Darwin Initiative Main Annual Report

(due 30th April 2021)

Darwin Project Information

Project reference	26-019
Project title	Secure Wetland Ecosystems to improve livelihoods through Community Conservation Agreements
Country/ies	Uganda
Lead organization	NatureUganda
Partner institution(s)	BirdLife International Wetland Management Department (WMD) Kabale and Rubanda District Local Governments Ramsar Committee of East Africa (RAMCEA) Community Rural Development (CRD)
Darwin grant value	£299,939.00
Start/end dates of the project	01 April 2019 - 31 March 2022
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2020 – Mar 2021) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	01 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 Annual report 2
Project Leader name	Mr. Achilles Byaruhanga
Project website/blog/social media	www.natureuganda.org https://twitter.com/NatureUganda https://www.facebook.com/NatureUganda
Report author (s) and date	Mr. Achilles Byaruhanga, Dr. Dianah Nalwanga, Mr. Jimmy Muheebwa and Mr. Julius Ndemere, 28th April 2021

1. Project summary

The project is addressing threats to three hydrologically-linked high-altitude wetlands in Rubanda and Kabale districts located in the Kigezi region south-western Uganda: Nyamuriro swamp (5,100 ha), Kiruruma valley (4,500 ha) and Lake Bunyonyi (12,500 ha) collectively covering approximately 60% of all wetlands in Kigezi region. These wetlands are key sources of water, food, recreation, soil conservation, water conservation and erosion reduction properties among others, which support the landscape integrity.

NatureUganda's birds monitoring programmes shows that together these wetlands support the highest number of breeding Grey Crowned-Cranes (>100 pairs) in Uganda, Papyrus Gonolek, and other globally threatened birds such as Papyrus Yellow-Warbler, wetland endemic mammals e.g. the Sitatunga and amphibians especially endemic *Xenopus* frogs (a local delicacy).

Ugandan wetlands are considered 'freeland' or wastelands with no incentive to manage them sustainably. Until recently the main threats were unsustainable harvesting of wetland resources such as unregulated drainage for agriculture. These wetlands are dominated by peat, one of the richest reservoirs of

sequestered carbon. In the long-term, exposing peat to oxidation reduces productivity and food security and thus accelerating land drainage.

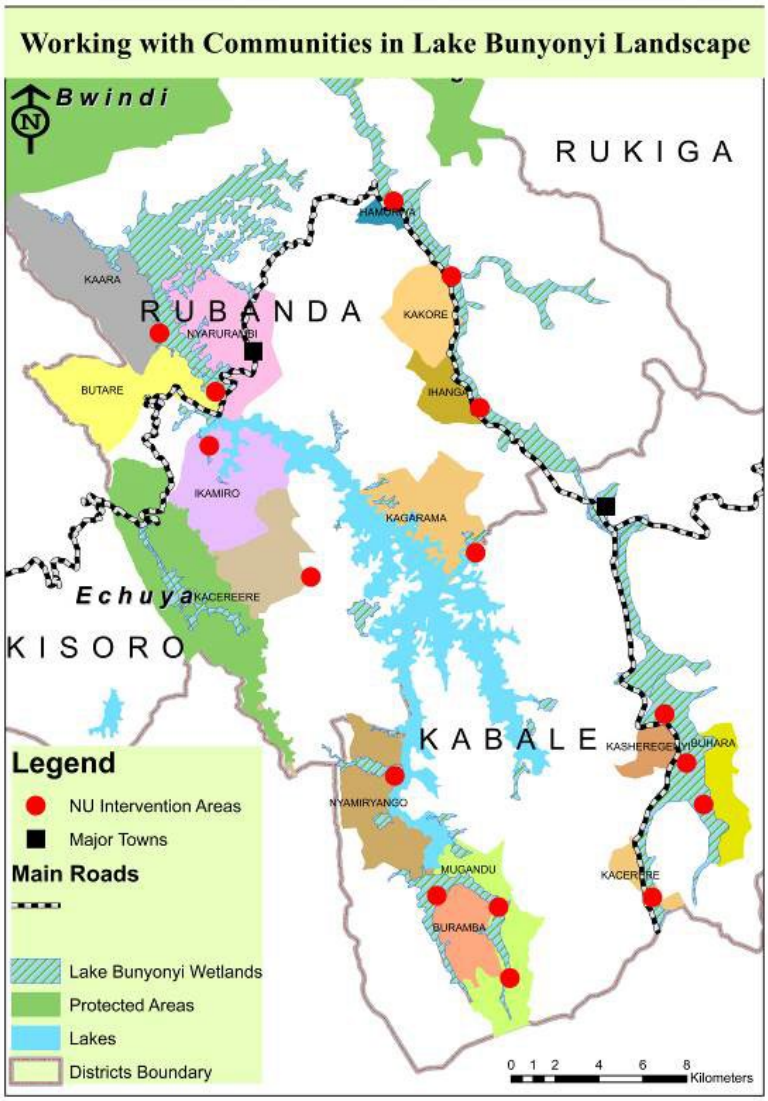
In addition, the Uganda Wetlands Atlas and Uganda Wetlands Assessment Report 2017 indicate that wetland encroachment changes water regime, water quality, and the macro-climate with negative impacts on the availability of wetlands resources, safe water, and public health. NatureUganda has worked with communities living in/around the wetland complex for over 5 years: raising awareness of the value of wetland biodiversity, encouraging cattle farmers in the Kiruruma valley to set-aside habitat for breeding cranes, and supporting farmers in the catchment of Lake Bunyonyi and Nyamuriro to co-exist with feeding cranes and avoid soil erosion and encroachment on peatland.

However, in 2017 the government proposed mining the wetlands for peat. Local communities with support from NatureUganda (backed by a scientific study) protested and petitioned the government to show that mining would be uneconomic, displace people and contribute to climate change.

