



Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No:	21-014
Project Title:	Reconnecting poverty-alleviation to biodiversity conservation in Kenya's Eastern Arc Mountains
Country(ies):	Kenya
Lead Organisation:	Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE), University of Kent
Collaborator(s):	Kenya Forest Service, Government of Kenya. Taita Taveta Wildlife Forum (TTWF). Nature Kenya. Zoological Society of London (ZSL). International Institute for Environment and Development.
Project Leader:	Dr Jim Groombridge
Report date and number (eg HYR3):	HR1
Project website:	Under construction

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).

Project start date: 1st July 2014. Reporting period: 1st July-31st Sept 2014 (3 months)

General tasks achieved:

- The three local Kenyan positions on the Darwin Project have been successfully filled; The Project Manager is Dawson Mwanyumba (TTWF); the Project Officer for Sagalla is Mr. Basil Lewela (TTWF). The Project Officer for Taita Taveta is Gilbay Obunga (NK). The Project Officers are managed by the Project Manager, who reports to the Project Steering Group (PSG). The PSG has met virtually (via skype) to discuss the initial activities of the project. A 1-week visit by 3 representatives of TTWF (Carolyn Talu, Dawson Mwanyumba, and James Mwang'ombe) to UK to meet DICE, ZSL and IIED partners is scheduled for mid-November 2014, to discuss project activities, planning and management, as well as financial and administrative management. This trip was initially scheduled for September 2014 but had to be postponed due to visa issues (see below, section 2a).
- A Toyota Hilux Double-Cabin 4WD and a motorbike Yamaha 175DT were purchased and delivered on 16th October 2014, using Project funds allocated for this purpose. POs will mainly use motorbike transport whilst the vehicle will be used when there are equipment or materials to be transported or when more than 1 officer are visiting the same place. The vehicles will greatly enhance to mobility of key personnel and materials
- Ms. Carolyn Talu and Dawson Mwanyumba have now obtained their Visas for the planned visit to UK (see section 2a). The visa for James Mwangombe is expected very soon.
- Dawson Mwanyumba has been successful in being awarded the EDGE Fellowship position at ZSL, to lead conservation activities for recovery of the Sagalla caecilian.
- Mr. Basil Lewela attended a short training course on Results Based Monitoring organized by a network to which TTWF is a member – PELUM (Participatory Ecological Land-Use Management).

Progress against Project Implementation Timetable (in Logframe) for Q1 of Year 1:

Output 1

1.1 Training of farmers and cascade training

In Sagalla, technical support visits have been made to farmers/groups with fishponds and a site for an additional fishpond has been identified and initial discussions held. Contact has also been made with the local handicrafts groups there.

In Taita, the main focus has been on development and progression of PFM Plans and CFAs. Because Taita is a much larger area and involves a larger community than Sagalla, project engagement with the fish farming groups there is still in its initial stages. Contact in Taita has been made with one handicraft group and follow up visits have been planned to set out the activities with the group.

Output 2

2.1 Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMPs), Forest Management agreements, and Sub-Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs)

The Project Manager and POs have reviewed progress of the preparation process for the PFM Plans. The plans are for Iyale/Wesu/Mbili forests and Susu/Ndiwenyi/Fururu forests.

The Project Manager and POs have discussed the preparation of the Articles of Association for IYAWEMBI Community Forest Association and SUNDIFU Community Forest Association.

Contact and awareness has also been made with the community surrounding Kinyeshamvua forest for the need to form a CFA and prepare a PFM Plan to enable their participation in the management of Kinyeshamvua forest.

These meetings were attended by the Assistant Director in charge of Forest Plans in Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Headquarters. The Senior Assistant Director in charge of Biodiversity Conservation & Management (James Mwangombe) in KFS Headquarters was also involved in the meetings. Officers at the County level were also involved; Taita Taveta Forest Station Manager and his assistant (KFS), Biodiversity Officer (Taita Taveta County Government), Nature Kenya Project Officer and the Project Manager (TTWF).

