



Darwin Initiative Annual Report

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DARWIN200

Darwin Project Information

Project Ref Number	17-013
Project Title	Building capacity and resilience within the conservation sector in Tajikistan
Country(ies)	Tajikistan
UK Contract Holder Institution	Fauna & Flora International
Host country Partner Institution(s)	School of Professional and Continuing Education, University of Central Asia Institute of Zoology and Parazitology, National Academy of Sciences Institute for Professional Development
Other Partner Institution(s)	International Centre for Protected Landscapes
Darwin Grant Value	£213,667
Start/End dates of Project	April 2009 to March 2012
Reporting period	1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 Annual Report 1
Project Leader Name	Liesje Birchenough
Project website	None – dedicated webpage planned for 2010
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1. Project Background

Tajikistan, a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), covers a mostly mountainous land mass of 143,100 km² bordering China, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia. The conservation sector in Tajikistan is currently unable to address the varied and serious threats to biodiversity and adequately protect the country's rich natural heritage. Statutory conservation agencies and scientific institutions lack the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to meet the multiple challenges they face. Staff lack up-to-date knowledge in biodiversity conservation, including participatory methodologies and sustainable natural resource management. There are currently no conservation courses available in Tajikistan.

The nascent NGO sector is mainly focused on development issues and lacks the skills required to complement the development of a modern natural resource management sector. The State and NGOs need to work together to raise awareness and engage stakeholders and local communities in the process of addressing the critical issues leading to biodiversity loss.

There is therefore an urgent need to build the capacity of current and future conservation practitioners so they can develop resilient, adaptive and participatory approaches to natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. These would be innovative approaches to conservation in Tajikistan. The development and provision of a national conservation training programme will address the deficit in knowledge and skills. Moreover, it will allow for students, state and NGO employees to be brought together in an environment that is both instructive and conducive to building trust and relations between them facilitating effective collaboration and leaving a lasting legacy.

There is only a limited amount of relevant applied field research, leading to a lack of ecological information on which to base conservation strategies and activities. Researchers in Tajikistan have been isolated from the international scientific community both before and after the break-up of the Soviet Union, and are very keen to address this deficiency.

2. Project Partnerships

FFI has strengthened its relationships with the three host country partners namely the School of Professional and Continuing Education, University of Central Asia (UCA), the Institute of Zoology and Parasitology, National Academy of Sciences (IZP NAS) and the Institute for Professional Development (IPD). This started with a planning and inception workshop in May 2009 followed by two project steering committee meetings, which were held in September 2009 and March 2010. Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and Terms of Reference (ToRs) for each partner were drafted and circulated to host country partners for review and comment. These have since been modified and signed by two partners. The UCA documents have been approved but are awaiting signature by the central administration office in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In addition to this formal partnership development, FFI's local Tajik Programme Representative (the in-country project coordinator) is regularly in contact with host country partners on an ongoing and informal basis soliciting their input and feedback on project activities.

FFI is the lead organisation and takes overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the project with input from the host-country partners. Terms of Reference (ToRs) for each partner organisation have been drafted, discussed and agreed, clarifying roles and responsibilities within the project.

All host country partners are represented on the Project Steering Committee which has a key role in providing overall direction, support and guidance to the project, as well as monitoring project progress and outputs.

UCA will contribute to the implementation of the project by advising and inputting on a working structure for course development, design and delivery, and provide administrative and marketing support, training expertise, and facilities. In particular UCA will organise and lead on the development and administration of a selection process for trainees (course participants), working in collaboration with FFI. IZP NAS has lead responsibility for identifying and coordinating the input of national specialists into the module content, and ensuring relevance of training materials to Tajikistan. IZP NAS will also organise and lead on the selection process for post-graduate research students for fellowships. IPD will contribute experience in the 'training of trainers' methodology, and advise on course development, structure and delivery, and also provide some teaching facilities. All three host country partners will contribute established relationships with the government, academic and NGO sectors to the furtherance of the project's objectives.

There have been no major changes to the management structure of the project. The relationships with host country partners have been managed primarily through FFI's Tajikistan project coordinator based in Dushanbe with guidance, support and instruction from the FFI Cambridge team. The Coordinator liaises directly with host country partners via e-mail, telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings. This is supplemented by the more formal six-monthly project steering committee meetings where all partners and other key stakeholders come together to discuss and monitor progress, discuss any problems or issues and agree next steps for the project.

FFI's main UK partner is the International Centre for Protected Landscapes (ICPL). ICPL is providing expertise to develop and deliver two specific training modules including the mentoring of host country specialists to become trainers for the developed modules.

As planned, the involvement of ICPL has significantly strengthened the pool of expertise and experience available to the project. However, given the respective strengths of the partner organisations and unforeseen changes in ICPL staffing, we faced a challenge in separating out project tasks and allocating clear terms of reference for the partners including ICPL. This resulted, through a series of planning meetings and dialogue facilitated by the lead partner, in the TORs being developed somewhat into the project implementation period rather than at the outset. This had the advantage of providing time for all partners to fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of other partners and the local situation and to better tailor specific TORs. Recognising that partnership is a process, we believe that FFI's experience in capacity building and good knowledge of the target country has allowed for an effective partnership between the international and national partners to be established. Moreover, we are continually learning from all of our partnerships and where required, are able to adapt projects, decision making and management processes to accommodate change. To demonstrate our commitment to building its capacity to foster more effective partnerships, FFI has released a set of guidelines entitled "Guidance for working with other organizations" (2009). The guidelines include principles and good practice for building and maintaining organisational relationships and, as with all FFI teams, the Darwin project team are supported to adopt these principles in this project. Particular emphasis is placed on building effective working relationships with the core values of equity, transparency and mutual benefit.