The Project Area

The project area consists of three wetland systems; Lake Bunyonyi system, Nyamuriro Wetland (an Important Bird Area) and Kiruruma Wetland System **(Photo 1)**. Since the project implementation started two years ago, various projects have been established. The implementation team started with baseline assessments and information from the assessments guided on the establishment of community project (**see Map 1**

Map 1 showing project sites



2. Project partnerships

BirdLife International

NatureUganda (NU) is the BirdLife International partner in Uganda and is the leading institution on this project. NU liaises with Birdlife International a global Partnership of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) working together to conserve birds, their habitats and biodiversity through working with people. The project implementation is benefiting from extensive experience in nature conservation and the empowerment of local communities. NU coordinates all partners on this project and ensures effective delivery of project outcomes.

Wetland Management Department (WMD)

NU is working with Wetland Management Department (WMD), a government department in wetland restoration and enforcement of laws and regulations under the Ministry of Water and Environment. Their focus on this project is supporting the designation of Lake Bunyonyi and the surrounding wetlands as a Ramsar site. The ministry also hosts the Ramsar Focal Point for Uganda, who represents the country on the Ramsar Committee. This focal person is our link and guide to the Ramsar designation process. The focal peson is already reviewing the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS).

Kabale and Rubanda District Local Governments.

NU is working with Kabale and Rubanda district technical Officers in the process of supporting the proposal for the designation of Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands to a Ramsar site. In addition, the district's technical teams are providing technical support in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the district's development plans and government targets for wetlands conservation and restoration in the Kigezi region. NU has already secured supporting documentation from the two districts in support of the proposal for designating Lake Bunyonyi wetland systems to a Ramsar site. These include support Letters and minute extracts (Annex ia and ib). The support letter from the District Local Council is evidence that local government support the Ramsar designation process for Lake Bunyonyi and Associated Wetlands.

Ramsar Committee of East Africa (RAMCEA)

NU is further working with the Ramsar Committee of East Africa (RAMCEA) in providing technical support on Ramsar designation through guiding on the compilation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) for the Lake Bunyonyi wetlands system. The Ramsar Focal point for Uganda sits on this committee and is reviewing the RIS.

Community Rural Development (CRD)

NU is working with Community Rural Development (CRD) who provide technical support on establishment of Farmer Field Schools (FFS). A manual for the establishing and management of FFS has already been drafted. Because of the limitation to organising meetings in the last one year due to Covid-19, the draft has not been completed. In addition, CRD continues to support training and establishment of demonstration sites and the monitoring of the project progress activities. (Annex ii. Farmer Field School Training Manual)

Consultants (Makerere and Uganda Fisheries Research Institute)

Furthermore, NU is closely working with technical and scientific teams of experts from various fields who are part of the working groups of NU. Whereas teams were involved to conduct baseline studies on biodiversity and landscape studies, the experts remain a key component of the project implementation especially in guiding monitoring and Ramsar designation process. All the reports were shared in Year 1 Annual report and the information will be synthesised for further dissemination through an information booklet for the Lake Bunyonyi region (Annex iii) and this will be available in the next reporting period (now under review).

Field selected community groups

Ten field community groups in the project implementation sites have been engaged as potential partners in the conservation of the target wetlands. By rapid appraisal and engagement of the district leadership, the groups were identified for project implementation. The groups were then taken through feasibility assessments to determine their capacity and ability to perform the required conservation actions and also defined livelihood benefits. The process that lasted over 4 months culminated into the negotiations and

signing of the Community Conservation Agreements (CCAs). The latter would ensure the sustainability of the project conservation and livelihood interventions. Attached is a copy of the CCAs that were signed with the different groups (Annex iv). Each of the ten CCAs, and therefore community group, defines specific interventions in the village and against the likelihood benefits expected from the project support.

3. Project progress

The project has completed its second year of implementation and despite interruption by the Covid-19 pandemic, progress remains on track to achieving the expected outcomes. The stated assumptions in the proposal still hold and the indicators for measuring the expected outcomes are still possible. Covid-19 lockdowns especially restricting peoples meetings and assemblies have slowed down community interventions. However due to the fast progress in the first year and half of the second year, we were able to complete the CCAs which provided the foundation of community support. The community activities have progressed with guidance from the field officer. The Ramsar designation process has also progressed with approval of the District Local governments and RIS submitted to Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) for review and further guidance. MWE is the national focal point for Ramsar Convention.

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Output 1. Wetland ecosystem values are known and availed to local and national decision-makers

Activity 1.2 Develop and disseminate materials for public awareness on the values of the wetland resources.

Following the completion of baseline assessments, information has been shared in various media in Uganda including NatureUganda Newsletter, The Naturalist (http://www.natureuganda.org/downloads/Naturalists/Naturalist_June_2020.pdf), shared with members in Uganda and accessed through BirdLife International Partnership. The importance of Lake Bunyonyi and potential designation into a Ramsar site has also captured media attention and published in the national print media (https://www.bukedde.co.ug/tourism/3704/bunyonyi-on-way-to-become-ramsar-site) and also trending on the NatureUganda twitter (https://twitter.com/natureuganda/status/1297043729551970304). These publications have emphasised the value of Bunyonyi landscape and promoted its protection. The story of Lake Bunynyi has appeared in the National prominent Newspapers, The New Vision (https://www.newvision.co.ug/articledetails/95407). The project will continue to promote the conservation of the Lake and its associated wetlands and the Ramsar designation will ensure long-term sustainability of our conservation efforts.

Activity 1.3 Organize dialogue meetings with local councils to raise awareness of wetland resources and their value

Three meetings targeting the District local government technical and political leadership (District Council) have been organised during this reporting period. The Project also organised a study tour and learning visit for the district local council members to the project areas. These have focused on the discussion of valuation reports and formulation of action plans for the best practices of managing their resources. Attached is one copy of the activity reports for details (Annex v). The meetings attracted sixty one (61) district council leadership and twenty-seven (27) local government technical officials from the districts of Kabale and Rubanda. It is the sitting of the Local Government District Council that approved the designation of Lake Bunyonyi as a Ramsar site.