In these meetings, the Project Manager (TTWF) presented the data collected (both technical and socio-economic) for the preparation of the PFM Plans. The draft articles of association for the two CFAs were also presented. The Assistant Director in charge of Forest Plans took the meeting participants through the PFM Plan preparation process and what is expected of the plans for them to meet the requirements for approval. He asked the CFA officials to prepare letters addressed to the Director of KFS requesting authority to prepare the PFM Plans which was done before the meetings ended. The letters of authority from the Director KFS have since been received.

The PO (NK) is being involved in preparation of PFM Plans and also assisting in formations of the CFAs. The PO has also been undertaking environmental education activities in the schools in Taita hills.

These activities by the project have raised the interest of the Taita Taveta County Government and it has planned to assist with PFM Plans and support of CFAs that are outside the focal areas of the project, in doing so galvanizing wider impact. The County Government has planned to review the PFM Plans of Ngangao forest, Mbololo/Mwambirwa forests with the assistance of TTWF officers and also KFS officers from the Head Office. Their wish is to have the revised plans approved at the same time as the ones supported by TTWF and to hold a prominent launching ceremony to be graced by the Director KFS and the Governor of Taita Taveta County.

2.3 Formation of Community Forest Associations and Water Resource Users Associations

TTWF staff together with the Taita Taveta Forest Station Manager attended the 3rd AGM for the Sagalla CFA and election of new officials facilitated. The Sagalla CFA have written the "Letter of Request" to the Director of KFS for preparation of the PFM Plan; response expected shortly.

In addition to PFM Plans/CFA activities, initial contact has been made in Taita with two WRUAs (Water Resource Users Association) – Kishenyi WRUA and Kinyeshamvua WRUA and follow up meetings have been organized.

Output 3

3.8 Survey to gauge impact of CEPA strategy

A questionnaire for the collection of baseline socio-economic information is under preparation. Further work on this will be conducted during the UK visit to DICE/ZSL.

Output 5

5.1 Development of seedling nursery(ies) involving locally-led community groups

5.2 Maintenance of seedling

Taita: Contacts and site inspections have been made with the community groups and individual farmers that have tree nurseries. In Taita, 6 tree nurseries were inspected in Chawia (Chawia Environment Committee), Iyale (Angamiza, Msidunyi, Sere community groups), Wesu (Changamoto) and Fururu (Dogholonyi). In total >50,000 tree seedlings are being raised and out of these >5,000 tree seedlings are ready for planting in the short rainy season (Oct/Dec).

Sagalla: In Sagalla, contacts were also made with private farmers and community groups with tree nurseries. TTWF has partnered with Shauri Moyo Community Group in raising “the difficult to produce” native tree species in a nursery located in Kishamba/Ngolia area. This partnership necessitated the repair of a water tank and pipes. The tank not only serves the tree nursery but also a dispensary and school thus benefitting a wider community. The tree nurseries inspection revealed >10,000 tree seedlings with >6,000 ready for planting in the short rainy season (Oct/Dec). Visits to meet School environment club patrons have been scheduled in order to plan for the planting of these seedlings. Poly tubes (24 rolls totaling 120kgs) for use on raising tree seedlings have been purchased.

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.

A notable delay has been experienced due to postponement of a trip to UK partners by Kenyan project personnel; originally scheduled for September to discuss project activities, planning and management, as well as financial and administrative management, the trip had to be postponed at the last minute due to visas not being issued to all of the three travellers (non-issue was due to additional paperwork being requested by the Visa Office in Nairobi). This unexpected development required flights and accommodation to be hastily rescheduled (involving some rebooking charges), and a delay of two months in the key meeting of Kenyan and UK partners. It is hoped that lost time caused by this delay can be made up during the first year of the project. LTS/Darwin have been appraised of the situation by email, noting the likelihood of other Darwin projects experiencing similar visa-related difficulties and flagging whether Darwin/DEFRA ought to seek FCO support to minimise frequency of future visa issues.

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 (see above)
Formal change request submitted: describing	No (Darwin forwarded to DEFRA our email this general issue)
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A

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: £

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

No.