



## Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2015)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	21-001
<b>Project Title</b>	Developing a conservation management plan for Samoa's little dodo- the Manumea or tooth-billed pigeon
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Samoa
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	ANU
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Samoa Conservation Society (SCS), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Samoa (MNRE), Birdlife, Department of Conservation (DOC) New Zealand
<b>Project Leader</b>	Rebecca Stirnemann
<b>Report date and number (eg HYR3)</b>	HYR2 16/10/2015
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.samoanbirds.org">www.samoanbirds.org</a>

**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 to end September).**

### **Output 1**

#### **Activity 1.1 Manumea surveys undertaken and monitoring plan developed**

We have successfully designed and piloted a method for detecting and monitoring Manumea in the landscape. This method allows us to calculate detectability of the species and determine the optimal time of day and seasonal timeframe required for determining species presence or absence. We have also used this technique to monitor the species over a number of months so we could correlate presence and absence with tree phenology so the important factors driving movements in the landscape could be ascertained. This technique has been successful but monitoring the large numbers of sound files is time consuming. Therefore we are currently determining how best to automate this process. A large scale version of our pilot study will take place next year and aim to relate species presence to fruiting phenology. This will also enable important population estimates and identification of important determinants of population size and movements. *Indicator 5: Methodology for a monitoring program for Manumea designed- has thus been completed*

The breeding period for manumea has also been determined via examination of museum specimens (see 1<sup>st</sup> six month report from 2014).

#### **Activity 1.2 Sites identified where further research/conservation can occur**

We have isolated some sites which are valuable to this species. One of these is optimal for undertaking pest control activity 2.2. Discussions with land owners still to take place.

#### **Activity 1.3 Radio tracking of Manumea**

Capture of Manumea has been more difficult than we expected since the birds are very nervous because of hunting. A team will come out next year to continue trying to capture birds for transmitter attachment since this will provide extremely valuable information on spatio-temporal use of habitats. However this must occur at a biologically optimal period when the birds are most clustered. We now know the best periods to attempt capture are May-September.

## **Output 2**

### **Activity 2.1 Sites selected for future conservation effort**

We have isolated some sites which are valuable to this species. One of these is perfect for undertaking pest control.

### **Activity 2.2 Pest control**

We are still working with the invasive specialist group to undertake this. We have reviewed the different methods used in French Polynesia, NZ, Seychelles, Mauritius and Rarotonga. Our expert group are drafting a work plan and costing. Some members will attend a workshop next year.

## **Output 3**

### **Activity 3.1 Development of short educational program on Manumea and forest preservation**

Our results show that hunting is a key threat to the Manumea. Our data shows the extent of this threat and the economical drivers (a scientific paper on these results is currently being drafted). Our first analysis revealed a number of knowledge gaps which we need to address in order to develop an educational program aimed at reducing hunting in key areas where Manumea are present. To this end we have designed a survey of hunters which will be undertaken in the upcoming months in key villages located near forest. We are also investigating how reliant communities are on these resources as suggested in the last annual report. While undertaking the surveys we are also making attempts to inform and encourage local people as to the importance of the Manumea.

We have also trialled an educational presentation encouraging replanting of the tree species the Manumea are most reliant on. This presentation was successful in inspiring the local youth of the village of Faleseela to undertake planting. In part this was because of the extensive enthusiasm of the presenter who works for the MNRE, Fialele Enoka.

### **Activity 3.2 Discussions with key village chiefs over the preservation of forest and reduction of pigeon hunting of specific sites**

Our original plan was to encourage pigeon hunting bans and logging restrictions for key areas developed through participatory methods with key villages. We are however discussing alternative methods to reduce native pigeon hunting which is illegal under current legislation.

### **Activity 3.3 A local native tree planting program established to benefit Manumea in collaboration with the forestry department**

We are encouraging planting of the key native trees (*Dysoxylum sp.*) Manumea require in a variety of areas and are educating people as to the importance of this.

## **Output 4**

### **Activity 4.1 Additional staff hired and trained for SCS**

An additional staff member has been hired by the NGO

### **Activity 4.2**

#### **Funds applied for to ensure the sustainable future of the organisation**

Proposals for funds have been submitted. These have provided training for the NGO in obtaining small grants, thus providing extra revenue and motivation to apply for grants in the future.

**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.**

Hunting is a greater threat to the species than earlier estimated and affects our ability to

capture the birds. This in turn affects our time table since capture requires more effort and we are likely to require some of the funds which we underspent in year 2 and will be needed in year 3 instead to undertake this fieldwork.

**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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

**If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:**

2014/2015 Funding year is yet to be finalised, and we are still awaiting payment of the Quarter 2 & Quarter 3 Funding for the 2015/2016 year.

**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 can be discussed in this report but **should also** be 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 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**