Output 2: Wetlands biodiversity assessed and data obtained and used to evaluate Ramsar status of the sites and enable designation.

Activity 2.2. Synthesize and analyse data against Ramsar criteria and complete the Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) for the National Ramsar Committee

The process of synthesis and analyzing data to support government in the completion and submission of a Ramsar information on Lake Bunyonyi to the Ramsar secretariat is nearing completion with a draft Ramsar Information Sheet (Annex vi) ready for submission to the National Ramsar committee. This information is to support the proposal of Lake Bunyonyi and associated wetlands a Ramsar site. A monitoring framework under activity 2.4 for biodiversity assessment was developed and it is informing the monitoring of indicator species and the impact of the project on biodiversity conservation. Monitoring of the Cranes is based on Bird Population Monitoring (BPM).

Output 3: Wetland communities engaged in the implementation of Community Conservation Agreements to sustainably manage use of wetlands

Activity 3.3. Facilitate the development and signing of CCAs between communities and district authorities

The project has mobilised the community around the Community Conservation groups. All ten community groups have negotiated and signed Community conservation agreements (CCAs) with NatureUganda and the respective local Government of Kabale and Rubanda Districts. The groups are now implementing their respective agreements with guidance from NatureUganda and the respective local governments' technical staff. The monitoring reports indicate that community group members' knowledge and attitude of observing laws and regulations that govern the protection and wise use of wetlands has improved. This is evidenced by the restoration and conservation work being implemented by the identified groups. Interestingly, each party is undertaking specific roles and responsibilities in the fulfilment of the terms and conditions stipulated in the agreements towards wise use and management of the wetlands. Photo 1 (a, b, c, d).

Output 4: Wise use/sustainable use strategies and plans developed, demonstrated and adopted to improve community livelihoods

4.1 The baseline report on upland soil quality was completed in the first. The baseline information informed the establishment of Five (5) Farmer Field Schools.

4.2. Three farmer field schools established and demonstrating benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement activities by end of yr2.

So far, five (5) farmer field schools have been established instead of the three earlier planned in the project design. These are demonstrating Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) practices through construction of Water retention Trenches (commonly referred to as Fanya-kini-fanya-ju structures) using the 'A-Frame technology (Annex vii) Photo 2. In the landscape the communities have adopted to animal husbandry including Zero grazing to produce organic manure to improve fertility in the gardens and increase income. As planned the project supported communities with goats and sheep (most preferred animals because of high quality manure and minimal space required to manage the animals. It is expected that organic manure (dung) will improve crop yields, which will result into improved income and food security.

4.3 Ten community groups (1000 HH) trained in and using appropriate SWC methods

Ten training sessions were conducted and attracted 438 community group members in demonstrating the benefits of soil and water conservation methods, as well as livestock management in the preparation for farmer field schools and sustainable enterprises demonstration sites establishment. Trainings were focused on the support to be provided to the respective community groups and management of enterprises. The various options for support (sheep, goats, SWC) were arrived at through a participatory process, which is outlined in the CCAs. A copy of the training report is attached (Annex xiii)

4.4. *1500 farmers adopt soil fertility improvement practices, establish fodder banks in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetland-based livelihoods BEOP and* **4.5** 1,000 HH (5,000 people) trained *and practicing sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying. BEOP.*

Community groups were trained in appropriate soil and water conservation methods, soil fertility improvement, and fodder banks establishments in uplands to reduce soil erosion. They were further trained to reduce wetland dependence by improving productivity on their land. In addition, sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation were undertaken and the baseline reports established baselines for upland soils carbon (Annex ix) and Peat content in wetlands (Annex x). To reinforce the soil and water conservation methods, soil fertility improvement and sustainable farming practices, the community groups were further supported with the best agroforestry materials; each community group receiving 450 Grevillea (2450 seedlings), 700 calliandra (4350 seedlings), 250 Sesbania (930 seedlings) and Napier grass (6 tipper Lorries) covering over 500 metres as a demonstration. We also supported communities with farming tools such as hoes (53 pieces), mattocks (50 pieces), panga (55 pieces), and spades (55 pieces) among other support materials provided. (Photo 3).

4.6 At least 20% of community group members establish sustainable enterprises, in particular, ten 'zero-grazing goat rearing units and fourteen modern beekeeping units by end of yr2.

The process of supporting community group members with sustainable enterprises kick-started with the construction of five pens for the sheep, goats and pig-style for pigs. Whereas the project provided iron sheets (50) and 30kg of nails, the community members provided space and other building materials including necessary Timber. The community groups included Nyamiryango Barema Tukwatanise (20 sheep), Ruhuma wetland conservation and crane monitoring (20 goats), Bigyegye Katembe Turinde Eitaka (30 sheep), Nyamatembe Turinde Eitaka (20 pigs), Biringo Nyombe Tukwatanise (20 sheep), Lake Bunyonyi Tour Guides Association (01 Boat of 20 seater capacity for tour operations), Nyamiringa FAL Class (music dance and drama costumes) and Kigezi Women children health initiative (tailoring and knitting machines and start-up raw materials) (Photo 4)

Activity 4.7. Support the establishment of tour guiding operations and train guides around lake Bunyonyi to increase awareness of tourism opportunities available BEOP

One tour guides group called Lake Bunyonyi tour guide association was established with 20 members and it is registered with the Kabale District local government. The group has been provided with a 20-seater boat (see 4.6 above), and will be trained in tour guiding skills in the next reporting period. This Training of tour guides will focus on fostering tourism development in the landscape and to increase awareness of the tourism opportunities in the region.

Output 5: Lessons from management of wetlands in Kabale shared at national, regional and international levels for future replication to protect peat wetlands

Activity 5.2. Organise learning visits to other communities outside the project area to share expertise and experience BEOP

Due to the restrictions on movement to control the Covid-19 pandemic, there was limited movement of people from one place to another and this affected the movement of identified community group members from traveling to other areas for exchange learning visits in the project sites. The District local councillors were able to move at the time of assessing Lake Bunyonyi for Ramsar Designation.

