for the project.
- Meetings conducted with all four schools involved in the project. Three are registered in the WESSA – GREEN TRUST Eco- School programme.
- Participation in the Gauteng Birding Route meeting, which will incorporate Soweto in the regional birding route.
- Martin and the Ubuntu Eco-club are developing the Soweto Heritage-Birding Walking Trail and have developed a list of birds occurring in the area.
- The site has identified users groups along the wetland (Traditional healers, Cattle farmers, schools, local informal residents and church groups). These groups will be engaged formerly from April 2008 starting with a resource use assessment.
- Ubuntu Eco-club celebrated National Wetland day by counting birds in the Klipspruit wetland. The club has ongoing weekend bird watching events.

Cata:

- This project planted 200 pecan nut trees in the Cata community irrigation scheme with co-funding from BirdLife Netherlands. The objective of the pecan nut plantation is to provide the community with a commercial farming opportunity in the future, while providing an additional, safe food source for the Cape Parrot. Woolworths Ltd. food stores are interested in partnering with this specific project by helping market and selling “Cape Parrot Friendly Pecan Nuts”.
- The local principals of schools were approached to discuss environmental issues schools would like to tackle in order to assist learners learn about the importance of the environment.

Ongoye Forest:

There are currently two trained bird guides from the local community. These guides are currently engaging the community to identify resource users. The most prominent resource users of the forest are cattle grazers and medicinal plant users. Due to lack of reserve control and management from Kwa-Zulu Natal Wildlife Services, resource users have been allowed to use the resources freely, but also unguided, leading to perceived over use. The next step for this community will be to conduct a resource use assessment using PRA, planned for the second half of 2008.

The project's output-level assumptions still hold true.

3.3 Standard Measures

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	3 / 4	Total to date	Total planned from application
6A	1 project manager trained. RSPB training covered the following areas: project management; training of trainers; socio-economic assessment; participatory rural appraisal (PRA); ecological monitoring; environmental education; management plans; engaging with local people near conservation areas; design and construction of bird hides; setting up community-based fora; and managing a Darwin Initiative budget. Training in Kenya is detailed in Annex 1 below.	1			1	1
6A	People from project sites trained in: Socio-Economic Assessments (1wk); Participatory Rural Appraisals (1wk); Media & Fundraising (0.5wk); Project management (0.5wk); Site monitoring (0.5wk); Environmental education (0.5wk).		9		9	12
			9		9	0
			3		3	12
			9		9	12
			9		9	50
			20		20	50
	Bird Guide training (1mnth)		2		2	10
6B	Total training weeks above	6	46.5		52.5	284
7	1 education resource book		1		1	2
8	Andrea Lockwood and Paul Morling (economist) spent 2 weeks over April 07 in South Africa	2.3			8.3	18
	Paul Buckley spent 1.5 weeks in South Africa visiting all three project sites in November 2007 and a further 0.5 weeks in February 2008		6			
14A	Annual seminars to discuss project outcomes		2		2	
14B	The project manager and Wakkerstroom site manager attended the Wings Over Wetlands conference in the Netherlands, January 08.		2		5	6

	The project manager attended the BirdLife Africa Secretariat-Conference of the Partners meeting in Nairobi in October 07. The project manager attended the IUCN Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group Annual meeting. The project manager attended the WWF regional office CBNRM workshop in July 07.		1 1 1			
15A	1 article.	1			1	4
15B	3 articles	3	1		4	4
16A	1 project Division newsletter & 1 Wakkerstroom site newsletter produced.	1	2		3	4
16B	Approximate circulation of African Birds & Birding popular magazine in South Africa: 22 000.	17,000	22,000		22,000	10,000
16C	Approximate circulation of BLSA newsletter in the UK: 500.	500	500		500	500
18A	TV features		1		1	3
19A	1 national radio interview.	1	1		2	4
20	Physical assets	£14,884	£1,498		£15,982	£13,500
23	Amount leveraged from other funding sources by the RSPB and BLSA.	RSPB: £18,858 BLSA: approx. £25,915	RSPB: Approx £14,900 BLSA/Wings Over Wetlands: approx £43,100 BirdLife Netherlands : approx. £17,800 WWF-SA £9,000		£129,573	£154,000

