

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	18-005
<b>Project Title</b>	Understanding, assessing and monitoring ecosystem services for better biodiversity conservation
<b>Country(ies)</b>	UK and Nepal
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Birdlife International
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Bird Conservation Nepal
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Alison Stattersfield</i>
<b>Report date</b>	<i>31 October 2010</i>
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	<i>HYR1</i>
<b>Project website</b>	

## **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).**

Progress is outlined below based on the key milestones during this period (April-October) as in the project implementation timetable. Bold denotes activities that we aimed to undertake during this period. Other activities mentioned are in addition to what we planned at this stage.

### **1.1 Convene UK expert meetings (1st = Inaugural Workshop)**

A UK expert meeting was convened on 17-18 May 2010 and attended by 31 participants with a wide range of expertise. This workshop was organized in collaboration with another Cambridge based project ('Measuring and monitoring ecosystem services at the site scale: building practical tools for real-world conservation'), coordinated by members of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI), including BirdLife International. The workshop initiated the process of producing a 'toolkit' for ecosystem service (ES) assessment at the site level. Dr Hum Gurung (CEO of host country partner organisation, Bird Conservation Nepal / BCN) visited the UK in May 2010 for two weeks to coincide with the workshop.

### **1.2 Compile & refine scientific framework for site-based ES assessment & monitoring**

In conjunction with the CCI project, we have begun to document the scientific framework that will underpin the 'toolkit' for site-based ES assessment and monitoring. Regular meetings of the steering committee (including four members of the BirdLife Secretariat) have taken place between July and October. Input from experts on the detailed methodology has been received and is currently being reviewed. Discussions with project partner, Kings College, London, have highlighted the potential to use a regional hydrological model for rapid (remote) assessment. A consultancy has been set up with Bhopal Pandey (a PhD student at Kings) until March 2011 to carry out specific tasks for this aspect of the project. Remote training in monitoring Important Bird Areas (IBAs) has also been delivered to three members of BCN staff via 'Go To Meeting' facilities in order to improve and extend site-based (IBA) monitoring in Nepal. This framework will be the basis for future ES assessments and therefore needs to be well-established.

### **1.3 Develop database to hold ES data & test for analyses & indicator development**

Initial discussions were held to assess the potential of BirdLife's World Bird Database to hold ES data alongside IBA monitoring data. As a result, we decided to postpone the development of the database until Year 2. This is because the format in which we will present the data is yet to be finalized and some explanation will need to be provided before it can be made available more widely to BirdLife Partners. Instead, a simple method of recording the data will initially be used (such as an Excel spreadsheet) until a final specification has been agreed.

### **3.2 Produce a range of other awareness-raising / advocacy materials**

A news item was published on the [www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org) website (2 July 2010) and an article appeared in Nepal's most prestigious daily newspaper, the Kathmandu Post (30 June 2010). A project factsheet was distributed at the CBD COP10 meeting in Nagoya and will be taken to other relevant events. BCN also developed a leaflet in Nepali to raise awareness. A draft advocacy plan is being developed by BCN and will be used to guide the outputs of the project.

### **3.4 Promote ES & biodiversity conservation at local, national & international meetings**

BCN has shared the project during a stakeholders consultation meeting on the 'Economic Value of Wetlands in Nepal' organised by the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation / Conservation and UNDP Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal project. Jenny Birch (Project Manager) presented the project at the British Trust for Ornithology in Thetford, UK, on 24 September.

### **4.1 Seek feedback from BirdLife Partners (ES work & needs)**

An online survey was designed and disseminated to all BirdLife network organisations (114 in total) to explore their interest in ES work and their views on how the outputs of this project could benefit them. To date, 47 replies have been received from all regions. Feedback suggests that BirdLife Partners are very keen to get involved in ES work and would like to be informed of project progress and trained in the use of the 'toolkit' and methods produced.

### **4.2 Share experiences with other Asian BirdLife Partners / organise regional training**

Dr Hum Gurung introduced the project at the BirdLife Asia Regional Partnership meeting in Taipei on 13-14 May 2010. He highlighted the purpose and scope of the project to over 80 participants from BirdLife Partners in the Asia region.

## **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.**

a) It was necessary to change the Host Country Coordinator as the original coordinator left his post at BCN in early 2010 and a new Director, Dr Hum Gurung, assumed the role. Thus Dr Gurung has been involved from the outset and has put together a strong team at BCN to work with him on this project. There will be no impact on the budget and timetabled activities.

b) Following discussions with BCN, it was agreed that the first project field visit should involve a larger UK team than originally planned. This is essential to cover the advocacy and livelihoods objectives of the work, as well as the technical scientific fieldwork and training of host country staff. Additional equipment will also be required to conduct measurements in the field. A formal request was made to transfer some funds between budget lines, taking £5,500 from 'Salaries' to cover additional expenses under 'Travel & Subsistence' and 'Capital Equipment'. This does not affect the overall budget or timetable but will greatly improve the impact of the first field visit to Nepal.

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

Yes, both have been discussed with LTSI and formal change requests submitted and agreed. No changes to the original agreement were deemed necessary.

### **Discussed with LTS:**

- a) yes, in March 2010
- b) yes, in September 2010

**Formal change request submitted:**

- a) yes, 17 March 2010
- b) yes, 24 September 2010

**Received confirmation of change acceptance**

- a) yes, 1 April 2010
- b) yes, 4 October 2010

**3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes  No

If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carryforward request: £

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

None

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 LTS International directly.**

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.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: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**