Activity 5.3. Share project outcomes, experiences and lessons in at least 5 meetings and forums BEOP

As part of the awareness-raising activities, the project staff presented the progress of the project activities before district council leadership meetings of Kabale and Rubanda districts seeking the support and buy-in of the proposal for designating Lake Bunyonyi as a Ramsar site. Two fact-finding mission were conducted for Kabale and Rubanda district local government council members to ascertain the status of Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands (Photos 5). The political group appreciated the need to conserving the lake and also protecting the catchments including support to communities. They promised to leverage support from District development fund and Operations Wealth Creation (government programme to alleviate poverty) to increase community support.

Activity 5.5. Develop and disseminate publicity materials on the project results including newsletters, posters and policy briefs and Activity 5.6. Raise awareness on the outcomes and results of the project through radios, TVs and public print media.

See Also 1.2. Regular publications in the national newspapers, online news outlets and local radio stations were used. The project held 5 radio talk shows on VOK (a local FM station), 4 radio talk shows on Peak FM (a local radio station) and project activities were reported TV West (a regional TV station) and NTV (a national TV station with local content) Link…….. and two articles were carried by the national newspaper (The New Vision) (see section 1.2).

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Despite the challenges of the pandemic and lockdowns, the project progress remains on schedule. The project adapted to the restrictions of the pandemic especially working with small community groups rather than large workshops.

Output: 1. Wetland ecosystem values are known and availed to local and national decision-makers.

Baseline assessments were completed in Year 1 and all biodiversity and wetland values known. Lake Bunyonyi information booklet under review (see Annex iii) will highlight importance of the wetlands and disseminated to all stakeholders especially local leaders who bear much responsibility to protect the site. The results from the baseline assessments on the values of the wetlands in the Lake Bunyonyi landscape were shared with stakeholders at the National level (in year one), regional level and at the DLG level through workshops and dialogue meetings, radio talk shows, and TV news bytes to project beneficiaries.

Output: 2. Wetlands biodiversity assessed, indicator species monitored and data obtained and used to evaluate the Ramsar status of the sites to enable designation.

The biodiversity data was synthesized and analysed for the development of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) or booklet. This will be used by the Ramsar Secretariat/focal point at the Ministry of water and environment for consideration in proposing Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands a Ramsar site, the first of its kind in south-western Uganda. Bird Population Monitoring activities are conducted biannually to continue monitoring the bird populations which are indicators of biodiversity status of the landscape. This data is being used to update the Ramsar Information Booklet. This monitoring is part of the M&E plan for the project.

Output: 3. Community stakeholders engaged in the implementation of Community Conservation Agreements to sustainably manage and wisely use wetlands.

Following the mobilisation of communities in Year 1, the project implementation established ten community conserved Areas (CCAs) groups as community models and mechanism for delivering livelihood interventions. The project developed and signed MOUs with all the groups witnessed by the local government (see Annex iv). The MOUS spell out the deliverables from the community in turn for the support from the project. At the time of signing, each group comprised of over 50 members. Additionally, the routine monitoring reports show that community groups are implementing conservation actions (wetland restoration, fodder establishments and construction of trenches/terraces) and biodiversity monitoring (birds) as stipulated in their conservation agreements Photo 6. These activities are a reflection of progress in implementation of the MOU targets especially wise use of wetlands.

Output: 4. Wise use/sustainable use strategies and plans developed, demonstrated and adopted to improve community livelihoods.

Five Farmer field schools (FFS) were established to support knowledge sharing within the landscape among the community members. The FFS demonstrate the benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement technologies for increased agricultural yield. These Farmer Field Schools are to increase the adaptation levels of the technologies being demonstrated in the project sites and increase the project visibility, sustainability as well as foster community empowerment by bringing the knowledge closer to the community members across the landscape.

The structure of the FFS is in such a way that each site selected has one Master demonstration house hold (HH) with at least three or all of the selected interventions being demonstrated and then other HHs are provided with one of the demonstrated interventions as may be chosen by the team. The master HH is the training centre where other members go to learn about all the demonstrated interventions. All the strategies are outlined in the FFS manual developed in a participatory manner with the group members.

Majority of the Community group members received training in appropriate SWC methods, soil fertility improvement practices, fodder banks management in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetland-based livelihoods and sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying. These demonstrations aim at improving the integrity of upland soils to support sustainable agriculture and reduce pressure on the wetland in search of fertile soils and animal feeds to improve people's lives and livelihoods. However, it is important to note that this output is progressing well but requires continuous monitoring and providing support to the farmers to be able to achieve the intended project output. In this regard, the project has patterned with local government through the natural resources department to integrate the project work into the district development planning.

Output: 5. Lessons from management of wetlands in Kabale shared at national, regional and international levels for future replication to protect high altitude wetlands.

Two dialogue meetings that involved key stakeholders at the local government political and technical arms from Kabale and Rubanda district were conducted. The project progress was communicated in print media (new vision), radio talk shows and TV news bytes on national and regional TV stations. During

the presidential and parliament campaigns and elections in the second half of 2020, we were faced with a new situation unexpected in the development of the project proposal. The political leaders use natural resources to woo voters including offering to lobby for communities to continue using wetlands for their livelihood benefits. The project had moved earlier to involve political and technical leadership in the two districts that supported the project work. This was a big lesson that the education and awareness campaign must involve the political leadership for sustainability of the project successes.

Although, learning visits were interrupted by the Coronavirus situation which limited movements and gatherings/mixing of people from one area to another, two learning visits were conducted one for each of the two districts, which improved their understanding of the project landscape. It is hoped that more learning visits will be conducted in the next reporting period to share experiences and expertise in the subsequent reporting periods.

Most importantly we observe sustainable activities by the community members including responsible fishing and demarcation boundaries of wetlands including sign posts to stop community members from further encroachment Photo 7, Photo 6.