Table 2 Publications

Type * (eg journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (title, author, year)	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (eg contact address, website)	Cost £
Newsletters	Wakkerstroom Site Newsletter, September 2007 and April 2008	Self Publication	www.birdlife.org and http://wow.wetlands.org/HANDSon/SouthAfrica/tabid/152/language/en-US/Default.aspx	none
Newspaper Article	Volksrust Recorder, September 2007	Volksrust Recorder	Volksrust Recorder, Volksrust	Free
Online article	World Migratory Birds Day Celebration, 2007	Wetland International	http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/2008/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=23&Itemid=38	none
Popular Magazine	Linking Livelihoods to conservation, African Birds & Birding, April/May 2007, vol 12, no 2, pf72-73, 80.	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	R34.95
Popular Magazine	Personalities, Raymond Rampolokeng, African Birds & Birding, June/July 2007, vol 12, no 3, pg 78-79, 84.	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	R34.95
Popular Magazine	Klipspruit Wetland Clean-up Day, Africa Birds & Birding, Aug/Sept 2007, vol 12, no 4, pg 77, 84.	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	R34.95
Popular Magazine	Many thanks to our corporate members and supporters, Africa Birds & Birding, Oct/Nov 2007, vol 12, no 5, pg 80.	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	R34.95
Popular Magazine	Wetlands and People, African Birds & Birding, Dec/Jan 2008, vol 12, no 6, pg 74, 80.	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	R34.95
Popular Magazine	Educating communities on	Africa Geographic,	Africa Geographic (pty) Ltd, 1 st Floor,	R34.95

	sustainable conservation, African Birds & Birding, Feb/March 2008, vol 13, no 1, pg 74, 80.	Cape Town, South Africa.	Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa. www.africageographic.com	
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3.4 Progress towards the project purpose and outcomes

Progress toward the project purpose and outcomes was generally good. Specific areas of progress include the following:

- Daniel created further partnerships and liaised effectively with a range of entities in South Africa. Most notably was Daniel's membership to the Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group (IUCN), the World Congress on Protected Areas (IUCN). These partnerships are detailed in section 2 above;
- BLSA also cemented partnerships with leading conservation NGO's and government departments, specifically founded on the Wakkerstroom project site. These include EWT, WWFSA, BocSoc, SANBI and DEAT.
- Strong youth-based environmental clubs in impoverished communities were established at the Wakkerstroom and Soweto project sites respectively. Both these groups are actively engaging the project and its activities.
- Forty-six and a half (46.5) weeks of training took place with the site coordinators and community representatives.
- Daniel and Hansco Banda attended the Wings Over Wetlands conference in the Netherlands in January 2008, which has further extended the network linked to the Wakkerstroom site.
- Daniel attended the BirdLife Africa Partnership Conference of the Parties meeting in Kenya, October 2008. Daniel was able to raise awareness about the South African Site Support Group projects with the other African partners, and begin developing a southern Africa SSG network with Botswana and Zimbabwe.
- Co-funding in the amount of €33,100 was secured from the project from the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) through BirdLife International, April 2008-August 2009. This funding is dedicated to livelihood development and policy and advocacy in Wakkerstroom. This funding has provided an assistant for Hansco Banda;

3.5 Progress towards impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits

It is felt by the project manager that real impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods will only be tangible and measurable in year three. The only tangible impact on both livelihoods and biodiversity was in Wakkerstroom with the establishment of the Reed & Grass Cutters Associations, and their selling of grass reed fences. This group of resource users was previously unorganised. Hansco Banda met with them, offered to help them form an association and provide advice on sustainable reed harvesting. Hansco also assisted the group in making reed fences, which became a viable product among the local residents, selling over £1500 worth of products in the last half of 2007. Over that same period, when the wetland would normally be burnt by illegal fires, the portion of the wetland where the group harvests was not burnt in 2007. We are unable to prove whether this was coincidence or not, but we believe that in this case there is a link between benefit sharing, sustainable use and biodiversity conservation.

