

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	16-014
Project Title	Co-management of Forests and Wildlife in the Bi Doup-Nui Ba (BD-NB) Nature Reserve, Vietnam
Country(ies)	Vietnam
UK Organisation	International Institute for Environment and Development
Collaborator(s)	WWF Greater Mekong Programme – Vietnam Country Office
Project Leader	<i>Ivan Bond</i>
Report date	31 October 2007(Period covered 1 July 2007 – 31 October 2007)
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	1
Project website	http://www.iied.org/SM/tourism/projects/bidoupnuiba.html#purp

1. Outline progress over the last 3 months (July - September 2007) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project

Project management: Considerable progress has been made in initiating and establishing the project in Vietnam. A significant hurdle was overcome when the project was approved by the Lam Dong Provincial Authority (see attached). Indeed, a process that often takes months [even years], this project was approved in four weeks - a great indicator of local interest in our work. Key progress indicators:

- Personnel: Two Vietnamese nationals have been recruited as the local project coordinator (Nguyen Huong Minh) and the community co-management facilitator (Pham Tron Nhan).
- Office space: The Bi Doup-Nui Ba Park Authority has agreed to provide office space within its own offices in Dalat. WWF (GMS) is currently buying a computer, simple office equipment and installing internet and phone access.
- Project meeting: Ivan Bond, James Macgregor of IIED and Richard Macnally of WWF(GMS) have visited Dalat, the BD-NB Protected Area and met with other key stakeholders.

The project will be officially launched at a workshop to be held in January 2008. This will be preceded by a planning session at which the three-year work-plan will be revised in the light of the information that has been developed since July 2007.

Progress by Outputs: Over the last four months IIED and WWF(GMS) have been working to establish the project in Dalat. The focus of our effort is now switching to the technical implementation of the project. The following section records current activities:

1. Appropriate legal frameworks for co-management in place:

- terms of reference for a study of the legal and policy framework for co-management within Lam Dong Province being developed
- list of consultants for this and other studies being developed
- arrange a study trip to other WWF sites where co-management is being implemented

2. Communities in buffer zone have capacity to negotiate and benefit from co-management:

- initial discussions with commune leaders being held by project staff
- conduct a brief stakeholder mapping process

3. Core protection zone established:

- digital and hard official copies of maps of BD-NB Protected Area, boundaries and zonation being procured

4. Socio-economic status established:

- Compile and catalogue all existing social and economic information on communes surrounding BD-NB protected Area.

5. Communities monitoring natural resources:

- no directly related activities

Project success (lessons) communicated: A web-page within IIED's website has been established for the project. In addition, the project is seeking one or two journalists based within Dalat, who can follow the project's activities and disseminate interesting stories via print, radio or TV.

Other progress: In Cambodia (Sustainable tourism supporting species conservation in the Srepok Wilderness, Cambodia), IIED has shown the benefit of partnering with academic institutions to complete some of the baseline / technical research required. A days meeting was held with Professor Jester Stage, from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Opportunities for using the BD-NB Protected Area for both selected PhD and MSC studies were discussed.

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.

There are two budget issues that the project team wishes to raise with Darwin in the near future. There is a third set of issues that we wish to bring to the attention of the Darwin Committee, but feel that it lies outside the scope of our work.

Budget issue 1: Timing of disbursements: Darwin operates a financial year that runs from April to March 30th each year, thus in the current financial year the project has been allocated £68,744 (ECTF 25-4-07). However, this project only started formally on 1 July 07. Instinctively, we had assumed that the disbursements would follow the project cycle rather than the financial year. IIED would like to discuss the option to transfer approximately 25% of each budget allocation into the next financial year. The total costs of the project would not change. The major implication for the Darwin Initiative will be that there will be a final disbursement to the project in FY10-11 of approximately £12K.

Budget issue 2: UK costs vis-à-vis Vietnam costs: In the current budget it is envisaged that IIED staff will spend approximately 32%, 21% and 14% of their time on this project over the next three years on the project. In the inception phase of the project, it has been possible to recruit two experienced and well-qualified Vietnamese citizens to as the project coordinator and the community liaison / development coordinator. We believe that this is extremely positive development. However, some unexpected costs have arisen in terms of facilitating transport for the project staff from Dalat to BD-NB National Park. IIED, WWF and the new project staff are currently developing a revised budget. However, given the quality of our local collaborators it would appear that the most rational approach to addressing some of the unexpected costs is to reduce the input by IIED staff based in the UK – who, by comparison to our Vietnamese colleagues are extra-ordinarily expensive. This will have no overall impact on the total cost, the only difference will be that a greater proportion of the budget will be spent in Vietnam. The time input from both James Macgregor and myself will still

enable leadership and experience sharing that is embedded in the spirit of the Darwin Initiative.

Issue 3: Infrastructure Development: Dalat is a major tourism destination for Vietnamese – famed for its scenic beauty and sub-tropical temperatures. It is estimated that over 2 million people visit the city annually. There are an increasing number of foreign visitors to Dalat. The maintenance of the BD-NB Protected area is important for both local and foreign visitors. However, in order to make the city more accessible a new road is being constructed from Dalat to Nga Trang on the coast. The road passes through the north-east corner of the BD-NB. The road and associated ribbon development will provide a substantial challenge to the bio-diversity and the integrity of the BD-NB.

Immediately to the south of BD-NB, a Japanese company is preparing to invest in a golf course and retirement homes, displacing the current residents. There are fears that displaced people will either move into the BD-NB or will become dependent on non-timber forest products harvested from the protected area.

It is our opinion that these two developments will have a major impact on the bio-diversity of the BD-NB Protected Area. The road itself has already caused the destruction of swath of habitat that vastly exceeds the width of the road. Ribbon development along the highway could effectively split the protected area into two relatively discrete sections – with negative impacts on the bio-diversity.

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

To date these issues have not been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat.

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

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in.....(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?

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 email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at 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**