

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

Project Ref No	22-010
Project Title	Enhancing management and benefit flows in Vietnam's wild medicinal products
Country(ies)	Viet Nam
Lead Organisation	TRAFFIC International
Collaborator(s)	Bac Kan Provincial Forest Protection Department (FPD), Hanoi University of Pharmacy and DK Pharma/Dk Natura, Ministry of Health, Vietnam
Project Leader	Madelon Willemsen
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	30 October 2015, HYR1
Project website/Twitter/Blog /Instagram etc	www.traffic.org ; http://facebook.com/trafficsea.gmp
Funder (DFID/Defra)	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).

The project started in April 2015 and project staff (Project Policy Officer and Project Market Officer) were recruited based in the TRAFFIC office in Hanoi. Matching project funding through the Keidanren Natural Conservation Fund (KNCF) was confirmed and made available for the period between April 2015-March 2016; the final year of a three-year project. Complementarity of the KNCF to the Darwin Initiative project was ensured through mapping budget allocations and project activities. Project implementation agreements with the project partners, were confirmed.

The permission for the project implementation from the Bac Kan Provincial People Committee, as required by the government, was submitted in September 2015 and permission is expected in the Q3; however, the project inception workshop has already taken place on 2 October 2015 with support of the People's committee.

The following activities have taken place as per the log-frame of the project:

- The discussion was initiated among the partners regarding the methodology of the baseline surveys to establish a set of project Monitoring & Evaluation indicators. The baseline survey protocol and questionnaires for target groups including the local collectors, traditional medicinal practitioners, local government authorities, and local traders have been developed (Activity 1.1). The baseline surveys will be carried out in the next reporting period.
- Activities were initiated to analyse value chains of target species, in particular through strengthening the market linkages to potential corporate partners, and obtaining recommendations on improved quality of target species and value-addition (Activity 1.2).
- The documents relevant to the development and refinement of the project-specific training materials on improving quality, marketing and entrepreneurial skills (the FairWild flyer, the FairWild Performance Indicators) were translated (Activity 1.3 and 2.2).
- New partnership with local NGO GreenViet (<http://en.greenviet.org>) was identified in promoting the concept of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), a methodology for

the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials for sustainable long-term uptake of the project interventions (Activity 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2).

- At the national level, TRAFFIC and FPD, continued to facilitate the links between local collecting communities and the alliance of DK Natura and DK Pharma. Communication with international buyer companies is ongoing. The presentation and delivery of *Gynostemma pentaphyllum* samples to companies including the Nu Herbs (US), the Organic Herb Trading Company (UK), Pukka Herbs (UK) at the world's largest trade fair for organic products BioFach 2015 (February 2015) are outside the project period. However the relationships that were built contributed to the current project implementation. E.g. TRAFFIC was visited in Hanoi in April 2015 by the Sourcing Manager from Pukka Herbs, who has been involved in projects providing technical guidance and support to FairWild-certified producers. Nu Herbs (US) carried out tests on the samples and confirmed their satisfactory quality. Communication is ongoing regarding the next steps. Four dryers (funded by KNCF funding) were installed in April 2015 for the cooperative groups to ensure the value-addition for wild-sourced products. This equipment encourages the local collectors to take action to change their previous unsustainable harvesting habits. DK Natura provided technical advice and training to the collectors in using the dryers (Activity 1.6).
- TRAFFIC conducted first consultative meeting with partners in order to prepare for the project launch; introduce the project to multi-stakeholders at commune, district and provincial level of Bac Kan; understand the current situation of MAPs harvesting and trade in four target districts; identify villages/communes involved in the project; identify the needs and expectation of local authorities; consult regarding the project approaches/methodologies; and formulate the project implementation body on the ground. (Activity 2.1).
- The preparations for conducting the target species resource assessment were made to start in the next reporting period (Activity 2.3)
- TRAFFIC provided technical support to FPD to improve regulations based on recommendations of the review developed during the meeting in March 2015 at which MAPs conservation in accordance to the provincial decision no. 3808/2009/QĐ-UBND (approval of MAP development program in Bac Kan Province from 2010 to 2015 and its vision to 2020) was discussed and a proposal was submitted to Bac Kan People's Committee in June 2015. As per the Vietnamese governing process, requiring consultation with and buy-in from a wide range of different stakeholders, the outcomes of the proposal are expected to be presented by the Bac Kan People's Committee in the next reporting period (Activity 2.4).
- Biodiversity Conservation Agency of Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment, Department of Natural Conservation of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, National Institution of Medicine Materials have been consulted regarding the potential contribution of project to Vietnam's commitment to the implementation of the Good Agricultural and Collection Practices. They expressed their interests in the project and are ready to support the project implementation in Viet Nam (Activity 3.4).

Communication and outreach materials developed in the reporting period include a 20 minute-documentary about the project. 2,400 FairWild Standard and project overview flyers and 500 FairWild Performance Indicators brochures prepared as a part of the preparation to the project Inception workshop These materials provide information on sustainable harvesting and management and fair trade of wild MAPs (Activity 2.1, 2.2; Activity 3.2, 3.3).

The project summary 'The FairWild approach in Vietnam is helping communities and conservation' with brief project description was published in the March 2015 Darwin Newsletter on Trade and Biodiversity. An article 'Asia: Biodiversity and human health – implementing best practices in sustainable harvesting and trade of medicinal plants' by Anastasiya Timoshyna, TRAFFIC, covering a range of project examples, including Darwin Initiative Vietnam project was included and published in the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Non-Wood Forest Product Update September 2015 Newsletter (<http://forestry.fao.msgfocus.com/q/1bwAVLdrLMLyAbKqk6j/wv>). The Darwin Initiative project update was also included in the Edition 5 of the FairWild Foundation Newsletter, published in August 2015 (<http://www.fairwild.org/newsletter>).

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.

Following the submission of the proposal, Madelon Willemsen has joined TRAFFIC as the Head of Office Viet Nam, and change request was made to the Darwin Initiative about appointing her as a Project Leader. This request was confirmed on 26 March 2015.

The key challenges for this project is to ensure the support from the local partners, stakeholders and regional government officials. The previous work done through KNCF and Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), set up these relationships and through this project. TRAFFIC has continued to nurture productive and constructive relationship.

We have not experienced any other unexpected or notable problems. TRAFFIC's constructive and positive relationships with the project partners has facilitated efficient implementation and is key to influence the expedience of the Vietnamese government processes as such.

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

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

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:

N/A

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

N/A

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. 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**