The project has collaborated in country with a UNDP/GEF "Gissar Mountains Biodiversity project", which is focused on "Demonstrating new approaches to Protected Areas and Biodiversity Management in the Gissar Mountains as a model for strengthening the national Tajikistan Protected Areas System". This project began in 2006 and is due to finish in 2011. We are sharing learning and experiences between projects and reviewing the possibility of outputs from the UNDP project being used in the design of the appropriate training modules. The UNDP project team are also interested and happy to cooperate and participate in any of our training activities.

We have also established links with the international German Development Cooperation GTZ. GTZ has a regional programme on the sustainable use of natural resources in Central Asia and has a project focusing on this theme in Gorno Badakshan – one of the regions of Tajikistan.

The project is also using the knowledge and expertise gained from FFI's successful Darwin Initiative project (14-037) which established a Biodiversity Conservation MSc course in Cambodia. The project is also learning from a second FFI project, working in Romania, developing and delivering training in protected area management. Lessons learnt from these initiatives and, where appropriate, training materials already developed for these programmes, will be adapted for the Tajik programme.

The CBD focal point in Tajikistan was Dr Neimatullo Safarov, the Director of the National Biodiversity and Biosafety Centre. FFI representatives have met with Dr Safarov on several occasions including the project scoping trip and during the project's inception period. He has given his full support and agreement to collaborate on the project. He also agreed to provide a representative to sit on the project steering committee. The CBD focal point was actively engaged from the outset to ensure that the project was designed to meet the needs of Tajikistan and contribute towards implementation of the CBD in country. In March 2010 Dr Safarov was replaced by Mr Khursandmurod Zikirov (Head of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Forestry) as the CBD focal point. The Project Leader has previously met with Mr Zikirov and we will now be seeking to strengthen relationships with him, as the new CBD representative, over the coming months to ensure the project has his support and is relevant to the needs of Tajikistan.

As this is the first year of the project, it is too early to demonstrate the building of host country institutions' capacity to meet the CBD requirements. However, during the project's lifetime, various CBD articles will be addressed that will assist host country institutions in meeting their CBD commitments. These will primarily be addressed through Article 12: Research and

Training (a) Establish and maintain programmes for scientific and technical education and training ... and provide support for such education and training for the specific needs of developing countries; and (b) Promote and encourage research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, particularly in developing countries.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Output 1: Accredited teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice developed, tested and refined by UK and Tajik specialists.

Activities (Year 1)

1.1 Needs assessment to confirm and refine course topics

1.2 UK experts develop outline course modules

1.3 In-country workshops to ensure modules relevant to Tajikistan; course materials finalised and translated

A participatory Training Needs Assessment was conducted during August and September 2009. A Training Needs Questionnaire (Annex 3i) was initially circulated to representatives within the target sector including in-post conservation practitioners and professionals from the government and NGO sectors as well as academic and scientific institutions. 70 responses were received. This was followed-up with a participatory Training Needs workshop, which was held in September. The workshop involved 17 stakeholders from key target groups including the government, NGO and academic sectors. Feedback on the results of the analysis of the training needs questionnaire survey was provided to the workshop participants and discussions held on the results. The workshop also allowed for consensus to be obtained on the priority training themes, as identified by the questionnaire, and for prioritization of the modules to be delivered. Modular subthemes were also outlined and schedules for implementation discussed. The two modules identified as being of highest priority for delivery were the "Protected Area systems and management, including community involvement" and "Biodiversity monitoring and surveying; information management".

The UK experts have since worked on the development of the 'international' training modules. Work will commence with host country specialists to adapt the material to the Tajik situation in April 2010. The training materials will then be produced into Russian. Currently one international module is finished and is being translated (Annex 3ii); three other modules are being developed. Three in-country workshops to ensure modules are relevant to the Tajik context are scheduled to occur in April, May and July.

The Needs workshop also revealed that UCA were considering developing a training course similar to one of the project's planned modules "Project planning, management and fundraising". We therefore had to determine whether there was a need to still develop this module. We subsequently learned in March that the training course's development remained unfinished and UCA were not in a position to take this forward. The PSC expressed their support that the module be included in our programme. This has resulted in a delay in obtaining a UK expert to deliver this component, but will be addressed in Q1 Y2.

As reported in the Half Year Report, changes in staffing and a slower than anticipated start up, primarily due to complications in getting a local programme and logistics organised, as well as recruiting a project assistant in-country, resulted in an unfortunate and un-anticipated delay to project implementation. Consequently, the needs assessment was conducted in quarter (Q) 2 rather than Q1. This has resulted in the UK experts beginning to develop the outline course modules in Q3. Some of this delayed time is being regained as modules are being developed concurrently, and this component was originally programmed to occur over Q2-Q5. The next step of UK experts working with host country specialists to adapt the materials to the Tajik situation, as well as translating the training materials into the local language, will now extend into Q2 of Year 2. However, the module development process is further advanced for some courses than others, so it will be possible to start delivery of these modules before all six are

completed, thereby allowing us to catch-up time and deliver all modules within Year 2 as planned.