Progress towards the project Outcome

Outcome: 10,000 households benefit from the wise use of wetlands and ecosystem services, mainly water, biodiversity and secure long-term conservation of the three wetlands in Kabale and Rubanda Districts.

The project has signed 10 CCAs benefiting over 50 HH in each group. In addition, we have established 5 FFS involving over 50 HH in each of the groups (schools). The district local government have highlighted the project activities as a model that will benefit the implementation of the districts development plans. The conservation of the wetlands is estimated to benefit over 2000 people who utilize the ecosystem services in Kabale and Rubanda districts, ranging from water for domestic use, wetlands products such as fish and *Xenopus* frogs, thatching materials and grazing for animals. Currently Kabale Town (to become a City in 2023) water supply comes from Lake Bunyonyi and the development and expansion is hinged on the supply of water from the lake. Based on the livelihood projects provided by the CCAs and FFSs, there is an indication of improved adoption of the strategies especially the soil and water conservation approaches. In the long-term this will have a ripple effect on productivity of land and cascade into increased crop production. Already the CCA approach has been adopted in other sections of the wetland, targeting support for project implementation. The restoration activities of wetlands especially in Nyamuriro and Nyombe wetlands signals increased awareness of the values of the wetlands and will steady supply of wetland materials to the communities. In the next reporting period, we target to allow monitoring of uptake and harvesting of materials from wetlands at the CCA and FFS level so that communities will have their own mechanism of monitoring their activities in the wetlands. There is continuous engagement in undertaking conservation actions such as wetland restoration, implementing of soil and water conservation approaches, awareness creation on the values of wetlands and the general biodiversity to the communities.

Biodiversity monitoring reports indicate stable number of indicator species, the Grey Crowned Crane indicated by the bird numbers recorded.

The process of designating Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetland a Ramsar site is on track since all the stakeholders in the project operational sites supported the initiative and have seconded the proposal and the Ramsar focal point in the Ministry of water and environment has taken up the final stage of approval by the National Ramsar committee. This will be the final process and expected to be finalised by end of 2021.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

The project assumptions are still holding appropriate including the fact that the Coronavirus pandemic was never envisaged. The new assumption is that Covid-19 pandemic will not worsen to cause more restrictions in the country. Similarly, the tourism market has completely come at a standstill and we hope this will subside in the near future in order for the tourism targets in Output 4 may be realised.

Outcome assumptions:

1. The stable political environment is maintained.

Comment. The assumption still holds and there are no changes expected in the foreseeable future. Though there were general elections in February 2021, no major changes are recorded although there were political rhetoric about natural resources conservation versus likelihood of people. In our education and awareness activities, we involve the local politicians

2. Project interventions in sustainable farming practices, alternative incomes and CCAs will reduce the impact on wetlands.

Comment. The assumption still holds. The support exhibited by local governments and communities during the establishment of Farmer Field Schools and CCAs demonstrating the benefits of soil and water conservation methods and the training in sustainable farming practices, livestock management, soil fertility improvement practices shows commitment and interest from partners and project expectations are still on target.

3. Coronavirus infection will be controlled

Comment: This assumption emerged in the course of the project implementation as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. We think this will hold because the national infection rate has been one of the lowest in the world and the project area has registered insignificant cases as a result of massive public awareness about the disease. However, we shall continue to monitor this assumption since it is likely to impact on some of the project targets such as tourism.

Output assumptions.

1. Cooperation with local stakeholders, communities and local governments maintained

Comment: This holds because we have had and still have long working relationships with all these stakeholders in the landscape and we still think this will continue.

2. The national government remains committed to wetlands conservation

Comment. We think this still holds because the government is in process of reviewing wetlands policy and laws and wetlands agencies have committed to providing support to the project implementation. In addition, our long-time relationship with the Wetlands Management department in the Ministry of water and Environments is still good.

3. Local politics remain conducive

Comments. This still holds. So far local governments have provided maximum support for designating Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands a Ramsar site and public awareness events on radio talk shows and TVs have increased awareness. The general elections were held without major incidences which indicated that local politics will not hinder progress of the project.

4.1 The rainfall patterns remain conducive for farming

Comment. There are no significant unusual changes in rainfall patterns in south-western Uganda.

4.2. Political stability allows foreign tourists to visit the region

Comment. Regardless of the Coronavirus pandemic that is impacting foreign tourists, Lake Bunyonyi has been highly attractive for domestic tourists and visitors, and we don't expect a big shock in the long term, but rather a stable recovery when the international flights resume across the globe.

4.3 With the improved status of wetlands as Ramsar site, increased publicity, sufficient tourists visit the area and provide employment opportunities for the tourism operators.

Comment. This still holds with support from local governments, national government through the Ministry of Water and Environment and Ministry of Tourism Wildlife and Antiquities. This however will be premised on the expectation that the Covid-19 pandemic will be controlled through vaccination of many people and lockdown eased.

5. Lessons learned from the project inspire wetlands conservation in the region

Comment: This assumption still holds because the government as banned further encroachment of wetlands and called for restoration of all degraded or converted wetlands. Government has also started a process to cancel all land certificates in wetlands and has provided an ultimatum for those with investments in wetlands to vacate. This is a clear indication of government commitment.

3.4 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

Impact: Achieving biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

NU is progressively working with all the stakeholders in implementing project activities at all levels including the local government members and communities. Baseline assessments completed and results shared with local government showing especially the value of wetlands. Central government bans encroachment of wetlands in the whole country and local government approves the designation of Lake Bunyonyi and associated wetlands as a Ramsar site.

