

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

Project Ref No	20-021
Project Title	Forest Futures: Livelihoods and sustainable forest management in Bolivian Amazon
Country(ies)	Bolivia
UK Organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew)
Collaborator(s)	Herencia, Cobija, Bolivia; Museo de Historia Natural Noel Kempf Mercado (MHNNKM), Santa Cruz, Bolivia; Universidad Amazónica de Pando (UAP), Cobija, Bolivia
Project Leader	Dr William Milliken
Report date	April 1 st – September 30 th 2014
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	Half-year 2 (April 1 st – September 30 th 2014)
Project website	http://www.kew.org/science/tropamerica/pando/ http://museonoelkempff.org/museo/antecedentes/ http://www.herencia.org.bo/index.php?q=noticias_novedades&nid=360 Project blog http://tropicalbotany.wordpress.com

1. Progress over the last 6 months (April – September)

Output 1

- Fruit tree species that could be incorporated into agroforest system and cater to an export market in Brazil (as well as a local market within the Pando) itself have provisionally been identified. Whilst this differs from our initial strategy (see Section 2, Item 6) we believe it meets the key objectives: diversification of NTFPs and generation of increased income from NTFPs.
- At the beginning of October we secured £90,000 from the innocent Foundation that will enable inclusion of fruit trees in six communities in the Bolivian Amazon over a three year period.

Output 2

- Agreements were written with three rural communities and we are working to have agreement with a further three communities by March 2015. Agroforest plots were established in the three rural communities: Palacio, Motacusal, San Jose. Two of these are developing well.
- At six months, trees at the Motacusal plot have reached 1.5 m in height and should capture the site by month 12. The San Jose plot was planted on a heavily impacted bull-dozed site and progress is much slower with higher mortality. BONI is developing well at Motacusal and Palacio but slowly at San Jose. This reflects the history of engagement between our partner, Herencia, and each community.
- A budget and timetable is in place for the planned field visit to established agroforests in Peru.
- We secured \$38,500 from the Sabin Family Foundation to support the development of Inga agroforest component.

Output 3

- By the end of July the team had established an additional three permanent one-hectare plots, tagged 1,839 trees with diameter of 10 cm or larger, collected 679 vouchers and taken more than 5000 photos, together with data on life form, crown type and state of decomposition etc.
- The vouchers were verified against the herbarium collections at the Herbarium in the MHNNKM.
- The plant export permit is being processed by the Bolivian Ministry for the Environment (DGB).

Output 4

- Regular contact was established with the environmental course at UAP and Herencia. Until now this has resulted in a lecture about the project, and in August 2014 Herencia hosted a joint two-day workshop themed “the importance of the Amazon for the equilibrium of Earth” in the Palacios community. Sixty students and university teachers participated. Several presentations given to rural communities on Amazonian soils and their impact on land-use.
- Two interviews with project staff were broadcast on national television in Bolivia, several blog posts and tweets. The TV channel “Amazonía al Día de Boliviana” broadcast a 20 minute programme about Inga agroforestry. Project updates were posted on Herencia’s Facebook four times in the ½ year, receiving 459 Likes. Herencia also posted twice on its website. A project poster was developed in Spanish for use by all partners, where appropriate.
- In July, Alex Monro presented the project to the Governor of the Pando and developed links with the HM Ambassador to Bolivia, His Excellency Ross Denny, who visited the project in July.
- An environmental education plan was developed and implementation has begun. A proposal was

submitted to the British Ecological Society (outcome expected November) to co-fund a pilot educational scheme to run over a period of six months. This will be followed up by two workshops held with teachers and school children and will feed into development of educational booklets and posters to be distributed more widely in the 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.

1. The Government of Bolivia is becoming increasingly hostile towards NGOs. This is leading to delays in the receipt of funds for our partners. It is part of a regional trend that could cause further difficulty if it continues for the duration of the project. Partly for this reason we have tried to emphasize the long history of trade between the UK and the Bolivian Amazon and to establish positive relations with the UK Embassy. Introducing the Governor of Pando by HM Ambassador had mixed results: the Governor seemed enthusiastic about project activities, but this was followed by slightly unsettling bureaucratic attention.
2. The structure of partner MHNNKM (belonging to the Bolivian Civil service system) was reorganised in Spring 2014. As a result our Bolivian employees had to reapply for their positions and sign new contracts. This has slowed down project progress for Output 3 but we are broadly on track.
3. We are having difficulty finding and holding on to in-country technical staff on the social/community engagement side of the project. This is making participative management and monitoring of the project a challenge. Yazmin Daza, our very effective social engagement officer, left for family reasons, and since then we have not been able to find staff of the same calibre willing to spend time in the field. One solution that we have discussed is the hiring of an un-salaried Spanish-speaking intern from the EU/US who would have both the professional skills and enthusiasm for fieldwork.
4. Limited engagement from our local University partner UAP has restricted capacity to measure the impact of agroforest on soil/site productivity through structured experimentation. We are working to resolve this through incorporation of further monitoring within the community-based programme.
5. Restructuring and redundancies at RBG Kew could have an impact on project staffing. With the exception of A. Monro all UK project staff are 'at risk of redundancy' and currently reapplying for positions. Whilst this time-consuming process has had some impact on project progress we hope to resolve the situation in December.
6. A field expedition was planned for October for Output 3. The Bolivian botanist leading this component, Alejandro Araujo-Murakami, was diagnosed with on leishmaniasis in September. Provided that his treatment is effective he will, at the earliest, be allowed to return to the Amazon in November.
7. In July 2014 Freeworld Trading confirmed that for commercial reasons it would not be able to meet its commitments to our project. Such commercially driven decision-making could be seen as a natural risk of partnerships with commercial partners. Whilst this does not have a budgetary impact it has required the adjustment of our objectives in this part of the project (see Objective 1 above).

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

The issues around component 1 and Freeworld Trading have been discussed with LTSI.

Discussed with LTS: yes, in June-October 2014

Formal change request submitted: no

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

Yes No

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

No

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.

Responses were requested for the next annual report only