Output 2: Host country teachers and institutions trained and supported to deliver and manage the developed modules.

Activities (to be started in Year 1)

2.1 Partnerships formalised with host country institutions (MoU and agreed Terms of Reference)

2.2 National trainers selected, contracted and trained in teaching methodology

2.3 National trainers' competence in course content assessed and built as necessary (during workshops and first round of courses led by UK experts)

2.4 Project co-ordinator works with host institutes to organise and promote courses

Partnerships have been formalised with our three host country partners. Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and Terms of Reference (ToRs – Annex 3iii) for each partner were drafted and circulated to host country partners for review and comment. These have since been modified and signed by two partners. The UCA documents have been approved but signatures are pending due to awaiting the necessary approval from their central administration office in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Following discussion with in-country partners during the September visit, FFI UK and Tajik staff, with input from ICPL, developed draft criteria for the selection of Tajik specialists and trainers. These were subsequently discussed and agreed by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

The selection and assessment of specialists and trainers has since commenced. The host-country partner IZP NAS is leading on the identification and coordination of national specialists to input into the module content, making it relevant to Tajikistan. From these specialists, trainers will be selected to work alongside the UK experts in course delivery.

Specialists were approached and asked whether they would be interested in contributing to the development of the training module content, and/or in becoming trainers for delivery modules in second and third years, and beyond the lifetime of the project, if the course is subsequently taken up and run by one of the in-country partners. Thirty specialists have been identified from a breadth of sectors as the PSC stressed the importance of there being a proportional section of specialists from different governmental and NGO sectors, and also ensuring a good balance and representation by selecting specialists from all regions of Tajikistan. It has been decided to select the actual trainers from within the relevant group of specialists once the UK expert has had the opportunity to interact with them during the workshops. In this way it is hoped to select trainers who not only have the required knowledge, but also the aptitude for modern-style training.

The Tajikistan project coordinator has been instrumental in coordinating these activities with the host institutes. He is the main point of contact and liaison between all three institutions and other interested stakeholders. He is working in close cooperation with UCA on the organisation and promotion of the planned courses. UCA play a key role advising and providing marketing and administrative support for the courses, in addition to leading the selection process for trainees.

Output 3: Government & NGO staff trained and making use of relevant new conservation skills.

Activities (to be started in Year 1)

3.1 Participants proactively sourced and selected for first set of courses

The selection of participants has commenced. An application and selection process was designed by FFI UK and Tajik staff following discussions with partners, and agreed by the PSC. An application form (Annex 3iv) has been developed and is being circulated along with a module descriptor (Annex 3v) to our target sectors - in-post conservation practitioners from the

government and NGO/civil society sectors. We anticipate that we will have a final list of participants identified to attend the first set of training courses by June 2010.

Output 4: Relevant conservation field research designed, conducted and disseminated by young Tajik researchers (Darwin Scholars).

Activities (Year 1)

4.1 Competitive selection of Masters students for research scholarships

4.2 Mentoring of students by UK experts & Tajik specialists/ supervisors

The selection process began later than anticipated. However, an application process and required forms have been developed and subsequently approved by the PSC. We are seeking to support field research which will add to knowledge in the topic areas of the project training modules. The application form is currently being circulated to our target sectors - post-graduate research department supervisors and their students. The selection process is organised and led by the host country partner IZP NAS. A request has been approved to delay the distribution of these funds to selected students until Year 2 of the project. As a result, the mentoring of students by UK experts and Tajik specialists/supervisors will now commence in Year 2.

3.2 Progress towards Project Outputs

Outputs

1. Accredited teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice developed, tested and refined by UK and Tajik specialists.

Indicator: At least 6 teaching modules on relevant conservation topics developed (by year 1), tested and refined (by year 2).

Substantial progress has been made towards the project outputs although a little slower than anticipated. Four teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice are currently being developed.

The output indicator for this year of 6 teaching modules on relevant conservation topics being developed, as evidenced by course materials, still holds as a viable measure of outputs. We anticipate this being met by September 2010 (end of Q2, Y2). No output assumption was identified for output 1.

2. Host country teachers and institutions trained and supported to deliver and manage the developed modules.

Indicators: a. At least 12 national trainers trained and able to competently deliver courses by year 2; b. Courses embedded in host institutions' on-going professional development training programmes by year 3.

The second output was mainly scheduled for Years 2 and 3 of the project. The indicators will be measured by evidence of training records; evaluation reports of courses given by host country trainers; host institution literature / course prospectus and remain valid. The output assumption that "host country partners remain committed to implementation throughout life of project and into the long-term" still holds true. Over the last year the host country partners have demonstrated their willingness to be engaged in this project. Moreover, the head of one of the main partners (UCA) has expressed a personal interest and willingness to be involved, as a local expert/specialist, in the development of the module on Project planning, management and fundraising.

3. Government & NGO staff trained and making use of relevant new conservation skills.

Indicators: a. Over 150 course participants trained; b. Two cycles of 6 two week courses delivered; c. Conservation professionals are using their new skills in their work to improve their performance.

