



## Darwin Initiative Main Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2015)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	21-011
<b>Project Title</b>	Securing livelihoods and conserving marine biodiversity through rights-based fisheries management
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Madagascar
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Blue Ventures Conservation
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Direction Régionale de l'Environnement et des Forêts (now DREEF) Melaky; Direction Régionale des Ressources Halieutiques et de la Pêche (DRRHP) (formally DRPRH) Melaky
<b>Project Leader</b>	Alasdair Harris
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website/Twitter/Blog/Instagram etc</b>	www.blueventures.org
<b>Funder (DFID/Defra)</b>	DFID

### 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).

We have reported below on activities due to start during this period in the submitted workplan. We have also reported on activities where work has started, even if outside the proposed workplan. We have included responses to our annual report feedback in italics in relevant places.

#### Activity 1.1 – Consultation of local and migrants fishers communities for management plan development

Consultation of fishermen communities is a core step in every activity we undertake.

While a management association – *Vezo Miray Nosy Barren* - with a board representing each fishing camp of the MPA was legally created early July (definitive status pending) - research and concrete discussions about zoning and management rules will begin on October 28<sup>th</sup>. This work session will help to gather information to develop a draft management plan that will be discussed within communities and other MPA stakeholders over the following months.

#### Activity 1.2 – Community exchange visit

Exchange visits are critical to provide a wider vision of the diversity and management of MPAs to fishing communities. The MIHARI network has organized 2 events where communities' representatives from the Barren Isles will participate:

- Regional MIHARI Forum, September 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>, Morondava – Representatives from Melaky/Menabe LMMA only.
- National MIHARI Forum, October 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>, Mananara – LMMA's representatives from all over Madagascar.

### **Activity 1.3 – Workshop with all MPA stakeholders to determine management plan, zoning and management association**

In April, a workshop was held with all MPA stakeholders and focused on defining the optimal design for the MPA management committee. Through this event, the creation of a fishers association, its status and bylaws were agreed by the stakeholders.

As stated above (see Activity 1.1), a draft management plan including zoning will be developed, discussed and validated with MPA's stakeholders within the coming months.

A validation workshop with final management plan is expected to be held by the end of Y2Q4 or beginning of Y3Q1.

*[How this will impact the overall timetabling of the project for year 2?*

*Due to bureaucratic delays to obtain the MPA's temporary status, some Y1 activities had to be pushed back. It affected Y2 timeline and especially activity 1.3 and activity 1.4 that have been respectively undertaken in Y2Q1 (instead of Y1Q4) and in Y2Q3/Q4 (instead of Y2Q1/Q2/Q3).]*

### **Activity 1.4 – Follow-up community consultations and final management plan validation workshop**

A final management plan will be developed and validated through a stakeholder workshop by the end of Y2/beginning of Y3. Throughout the development of this plan, communities will play a major role and be highly involved at each different step (drafting zones and management rules to be implemented).

### **Activity 1.5 – Creation of MPA management committee**

As mentioned in Activity 1.3, the optimal MPA management committee framework, its status and bylaws, were agreed through a stakeholder meeting in April.

Following this, a series of community consultations took place aimed at validating management committee design, association's status and bylaws, and electing communities' representatives.

At the end of June, an official workshop finalized the election and creation of the management committee of the association *Vezo Miray Nosy Barren* (creation legally registered on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015).

Through creating this association, the project reached a milestone as having official representatives of fishing communities, and will ease and enhance efficiency of the coming activities by building a solid foundation of stakeholders. It will imply a sense of continuity and progression, and help create information channels through the community representatives.

### **Activity 1.6 – Training and work planning sessions with newly formed MPA management committee**

Since September (Y2Q2), *Vezo Miray Nosy Barren* representatives (management and *Dina* committees) are invited to participate in a two day monthly event. While the first day is focused on training with an external trainer, the second day has been designed to allow for the association to share news, discuss important issues and seek plans to implement solutions. This second day is also a great opportunity for the project to discuss next steps required in order to reach MPA's definitive status.

The training sessions are currently focused on growing the associative skills of the representatives, as this management structure is a new concept for the majority of members. Upcoming topics include law enforcement, marine ecology and resources management.