Hansco is now doing similar work with the cattle owners (who graze their cattle in the wetland) who also want assistance in forming an association and developing a sustainable use programme.

The Wakkerstroom center has also been contracting local people from the impoverished eSizameleni community for any catering and maintenance work that needs to be done. This

has led to a high level of awareness among the black population about BirdLife South Africa, and the project is now seen as one that also benefits the black population.

The Soweto Ubuntu Eco-Club consists of youth from the Kliptown area. These youth have been active in assisting BLSA in bird monitoring, education and awareness and water sampling. The group also often lead bird walks for the community. The club provides extramural activity for these youth, getting them off the streets (local schools provide no extramural activities) and providing a stimulating hobby.

4. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons

At the site level each Site Officer has a workplan which they regularly review (An example of one of these is shown in Annex 6). Daniel Marnewick keeps in close touch with the Officers and visits, usually monthly, to review progress against the workplan. Daniel himself then has to produce monthly written report on progress with his programme to the BLSA Council. In February 2008 BLSA agreed to form a conservation committee to take a closer monitoring role on this and other conservation programmes.

RSPB monitoring staff made three visits during the reporting year. Andrea Lockwood visited the project in April 2007, Paul Buckley made further site visits to all sites in November 2007, and he visited again to discuss progress with the Project Manager in February 2008. Daniel also discussed project progress with RSPB staff during a meeting in Kenya in October 2007.

Meetings between RSPB and Daniel have provided the main opportunities to discuss progress against logframe and associated indicators. These continue to be the primary formal mechanism through which to monitor progress against outputs and necessary information is being collected by project staff. Progress against these is outlined in Annex 1.

Progress will also be reviewed by local stakeholder. We have not formed a national steering group – however Daniel's involvement in groups such as the IUCN Sustainable Use Specialist Group provides an additional avenue for advice and lesson learning.

In our previous report we outlined two key lessons – the importance of stakeholder engagement and the importance of mediation between divided communities. We have continued to place great emphasis on wide stakeholder involvement and building consensus. In Wakkerstroom and Cata we can attempt a fairly comprehensive approach whereas in Soweto we inevitably have to be selective. Our field officers have all proved to be good mediators with strong roots in the communities in which they work, while Hansco Banda in Wakkerstroom has gained the respect of all sections of the community. Nonetheless some community tensions are still evident, especially as a result of the mining controversy.

A key lesson from this year has been the difficulty in establishing income generating programmes. In all three communities where substantial progress has been made there are already some IGAs being implemented by partner organisations which unfortunately have been operating with rather limited success. It seemed the right approach to support these programmes rather than start new ones and we feel we have made some progress with helping to improve these projects and place them on a more sustainable footing. However in Year three we intend to balance this by establishing a limited number of new initiatives where we feel the chances of success are high.

An overall lesson highlighted last year is that we have chosen three very different and challenging sites for this programme. This has led both to longer preparatory times to engage stakeholders but has also meant that we need to continue to be flexible as to our activities in response to local opinion, tensions and to changing social and economic situations. This is quite difficult within the confines of a time limited project but we feel gives the best potential for long term success.