The third output will also mainly be evidenced in Years 2 & 3 of the project. The means of verification for the indicators of this output remain suitable and include: participants' attendance records; end-of-course assessment tests; training course reports; follow-up questionnaires and interviews with course participants. The main assumption here was "cooperation from government and NGOs enabling staff to participate in training sessions". This assumption still holds true. The PSC have raised the issue that a two week training module might be problematic as the trainees will have difficulty in obtaining permission to participate in training modules for such long periods. The PSC advised that the duration of the modules be shortened to 7 days. A final decision on this will be taken based on an assessment of the applications to identify the range of participants and their availability.

4. Relevant conservation field research designed, conducted and disseminated by young Tajik researchers (Darwin Scholars).

Indicators: a. 5 post-graduate students supported and mentored to conduct high quality field research leading to Masters degrees; b. Relevant research studies undertaken and results made available to guide future conservation work.

The results of the fourth output will only be realised in Year 3 of the project. The indicators and measures remain appropriate; submission of Masters Theses; external evaluation of research; published research papers; reports sent to appropriate conservation agencies. However, it has been identified that in Tajikistan, most Masters take three or four years to complete. We will therefore be sourcing students in the first or second year of their research and will support them to complete and submit a thesis. However, it is unlikely that they will obtain a Masters degree within the lifetime of the project. No output assumption was identified for output 4.

3.3 Standard Measures

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Number planned for this reporting period	Total planned from application
Established codes							
4C	Number of Tajik postgraduate students to receive training	0	5	0	0	0	5
4D	Number of training weeks to be provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each masters student will attend one course – module topic most relevant to their research 	0	10	0	0	0	10
6A	Number of people to receive other forms of education/training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of trainers: Participants of conservation training courses 	0 0	12 75	0 75	0 0	0 0	12 150
6B	Number of training weeks to be provided	0	13	12	0	0	25

7	Number of (ie different types - not volume - of material produced) training materials to be produced for use by host country: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training module packages 	0	6	0	0	0	6
8	Number of weeks to be spent by UK project staff on project work in the host country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFI UK project staff • Training needs assessment workshop • UK experts 	4	4	4	4	4	12
		1	0	0	1	1	1
		3	15	12	0	3	30
11B	Number of papers to be submitted to peer reviewed journals	0	0	5	0	0	5
14A	Number of conferences/seminars/workshops to be organised to present/disseminate findings	0	0	1	0	0	1
15A	Number of national press releases in host country(ies)	0	1	1	0	0	2
15C	Number of national press releases in UK	0	1	1	0	0	2
19A	Number of national radio interviews/features in host county(ies)	0	0	1	0	0	1
23	Value of resources raised from other sources (ie in addition to Darwin funding) for project work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-kind partner contributions 	£1243	£1243	£1244	0	0	£3,730

Table 2 Publications

Type	Detail	Publishers	Available from	Cost £
None produced				

3.4 Progress towards the project purpose and outcomes

Purpose: *Strengthened capacity of NGO and state conservation organisations in modern, collaborative conservation and applied research techniques.*

Indicators: *Conservation professionals using new skills in their work to improve their performance and impact: Improved linkages and collaboration within and between state, academic and NGO conservation sectors*

It is too early to report on the project outcomes. The main delivery mechanism for strengthening capacity – the training modules - will be delivered in the second and third years of the project. However good progress has been made towards the project purpose and we are on track to deliver. The assumptions at this level still hold true - that course participants are interested in developing skills and adapting their way of working; participants' employers will allow them to

put learning into practice; and the government sector is willing to engage with NGOs and wider civil society. The measures for verification of conservation professionals using new skills will be ascertained through follow-up questionnaires from course participants, and will be the most viable and valid method of assessing impact. In addition, interviews will be conducted with the employers of participants where possible, to assess the impact of the training. Supplementary evidence such as assessment reports from government, NGOs and community representatives will also be useful and adequate for measuring outcomes.

3.5 Progress towards impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits

It is too early in the project to determine this level of impact although the opinion of the PSC and other experts / specialist support the view that the level of knowledge in certain aspects of modern conservation policy and practice is low in Tajikistan and that any training programme will impact positively. The result of this project will be a cadre of conservation professionals with a greater awareness and understanding of modern participatory conservation thinking and methodology. This should in turn lead to a positive benefit for biodiversity.

4. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons

Monitoring of output indicators is being carried out by the PSC, which comprises of representatives from FFI, a member from each of the main host country partners as well as a member of the State Committee of Environmental Protection. The committee meets twice yearly (meetings have been held in September 2009 and March 2010) to monitor project progress including the development of the teaching modules, number of trained national trainers, number of course participants, progress of post-graduate research, progress of activities against implementation timetable etc.

The quality of the outputs will be evaluated through the post-training assessments administered by the host country partners, as well as attendance by committee members at some of the training sessions, and feedback from the UK experts on the research projects of the Darwin Scholars.

The indicators of achievement against project purpose will primarily be that conservation professionals will be using new skills in their work to improve their performance and impact, and improved linkages and collaboration within and between state, academic and NGO conservation sectors.

In terms of achieving the overall project purpose, the indicator that conservation professionals are using their new skills will be evaluated through follow-up questionnaires and/or interviews with course participants six months after the completion of the course. In addition, interviews will be conducted with the employers e.g. the Head of the Protected Area authority or the NGO director, to assess impact of the training on the participants' abilities to function within the organisation and to understand any wider impacts of the injection of new skills into the organisation. These interviews will be conducted by members of the steering committee and will also contribute towards evaluating whether collaboration between state, academic and NGO sectors has improved and from organisations' annual activity reports.

