

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	15/037
Project Title	Distance Learning for Biodiversity Conservation in Small Island Developing States
Country(ies)	South Pacific Island States.
UK Organisation	International Centre for Protected Landscapes
Collaborator(s)	Primarily the University of the South Pacific; also the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
Report date	November 10 th 2006
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	1
Project website	http://www.protected-landscapes.org/South_Pacific_Programme.html

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).

Baseline timetable April-September includes:

Work-scheme agreed and circulated

Internal review meeting and contribution to existing short-course

Progress:

Early activities included: agreement of a work-scheme by ICPL and USP; identification of other potential partners (stakeholders); review of existing teaching materials of the partners; research into potential case study / teaching material; development of a project web page; and a UK press release.

During a recent visit of the ICPL project co-ordinator to USP in Fiji:

- i. Familiarity was gained with USP systems and DFL delivery mechanisms
- ii. Internal meetings of the partners confirmed the structure, content and mode of delivery of the new programmes (PgCert; PgDip; MSc). A plan of the first two courses (four modules) for the PgCert was agreed and is undergoing further development before wider circulation to stakeholders, and subsequent completion (scheduled for June 2007).
- iii. Discussions were held with SPREP re. the linking of the current PICC Course (the outcome of a previous Darwin project) with this wider DFL programme, through accreditation.
- iv. meetings were held with stakeholders, especially national (Fiji) and regional NGOs including: SPREP, Birdlife International, The National Trust of Fiji, and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI). Their support and enthusiasm for this project is very clear and they have agreed to contribute to programme development and delivery where appropriate.
- v. Discussions were held with the Country Director of Birdlife International in Fiji, re.

establishing linkages with the Darwin Initiative project 'Community-Based Conservation Groups at Fiji's Key Conservation Sites'

Contribution of ICPL staff to the existing PICC Course (as scheduled for this visit) was postponed, as this course (jointly managed by USP and SPREP) was not run this year. Two ICPL staff members will contribute to the next running of the course in March/April and September of 2007.

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.

No major issues have been identified, but during a recent meeting of the partners in Fiji it was established that:

- (1) USP requires that the PgCert programme by DFL should begin in February 2008 not September 2007 as originally planned. This will have a knock-on effect on some elements of the project timetable.
- (2) On learning recently that there is to be a major regional environmental conference (hosted by SPREP) in Papua New Guinea in October 2007, it is now recommended that we should delay our planned seminar from this financial year until next, and 'attach' it to that Conference. SPREP has informally agreed to this and with DI approval we shall pursue the matter further. The benefits to be gained include addressing a much wider audience and at a greatly reduced cost than would otherwise be possible; and since the Conference comes less than 3 months before the new date of Programme commencement, it will enable us to stage high profile 'launch event'. This development will impact on the project timetable and will only be possible by rolling over the seminar budget from this year to next.

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

Not yet – the project Co-ordinator returned only very recently from Fiji, where these issues were raised. Contact with the Secretariat will be made very shortly.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: not yet

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: not yet

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

No

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

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

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