5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

- Effort and time needed for site selection and building relationships with local people was underestimated for year 1 and for the project as a whole. However a lot of catching up was achieved in year 2 in terms of concrete progress with local people on activities. Good progress has been made with establishing stakeholder groups and site support groups. We still have to complete community training and formal awareness raising activities – delayed by teachers strike action.
- Participatory plans and economic activities – This project is using both an informal and formal participatory planning processes. The site managers are engaging local stakeholders on a one to one basis, selling a motto of ‘unity towards a common goal’ to encourage the formation of representative bodies. Various partnerships have been establishing from the foundations laid down in year one’s extensive stakeholder engagement. The more formal engagement is through community workshops, where tools such as Participatory Rural Appraisals are used to engage local people on various issues such as resource use. After such engagement there is often a request from the stakeholders for assistance to organise themselves and manage their resource use.
- A management plan has been completed at Wakkerstroom. Plans will be completed for the Cata forest and the core Soweto wetlands during 2008.
- The formation of economic activities has been a slower process mainly due to the fact that these initiatives are trying to slot into/partner with existing initiatives, e.g. BRC’s tourism plans at Cata, the municipality’s Greening of Soweto project and the municipal managed Bee-Hive project in Wakkerstroom. These have been working with varying degrees of success and we will implement some additional activities this year. Feasibility studies are complete or underway into reed cutting and grazing in Wakkerstroom, eco-tourism at Cata and Soweto and medicinal plant collecting at Ongoye Forest.
- Partnerships have evolved around specific objectives, e.g. Wakkerstroom wetland management and protesting potential mining activities. The Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee was a planned initiative actively bringing together multiple stakeholders. The Wakkerstroom/Luneberg Environmental Protective Association was developed out of an immediate, unforeseen need. However, this Association has resulted in the formal partnership with key stakeholders locally and nationally.

6. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

No significant change has taken place to the design of the project. We have worked hard this year to complete activities planned for Year 2 and to catch up on delays last year. All three sites but particularly Wakkerstroom and Soweto have proved vulnerable to rapid and frequent changes to the situation on the ground. In Soweto this has included the effective collapse of one of our partners Mayibuye Wetlands and in Wakkerstroom the emergence of a major and divisive threat of mining around the wetlands. In both Cata and Soweto it has proved hard to get decisions made and initiatives progressed by Government agencies at the speed required by the project timetable.

These present risks to the completion of the project on schedule but not, we believe, to the long term viability of the projects’ objectives.

BLSA has continued to suffer from two further break ins during the year. This caused some disruption to operations although fortunately project equipment was not on the premises and therefore not lost.

7. Sustainability

Both RSPB and BLSA have a long term commitment to ensuring the long term conservation of these areas. The project contains a number of elements which we believe will help to ensure the achievements of the project are maintained

- Wakkerstroom is a high conservation priority for BLSA and they have a nature reserve, visitor centre and permanent staff based in the town. The site is in the process of being registered with RAMSAR and has a established management committee.
- In all sites we have made intense efforts to partner with other local institutions who have a permanent presence in the area – local government institutions, community associations or NGOs such as Border Rural Community. In the unlikely event that BLSA ceased to operate at one or more of the sites, we intend that core activities will be integrated into the operations of such organisations
- We have or will establish fora to broaden and strengthen ownership of the conservation programmes. To date this is working most effectively in Wakkerstroom but the Cata Forum will hold its first meeting in April 2008.
- We have already secured co-financing at all three existing sites – through GEF Wings over wetlands and the Spanish Government at Wakkerstroom, from BirdLife Netherlands at Cata and from WWF in Soweto. Woolworths (a major retail company) have expressed interest in supporting work at Cata. BLSA already invests other funds in eco-tourism work at Ongoye Forest. We will need to continue to work on securing further support for the core programme and have not yet secured any significant support from Corporate partners. All of the existing funding will also come to an end during 2009. The Division manager will therefore need to focus some of his time on securing funds for all four sites beyond 2009.

8. Dissemination

BLSA attracts regular media publicity and a number of radio and TV features this year have featured either the work of the Community Conservation Division or related issues such as the mining threat in Wakkerstroom. These are included in Table 1 above. Published articles and newsletters are listed in Table 2 and some excerpts from these are included in Annex 3

The Wakkerstroom Site Officer has started to produce a site specific project newsletter, and the Division produces a Division Newsletter highlighting all three sites.