No changes to the M&E plan have been made over the reporting period.

One lesson learned is that, to effectively develop and implement the project, a greater percentage of staff time needs to be realistically built into the project rather than just the bare minimum. At the inception period it would have been more efficient for the project manager to build in a substantial period of time in-country to really immerse oneself into the project and all possible factors that need to be considered. This would also help to clarify partner roles and ensure informed participation at an earlier stage of the project. Future projects should allow for a substantial inception period including a lengthy and exhaustive visit for detailed work planning and to discuss and resolve matters early on.

It is clear that greater engagement and more regular communication with all partners is needed, rather than just six-monthly PSC meetings. This is occurring through the in-country

project coordinator and regular frequent engagement with host institutions will be scheduled into the remaining years of the project. There is also the language difficulty, as not all partner representatives are able to communicate in English, and this can lead to misunderstandings with detail or nuance being lost in translation. Additionally we have learned that things take much longer than anticipated to occur in Tajikistan.

5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Not applicable.

6. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

The design of the project over the last year has been enhanced through the input of the PSC members. Having greater knowledge of logistics, timings, capabilities and levels of knowledge by host country partners has allowed the project to manage adaptively the implementation schedule. One suggestion is that the training of trainers component be scheduled to occur at the end of the first year of delivery of the modules rather than at the outset of delivery. This would give IPD (the host country partner institution that will be delivering this component) the opportunity to assess the trainers in-situ. At the end of the year they would then have a better idea of the scope and level of training that would need to be provided to all the trainers to be engaged on programme delivery for the second round of module delivery and pitch their sessions appropriately. This would also be a good pre-assessment evaluation and act as a baseline for post-training assessment and evaluation.

One difficulty encountered, although in fact anticipated, was the challenge of working with partners based in the remote town of Khorog, geographically distant from Dushanbe. It was considered important not to have our programme centred solely in the capital, but this has added to the difficulties of communicating and coordinating with host country partners. Face to face meetings are often more productive and allow for greater engagement and trust particularly early in the project. However the good relationships now developed between the FFI coordinator and partner representatives have helped to address this issue. Some small practical difficulties remain however, for example how to easily share the trainee application forms between the partners - they are now accumulating in Khorog with many only in paper form as applicants have no access to email.

One risk that has been identified is the ability of the national trainers to deliver the modules in the future. Time built into the project to train trainers on each module is quite restricted and, depending on the trainer and his/her existing skills and experience, it may be a challenge to leave someone in place who could competently teach the modules in the future. Some of the ideas are bound to be new to them and it is possible the trainers may lack the breadth of knowledge and the confidence to deliver the courses after the project ends. The UK experts are aware of this issue and will offer support and mentoring to the trainers. If deemed necessary, FFI will look for additional funding to support this mentoring for an additional fixed period beyond the current project.

7. Sustainability

FFI considers it of paramount importance to make key stakeholders aware of the project as this is vital in obtaining support, cooperation, involvement and participation in the development and delivery of a national conservation training programme. Initial and key engagement was established at the outset with the Head of Committee of Environmental Protection. Subsequent involvement in meetings and round table meetings, workshops and seminars were also used as a platform to raise the profile of the project to a variety of stakeholders and organizations. FFI has met to discuss the project with representatives of the Ministry of Education, including the Head of Science & Innovation Management, Ecological Education. They told us that the Government aims to establish ecological education teaching at all levels and to disseminate certain aspects of this through IPD. They mentioned that it would be good to be kept informed of our activities to prevent any duplication. They were also willing to provide us with the list of requirements for accreditation and provide corresponding legislation pertaining to this.

FFI was invited to attend the Consultative Meeting of the UNDP Gissar Mountains Biodiversity Project. During this meeting, the Chief Technical Advisor specifically mentioned FFI's project to develop a National Conservation Training Programme in Tajikistan and highlighted the need to have this consultative meeting and work together, to help reduce duplication of effort and enhance impact. FFI was also invited to attend a UNDP led Round Table on "Ecological education and participation of interested stakeholders and methods of global ecological impact and poverty reduction". Again, FFI's Darwin Initiative project on developing a National Conservation Training Programme in Tajikistan was mentioned and our presence at the table was welcomed. Participants included representatives of Majlisi Oli of Republic of Tajikistan, Committee of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Education, UNDP Department of Ecology and Energy, representatives from Conventions of Biological Diversity, Convention of Climate Change, UNCCD, Aarhus Convention; regional representatives of Environmental Protection Committee and Departments of Education; district level Local Government Committee members, and other International organizations and NGOs.

Feedback from each of our host country partners about the profile of the project has been positive. IPD believe that the project is of "high importance as nowadays conservation is on the agenda of the government policy. The public is attracted to participate in such a project. The information on the project is spread out through all sectors (Governmental and nongovernmental organizations) of the society dealing with conservation." UCA have reported that "the interest of the public towards the project is high; especially in GBAO we have received more than 100 application forms. Graduates and postgraduates are also interested to participate in the modules."

