

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

Project Ref No	18-013
Project Title	Building capacity for wild felid conservation in China
Country(ies)	China
UK Organisation	WildCRU, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford
Collaborator(s)	Beijing Forestry University
Project Leader	<i>Dr Philip Riordan</i>
Report date	31 st October 2010
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website	www.chinacats.org (in development)

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).

1.1 Recruit local project assistant (LPA) at Beijing Forestry University

For the first eight months of the project we have employed Ms Yuan YiFang as LPA. She has been instrumental in developing and organising project materials, our inaugural workshop in Beijing and translating training materials in Chinese. Her position is temporary and she will be resuming her MSc studies at BFU in December 2010. She will continue to be involved with the project as part of her studies. We have also recruited an MSc graduate to take on the LPA position, Mr Wang Jun. He has been working on the WildCRU Diploma course during 2010 and is therefore well versed in the teaching approach and will be instrumental in taking the China Cats training programme forward.

1.2 Define monitoring programme concepts and principles

1.3 Define training programme principles and methods

Our national and regional workshops, along with the instigation of a Cat Specialist Group as part of the Mammal Society of China, have allowed us to develop a robust backbone for the programme, with support of key officials and academics in China. We have received critical input from national and regional stakeholders that have refined the content and delivery of the training and will lead to more effective monitoring. Draft training manuals have been produced, which are currently being trialled in Jiangxi, Guangxi and Sichuan provinces.

1.4 Training for LPA (Beijing)

Our China team have undertaken training in survey techniques, with both Yuan Yifang and Wang Jun joining fieldwork on cats in South and Northwest China.

1.5 Team familiarisation with Diploma teaching (Oxford)

1.6 Training for LPA (Oxford)

Wang Jun has been involved with the Diploma course throughout most of 2010.

2.1 Develop project information materials (Chinese and English)

With our China team, we have produced bilingual brochure (attached) and poster materials, which have been well received in Chinese events and internationally, for example COP10 in Nagoya.

2.2 Website portal development and publication – Chinese and English

We have purchased and registered international (www.chinacats.org) and Chinese (www.chinacats.org.cn) web domains. The development of these sites is still on-going, as we are looking to find consistent content management solutions that will enable access within China and internationally.

2.3 Initiate and renew contacts with individuals to be brought into the CC network

Both Shi Kun and Philip Riordan attended CBD COP10 in Nagoya, Japan where we developed international support, particularly with nation states neighbouring China. We have good links with people and organisations in Pakistan, Mongolia, Russia, Bhutan and Nepal.

Within China, our inaugural workshop and opening ceremony in Beijing was held during August 2010. This event was attended by senior officials from Chinese State Forestry Administration, CITES China, key provinces, the President of BFU, DFID China as well as Professor David Macdonald. We were also pleased to receive noted and influential academic wildlife biologists. Our meeting received extensive press coverage within China and has led to many subsequent enquiries from potential stakeholders. This support led to a special session of the Mammal Society of China held in September 2010, at which we succeeded in launching the Cat Specialist Group within the society, which will act as our primary CC Network.

Further international links have been developed strengthened by PR, including IUCN, CI, WCS, Panthera, Earthwatch, and SK attending the International Tiger Forum in St Petersburg, Russia. The support of the Darwin Initiative has been highlighted on all occasions.

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.

Website development has been slower than anticipated, particularly in respect of consistent Chinese access. We highlighted this as a potential issue from the start. Our solution may be to develop twin-sites running in parallel, rather than a single universally available site. Our Chinese team are in discussion with web development experts in China, but there is nothing further to report at time of writing. We do not believe that this significantly affects the project timetable or budget at this stage.

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

No.

Discussed with LTS: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

Received confirmation of change acceptance no/yes in.....(month/yr)

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?

No.