

## Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

<b>Project Ref No</b>	18-015
<b>Project Title</b>	Addressing the illegal trade in the critically endangered Ustyurt Saiga
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Fauna & Flora International
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Imperial College London; Institute of Zoology, Academy of Science of the Republic of Uzbekistan; State Inspectorate (Gosbiocontrol) under the State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Institute of Zoology, National Academy of Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Forestry and Hunting Committee under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan; the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan
<b>Project Leader</b>	Paul Hotham
<b>Report date</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> of Oct 2010
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 1
<b>Project website</b>	n/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 project commenced in April 2010. A Project Coordinator was engaged in July based in Uzbekistan but operating in both countries. The requirement to obtain official project approval in both Uzbekistan (UZ) and Kazakhstan (KZ) resulted in a delay to the implementation of some planned activities (see below). It is a remarkable success that we have secured official approval for the project at the Presidential level in Uzbekistan. We are now going through the required process to register an FFI branch - to be legally represented in the country – at this time. We anticipated being registered by December 2010. An MOU has also been signed between the Forestry and Hunting Committee of Kazakhstan and FFI.

Despite bureaucratic delays activity has taken place. Two strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation workshops were conducted, the first in August in Tashkent (UZ), hosted by the State Committee for Nature Protection of Uzbekistan, and the second in October in Astana (KZ), hosted by the State Committee for Forestry and Hunting, KZ. These served to re-introduce the project to key government partners and stakeholders; were invaluable in identifying local perceptions and insights into issues pertaining to saiga and saiga trade, and; aided the adaption of the project approach to reflect local conditions. Discussions on implementing the different components of the project are ongoing (with government authorities, research institutions, NGOs, UNDP, etc). Steering Committees are anticipated to be established in both countries in the second half of the first project year.

Due to the lengthy registration process, research into illegal trade issues and the delivery of a Training and Resource Needs Assessment (TRNA) have been postponed. However, preparatory meetings have been held on these activities. The development of the research methodology, which is led by Imperial College London, is ongoing and will be finalised by February 2011. Two local students (one Uzbek and one Kazakh) will then be trained to conduct socio-economic and demographic surveys on the Ustyurt, identifying economic drivers of trade, potential trade routes, local awareness and perceptions of saiga conservation and trade, and alternative income opportunities. The postponed TRNA will be conducted in Uzbekistan at the national and regional government levels in November 2010. Following the TRNA, and depending on the needs identified, training and resource provision is planned for December 2010 through to February 2011.

In respect to the planned awareness campaign, discussions are ongoing with State partners in Uzbekistan on the production of a short television advertisement, which will: i) inform people of the recent population reduction of the Ustyurt saiga (an estimated 47% since last year), and; ii) emphasize the illegality of hunting, trade and/or consumption of saiga products in Uzbekistan. Likely costs are being assessed but it is envisioned that this advertisement will run several times on national TV throughout the winter – the time of year when saiga move south from Kazakhstan into Uzbekistan - the crucial period for poaching.

**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 time required to obtain official project approval and to register FFI in Uzbekistan was underestimated and has delayed project implementation. A major delay resulted from the failure of authorities to pass on documentation confirming approval of the project by the President. Approval at this level reflects the importance of the initiative to the government. FFI is now registering and establishing an office in Uzbekistan, which is expected to be completed by December 2010. In the meantime, we are undertaking a range of planning and preparatory activities through our locally hired Project Coordinator and governmental and non-governmental partners. It is anticipated that the current delay will have no major impact on overall project implementation, as time lost will be regained over the next years. A revised budget and work plan together with a formal Change Request have been submitted to LTS.

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

A formal Change Request was submitted to LTS on 29 October 2010

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

No.

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

A formal Change Request was submitted to LTS on 29<sup>t</sup> October 2010

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

No.

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

Yes  No

**If yes, and you wish to request a carry forward 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 carry forward request: £5300**

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

We have identified a flaw in the original budget template. The header sheet uses erroneous formulas when calculating the Distribution of ID Resources, which cannot be corrected locally as the cells are protected. A corrected Header Sheet is submitted with this report.

**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@tsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@tsi.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**