The project has attracted considerable attention for its innovative nature both through South Africa and among the BirdLife International partners around the world. The Project Manager has had a number of opportunities to disseminate the lessons learned from the project. He and the Wakkerstroom site manager attended the Wings Over Wetlands conference in the Netherlands in January 2008. He also attended the BirdLife Africa Partnership meeting in Nairobi in October 2007, the IUCN Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group Annual meeting and the WWF regional office CBNRM workshop in July 2007. He has also been invited to make a presentation to the BirdLife International World Conference in Argentina in September 2008. These presentations will ensure that lessons from the project feed widely into projects throughout and beyond Africa.

Since this project is BLSA's flagship conservation project, other BLSA staff also discuss its progress frequently in a range of fora and conferences. This will continue beyond the length of the Darwin funding since BLSA's other staff and their media operation are not dependent on Darwin funding for their continuation.

9. Project Expenditure

Table 3 Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 01 April to 31 March)

Item	Budget ¹	Expenditure	Balance
RENT, RATES, HEATING, OVERHEADS ETC			
Office costs (e.g. postage, telephone)			
Travel and subsistence			
PRINTING			
Conferences, seminars, etc			
Capital items/equipment			
Others			
<i>Salaries</i>			
TOTAL			

Note 1 – Budget amendment revising 07/08 grant budget from application request to version shown above submitted 22nd February 2008. Approval for amendment received from DEFRA 12th March 2008.

The project underspent by a total of £9,000 against the original approved budget. Following approval on 12th march to transfer this sum to the 2009/2010 budget, we submitted a revised budget. All budget lines were within 10% of this revised budget.

The main underspend over the year was on salaries. This was due to delays in recruiting site officers, especially in the Eastern Cape and also the gap between the resignation of the Soweto coordinator and appointment of a successor.

10. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

[I agree for ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section](#) (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

The project 'Protecting key South African biodiversity sites through community based conservation' has made good progress in building community support for conservation at three important biodiversity sites across South Africa – in Wakkerstroom wetlands and grasslands in Mpumalanga, the wetlands of Soweto and at Cata Escarpment forest in Eastern Cape.

At Wakkerstroom support for and involvement in management of the critical wetland its surrounding watershed has been broadened into new sections of the community. A wetland reserve management committee has worked effectively and a reed cutters association already appears to have served to reduce accidental fires in the wetland area under their control. The site manager has forged new alliances which will have value but be challenged by the emergence of a serious threat to the area as a result of proposals for coal mining.

Strong youth-based environmental clubs in impoverished communities were established at the Wakkerstroom and Soweto project sites respectively. In Soweto there is active engagement with resource users and youth around the wetlands and a major focus will be on developing birding trails as part of wider heritage developments being implemented by local government as part of the 2010 celebrations. In Cata strong community support is leading to collaboration on a number of income generating initiatives and a Pecan nut plantation has been developed which will both provide incomes and a food source for Cape Parrots.

The commencement of work at a forth site at Ongoye Forest in KwaZulu Natal and effective dissemination of project outcomes will enable lessons from this programme to be felt more widely across South Africa and beyond.

Forty-six and a half (46.5) weeks of training took place with the site coordinators and community representatives. Strong partnerships have been established at the local, national and international levels. Co-financing has been secured from sources including the Global Environment Facility, the WWFSA, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) and Dutch NGOs, giving a boost in the sustainability of these long term resource management programmes.

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2007/08

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2006 - March 2007	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Goal: <i>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>		<p>It is still early to measure progress but measures are set in place to promote conservation of biodiversity at two very important biodiversity sites and one critical for human survival and appreciation of biodiversity. Another site is identified. Sustainable use programmes are integral to each of these projects.</p>	<p><i>(do not fill not applicable)</i></p>
<p>Purpose: Community-focused programmes are significantly enhancing the status of important biodiversity sites and the capacity to manage them for the future.</p>	<p>Programmes in the four project sites are effectively managed by local stakeholders by end of project.</p> <p>Threat status and pressures on each area show improvement from beginning to end of project.</p>	<p>Identified the fourth project site and start up underway.</p> <p>Coordinators working and partnerships established at three sites</p> <p>Effective for a functioning at two sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective for a established and functioning at all 4 sites • Ensure community based group governance structures work effectively • Submit additional project proposals
	<p>Three other projects at important biodiversity sites being established with leveraged funds by the project end.</p>	<p>Good partnerships and organisations newly engaged with conservation issues</p> <p>Clear conservation benefits emerging at Wakkerstroom due to improved land management practices and reduced burning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver training in fundraising and business planning to project coordinators and key partners. • Complete local training in managing income generating activities and awareness raising at 4 sites

