

## Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017)

<b>Project reference</b>	22-015
<b>Project title</b>	Sustainable management of an Ethiopian rangeland for biodiversity and pastoralists
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Ethiopia
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Ethiopian Wildlife Natural History Society; SOS Sahel; BirdLife International; Coventry University; Manchester Metropolitan University
<b>Project leader</b>	Clare Stringer
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	HYR3 08/11/2017
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	<a href="http://www.rspb.org.uk/community/ourwork/b/biodiversity/archive/2015/06/15/closing-the-hunger-gap-establishing-grassland-reserves-in-ethiopia.aspx">http://www.rspb.org.uk/community/ourwork/b/biodiversity/archive/2015/06/15/closing-the-hunger-gap-establishing-grassland-reserves-in-ethiopia.aspx</a> <a href="http://www.cebmmu.co.uk/research/darwin-initiative-sustaining-pastoralist-livelihoods-in-ethiopia-and-saving-the-liben-lark-from-extinction">http://www.cebmmu.co.uk/research/darwin-initiative-sustaining-pastoralist-livelihoods-in-ethiopia-and-saving-the-liben-lark-from-extinction</a> <a href="http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/speciesfactsheet.php?id=1017228">http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/speciesfactsheet.php?id=1017228</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 2: Grassland restoration increases dry season food security for pastoralists equitably and restores grassland quality and Liben Lark habitat

Against the new targets following the change request, the project is making good progress:

- 143 people (107 males, 36 females) were involved in the urgent repairs of the kallos damaged due to the drought.
- It was indicated by District officials and community members that due to the presence of these kallos the death of livestock during the drought was substantially reduced.
- 131 ha of kallos have been repaired and maintained since the drought, engaging 94 people and benefitting 24 households.
- 700 ha of scrub has been cleared improving the amount of grassland available for pastoralists and for larks.

#### Output 3: Pastoralist communities have the capacity to develop livelihoods without reducing grassland area

We are working with the CBOs and local partners to develop small projects for funding in support of the overall Darwin Project Outcome and Impact. These will include supplementary projects to provide additional support for the cattle fattening alternative livelihood work already initiated by the CBOs at Liben; to develop ecotourism initiatives at Liben, especially birdwatching and nature tours; and to provide additional livestock (goats, cattle) to households where all livestock have been lost during the drought period.

- Training has been provided to CBOs on cattle fattening initiatives to improve resilience during drought.

**Output 4: Project partners maintain and build on the outcome of the project and promote Participatory Rangeland Management to conserve biodiversity across Ethiopia's rangelands in the long-term.**

- The process of reviewing the Oromia Pastoralist Development Strategy is still underway with inclusion of priority map expected by the end of the project. This will be a key document in influencing the uptake of this method of pasture management in the future.
- Meetings were held in Ethiopia in June with stakeholders that are involved with the management of the identified priority areas for participatory rangeland management.
- A lesson learnt and guidance document for integrating biodiversity into Participatory Rangeland Management in priority areas in Ethiopia has been drafted by BirdLife and will now be consulted with in-country partners.

**Output 5: Project management, monitoring and evaluation structures and processes ensure that the project objectives are achieved on schedule and within budget.**

Our planned survey trip (November) has had to be cancelled again, but the partners are working together to ensure some data can be collected at Liben this month. There have been several partner meetings during the last six months (June, September, November), including very constructive discussions in Addis in June which led to the submission of a change request to Darwin. We now plan to submit another change request ASAP to enable a survey trip in 2018. Short reports have been received from partners according to plan.

**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.**

**Staff changes:**

Since the change request was submitted in August, there have been further staff changes:

- RSPB science support is now provided by Mark Hulme (was Graeme Buchanan).
- RSPB financial management support is now provided by Wendy Cain (was Ruth Sharman).
- Sarah Havery (RSPB International Species Recovery Officer) is now supporting Clare Stringer with project implementation and coordination.
- SOS Sahel has employed a new programs manager: Teshome Dega who is now leading on the project.

These changes will not have a negative impact on delivery of the project outcomes.

**Further delays to surveys/monitoring trip due to security concerns:**

A delayed site visit was planned within the change request by the project team for November to collect comparative data on Liben lark and grassland to compare to the baselines at the start of the project. Two weeks prior to the trip it became apparent that the security situation in Ethiopia is still uncertain and unpredictable, with reports of attacks, notably on a vehicle and staff of one of the in-country project partners. Due to these security concerns and unpredictability, and despite the team's best efforts to change the plans to become a training session near Addis, the field trip was deemed unsuitable by the insurance companies of the UK-based partners and was therefore cancelled.

In light of this, a project partner meeting was held on 6<sup>th</sup> November to plan a way forward for the final year of the project and the team agreed that a further change request to Darwin for a **6-month no-cost extension is required**, taking the project-end to September 2018. This will allow for the team to plan for a survey/monitoring visit in the next lark breeding season (April/May). As an insurance, the in-country team are currently being trained remotely to collect some basic data for this season. We will be exploring options to provide face-to-face training from UK-partners in Kenya if the situation in Ethiopia does not improve.

<b>2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b>	
Discussed with LTS:	Yes – by email.
Formal change request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	No

<b>3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?</b>	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Estimated underspend: £15,000-£20,000 (to be confirmed)
<p><b>3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.</p> <p>If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.</p> <p><i>We do anticipate an underspend due to our lack of ability to carry out the field visit (just cancelled for November), and consequent delays to other activities. A rebudget change request will be submitted ASAP, when we have been able to discuss each partner's budget and the implications of the proposed no-cost extension.</i></p>	

<b>4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b>	
<p>Additional funding will need to be sourced to continue the work of EWNHS and SOS Sahel on the ground from March-September 2018. The RSPB will work with the other partners to find additional sources of funds to ensure the work is completed successfully.</p>	

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate 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: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**