Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2018)

Project reference	23-005
Project title	Promoting the use of plant resources in research and development
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ethiopia
Lead organisation	Botanic Gardens Conservation International
Partner(s)	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
Project leader	Suzanne Sharrock
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media etc.	http://www.bgci.org/policy/darwin_project/

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 has continued to run according to the project plan over the last six months.

Output 1:

Activities scheduled against this output are up-to-date

Year 3 Q1 and Q2 activities

Activity 1.8: Publish report on methodology used to carry out ABS review in Ethiopia

This report is presently being drafted and will be available by the end of Q3. The report will provide details of the process adopted for reviewing the existing ABS framework in Ethiopia and for carrying out stakeholder consultations to investigate the level of understanding of this framework by collection holders and researchers and for identifying key bottlenecks and capacity gaps.

Output 2:

Activities scheduled against this output are up-to-date

Year 3 Q1 and Q2 activities

Activity 2.3: Deliver training courses

A training course for researchers was held in September 2018. During this training course, researchers were presented with a series of practical 'scenarios' looking at ABS compliance measures relevant to their work. Analysis of these scenarios was considered a valuable training exercise by the researchers and by EBI. A total of 24 individuals from 15 research programmes participated in the training.

A final training course for collection holders will be held in January 2019.

Output 3

Activities scheduled against this output are up-to-date

Year 3 Q1 and Q2 activities

Activity 3.2: Review examples of best practice and make recommendations for their use in existing frameworks

A number of case studies and examples of best practice have been identified and these are being made available on the project webpages on the BGCI website – see: http://www.bgci.org/policy/abscasestudies/.

Efforts have been made to encourage the development of a specific new ABS module within the BRAHMS database system presently used by the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, to improve the currently problematic management of ABS agreement data by the ABS Directorate. The project leader and the project consultant visited Oxford University to discuss this idea, as well as how BRAHMS features could help EBI and other Ethiopian collections holders to manage ABS-relevant metadata.

However, EBI have now decided to change to a different data management system. The ABS-related features of this other system will be reviewed and further recommendations made before the end of the project.

The project consultant is continuing to review the case studies and will be making further recommendations over the coming weeks, especially with relation to the ABS aspects of working with communities and their traditional knowledge, drawing on examples from Mexico, Canada and Australia.

Activity 3.3 Make case studies available on-line and continue updating.

Two new case studies have been added to the website during the past six months and a further 6 are under development and will be available by the end of the project.

Output 4

Activities scheduled against this output have been initiated in Year 3 of the project.

Year 3 Q1 and Q2 activities

Activity 4.1: Draft policy brief based on field experience in Ethiopia and examples of best practice

The policy brief is under development and a peer review team has been identified to review this.

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.

- One of the main findings of the project so far has been the need for improved data management by ABS stakeholders. Efforts have been made to provide training and promote the development and use of ABS-relevant modules in the system presently being used by EBI (BRAHMS). However, EBI is now considering changing its data management system. This means that further planned database training will need to be more generic in nature while EBI decide on what system they want to use in the future. While this will not have any significant impact on the project as a whole, and will not affect budget or timetable of activities, it may affect the impact of our capacity building activities for collection holders in the short term.
- As mentioned in previous reports, since the project was initiated, a new global UNDP/GEF ABS project has come on stream, with Ethiopia being one of the project partners. This project is working directly on ABS policy issues with EBI. Our policy

recommendations therefore need to be considered in the framework of the UNDP/GEF project and the stage of development of the policy drafting process in Ethiopia, as led by this project. Again this does not affect the budget or timetable of our project activities, although the timetable for the UNDP/GEF project's revision of the ABS framework and opportunities for input from our project has continued to change.

- Despite discussions with EBI, gender imbalances at training courses / meetings continue to persist. However, as participants are invited to these events by EBI, and there are few female scientists available to invite, it is difficult to overcome this problem.
- Researchers selected by EBI for consultation and training are predominantly working in agriculture and forestry, while other ABS-relevant disciplines (e.g. ethnobotany, taxonomy or pharmacology) have been less represented, despite discussions on inviting a diverse array of plant scientists. However, agriculture and forestry are clearly regarded as the core research areas EBI wishes to target with ABS awareness-building and training efforts.

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	Yes/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. 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, 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.

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

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 R24 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 . 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**