### **Activity 2.2 – Conduct stakeholder consultations**

As stated in the annual report, a consultant with solid experience in participatory fisheries

management had been identified on Y1Q3, but was not available until the end of August. Therefore we had to wait until Y2Q2 to organize an official workshop with Ministry representatives to launch activities related to the elaboration of the Regional Fisheries Management Plan of the Melaky region.

After training sessions, the supervisor and surveyors are currently in the field carrying out community consultations. Industrial fishermen and other stakeholders' consultations will take place in Y2Q4.

### **Activity 2.3 - Hold validation workshops**

Following stakeholders' consultations, a fisheries management plan draft will be developed by the consultant. Once the draft has been approved by Y2Q4, 2 national and regional validation workshop will be held by the end of Y2 (or beginning of Y3 depending on road state/rainy season).

### **Activity 3.2 Develop ICT system for MCS (with IT consultant)**

While developing an ICT system for MCS activities remains an idea for the future, the current level of local Dina enforcement and infractions management is still weak. Increased time will be spent on these two aspects as they are critical for establishing strong and durable foundations for the MCS program of the BI MPA.

Hence, a change request for the logframe is requested regarding this activity.

*[How will the lack of local CSP presence affect the project (if at all)?*

*Despite the presence of 1 CSP representative in the region, it seems that there are a certain number of regional governmental entities that are involved in corrupt activities, CSP included.*

*So while the support from the local CSP representative would have been an asset to develop a MCS program, the above description implies that the focus/support has to be shifted to communities (eg. capacity development). Still, discussions with central CSP will be maintained to address the issue and find a long term solution for the MPA strengthening and how to increase information sharing on community monitoring of illegal fishing]*

### **Activity 4.1 – Participatory fisheries monitoring established in five villages**

*[This section has been expanded to incorporate details requested in the annual report review:*

*A revision to the finfish research work is proposed but no details are given – could this be expanded?]*

Participatory fisheries monitoring has been ongoing in Ambalahonko and Ampasimandro fishing villages. Following an assessment of the program by an external consultant (Y1Q4), the method has been updated and information collected by monitors upgraded.

Changes addressed:

- Equipment and maintenance (eg. Enhance scales durability in saltwater conditions, importance of levelling scales, new measuring tapes)
- Data collected (adapted data collection to make results more rigorous in line with the local context, eg. boat type, fish destination - sale/household consumption, sampling fish when more than 5 individuals per species)
- Monitors' skills (eg. Training sessions to reinforce original skills, training in the updated methods, data collection tips to avoid mistakes while entering final data).
- Furthermore, monitoring time has been increased from 2 half-days to 2 full days in order to capture greater information on fishing techniques (eg. longlines) that require fishermen to look at their gear several times a day.

The fisheries monitoring program has also been extended to 4 other sites (8 new trained monitors on 3 islands and 1 coastal village) since early July. This extension will provide

relevant information on new fisheries as coastal and island fishermen do not (usually) use the same fishing techniques. These data will be used to conduct stock assessments in Y3.

In parallel, the pilot shark fisheries monitoring program is running from May-December. Using smartphones (ODK app.), 6 fishermen based on 3 islands are monitoring the fishery, testing ICT and gathering relevant information to the MPA.

#### **Activity 4.2 – Community-based turtle nest monitoring at 8 sites**

The final months of last season's monitoring took place on 4 islands until May 2015. The next season's monitoring will start around November-December 2015.

Even though communities are involved in the process and data communicated quarterly, further emphasis on education and awareness-raising activities on keystone species would benefit the activity, increasing buy-in from communities and profiting the MPA in the long-term.

A change request for the logframe is requested regarding this activity.

#### **Activity 4.3 – Community-based monitoring of marine habitats at 10 sites**

Literature available on the subject coupled with the local context and specificity of the Barren Isles MPA, indicates that switching towards a more scientifically rigorous method with important involvement from communities all along the process, would be more relevant for the first few years of the MPA implementation.

A change request for the logframe is requested regarding this activity 4.3.

