

# Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

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

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	15/036
<b>Project Title</b>	Monitoring and Managing Biodiversity Loss in South-East Africa's Montane Ecosystems
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Malawi, Mozambique
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust (MMCT); Mozambique National Institute of Agronomic Research (IIAM); BirdLife International; Forestry Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM)
<b>Report date</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2007
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="Http://www.kew.org/science/directory/projects/DarwinMozambique.html">Http://www.kew.org/science/directory/projects/DarwinMozambique.html</a>

### 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).

During this reporting period (April-September 2007), the full technical report on Chipirone mountain was produced by the team. This document is appended, and shows that an estimated 30-40% of forest cover has been removed from Chipirone in the past 37 years. Fire appears to be the greatest current threat to the forest on Chipirone. The Ecological Monitoring Programme established on Chipirone, through this project, includes a botanical baseline which has identified and described the major vegetation types on the mountain. A total of 229 plant taxa were recorded on Chipirone, including 15 taxa not on the Mozambique plant checklist. A threatened coffee species, *Coffea mufindensis*, was also noted. The zoological survey discovered a lizard species (*Lygodactylus rex*) and a butterfly species (*Cymothoe melanjae*) thought previously to be endemic to Mulanje, thereby extending their known range not only to another mountain but to another country. Another significant discovery was that of the bat species, *Miniopterus inflatus*, only the second record of this species in Mozambique. The bird survey also recorded a number of globally threatened and range-restricted species, including *Alethe choloensis*, *Apalis chariessa* (only known site in Mozambique), and the woodland species *Nectarinia shelleyi*. The report details threats and conservation issues on Chipirone, and makes a series of recommendations. Species conservation plans will follow near the end of the project, when all the montane sites have been surveyed.

Following the Chipirone survey, a second Ecological Monitoring Programme was set up on Mount Namuli during an expedition run from May 22<sup>nd</sup> till June 5<sup>th</sup>. This expedition comprised a total of 17 people from Mozambique, Malawi and the UK. An expedition report is appended, and a full technical report will follow. In addition, we have produced a field guide to the 10 endemic or interesting plant species on Namuli. In most cases these species are only known from one or two specimens. Mount Namuli is the largest site to be surveyed during this project, and it has been decided to revisit this massif in November, a more suitable time for bird surveys, and also in order to collect a more comprehensive baseline of plant species.

Remote sensing studies have been carried out on both Chipirone and Namuli to date. The imagery and information associated with these studies has been made available to all project partners, and will form the basis of the Geographical Information System training programme scheduled for November in Mozambique. Further remote sensing studies will be carried out for the other mountains to be surveyed.

Additional progress includes the following: A poster on the project was presented at the AETFAT Congress in Cameroon, and also at the Systematics Association Conference in Aug 2007 in Edinburgh. An illustrated article on the project has been written for Kew Magazine (in press), and the project

featured in Kew's Annual Review. The project is now on Kew's website (see URL above).

**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 only major change to the scheduling has been to revisit Namuli in the November expedition, and postpone our expedition to Inago until next year. Inago and Cucutea are adjacent, relatively small and can be visited together in Nov/Dec 2008. These changes will not affect the budget or overall agreed outputs 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?**

These changes were brought to the Secretariat's attention, but they felt that the changes would not affect the agreed budget or outcomes of this project.

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat:**                     **yes, in July 2007 (month/yr)**

**Changes to the project schedule/workplan:**    **yes, see above.....(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?**

Responses to queries in the Year 1 annual review:

1. We can confirm that an MoU between Kew and IIAM was developed and signed in October 2006
2. The revised and updated logical framework is appended.
3. We can confirm that the National Herbarium is engaged through FRIM, and that the Herbarium has been represented on both expeditions to date.
4. Our overspend on the 'Others' budget line last year was primarily due to unforeseen GIS software costs for our African partners. In addition, postage costs were higher than expected due to the necessity of using courier services rather than the postal service, which is unreliable for urgent or valuable items. We therefore had to use the 'Others' budget for these purposes.

We would like to keep the mountains we are due to survey under constant review. Our work so far suggests that Mounts Mulanje, Chipirone, Namuli and Mabu have substantial habitats of conservation importance. Mounts Cucutea and Inago are much smaller, are of lower altitude and do not look so promising. Mount Mchese in Malawi might be an alternative survey site.

In addition, as well as the individual technical reports, we would like to synthesise all of our survey findings into one publishable volume at the end of the project. This would enable us to combine our recommendations for conservation of species and habitats into one strategy for the whole montane archipelago. This will, however, require additional funding, which we are pursuing.

**If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.**

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

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