



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

Project reference	23-024
Project title	Securing marine fisheries, livelihoods and biodiversity in Myanmar through co-management
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Myanmar (Burma)
Lead organisation	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) – Myanmar Program
Partner(s)	Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Irrigation (Department of Fisheries/DoF), Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association (RCA), Pyoe Pin, Rakhine Fisheries Partnership (RFP).
Project leader	Barry Flaming (Elizabeth Matthews, after 27 September 2018)
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	31 October 2018 – HYR3
Project website/blog/social media etc.	https://programs.wcs.org/myanmar/Wild-Places/Marine-Ecosystems.aspx https://www.facebook.com/WCSMyanmar/ https://twitter.com/WCSMyanmar https://myanmarbiodiversity.org https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2018/09/27/ensuring-a-blue-future-for-myanmars-coastal-communities/

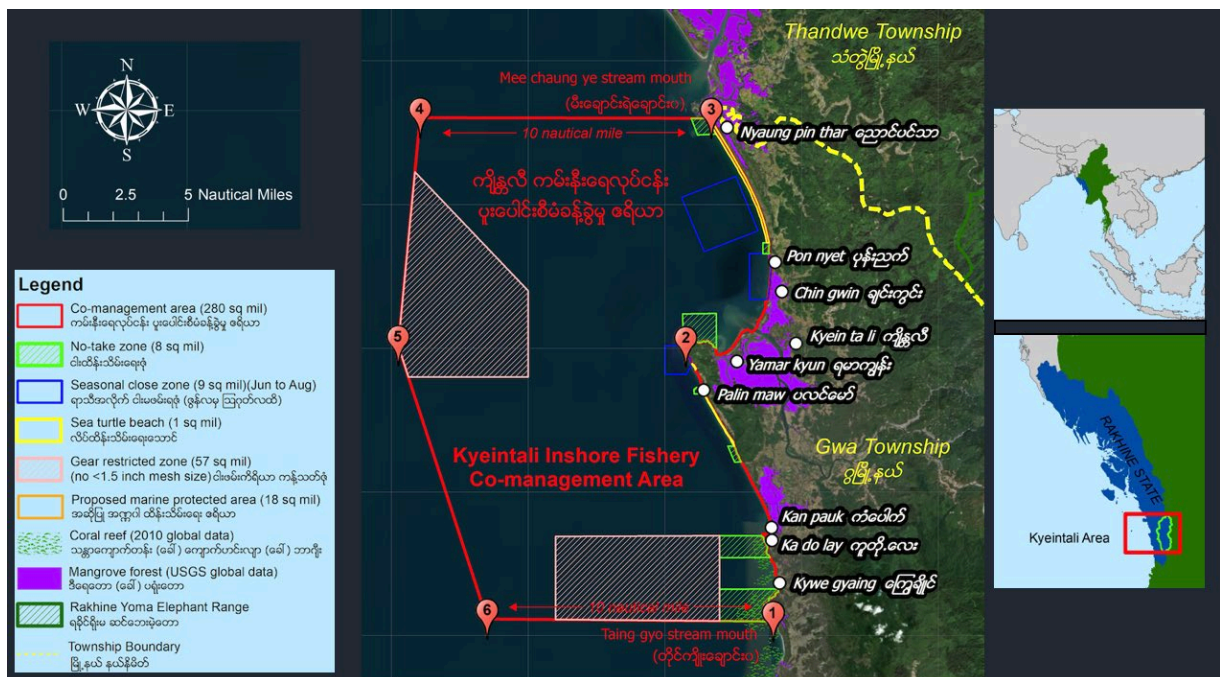
1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

From April to September 2018, significant achievement has been made towards the project's overall outcome and specific outputs. Following the Annual Forum in March 2018, received feedback was incorporated into a revised co-management plan and fisheries management zones. In April, WCS presented to Rakhine State Government to inform them about our work and to receive their input into the co-management area proposal. On May 4, the co-management proposal was formally submitted to the Government of Myanmar, and following a period of review and internal government consultations, the Kyeintali Inshore Fisheries Co-management Area was officially declared by the Director General of the Department of Fisheries on August 8, 2018. This is a major milestone for the project and one of the first such designations for Myanmar. This was followed by community meetings in each of the 10 participating villages during September to discuss the new designation with participating fishers. In addition, on September 18, WCS staff met with staff at the UK Embassy's Head of Prosperity in Yangon to explain our marine conservation efforts work, especially those funded through the Darwin project.

