

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	15-030
Project Title	Strengthening scientific capacity of conservation NGOs working with the CBD
Country(ies)	Bolivia, Botswana, Lebanon, Nepal, Palau, Russia
UK Organisation	BirdLife International
Collaborator(s)	n/a
Report date	31 st October 2006
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 1
Project website	None at present

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).

23rd – 25th August 2006: a 3-day training course was held for UK team members (Alison Stattersfield, Stuart Butchart, Lincoln Fishpool) at the BirdLife International Global Office in Cambridge to help prepare for the Inaugural Darwin Workshop. The programme, agenda and materials (=global 'training the trainers' toolkit) for the workshop were developed as a result (examples will be included with the end of year report).

7th – 9th + 11th – 14th September 2006: a 3-day Inaugural Darwin Workshop was held for host country and UK team members at the BirdLife International Global Office in Cambridge, followed by participation of host countries team members at the BirdLife Secretariat annual 'Strategic Team Planning' meeting involving some 100 staff from the Global and Regional Offices.

The workshop included: a discussion of current BirdLife Global, Regional and National Science Programmes and links with policy and advocacy work; a detailed review of the requirements of the Darwin Project with an emphasis on the importance of inputting results to governmental policy processes relevant to the implementation of the CBD; a SWOT analysis of BirdLife's capacity to execute the Darwin Project and discussion on how to will deal with possible Weaknesses and Threats; the identification of a suite of complementary Science Demonstration Projects (see below); and the development of a draft Action Plan with key milestones and outputs based on the original Project proposal.

The Demonstration Projects which were selected are as follows:

- Russia: Using the "World of birds of Russia" Project for capacity-building and advocacy
- Botswana: Strengthening the links between the "Birds of concern" Project and national initiatives
- Bolivia: Initiating conservation action for the most threatened bird species
- Palau: Developing an Important Bird Area inventory and follow-on advocacy strategy
- Lebanon: Updating an Important Bird Area inventory and the action needed
- Nepal: Monitoring Important Bird Areas to stimulate action at sites

September: a global press release about the Darwin Project was drafted and is in the process of being adapted for release in each of the six host countries.

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 Coordinator for Lebanon was changed because of difficulties owing to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was not possible for Sawsan Medhi to leave the Lebanon at the time of the Inaugural Workshop but luckily another SPNL staff member, Soumar Dakdouk, was in the US and able to step in. As a result, SPNL have decided to that Soumar should continue to coordinate their involvement to the project, despite the current political difficulties. The Project Coordinator for Russia was also changed for personnel reasons with Tatiana Sviridova replacing Natalia Nikolaeva. One of the UK team members has changed with Mike Evans replacing Martin Sneary. We are not anticipating that these changes will affect the budget or timetable of project activities as outlined in the proposal.

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

We have alerted the DI Secretariat about these staff changes via email and agreed to send replacement CVs for Soumar and Natalia for the record.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: yes, in Oct 06

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No thank you.

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. N/a

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**