

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

|                                         |                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Ref No.</b>                  | 20-024                                                                  |
| <b>Project Title</b>                    | Delivering Sustainable Forest Management for Fiji's People and Wildlife |
| <b>Country(ies)</b>                     | Fiji.                                                                   |
| <b>Lead Organisation</b>                | BirdLife International                                                  |
| <b>Collaborator(s)</b>                  | NatureFiji-MareqetiViti.                                                |
| <b>Project Leader</b>                   | <i>Mark O'Brien</i>                                                     |
| <b>Report date and number (eg HYR3)</b> | <i>HYR1</i>                                                             |
| <b>Project website</b>                  |                                                                         |

## 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).

The programme was formally launched on 18<sup>th</sup> July, with a reception at the British High Commission in Suva, Fiji.

Jenny Birch from BirdLife Cambridge arrived to provide details about TESSA (Toolkit for Ecosystem Service Site-based Assessments), and how it might be applied in Fiji. We presented the methods to the National Protected Areas Committee. From this we liaised with the Government's Forestry Department, who have been working on other projects to estimate carbon storage. Our methods were similar to those that they have previously used, although designed to be rapid assessments across a range of sites. Forestry are happy to loan us an expert in tree identification to help with assessments, and we will work closely with them to ensure that we use comparable formula and so produce results that.

Assessments have been undertaken at 2 sites to date (by Mere Valu of NFMV, with assistance from Nunia Thomas, Forestry department, members of local Site Support Groups, Mark O'Brien and Jenny Birch of BirdLife International), with the third planned in the near future. The two sites completed, are contrasting in that one, Wainawa, is close to Suva, most of the community work in town and so there is not a great demand for livelihoods from the forest although, clearly some form of value would be appreciated. The second site, Natewa/Tunuloa is isolated, and well away from any substantial market. The communities here are more dependent on essentials for day-to-day living, together with some income that they can derive from the local area. Pressure on the third site, on Taveuni, comes from a substantial agricultural export market resulting in an increasing demand for land. A bonus on Taveuni is that Fiji Government has some GEF PAS funding to monitor the boundary of the protected forest. Findings from the Rapid Assessments will provide immediate information on the benefits or otherwise from this forest compared with an alternative landuse.

TESSA also provides methods to assess harvested wild goods, and cultivated goods at these sites, while bird and, where possible, other biodiversity surveys are being undertaken at the same time. A method for maintaining a permanent record of this raw data has been developed, while first assessments of the results have been undertaken and used to indicate the scale of further surveys that may be required to produce a sufficient level of precision.

It has been agreed that a separate Project Steering Committee is not required, but that instead the project would form a component of the Forestry Board quarterly meetings. A paper on the next steps for the Permanent Forest Estate programme is being drafted for presentation at the next Forestry Board meeting. This draws heavily on a discussion paper prepared by NatureFiji-

MareqetiViti. Presentation will be by Mr Elik Senivasa, the Deputy Conservator of Forests. BirdLife International (Mark O'Brien) and NatureFiji-MareqetiViti (Nunia Thomas) were invited to, and the latter presented at, the launch of the new version of the Fiji Governments Forest Harvesting Code of Practice, in July. NFMV plans to get this version translated into Fijian, so that it provides a more accessible document for those local communities who wish to become involved in the Forest Industry. Nunia Thomas has also been accepted onto the Fiji Forest Certification Steering Committee who are finalising the national standards, which should be drafted by the end of 2013. This committee has representatives from the Government Forestry Department, the Forest Industry as well as NGOs. It is encouraging that there is widespread support across all sectors in Fiji for certification that aims to ensure a sustainable forest programme.

**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.**

We hadn't anticipated that Forestry Department would prefer to lead on the Permanent Forest Estate process. This has inevitably meant that it has taken longer to get to the stage of having a draft plan to trial, but the fulsome support of Forestry, and in particular the Deputy Conservator of Forests, means that this will have considerably more impact now, in the short term, but also more importantly into the future, well beyond the period of this project.

The delay in this stage of the process means that we have had to delay the establishment of a baseline of the awareness of the various government departments regarding PFE. This will progress just as soon as the PFE project is officially launched at the Forestry Board meeting.

So, there has been a delay of 4-6 months in the establishment of the mechanisms that will be used to trial the PFE with members of the local community but, we believe that the delay was justified as it means that the programme is championed by a senior person in the Forestry Department – rather than by a member of a national NGO. We anticipate that we will be back on track with the programme by the end of March 2014.

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

No, and we don't consider that there need to be changes to the original agreement at this stage.

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Discussed with LTS: | No |
|---------------------|----|

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Formal change request submitted: | No |
|----------------------------------|----|

|                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|
| Received confirmation of change acceptance | N/A |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|

**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 carryforward 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?**

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.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report 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**