In mid-May our staff continued to work with our local partner (Rakhine Conservation Association, RCA) on data collection and data entry, registration of the new Kyeintali Inshore Fisheries Co-management Association (KIFCA), and to prepare for World Environment Day events on June 5. Environment Day events included a beach clean-up, a talk at the school, collecting ghost nets, and the production of a short video to promote the importance of protecting the oceans (see link on page 4).

Barry Flaming resigned from WCS at the end of September and was succeeded by Elizabeth Matthews as the new Project Leader, approved by Darwin on September 18.

Progress towards Output 1: A gender-sensitive participatory planning process has led to the development and adoption of a co-management plan for coastal fisheries in Thandwe District in Rakhine State. Following the March Annual Forum, in April WCS and RCA were invited by Rakhine State’s Minister for Social Welfare (who chaired the Forum) to brief the State government on the project’s progress. Representatives from state-level ministries expressed their full support for the project. Following this, WCS prepared a detailed proposal for the co-management area and submitted it to the Department of Fisheries office in Nay Pyi Taw in May. Following a three-month period of review and internal government consultations at the national, subnational, and local levels, the Kyeintali inshore fisheries co-management area was officially declared by the Director General of the Department of Fisheries on August 8, 2018. The designated area covers 280 square miles of coastal waters in the vicinity of the ten participating communities and incorporates a number of management zones.



The designated Kyeintali Inshore Fisheries Co-management Area and its management zones.

A new group, the Kyeintali Inshore Fisheries Co-management Association (KIFCA) was formed. This group is a township level committee with 20 representatives from 10 communities; there is one man and one woman representative from each of the cooperating co-management villages. Throughout August and September, meetings were held with each community to discuss the new designation and raise awareness about the specific zones and associated rules and regulations included in the management plan. WCS also conducted a briefing for the British Embassy’s Head of Prosperity in Yangon on September 18 to update her of the achievement. A public ceremony was held on October 12 in Thandwe and Kyeintali, with participation from the Deputy Director General (DDG) of the Department of Fisheries. The DDG and Rakhine State Government handed over co-management certificates to the 10 participating communities. Afterwards, the DDG, Department of Fisheries personnel, RCA, KIFCA, and WCS visited the Kyeintali Co-management Area. The DDG also demonstrated how to set up Pelagic Data Systems (PDS) devices on inshore fishing boats. These devices are being used to collect data on where the boats are fishing.

Progress towards Output 2: Baseline data is available and routine participatory collection of additional data is integrated into the governance mechanisms for co-management. We have undertaken an extensive data collection effort that has resulted in a significant amount of information related to fishers, licenses, gear types, target and non-target species catch, and socioeconomic status in the ten target communities. In addition to

household interviews, this has also included ongoing fish catch data collection from fisher logbooks, trader invoices, and length-weight surveys. Baseline (year one) values have been established for two key indicators - Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) and fisher household income.

The household survey forms have been updated and revised, incorporating additional questions related to fisher perspectives, as well as awareness of and compliance with the co-management area and plan. These have been translated into Myanmar language and will be implemented during the next quarter to aid in assessing changes in income and awareness and compliance with co-management area zones and regulations. Collection of the third season of purse seine catch data also began in October and will continue through the final two quarters, allowing us to assess changes to CPUE over the course of the project.

Pelagic Data Systems GPS tracking devices have been attached to 10 purse seine vessels (supported by the vessel owners and DoF). These data loggers have been transmitting data on purse seine vessel activity for about two years. Some units have had some issues in recording continuous data; we have since requested replacements from the vendor and expect to have those re-installed as the final fishing season begins.

