

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

Project Ref No	20-016
Project Title	Reviving socio-ecological landscapes for biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation
Country(ies)	India + UK
Lead Organisation	Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE)
Collaborator(s)	Applied Environmental Research Foundation Pukka Herbs Ltd.
Project Leader	Prof. D.MacMillan
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	HYR1
Project website	http://www.kent.ac.uk/sac/research/projects/dcm_ghats.html

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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).

With the permission of LTS the project start date was shifted to the 1st June 2013 because of pre-existing commitments of key staff and the need to have host county staff in place from day one.

Recruitment of project staff: staff have been recruited in India across the required range of expertise, and all activities are now proceeding according to original timeline

The joint project visit by Pukka and DICE (11th-25th October 2013) was designed to assess progress to date, input into the social research design, look at the candidate agroforestry study sites and, in the company of the Pukka staff, assess the potential collection and processing sites in Bhimashankar (for *Terminalia chebula* - Haritaki) and Sangameshwar (*Terminalia bellirica* – Bibitaki) and scope the design of the processing facilities. All participants agreed the work is meeting its objectives.

Q1 and Q2 Activities against implementation timetable

A1.1. Biological surveys are well underway on those sites which were anticipated as being selected project sites (and subsequently confirmed). Data have been collected for floral and insect/pollinators and bird diversity and will be completed for all sites by Dec. 2013, with a preliminary report by end Jan. 2014. A questionnaire for collecting baseline data, prepared shared and pilot tested for Sacred groves, is now being implemented.

A1.2. Data have been collected for floral and insect/pollinators and bird diversity at the **community-conserved forests**.

A1.4. These data are being complemented by the **socio-economic surveys**, which have been drafted, piloted and subsequently redesigned in a specific project team workshop conducted at the Sangameshwar field station by Dr. Bride during the October 2013 project visit. The research schedule and survey instruments will be implemented by the end of November.

A2.1. Preliminary work has been carried out on the design of the **knowledge sharing workshops**, with a collection module/manual to be drafted by AERF supported by Pukka and DICE and to be informed by a review of existing agro-forestry systems operating in the region. It is anticipated that the first workshops will take place in the spring of 2014.

A2.2. Existing data and materials held by AERF on **NRM practice** are currently being catalogued and organised by one of the field workers (ER+DU – see personnel in section 2a). These will be supplemented by the data gathered through the socio-economic survey data.

A2.4. Discussions have taken place between AERF, Pukka and DICE as to the nature and operation of a suitable **ABS mechanism**. The benefit sharing mechanism has been discussed in three villages with the governing body and in one village a biodiversity management committee has also been formalized.

A2.5. AERF have established an organisation *Nature Connect to manage the ABS and process*

infrastructure.

A3.1 A short list of twelve **suitable sites for pilot agro forestry interventions** has been identified so far. One, at Umare, bordering on a sacred grove and in the near vicinity of a pre-established plant nursery has been agreed with the owner.

A3.2.+A3.4 Currently dealing with **ownership** issues at other sites and **training** needs (UH).

A4.1. The October 2013 Project Team visit agreed with Pukka and the village (Dagewadi) for the collection and processing site location for *Terminalia chebula* at Bhimashanker and identified primary candidate sites for *Terminalia bellerica* collection in Sangameshwar.

A4.2. The drafting of the **design for the collection and processing facilities** for *Terminalia chebula* is already underway.

Budget The budget spend is on track. Although some specific financial and matched staff-time resources are available from elsewhere to meet the cost of the official FairWild certification visit due to take place in mid-January, some virement from other budget headings might be required in order to support this cost. However, it is anticipated that this will not be in excess of the permitted 10% level.

2a. 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 Project Officer who was initially stipulated for the host country (Sameer Punde), although supporting the project design up until and beyond the Stage 2 application, was offered a fully funded PhD studentship at the University of Queensland linked to the Commonwealth Science and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). Fortunately AERF had another excellent candidate, Umesh Hiremath (UH), to replace Sameer. Umesh, who has worked with AERF previously, has considerable expertise in biological assessment and working with local communities and was considered an ideal replacement. He will perform the same role as Sameer and is currently managing the surveys of resource availability of Haritaki and Bibitaki, and preliminary biological assessments of candidate study sites.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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

Yes No

3b. If yes, and you wish to request a carry forward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible through the formal Change Request process. However, it would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication now 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?