4. Contribution to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

The project is contributing to the following sustainable development goals (SDG); SDG1 through the establishment of FFSs and supporting enterprises to reduce poverty and improving livelihoods at the community level. SDG2 through the establishment of soil and water conservation that improves the productivity of crops on land a well as FFS that will ensure sustainability in villages; in the establishment of CCAs and FFS, the focus was made to increase women and youth participation. In the Kigezi Women Child Health Initiative Group, support was provided to improve income generation through tailoring and the Nyamuringa FAL (Functional Adult Literacy) Class was supported with Music dance and drama to disseminate information on soil and water conservation. In Biringo-Nyombi, the project work with the Batwa Indigenous group to reduce the harvesting of Cranes for food and the burning of wetlands. Protecting wetland from siltation and sedimentation through SWC, have improved ecosystem services especially water for domestic use (SDG6) and restoration of wetlands to increase habitat quality for biodiversity (SDG15 and finally protecting the rich peatlands in all the wetlands to reduce carbon dioxide emission and designation of the wetlands as Ramsar site for their long-term protection (SDG15).

5. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties, or Agreements

The project is supporting the designation of the wetlands as Ramsar Site. The Ramsar site designation process for Lake Bunyonyi is in the final stages and once we secure a Ramsar site, other treaties and conventions will benefit directly and indirectly. For example the project is supporting the conservation of globally threatened species including the national symbol, the Grey Crowned Crane and rich high altitude wetlands (CITES and CBD) and reduction in carbon emission through protection of the peat rich wetland (UNFCCC). The biodiversity conservation contributes directly to implementation of the NBSAP.

6. Project support to poverty alleviation.

The identified community groups in the current year of the project have been closely engaged in diverse activities aiming at improving their lives and livelihoods through awareness creation and training on the values of wetlands, restoration and conservation. The Farmer Field Schools establishments have demonstrated potential to improve the livelihoods of the members through the benefits of soil and water conservation methods and sustainable farming practices aiming at increasing soil fertility to get high yields/food from the agricultural land together with sustainable enterprise support such as goats, sheep and pigs. The produce is consumed locally for improved nutrition and wellbeing, while the surplus is sold for cash in the nearby markets to support other household or human needs such as school fees and

medical bills. However, most of these actions contributing to wetland conservation in the catchment are steadily increasing the supply of wetland resources like raw materials to support the community's livelihoods in form of handcraft raw materials to make, or produce and sell baskets, hats, mats, bean stakes, thatching houses among other wetland values from sustainable harvesting and wise use of the wetland resources.

7. Consideration of gender equality issues

The community groups' formation and design considers gender issues especially in electing the leadership of the groups (a third of the group leaders must be women). Training in particular enterprises and participation in the project wetland conservation work at all levels involved both males and females and participated equally. The project emphasizes the involvement of all gender categories in project implementation especially disadvantaged groups such as women, people with disabilities (PWD), the youth who are the future conservationists and leaders, and the marginalized groups such as the Batwa-Pygmies in benefit sharing and undertaking wetland conservation activities in the project host communities. However, it is observed that land ownership in the region and the country at large is male-dominated. Luckily enough, the group composition of the selected communities targeted families rather than individuals, implying that the barrier of land ownership was overcome. Additionally, supporting members in capacity building and enterprise development helps to reduce conflicts at HH level. However in Kigezi Women Group and Nyamiringa groups are largely composed of Women and intervention learned to women priority including tailoring and dance and drama respectively. In Biringo, the project support indigenous community, the Batwa.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The project outcome focuses on improved ecosystem services and improved livelihoods. These are mainly supported by the conservation actions by the communities and the livelihood options provided under the respective CCAs. The project team is monitoring the interventions under CCAs and the monitoring component was included in the agreement for sustainability. Progressively, based on last year's baseline study's findings and some of the conservation actions, training in awareness creation, leadership and governance of groups were conducted. Observations indicate steady rise in uptake of conservation actions, streamlined leadership and governance of groups in the catchment which is a result of the trainings. NatureUganda together with local government technical officials observed these practices during routine meetings and supervisory monitoring visits in the project host communities. There have not been any revisions on the M&E as originally designed and the exercise is often supported by the district Local Government. Behavioural change is usual slow but our observation indicate quick uptake of project intervention and appreciation of the role of wetlands in providing ecosystem services.

9. Lessons learnt

a) What worked well, and what didn't work well, this past year?

-Community and key stakeholder engagement ease the work of wetland conservation. The support from local government has been critical and will also contribute to project sustainability. The close relationship between NatureUganda and the Local government built over time, as well as communities in the landscape proved to be efficient in executing project work in a timely manner.

-Due to the good current working relations, the districts of Kabale and Rubanda local council members without any objection supported the proposal for designating Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands a Ramsar site, a result of good awareness meetings, field visits to the targets by local politicians.

When the Covid-19 pandemic unexpectedly hit the country and lockdowns were introduced, communities were affected especially with lack of income and in some cases food. In the past year, emergency provision of relief especially food to support the vulnerable communities was provided by the Government, but more often did not reach the villages.

b) If you had to do it again, what would you do differently?

During the lockdown, there were limited movements, limited workshops and limited interaction. It is important to set community learning centres which may be facilitated with communication gadgets that support online or e-learning. This would avoid delays but even in absence of pandemics reduce costs.

c) What recommendations would you make to others doing similar projects?

-Working closely with all the stakeholders would ease the implementation of project activities but this has to be built over time.

-Empowering communities to make their own decisions on investments build their confidence and quickens the buy-in by their leaders into projects.

-Using the group members as owners and managers on demonstration sites shows other members that they can also do it and build confidence which supports quick upscaling. This also builds community champions and in this project we have established master HH.

-The project has built structures in the community and collaboration with government for sustainability of the project activities but social environmental challenges remain. In addition to the already existing activities, we would implement actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems (nature-based solutions) while we tackle social-environmental challenges.

d) How are you going to build this learning into the project and future plans?

-Sharing of these lessons through trainings and exchange visits is one key avenue being employed in NU project activities as a way of promoting upscaling. We have also build Master HH (Champions) as a sustainability measure. The communities have also been linked with local government technical departments for continued support beyond the project period.

-Documenting of the processes of developing these demonstrations is another means by which these lessons will be built into future plans for similar interventions eg the development of the FFS manual.

10. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Comments raised from the Year 1 Annual report

1. Comments and queries for Project Leader
    a. Whereas we did not envisage changes in the activities and budget at the start of the year, abrupt lockdown from May 2021 delayed our reporting.
    b. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) attached as Annex…….
    c. All the public awareness materials contain Darwin logo or Darwin and UK Aid logos. T-shirts have used Darwin logo and print materials have Darwin, UKAid and DEFRA
    d. We have built structures at community level (CCA, FFS), we have used the regional Biodiversity Forum and the support from the District Councils has been a strength for the project now and will help strengthen integration of project activities in the district plans.
2. The reviewer was correct in the description of the partners. Rubanda District is a new entity but has been fast moving on conservation based on the fact that they receive over one billion Uganda shillings for district support from Uganda Wildlife Authority through revenue sharing fund. They have great support in Ramsar process and community mobilisation for enterprises activities. Other partners remain active. We are now working with RAMSEA and MWE on the Ramsar process. Birdlife has provided technical support in ecosystem evaluation using the TESSA process and continue to provide guidance on use of tools to evaluate impacts of project; https://conservationevaluation.org/PRISM-Evaluation-Toolkit-V1.pdf and assessment of community interventions; https://www.birdlife.org/sites/default/files/attachments/BirdLife_Africa_SSG_Capacity_Assessemen_%20Tool_v4_1.pdf
3. Summary of progress

Baseline report on the Impact of different farming practices and conservation activities on emissions attached as Annex ix and x

4. Project support to convention.

   i) Ramsar Convention ; the process on track for Bunyonyi Ramsar designation

   ii) Convention n Biological Diversity. NatureUganda is a member of the national taskforce on CBD and we have already participated in the national preparations CBD including the development of the national Clearing House Mechnaism (CHM). This will act as a national depository and stop centre for biodiversity data in Uganda. The project will contribute its data to this process

5. Sustainability strategy

   Reviewers comments noted. In addition;

   i) All biodiversity data is shared with NBDB. Also the data on birds is shared with the World Birds Bata base (hosted by British Trust of Ornithology BTO) and Monitoring Data on Cranes shared with International Crane Foundation

   ii) The Districts of Rubanda and Kabale have embraced the project and the District Natural Resources Officers (environment, Agriculture, Forestry, Wetlands, Tourism) are part of the project implementation. This will help in integration of project activities in the District Development plans. Already the restoration activities have been embraced.

   iii) The designation of the wetlands as Ramsar site will raise more profile and attention by government in the long-term.

6. Darwin Identity.

   Reviewers comments noted. All publication and materials acknowledge donors support

7. Project Expenditure

   Reviewers comments noted. A strict lockdown from May 2021 disrupted many activities but we have kept field team in the community for continued support. We shall report any substantial delays in the coming months if it is envisaged that it will impact project progress.

8. Project response to Covid-19

   Covid-19 has been unpredictable and the response in Uganda has been reduce or minimise the spread. Uganda received vaccination to cover about one million people and only teachers, elderly and security agencies were prioritised. While the spread of the virus was minimised at the onset with lockdown, when the country was opened especially during the electioneering process from June 2020 to January 2021, the virus burst out into the whole country. Another strict lockdown will be expected in the near future. The project has made several interventions to minimise impact;

   i) All community groups have been prepared for the interventions, trained and organised in the FFS and CCA. In other words any strict lockdown will only affect travel but not implementation of the ground activities with communities

   ii) All the support letter for the designation of the Ramsar site have been secured and what remains will technical work with the Ministry of Water and Environment and the national Focal Point

   iii) Whereas there were some calls for relief support of food and other surplus, the project decided not to venture into this process because it was viewed as disruptive since many community members harvest food from their gardens. Instead the project fast tracked inputs for enterprises such as ruminant animals for subsequent provision of organic manure for crop production.

   iv) Whereas an attempt was made to allow organisation staff work from home, internet access for the field teams has proved a challenge.

11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Please use this section to provide any further comments on progress that have not been covered elsewhere in this report. Issues that might be covered in this section include:

- Has the design of the project been enhanced over the last year, e.g. refining methods, or exit strategy?

  Ministry of water and Environment is implementing a Green Climate Fund project is western Uganda. Part of the process has been to demarcate wetlands and restoration. We are working together with the technical team at the ministry and our project is looked at as complimentary to the objective of the GCF project. Our model of CCA where communities commit to a conservation goal without enforcement has been uploaded as a good for wetlands outside protected areas and the FFS has been appreciated as a capacity building centre in the village

- Discuss any significant difficulties encountered during the year and steps taken to overcome these if not already discussed elsewhere.

  The have been two challenges;

  1. Covid-19 pandemic which has continued to create panic among the population. Whereas the lockdowns slowed some activities die to the limitation of number of people in meeting, the project adopted to work in more small groups, provided masks to participants and soap for washing. Also the project meetings provided messages and awareness about the virus. None of our community members have been affected.

  2. Electioneering of presidential and parliamentary elections (June 2020- January 2021). A few politicians used natural resources to rally supporters and voters. However using radio programs, we indicated conservation as a national issue and an election issue, by continuing to raise messages of importance of wetlands for national development. No incursions were experienced.

- Does the project face any particular risks?

  The project does not face particular risk to the extent of failure to deliver on our promise. However the continued spread of the virus and lack of vaccines may slow down the activities. At the moment, the virus has been more prevalent in urban centres and rarely observed in the villages. We shall continue to monitor progress especially if government introduces strict lockdown

12. Sustainability and legacy

Currently NatureUganda has well established good relations with central government and the local governments in the project area. The implementation of the project activities has involved the districts technical officers so that project activities, lessons are streamlines into the district development plans. Currently NatureUganda, district natural resources officers and an agricultural research station in the area are working together to develop a soil and water conservation guidelines.