Additionally, IZP NAS have stated that the project has "found support from the employees of the Committee of the Environmental Protection under the government of the Republic of Tajikistan, Research Institutes, Institutes of Higher Education and NGOs of Tajikistan. Specialists and employees that work in these organizations consider the project of high importance and actual for Tajikistan. The information on tasks and goals of the project, application forms disseminated to all interested organizations which are operating in Tajikistan as well as to organizations that operate in the regions (Katlon, GBAO, Sugd). The postgraduate application forms sent to postgraduate managers of the research institutes for selection as well. All organizations responded to us and expressed their deep interest to participate in the training modules."

Whilst it is too early to demonstrate increased capacity for biodiversity resulting from the project, (training to be delivered in the second and third years), there is clear evidence of interest. There is a keen interest in people applying to attend training and submissions indicate that there will be a substantial pool of participants from which a shortlist will have to be selected.

This project will deliver a discrete set of outputs, but in terms of an exit strategy, the long term aim is that the training will be continued by local institutions and evolve as needs change.

The project will produce a set of training modules designed for the Tajik situation and a group of national trainers able to competently deliver the courses. The training programme will be embedded in the School of Professional and Continuing Education of UCA, an institute of the Aga Khan network. UCA has expressed serious interest in continuing to offer the training as part of their professional development programme in the future and discussions are now underway on how the project can best ensure this.

It is anticipated that future training courses will be supported in part by fee paying participants from international NGOs and their local partners in the region, as part of capacity building projects, and government agencies implementing internationally funded projects which include a training element. This will require the course to build a good reputation and renown during the Darwin project.

8. Dissemination

A number of dissemination activities have occurred during the year. Initial and key engagement was established with the Head of Committee of Environmental Protection. Broad input was required for participation in the Training Needs Assessment (TNA). This involved dissemination of a briefing note (Annex 3ii) and training needs questionnaire to our target sector of in-post conservation professionals and practitioners from both government and NGO sectors was sought. Additionally, the questionnaire was circulated to the academic sector as we also wanted input from the scientific arena to capture their perceptions of future research training needs. In total, information about the project and the TNA was disseminated to 25 different organizations. Involvement of key stakeholders in the Training Needs Assessment and Identification of Themes workshop involved participants from 11 organizations. Selection of specialists, trainers, trainees and post-graduate students has also resulted in dissemination of information about the project and the modules being developed. This list can be found under Annex 3.

As mentioned in 7 above, it is planned that the training courses will continue to be run after the project finishes by UCA as part of their professional development programme, made available to conservation professionals across Central Asia through their campuses in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and possibly eventually incorporating the materials into their planned Natural Resource Management Masters. This will be funded in part by fee paying participants.

9. Project Expenditure

Table 3 Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010)

Item	Budget Reforecast approved Feb 2010	Expenditure	Variance
Rent, rates, heating, overheads etc			
Office costs (eg postage, telephone, stationery)			
Travel and subsistence			
Printing			
Conferences, seminars, etc			
Capital items/equipment			
Others (specify)			
Salaries (specify by individual)			
Liesje Birchenough / Paul Hotham			
Suzanne Tom			
Ubayd Gulamadshoev			
Interpreter/ translator			
Accountant			
Dr Jenny Daltry			
FFI livelihoods expert			
ICPL experts (2)			
Other UK experts (2)			
Project assistant			
Dr Saidov			
UCA rep			
Dr Safarov			
IPD rep			
Specialists (15)			
National trainers (9)			
Trainers in teaching			
Steering group (3)			
UCA admin			
TOTAL			

10. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2009/10

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2009 - March 2010	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Goal: <i>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>		<p>Too early within project implementation period to demonstrate any contribution towards positive impact on biodiversity.</p>	<p><i>(do not fill not applicable)</i></p>
<p>Sub goal:</p> <p>Improved protection of Tajikistan's biodiversity by enhancing conservation and research skills, and increasing collaboration, thereby supporting the implementation of Article 12 of the CBD and strategic priority trends of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).</p>	<p>Improved monitoring of habitats and species.</p> <p>Increased use of participatory methods to involve communities in biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Improved understanding of Protected Area management.</p> <p>Increased engagement between Government staff and civil society.</p>	<p>Good progress has been made in the first year of the project on the important preparation work. The training itself will be delivered in Years 2 & 3, which should lead to the achievement of these indicators.</p>	<p>(do not fill not applicable)</p>
<p>Purpose</p> <p>Strengthened capacity of NGO and state conservation organisations in modern, collaborative conservation and applied research techniques.</p>	<p>Conservation professionals using new skills in their work to improve their performance and impact.</p> <p>Improved linkages and collaboration within and between state, academic and NGO conservation sectors.</p>	<p>Good progress has been made in the first year of the project on the important preparation work. The training itself will be delivered in Years 2 & 3, which should lead to the achievement of these indicators.</p>	<p>In-country workshops to ensure modules relevant to Tajikistan continue.</p> <p>Delivery of 6 teaching modules led by UK experts to 75 participants from the State and NGO sectors.</p> <p>12 national trainers being trained in module content and in delivery, and</p>