		<p>Secured substantial co-funding.</p> <p>Conducted two RSPB site monitoring visits.</p> <p>Projects lessons and experiences actively disseminated to other field projects in South Africa and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete management plans at Cata and Soweto. • Establish sustainable site monitoring programmes at all sites • Undertake urgent conservation interventions identified in management plans • Deliver ecotourism at Soweto, Cata, Ongoye • Ensure at least one one additional income generating activity running effectively at Cata, Wakkerstroom, Ongoye • Organise one network meeting for site representatives • Strategy for future development of programme across other sites • Complete awareness programme at four sites, esp schools component.
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<p>Output 1. Local site support groups/fora in place at each site establish a firm basis for project sustainability.</p>	<p>Funding for further work at each site achieved by end of June, 2009.</p> <p>All key stakeholders contribute to effective group management.</p>	<p>Good progress. Indicators are appropriate. Key stakeholders are all involved and fora in place at 2 sites. Fora in Soweto will need to be thematic and focused otherwise too unwieldy.</p> <p>Co-finance already in place at all sites – more will be needed to sustain achievements</p>
<p>Activity 1.1. Develop four local fora</p>		<p>The local forum in Wakkerstroom – the wetland reserve management forum has worked well and effectively brought together stakeholders who have not previously collaborated including eg grazers and reed cutters. The Cata Forum has just started and shows high promise of success. In Soweto we are collaborating with a number of groups and will seek to bring these together in a resource management forum in 2008 – the large number of people and groups makes this problematic and we will probably focus initially on tourism. We hope to develop a forum in Ongoye when the programme is established.</p>
<p>Activity 1.2. Regular programme of activities</p>		<p>The three site coordinators have been very active in their communities and numerous activities undertaken including bird walks, clean ups, awareness raising initiatives, tree planting. Some of these are outlined in the articles annexed.</p>
<p>Output 2. Training and capacity-building programme for national and local stakeholders implemented.</p>	<p>Recommendations for ongoing support from training courses implemented.</p> <p>Training cascaded down at all four sites.</p>	<p>Fair progress. Indicators are appropriate. Training has been implemented for site officers and key stakeholders but much still needs to be cascaded down.</p> <p>Training programme has been adapted continuously in the light of consultation and feedback. Capacity building has been effective at local level and at national level but some institutional capacity building hampered by weaknesses, instability and changing circumstances eg Mayibuye Wetlands project in Soweto</p>

<p>Activity 2.1. Training programmes in project management, socio-economic analysis, training for trainers, site monitoring</p>	<p>These all completed. The first two with assistance from RSPB staff and the last two using South African skills.</p>						
<p>Activity 2.2. Training in awareness raising, group operations, advocacy and fundraising</p>	<p>The Site Officers have been given training in these areas of work but the training has not yet been cascaded down more widely within the communities. In the case of awareness raising this was delayed by strike action. In the case of the rest it needs to wait until for and community group structures and more established.</p>						
<p>Output 3. Participatory plans for conservation monitoring and action in place and under implementation at each site.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="604 571 1086 702"> <p>Three plans adopted by key stakeholders by June, 2008. The fourth adopted by June, 2009.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1086 571 2078 702"> <p>Implementation has been delayed. Indicators are appropriate. Plan in place at Wakkerstroom. Plans will be completed at other sites during 2008. Implementation of actions will follow.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="604 702 1086 813"> <p>80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1086 702 2078 813"> <p>RAMSAR site designation at Wakkerstroom is being pursued.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="604 813 1086 933"> <p>Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1086 813 2078 933"></td> </tr> </table>	<p>Three plans adopted by key stakeholders by June, 2008. The fourth adopted by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Implementation has been delayed. Indicators are appropriate. Plan in place at Wakkerstroom. Plans will be completed at other sites during 2008. Implementation of actions will follow.</p>	<p>80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.</p>	<p>RAMSAR site designation at Wakkerstroom is being pursued.</p>	<p>Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.</p>	
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<p>80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.</p>	<p>RAMSAR site designation at Wakkerstroom is being pursued.</p>						
<p>Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.</p>							
<p>Activity 3.1. Participatory management plans in place at all four sites by month 30</p>	<p>A plan is in place at Wakkerstroom. A community forest management plan for Cata and a plan for Soweto based around tourism development and management of the central wetlands will be completed in the coming year. The need for a plan at Ongoye has yet to be assessed.</p>						
<p>Activity 3.2. Site monitoring programmes</p>	<p>Training has been completed and monitoring protocols are being developed.</p>						

