

Darwin Initiative Main Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	24-017
Project title	Access and Benefit Sharing in Practice: Community, Science and Policy
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Cameroon, Namibia, South Africa
Lead organisation	The University of Cape Town (UCT)
Partner(s)	People and Plants International (PPI); Forests, Resources and People (FOREP); Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC); Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG); Leeds University
Project leader	Associate Professor Rachel Wynberg
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media etc.	Under development

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).

COORDINATION, THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Rachel Wynberg (UCT) and Sarah Laird (PPI) met in London from 7-10 June 2017 to flesh out a detailed action plan, to think through a management approach and to begin conceptualising the Community of Practice, as well as the advisory group that will help to support it. A meeting was also held in London on 8 June 2017 with UCT, PPI and Leeds University (Graham Duffield) to discuss plans for the year.

A project inception workshop was held in Cape Town, South Africa on 26-27 June 2017. The meeting was attended by four members from UCT, and three from Namibia affiliated with the NGO IRDNC. Sarah Laird from PPI, also representing the work to be done in Cameroon by the NGO FOREP, joined the meeting via Skype.

Background briefing documents were developed to share with project collaborators and to communicate the objectives of the project; these included an overview, description and outline of case studies, and a discussion of the core themes to be addressed by the project. A total of 10 themes will be addressed over the course of the three years of the project.

A project brochure was developed, which was distributed to NGOs, government officials, and other actors who might have an interest in the project. A shorter version was also distributed on social media. Designers were commissioned to design 1) a project logo, and 2) a project website. A “catchy” title for the project was co-conceptualised: “Voices for BioJustice”.

We applied for, and received, ethics clearance from the Science Faculty at UCT.

The project is based on three case studies – one each from Cameroon, Namibia and South Africa. A template which will guide the development of the case studies was developed and circulated to the team.

After some delays, contracts were finalised between UCT and all partners, and a foreign currency account was opened by UCT to facilitate fund transfers with minimal risks of currency fluctuations.

UCT and EMG – ROOIBOS, SOUTH AFRICA

A detailed plan was developed by UCT and EMG around the rooibos case study. Meetings were held with the CEO of Rooibos Limited; Cape Nature; the Department of Environmental Affairs; the South African National Biodiversity Institute; the University of Stellenbosch; and the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning. We were also invited to participate in meetings with the San and National KhoiSan Councils to support the development of a position for their benefit-sharing negotiations with the rooibos industry.

Two community site visits took place in the Cederberg, to begin a scoping process around benefit sharing arising from a “tax” to be paid for rooibos. Core themes for the project were discussed with various stakeholders, including an identification of those issues most relevant to the rooibos case. Strong links were forged with the Wild Foods project in the Cederberg, with good opportunities for collaboration identified. A Masters student has been recruited, beginning 2018, to begin research on the social and environmental impacts of honeybush and rooibos cultivation.

Preliminary meetings were held with film-makers, to explore possibilities for capturing different processes and stories.

Plans were initiated to establish a Community of Practice on Access and Benefit Sharing in the Western Cape, with strong buy-in from government departments. A rooibos research “forum” is planned for March, 2018. The Darwin project was presented (in Pretoria in August, 2017) to the Bioprospecting Forum at the national Department of Environmental Affairs, eliciting much interest, and to the Honeybush Community of Practice (in George, in October 2017).

PPI/FOREP - CAMEROON

The first phase of consultations and interviews commenced with stakeholders in Cameroon, including civil society, local community, government, NGOs and research institutions (continuing through December 2017).

Consultations were held with local stakeholders in Cameroon to identify the core themes to be addressed by the project, and in videos and other project activities.

Research was initiated on market and business trends in Cameroon, with an emphasis on changing markets over the last 25 years (and the parallel developments in policy), and the case study on Irvingia.

Steps were made to begin building relationships with filmmakers and others in Cameroon, in order to explore the most cost-effective, high quality and streamlined options. These discussions are continuing and film and video partnerships will be finalized in the coming few months.

IRDNC

Project implementation began in June 2017 with activities following the IRDNC – Namibia workplan as submitted.

The Namibian legislation “Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge Bill” was promulgated by parliament on the 27th of June 2017. At this stage the regulations that accompany the bill have not been passed and it is anticipated that this may take some time. The regulations will have a significant impact on the content of the materials to be produced under this project. Project consultant John Hazam of the Legal Assistance Centre has begun working with a lawyer on the draft information booklets. The booklets will include a summary of the legislation and, once available, the associated regulations. The draft materials will be used for training events in year 1, and will be finalised with promulgation of the regulations.

During this period, five meetings were held with key harvester groups (harvesters and Conservancy Management Committees) to share information about this study, the new ABS legislation for Namibia, to assess their current understanding of ABS and to discuss plans for

upcoming workshops and harvester meetings and discuss the current and relevant joint venture agreements.

Michelle Nott, Masters student

Michelle Nott registered her Masters under the supervision of A/Prof Rachel Wynberg at UCT and successfully presented her proposal to the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science. Methods were subsequently developed, and interviews have commenced with companies using the resurrection bush as an ingredient, resurrection bush harvesters, processing facilities, NGOs and government authorities.

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.

There have been some administrative delays due to the fact that UCT was only able to open a foreign currency account once all contracts were signed between UCT and the four partners – this in turn took some time. This has now been resolved but has led to a minor delay in invoicing and payments.

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/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/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.

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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**