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2009 - March 2010	Actions required/planned for next period
			<p>in teaching methodology.</p> <p>5 post graduate students being mentored by UK experts and Tajik specialists/supervisors.</p>
<p>Output 1. Accredited teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice developed, tested and refined by UK and Tajik specialists.</p>	<p>At least 6 teaching modules on relevant conservation topics developed (by year 1), tested and refined (by year 2).</p>	<p>Substantial progress has been made towards the project outputs although slower than anticipated. Four teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice are currently being developed.</p> <p>The output indicator for this year of 6 teaching modules on relevant conservation topics being developed, as evidenced by course materials, still holds as a viable measure of outputs.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.1 Needs assessment to confirm and refine course topics</p>		<p>The Training Needs Assessment was completed in August and September 2009. No further activities to be carried out under this activity for the remainder of the project.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.2 UK experts develop outline course modules</p>		<p>UK experts are currently developing outline course modules for four modules. One international module is finished and is being translated; three other modules are in progress. In the next period, two further modules will be developed.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.3 In-country workshops to ensure modules relevant to Tajikistan; course materials finalised and translated</p>		<p>Three in-country workshops to ensure modules are relevant to the Tajik context are scheduled to occur in April, May and July 2010. The remaining three will be delivered in the next quarter.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.4, etc Modules refined following feedback from first round of training courses</p>		<p>No activities scheduled for Y1. This will occur throughout Y2 after delivery of first round of each training module.</p>	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2009 - March 2010	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Output 2. Host country teachers and institutions trained and supported to deliver and manage the developed modules.</p>	<p>2a. At least 12 national trainers trained and able to competently deliver courses by year 2.</p> <p>2b. Courses embedded in host institutions' on-going professional development training programmes by year 3.</p>	<p>This output was mainly scheduled for Years 2 and 3 of the project. The indicators will be measured by evidence of training records; evaluation reports of courses given by host country trainers; host institution literature / course prospectus. These are still valid indicator measures.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.1 Partnerships formalised with host country institutions (MoU and agreed Terms of Reference)</p>	<p>Partnerships have been formalised with our three host country partners. Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and Terms of Reference for each partner have been approved. No further activity under this activity is planned.</p>		
<p>Activity 2.2 National trainers selected, contracted and trained in teaching methodology</p>	<p>Criteria were developed for the selection of Tajik specialists and trainers and agreed by the Project Steering Committee (PSC). The selection and assessment of specialists and trainers has commenced. During the next period the selection and contracting of actual trainers from within the relevant group of specialists will take place. These trainers will be trained in teaching methodology towards the end of delivery of the first cycle of module delivery.</p>		
<p>Activity 2.3 National trainers' competence in course content assessed and built as necessary (during workshops and first round of courses led by UK experts)</p>	<p>National trainers will start being assessed during involvement in the in-country workshops and assessment will continue during the first cycle of module delivery, a Year 2 activity. The UK experts will build the trainers capacity during the workshops and first training cycle, through teaching and mentoring.</p>		
<p>Activity 2.4</p>	<p>The Tajikistan project co-ordinator has been instrumental in coordinating</p>		

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2009 - March 2010	Actions required/planned for next period
Project co-ordinator works with host institutes to organise and promote courses		activities with the host institutes and is the main point of contact. He is working in close cooperation with UCA on the organisation and promotion of the planned courses. Promotion is well underway and logistical organisation has commenced with selection of field trip sites.	
Output 3. Government & NGO staff trained and making use of relevant new conservation skills.	3a. Over 150 course participants trained. 3b. Two cycles of 6 two week courses delivered. 3c. Conservation professionals are using their new skills in their work to improve their performance.	This output will mainly be evidenced in Years 2 & 3 of the project. The means of verification for the indicators remain suitable and will include participants' attendance records; end-of-course assessment tests; training course reports; follow-up questionnaires and interviews with course participants.	
Activity 3.1 Participants proactively sourced and selected for first set of courses		An application and selection process was designed and agreed by the PSC and an application form created. Selection of participants has commenced. We anticipate having a final list of participants for the first courses identified by June 2010 and the remaining selected by end of Q2.	
Activity 3.2 Each course run once in Year 2 (led by UK experts) and once in Year 3 (led by Tajik trainers)		No planned activity was scheduled in Year 1. The first delivery is planned to occur in August/September 2010 and to continue throughout Year 2.	
Output 4. Relevant conservation field research designed, conducted and disseminated by young Tajik researchers (Darwin Scholars).	4a. 5 post-graduate students supported and mentored to conduct high quality field research leading to Masters degrees. 4b. Relevant research studies undertaken and results made	This output is due to be evidenced in Year 3 of the project. The indicators remain appropriate. However, most Masters take three or four years to complete in Tajikistan. Our students will be in the first or second year of their research and so it will be unlikely that they will actually obtain their Masters degrees within the lifetime of the project. However they will have completed and disseminated their field research.	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2009 - March 2010	Actions required/planned for next period
	available to guide future conservation work.		
<p>Activity 4.1</p> <p>Competitive selection of Masters students for research scholarships</p>		<p>The selection process began later than anticipated. An application and selection process was designed and agreed by the PSC and an application form is being circulated to our target sectors of post-graduate research department supervisors and their students. We anticipate being able to identify final candidates and disburse funds by June 2010.</p>	
<p>Activity 4.2</p> <p>Mentoring of students by UK experts & Tajik specialists/ supervisors</p>		<p>Due to the delay in the selection process, the mentoring of students by UK experts and Tajik specialists/supervisors will now commence in Year 2.</p>	
<p>Activity 4.3</p> <p>Production of masters theses, research papers and reports</p>		<p>No planned activity was scheduled in Year 1. The production of theses, research papers and reports we anticipate occurring in Year 3 of the project.</p>	

Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Goal:</p> <p>Effective contribution in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), as well as related targets set by countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources.</p>			
<p>Sub-Goal:</p> <p>Improved protection of Tajikistan's biodiversity by enhancing conservation and research skills, and increasing collaboration, thereby supporting the implementation of Article 12 of the CBD and strategic priority trends of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).</p>	<p>Improved monitoring of habitats and species.</p> <p>Increased use of participatory methods to involve communities in biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Improved understanding of Protected Area management.</p> <p>Increased engagement between Government staff and civil society.</p>	<p>Annual National Report on the activities implemented to meet the NBSAP objectives.</p> <p>National Report on Biodiversity Conservation to the CBD Secretariat.</p>	
<p>Purpose</p> <p>Strengthened capacity of NGO and state conservation organisations in modern, collaborative conservation and applied research techniques.</p>	<p>Conservation professionals using new skills in their work to improve their performance and impact.</p> <p>Improved linkages and collaboration within and between state, academic and NGO conservation sectors.</p>	<p>Follow-up questionnaires from course participants.</p> <p>Assessment reports from government, NGOs and community representatives.</p> <p>Organisations' annual activity reports.</p>	<p>Course participants are interested in developing skills and adapting their way of working.</p> <p>Participants' employers allow them to put learning into practice.</p> <p>Government sector willing to engage with NGOs and wider civil society.</p>

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Outputs 1. Accredited teaching modules on modern conservation policy and practice developed, tested and refined by UK and Tajik specialists.	1. At least 6 teaching modules on relevant conservation topics developed (by year 1), tested and refined (by year 2).	1. Course materials	
2. Host country teachers and institutions trained and supported to deliver and manage the developed modules.	2a. At least 12 national trainers trained and able to competently deliver courses by year 2. 2b. Courses embedded in host institutions' on-going professional development training programmes by year 3.	2a. Training records; Evaluation reports of courses given by host country trainers. 2b. Host institution literature / course prospectus; Training records.	Host country partners remain committed to implementation throughout life of project and into the long-term.
3. Government & NGO staff trained and making use of relevant new conservation skills.	3a. Over 150 course participants trained. 3b. Two cycles of 6 two week courses delivered. 3c. Conservation professionals are using their new skills in their work to improve their performance.	3a. Participants attendance records; end-of-course assessment test. 3b. Training course reports. 3c. Follow-up questionnaires and interviews with course participants.	Cooperation from government and NGOs enabling staff to participate.
4. Relevant conservation field research designed, conducted and disseminated by young Tajik researchers (Darwin Scholars).	4a. 5 post-graduate students supported and mentored to conduct high quality field research leading to Masters degrees. 4b. Relevant research studies undertaken and results made available to guide future conservation work.	4a. Masters theses; external evaluation of research. 4b. Published research papers; reports sent to appropriate conservation agencies.	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Activities (details in workplan)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Needs assessment to confirm and refine course topics 1.2 UK experts develop outline course modules 1.3 In-country workshops to ensure modules relevant to Tajikistan; course materials finalised and translated 1.4 Modules refined following feedback from first round of training courses 2.1 Partnerships formalised with host country institutions (MoU and agreed Terms of Reference) 2.2 National trainers selected, contracted and trained in teaching methodology 2.3 National trainers' competence in course content assessed and built as necessary (during workshops and first round of courses led by UK experts) 2.4 Project co-ordinator works with host institutes to organise and promote courses 3.1 Participants proactively sourced and selected for first set of courses 3.2 Each course run once in Year 2 (led by UK experts) and once in Year 3 (led by Tajik trainers) 4.1 Competitive selection of Masters students for research scholarships 4.2 Mentoring of students by UK experts & Tajik specialists/ supervisors 4.3 Production of masters theses, research papers and reports 			
<p>Monitoring activities:</p> <p>Indicators 1 – 4: Progress towards all output indicators will be monitored by reports from project co-ordinator to the Project Steering Committee (every six months) and regular Steering Committee meetings.</p> <p>Indicators 2a, 3a, & 4a: Quality of these outputs will be evaluated by project leader and UK experts through assessments in situ and the evaluation questionnaires.</p> <p>Indicator 3a: Participants' knowledge will be assessed against criteria at end of training module (post-training evaluation test).</p> <p>Indicator 3c: Follow-up assessments of participants will be conducted by questionnaire or interview six months after the course, to assess relevance and use of newly acquired skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Indicator 4a & b: Masters theses will be marked and submitted papers peer-reviewed.</p>			

Annex 3 Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

- 3i TRAINING NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE – English & Russian
- 3ii EXAMPLE TRAINING MODULE UNIT
- 3iii EXAMPLE TOR WITH HOST COUNTRY PARTNER
- 3iv TRAINEE APPLICATION FORM
- 3v MODULE DESCRIPTOR
- 3vi BRIEFING NOTE – English & Russian
- 3vii DISSEMINATION YEAR 1 TARGET SECTORS

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 5MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	√
Is your report more than 5MB? If so, please advise Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk that the report will be send by post on CD, putting the project number in the Subject line.	No
Have you included means of verification? You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	√
Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	No
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	√
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	√
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	