<p>Output 4. Marketing-focused initiatives at each site are generating economic benefits for local people and assisting sustainability.</p>	<p>Analysis of socio-economic options completed at each site by end of April, 2008.</p> <p>Five new registered guides in two sites by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Implementation was delayed until year 2. Indicators are appropriate.</p> <p>Socio-economic analysis completed at three sites. Changing fortunes and delays in existing income generating programmes has slowed progress – assistance given to these at Wakkerstroom and Cata. Ecotourism actions underway at all sites. Pecan nut initiative at Cata and reed cutting at Wakkerstroom in progress.</p> <p>Four new registered guides in place at Soweto and Wakkerstroom.</p>
<p>Activity 4.1. Undertake socio-economic analysis.</p>		<p>Socio-economic analysis was undertaken at three sites. A Resource use assessment was completed at Cata.</p>
<p>Activity 4.2 Develop Income Generating Activities</p>		<p>Assistance given to a range of existing activities at Wakkerstroom and Cata. Pecan nut planting at Cata. Development of community based reed cutting association at Wakkerstroom. Tourism development underway at all four sites.</p>
<p>Output 5. National networking and experience sharing has stimulated action at additional high priority biodiversity sites.</p>	<p>Networking meeting for groups and other site protection agencies held during year 2.</p> <p>Expressions of interest from three other sites by end of June, 2009.</p>	<p>Fair progress. Indicators are appropriate.</p> <p>Representatives of three sites have met during Year 2. This will be formalised and expanded in Year 3. Project is well known and dissemination in South Africa and elsewhere has been highly effective</p> <p>Expressions of interest not yet sought.</p>
<p>Output 6. Awareness of conservation needs and values enhanced.</p>	<p>Attitude surveys show more favourable attitudes to conservation at all sites.</p> <p>School programmes in place at all sites by June, 2008.</p>	<p>Implementation was delayed. Indicators are appropriate.</p> <p>Much informal work undertaken. Schools work is underway at 4 sites in Soweto and informally at 2 schools each in Cata and Wakkerstroom. Formal school programme delayed by strikes and subsequent embargo on any work outside the strict curriculum.</p>

Activity 6.1. Develop schools materials.	Some materials developed but more planned for Year three.
Activity 6.2. Establish programmes at ten schools in four sites.	Substantive programme at four schools around wetlands in Soweto. Some links with four more schools in Wakkerstroom and Cata but less than hoped for due to strike action.
Activity 6.3. Train site groups in awareness-raising techniques.	Training provided to Site Officers and some key stakeholders but not yet cascaded.

Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

Changes made to the logframe in year 1 are highlighted in blue:

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Goal:</p> <p>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources 			
Purpose			
<p>Community-focused programmes are significantly enhancing the status of important biodiversity sites and the capacity to manage them for the future.</p>	<p>Programmes in the four project sites are effectively managed by local stakeholders by the end of the project.</p> <p>Threat status and pressures on each area show improvement from beginning to end of project.</p> <p>Three other projects at important biodiversity sites being established with leveraged funds by the project end.</p>	<p>Project reports, future workplans</p> <p>Biological status reports from each site</p> <p>Project proposals/workplans</p>	<p>No additional unrecognised threats emerge during project period.</p> <p>Benefits accruing to communities are adequate to counter any damaging alternative economic proposals.</p>
Outputs			
<p>Local site support groups/fora in place at each site establish a firm basis for project sustainability.</p>	<p>Funding for further work at each site achieved by end of June, 2009.</p> <p>All key stakeholders contribute to effective group management.</p>	<p>Funding agreements, project reports</p> <p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Constitutions/MoUs</p>	<p>Community-focused programmes show short-term benefits through improved threat status/key species populations/job creation.</p>

Training and capacity-building programme for national and local stakeholders implemented.	<p>Recommendations for ongoing support from training courses implemented.</p> <p>Training cascaded down at all four sites.</p>	<p>Training reports</p> <p>Project reports</p>	Staff and volunteers remain in post after training.
Participatory plans for conservation monitoring and action in place and under implementation at each site.	<p>Three plans adopted by key stakeholders by June, 2008. The fourth adopted by June, 2009.</p> <p>80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.</p> <p>Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Adopted management plans and business plans</p> <p>Workplan and monitoring reports</p>	Current strong community links and stability at chosen sites are maintained.
Marketing-focused initiatives at each site are generating economic benefits for local people and assisting sustainability.	<p>Analysis of socio-economic options completed at each site by end of April, 2008.</p> <p>Five new registered guides in two sites by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Socio-economic reports</p> <p>Guide training reports</p>	Current favourable climate for local and international tourism is maintained.
National networking and experience sharing has stimulated action at additional high priority biodiversity sites.	<p>Networking meeting for groups and other site protection agencies held during year 2.</p> <p>Expressions of interest from three other sites by end of June, 2009.</p>	<p>Reports of network meeting</p> <p>Written expressions of interest from groups at other sites</p>	
Awareness of conservation needs and values enhanced.	<p>Attitude surveys show more favourable attitudes to conservation at all sites.</p> <p>School programmes in place at all sites by June, 2008.</p>	<p>Repeat surveys at start and end of project</p> <p>Education reports</p>	

Activities	Activity Milestones (<i>m = month</i>)
Establish local site support groups/fora	Set in place project management structures and hold start up meeting by m ⁴ , develop four local fora by m ¹⁵ , regular programme of activities in place by m ¹⁸ , group governance structures in place by m ²⁴ , additional project proposals in place by m ³²
Training and capacity building programme	Project Manager recruited and initial training in UK by m ⁶ , training programmes in project management (UK input), socio-economic analysis (UK input), group operations, awareness raising, training for trainers completed at all four sites by m ¹⁸ . Training in site ecology / monitoring, advocacy, fundraising (with UK input) by m ²⁴
Develop and implement plans for conservation action	Plan framework and process agreed by m ⁸ , first workshops held at each site by m ¹² , management with associated business plans adopted at all sites by m ³⁰ , Establish site and species monitoring by end of m ²⁴ , priority year 1 actions underway by m ³⁰ .
Establish income generating programmes	Undertake socio-economic analysis by m ⁹ , guide training completed by m ²⁴ , pilot and train in three other income generating activities by m ²⁴ , facilitate additional funding support at three sites by m ³⁶
Establish national sites network	Hold network meetings by m ¹⁸ and m ³⁰ . Distribute materials to four projects and wider sites network at end of each year. Assess potential for further sites by m ³⁰ , organise seminar and lessons learned report by m ³⁶
Raise awareness of conservation needs and values	Develop schools materials by m ¹² , establish programmes at 10 schools in four sites by m ¹² , train site groups in awareness raising techniques by m ¹² , implement community based awareness programme from m ¹⁵ to m ³⁶

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 5MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Is your report more than 5MB? If so, please advise Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk that the report will be send by post on CD, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table?	
Do not include claim forms or communications for Defra with this report.	