Progress towards Output 3: A strategy to reduce unintended bycatch of marine vertebrates has been developed and implemented by local fishing communities.

Experienced WCS staff have been facilitating a bottom-up approach to marine spatial planning that aims to reduce bycatch. This MSP process is based on collecting and incorporating indigenous knowledge of the local fishing communities into zoning and management plans. This process requires effective local facilitation skills to successfully gather the information from all stakeholders for participatory sea-use mapping.

The planning process for the co-management area incorporated time-area management of fisheries and included proposed spatial and temporal measures and management zones. Communities proposed their own no take zones, seasonally closed areas, gear restricted zones, and protected turtle nesting beaches, which were included in the proposed co-management area and discussed at the Second Annual Forum in March. These areas were subsequently revised based on feedback received (i.e. changing round areas to square areas for easier monitoring) and have now been approved by the DoF as part of its co-management designation. These zones include: no take zones (8 sq. miles), seasonally-closed areas (9 sq. miles), gear restricted areas (57 sq. miles), and sea turtle nesting beaches (1 sq. mile) (see map above) and are intended to protect important habitats and reduce potential interactions of threatened species with fishing activity. In addition, participating communities also proposed a potential marine protected area (18 sq. miles) outside of the co-management area. In September, meetings were held with fishers in each community to raise awareness of the new co-management area and facilitate compliance with these management zones and regulations. Community compliance with the management zones and regulations will be assessed through household surveys during the final two quarters of the project.

Progress towards Output 4: Lessons learned from fisheries co-management planning and practices are shared to boost national fisheries resource governance capacity.

As one of the first demonstrations of inshore fisheries co-management in Myanmar, many useful lessons are being learned in Kyeintali that can inform further replication and policy reform. At the Annual Forum in March, community representatives and other stakeholders from Ayeyarwady and Tanintharyi Regions, Mon State, and other areas of Rakhine State participated and learned directly from the Kyeintali Co-management committee and their experiences. This has helped build closer partnerships with other organizations supporting similar efforts, and plans are underway now to facilitate a number of exchanges and cross-site visits. During the reporting period, as described above, we have also shared experiences through a number of meetings and fora, including at a coastal fisheries workshop hosted by Rare and the Smithsonian Institution.

With separate funding, we have now been able to replicate the fisher household surveys and participatory mapping activities in an additional 13 communities to the south of our pilot site in western Ayeyarwady Region. Our partner RCA helped serve as a trainer in these efforts, which

are setting a foundation for replicating new co-management initiatives there. We will participate in a joint Myanmar session and international fisher dialogues at the World Small-Scale Fisheries Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand in late October to share results of our work. WCS, RCA, and KIFCA representatives participated in this event.

We have been sharing project learnings through social media and other communications outreach. In terms of our social media outreach, we have broadcast messages about conservation and WCS Myanmar projects to an extensive audience, with over 2 million visualizations during the period from April 1 to September 30, 2018. On Facebook, we reached an audience of 591,299 people and have generated 214,357 engagements, while on Twitter we have recorded 379,373 impressions and 5652 engagements during the same period.

A new blog story is now hosted on National Geographic at:
<https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2018/09/27/ensuring-a-blue-future-for-myanmars-coastal-communities/>

<http://www.pyoneplay.com/video/94Z25mZjE6uJ1OUJmZjszAqsInHNqRIW/29/5/2018-Mingalarbar-Environment-Water.html>

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.

No significant problems or unexpected developments have been encountered by the project over the last 6 months, with the exception of one staffing change. Barry Flaming resigned from WCS at the end of September and was succeeded by Elizabeth Matthews as the new Project Leader, approved by Darwin on September 18. In addition, Kyaw Thinn Latt, was promoted to Deputy Director of Lower Myanmar, in recognition of his growing leadership role within the WCS Myanmar Program.

The social unrest that has affected northern Rakhine State has not directly affected the project location in the southern part of the state, and it is not anticipated that this ongoing situation will significantly affect the project budget or timetable of activities in the future.

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
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. 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?

No other issues to raise at this time.

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**