

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2008)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	15/037
<b>Project Title</b>	Distance Learning for Biodiversity Conservation in Small Island Developing States
<b>Country(ies)</b>	South Pacific Island States.
<b>UK Organisation</b>	International Centre for Protected Landscapes
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Primarily the University of the South Pacific; also the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
<b>Project Leader</b>	Dr Elizabeth Hughes
<b>Report date</b>	October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2008
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	3
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.protected-landscapes.org/South_Pacific_Programme.html">http://www.protected-landscapes.org/South_Pacific_Programme.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).

The baseline project implementation timetable for this period states:

- June 2008, second phase of course development complete
- June 2008 workshop to review second phase materials and advertise final form of DFL programme

Progress:

The second phase of course development has continued and is close to completion. A visit was made to ICPL in September by Prof. W. Aalbersberg, project leader from USP. The purpose was to review second phase materials and deal with other outstanding project issues. The visit was very productive. DL materials were reviewed; planning for residential courses and respective contributions discussed; and issues relating to accreditation and University validation clarified. Discussions were also held on opportunities for promoting the programme and mode of delivery within other island regions. Prof. Aalbersberg developed this further through networking at the World Conservation Congress shortly afterwards.

Final refinement of DL materials based on the September review is underway by ICPL. Integration of other courses into the DFL programme at USP is also underway (see list below). This enables various combinations of distance learning modules and / or short residential courses to be undertaken, to enable students in the South Pacific region to pursue post graduate certificate, diploma or (ultimately) masters' level programmes through alternative (residential and/or distance learning) channels. Elements now include:

- Foundations of Protected Area Management (distance learning – single unit)
- Tools and skills for Protected Area Management (distance learning – single unit)
- Management and Business Planning for Conservation Areas (distance learning – single unit)

- The Science behind Protected Areas (residential short course – single unit)
- Pacific Islands Community Conservation Course – PICCC (residential course – double unit)
- Invasive Species in the South Pacific (residential short course – single unit)

Candidates may complete one double or two single units to qualify for a PG Certificate. To receive a PG Diploma they must complete four single units or one double and two single units. The masters' programme will comprise the PG Diploma plus a dissertation. Students cannot combine the DL module on Tools and Skills for Protected Area Management and the PICCC.

The DFL programme in general is now receiving broad promotion through its dedicated brochure, other institutional (USP) channels, and a regional conservation distribution list. Some specific elements await USP validation before they can be formerly promoted as part of the programme.

**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 partnership has decided to incorporate within this DFL programme a residential, taught course on Invasive Species. The preference is that this should be scheduled to back on to the current residential component of the programme (PICCC), which has been scheduled for February / March 09. Due to staffing issues, however, our South Pacific partner has requested that that the entire residential component be re-scheduled for July 09. I am therefore applying on a separate form for a no-cost extension to the project period to incorporate this and the subsequent writing up of the project report.

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

In progress (application being made on change / request form)

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat:** no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

**Changes to the project schedule/workplan:** no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

**Proposed:**

Extension of project period to September 2009 to incorporate:

- 6 week taught course on community conservation and invasive species - residential element of DFL programme (UK partners to contribute)
- Submission of final project report – September 2009

**3. 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.**

***In response to the comments of the Reviewer of our latest Annual Report, we can confirm that:***

*Three of the students enrolled for the Certificate programme are former participants of the PICC Course that was the subject of our initial Darwin Project in partnership with USP. Others were enrolled through the promotional brochure that was developed as part of this Darwin project. Advertisement is now also being done via regional conservation distribution lists.*

*Current students include: three from Papua New Guinea (conservation NGO workers); two from the Solomon Islands (one NGO person and one from the Government Environment Department); one from Samoa (Forestry Department), and two from Fiji (NGO staff). All of the above work in protected area management in some way, largely in relation to locally-managed marine areas.*

**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 email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at [Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk). The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**