#### **Activity 4.4 – Disseminate monitoring results to communities and stakeholders (presentations, resource status dashboard, etc.)**

Feedback on monitoring results has been minimal during the last two quarters as we do not have results from the updated finfish monitoring yet; and staff time has been focussed on building capacity of the management association.

However we hope to improve this in the next two quarters by involving *Vezo Miray Nosy Barren* management committees in the design process for the next dissemination sessions, handling them some of the presentation responsibilities in order to develop their legitimacy and deepen their understanding of MPA management and role of monitoring programme in management.

#### **2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.**

Although there have been no notable problems or unexpected developments, apart from one issue with GuanoMad (see below), we have taken this opportunity at the half way point to review and assess our logframe, in light of developments and new information since the project started. We have submitted a change request alongside this report for an updated logframe.

We have also reviewed our expenditure as this point and have submitted a second change request in relation to a budget change.

Notable problems:

***Guanomad*** – Despite the temporary protection status granted to the Barren Isles MPA, Guanomad came back to Maintirano in August in order to announce the launch of the environmental impact assessment of its project on the Barren Isles. If approved, this step will

allow Guanomad an environmental permit to extract guano from 4 of the isles.

With strong opposition from local communities and writing a “*lettre de doléance*” signed by every MPA’s fishermen and delivered to the director of the entity in charge of granting the environmental permit, Guanomad is still making progress in the process which reveals the strong political support they have.

Guanomad’s project is a great threat to the MPA with substantial risks of biological impacts on habitats and related ecosystems, physical impacts on landscapes, loss of legitimacy and trust from communities into the MPA that was supposed to protect resources from external threats mining activities included, etc... among many other impacts.

*[During the exact same period, an illegal extraction of guano on one of the Barren Isles has been done. Despite rumours and solid suspicions, nothing officially proves that Guanomad is involved. The case is currently prosecutor’s responsibility, even though no news have been communicated since then.]*

**Increasing insecurity** – Issues related to villages’ attacks have grown increasingly these last months. While fishermen villages were still preserved to date, thanks to their isolation (access through mangrove forests and river channels only), this fact changed over the last months with attacks occurring in 4 of the 6 coastal villages of the MPA.

To date Blue Ventures staff has not encountered any issue, but safety rules might be updated if the trend keeps growing. If so, fieldwork will be impacted to some extent.

**Increasing of illegal sea cucumber scuba divers within the MPA** – Fishing with scuba diving equipment is forbidden in Madagascar. Nevertheless, sea cucumbers demand and collectors are growing and fleet of scuba divers are getting bigger and more frequent within the MPA. With the main ship carrying up to 120 divers, these fishermen dive around reefs collecting all of the sea cucumbers. Apart from ecological impacts, these huge fleets are also targeting the way of living of hundreds of traditional divers that have to dive longer and deeper to make a living. Furthermore sea cucumbers being kept for Asian markets, scuba divers also fish for other species to feed the fleet, often targeting every edible species from huge groupers to small turtles and protected seabird eggs.

While on mission, we discovered a scuba divers camp on one of the Barren Isles. Following this event, we discussed the issue with local partners and decided to set an intervention with DRRHP, DREEF, Gendarmerie, Police and CSP representatives. Unfortunately, when we reached the site the next morning all divers and equipment were gone. According to traditional fishermen living on the same island, divers urgently left during the night implying a leak from our intervention team.

Corruption issues are a great challenge and present among most of the local authorities. While we are currently trying to find a solution with the fishermen association, the lack of local legal support is an important limit to address illegal activities within the MPA.

**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:	Yes – with this report
Received confirmation of change acceptance	No

**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., 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:

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

We would like to respond to the final comment from the annual report in this section:

- The PL refers to loss of local project partner (who?) due to mining interests – what are the impacts on the rest of the project?

The local partner, Melaky for the Protection of Marine Environment (MMTD in local language), is a fishermen's association created following a governmental initiative. While working properly for a time, the president became embroiled in the Guano mining business and used the association to facilitate the introduction of Guanomad to the Barren Isles (see 2.a notable problem identified). Following this act, the association and his president lost fishermen's confidence and support. Even though MMTD is still going, this mistrust issue convinced the staff to work on building a new management association rather than using the MMTD as it was originally discussed.

**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 e.g., Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**