

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

Project reference: 24-026

Project title: Integrating traditional knowledge into Guyana's conservation policy-making and practice

Country(ies)/territory(ies): Guyana

Lead organisation: Royal Holloway University of London

Partner(s): World Conservation Monitoring Centre, North Rupununi District Development Board, Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, South Central Peoples Development Organisation, Environmental Protection Agency, Cobra Collective

Project leader: Jay Mistry

Report date and number (e.g., HYR3): HYR1

Project website/blog/social media etc.: <http://projectcobra.org/cobra-project/traditional-knowledge-and-conservation-in-guyana>

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 on 1st July 2017. Since then we have carried out the following:

- 1) Key project staff were employed - these include Dr Deirdre Jafferally, the in-country project coordinator based at the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs and three community researchers at the North Rupununi District Development Board (please see section 2 for EPA staff position).
- 2) Inception meeting and project launch – this took place 1st to 8th September 2017 to coincide with Amerindian Heritage Month in Guyana. This involved various individual meetings with partners and stakeholders, a partner meeting attended by the Minister of Indigenous Peoples Affairs and a launch event hosted by the British High Commission. During the partner meeting, key issues such as the project's theory of change, methodology, and monitoring and evaluation were discussed and agreed amongst partners. In addition, key project staff worked for two days on the project's methodology and designed a detailed timeline of community/government engagement.
- 3) Review of traditional knowledge (TK) integration - Dr Lisa Ingwall-King led the work on developing a methodology to assess the level of TK integration in policy. This methodology was applied to review numerous Guyanese policy documents to establish the current level of TK integration in Guyana. The result from this initial assessment will serve as a baseline for the project, and follow up assessments are planned as an approach to measuring progress. In addition, an intern at WCMC worked with Dr Ingwall-King to undertake a literature review on TK best practices. Preliminary results from these activities were presented to partners during the inception meeting.
- 4) Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process – community researchers began the FPIC process with Indigenous communities associated with the Iwokrama Forest protected area. This involved developing presentations and a short video to introduce the project, community meetings and follow-up consultations where necessary. They also developed individual consent

forms to be used in the participatory video processes. Ethical approval for the project was submitted and agreed by project lead, Royal Holloway University of London. A letter of no objection to the research was issued by Guyana’s Environmental Protection Agency in lieu of the usual research permit, as the agency is a partner. Informed consent letters of permission have been issued by the North Rupununi communities for research to occur and a letter of no objection will be issued by the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs.

5) Website and project outreach – a dedicated page for the project was developed on the Project Cobra (www.projectcobra.org) website, and there have been regular postings, as well as on associated Facebook and Twitter sites. The launch event in Guyana received very good media attention with a number of news outlets reporting the event¹. At the community level, the team developed a simple newsletter which was distributed during the Annai District Heritage Celebration and a recording has been broadcast over Radio Paiwomak (community radio). The team has started a regular call in program which provides information on different topics of conversation starting with what the project is about, and will expand to look at the Convention on Biological Diversity, Aichi targets, participatory video etc.

6) Stakeholder engagement – as a first round of consultations, Dr Deirdre Jafferally met with national stakeholders to introduce the project and to look for synergies and entry points into ongoing and upcoming work. To date, this has involved the Protected Areas Commission (to work alongside and inform their initiatives), the Ministry of Culture (to further embed TK into current drafting of national culture policy), the Ministry of Finance (leading Guyana’s SDGs work), consultants working on Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs strategic plan (to embed TK into future activities and visions), UNEP (to collaborate with their work on Guyana’s Green State Development Strategy and next NBSAP). Meetings are planned with the National Toshias Council Executives and Indigenous Peoples Commission.

7) Advisory Committee – various academic and non-academics were contacted, and we now have two members from Guyana and six international representatives on the Committee. We aim to have a first online meeting of the Committee in December/January.

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.

1) The Environmental Protection Agency had some delays in recruiting a person to work on the project. This has now been resolved, and the outstanding tasks have been assigned to other consultants of the agency.

2) Dr Lisa Ingwall-King of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre was not able to attend the inception visit to Guyana in September due to her pregnancy. We requested that her travel/subsistence funds for Year 1 be carried forward to Year 4.

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

¹ See for example <http://gina.gov.gy/integrating-traditional-knowledge-project-officially-launched>

<http://demerarawaves.com/2017/09/05/guyanas-indigenous-amerindian-traditional-conservation-strategies-may-be-shared-with-guiana-shield>

<http://www.inewsguyana.com/integrating-traditional-knowledge-project-officially-launched>

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.

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?

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 . 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**