Additionally the project has established commitment with the local communities through the Community Conserved Agreements (CCAs) which will guide community operations especially in restoration and wise use of wetlands.

The project has also developed a farmer Field Schools manual that will guide capacity building of communities in landscape management an enterprises devilment and livelihood improvement in the villages. The guidance will support the community beyond the project period.

NatureUganda is also in the final stages of designation of Lake Bunyonyi as a Ramsar site. The designation as a Ramsar site will profile the lake and associated wetlands and raise government responsibility for the wetland of international importance.

13. Darwin identity

During the project activities in particular workshops and meetings, there is standard recognition of donors as follows or 'Join us to thank the UK government through the Darwin Initiative for the financial and technical support to the project'. This is very important for the project team because the mention of the partners and donors raises the profile of the project. Based on the comment from the first year report, all reports, presentations and articles published included the following phrase 'we thank the United Kingdom government through the Darwin Initiative for the financial and technical support to the project'. The Darwin initiative logo appears on every publication that recognizes project work and this was demonstrated in all project publicity materials such as banners, reports, year planners, newsletters, NU website, public and radio talk shows, and workshop presentations (see photos …).

14. Safeguarding

NatureUganda has a comprehensive Operations Manual that describes the code of conduct of staff and discipline and has also developed a Minimum Safeguards policy for NatureUganda that **'ensures our staff (employees and volunteers), operations and programmes do no harm to children and vulnerable adults or expose them to abuse or exploitation'**. The decisions on community activities are concluded during a participatory exercise involving key stakeholders especially community representatives and local government officials. Our staff are guided by our operations manual and the safeguard policy that has stringent disciplinary procures concerning bullying, harassment, bribery, or any other inappropriate conduct. So far there has not been any incidence that required resolution or a complaint against staff or other partners. As we have always done, he project team shall continue to observe high levels of integrity, maintain good relations with partners including communities.

15. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021)

Project spend (indicative) sinc last annual report	**2020/21 Grant (£)**	**2020/21 Total Darwin Costs (£)**	**Variance %**	**Comments (please explain significant variances)**
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL				

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year 2020-2021

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2020 - March 2021	Actions required/planned for next period
Impact Conserved wetlands with restored habitats for threatened species sustainably provide ecosystem services to improve the livelihoods of communities and mitigate against the causes of climate change			
Outcome: 10,000 households benefit from the wise use of wetlands and ecosystem services, mainly water, biodiversity, and secure long-term conservation of the three wetlands in Kabale.	0.1. 40% of 10,000 households show improved wellbeing (access to water, better health, and benefits from wetlands, etc) due to project intervention by end of a project. 0.2. Improved biodiversity scores as determined by IBA monitoring showing no further loss on baseline levels. 0.3. Lake Bunyonyi and surrounding wetlands designated as Ramsar site BEOP.	01. Demarcation and restoration of degraded sections at Nyamuriro wetland are now covering over 20 hectares. With this initiative, there will be reduced flooding through the fringing wetlands and less siltation of the lake. It is estimated this will serve over 6000 HH with clear water for domestic use. Through CCAs and FFS, he project has reached 1350 HH (estimated to benefit over 7000 people). With expected designation into Ramsar site, lake Bunyonyi and its associated wetlands will provide long-term security of water and livelihood for the Kabale and Rubanda district. 02. The project conducts Bird Population Monitoring (BPM) focusing on indicator species including the Grey Crowned Crane. Whereas there is appreciable increase in the numbers recorded but it is likely to be due to more observation because of increased observers and awareness. However, it is clearer that the area is more important for cranes earlier estimated with over 5% of the total population. The breeding success scores for the season also increased from 1.5 to 2.0 for the same period in 2019. 03.The process of designating Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands as Ramsar Site has received approval from local governments and it is now under consideration by the national focal point. The proposed site qualified under the following criteria; C1. Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types as a high altitude wetland in Uganda	Finalization of the processes of designating Lake Bunyonyi and the associated wetlands to a Ramsar site And consolidate the enterprises established with FFS and CCAs.

		C2. Rare species and threatened ecological communities for birds and other species of plants and animals C3. High biodiversity richness C6. 1% of water population and the area contains over 500 individuals of the Grey Crowned Crane accounting for near 5% of the global population. The RIS has been completed and information booklet is under review and will be completed by the next reporting period	
Output 1. Wetland ecosystem values are known and availed to local and national decision-makers	1.2. Synthesis and summary reports and graphics on the value of wetland services and 10,000 leaflets in local language distributed to residents by the end of yr2. 1.3. Local district council members discuss the valuation report to integrate results into local government development plans by end of yr2.	Following the baseline survey and documentation of wetland ecosystem services, the project followed with dialogue meetings held for the stakeholders during which the findings of the assessment and the value of the Lake Bunyonyi and associated wetlands were presented. The reports were shared with the stakeholders, especially the District Local Councils of Kabale and Rubanda for incorporation into their District Development Plans. The assessments have informed the information booklet (under review) and the RIS (under review by the Ministry of Water and Environment. Public awareness and education for the general public has been made on local Radio talk shows and TV news. The local FM radios used have a listenership of over one million people.	
Activity 1.2 Develop and disseminate materials for public awareness on the values of the wetland resources		Public awareness materials were developed. These include T-shirts, the 2020 and 2021 Year Planners and calendars	Development and dissemination of public awareness materials on the values of wetlands to project beneficiaries
Activity 1.3 Organize dialogue meetings with local councils to raise awareness of wetland resources and their value		Dialogue meetings conducted for District Councils of Rubanda and Kabale Districts where Ramsar designation approval were made. Two more workshops were held for the technical teams from either district. More trainings were held with each of the 10 CCAs and 5 FFS	Organise more dialogue meetings with local councils to raise awareness of wetland resources values
Output 2. Wetlands biodiversity assessed, indicator species monitored and data Ramsar designation	2.2. Synthesis and analysis of the data against Ramsar criteria and support the Government with completion and submission of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) to the Ramsar Secretariat	Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) draft completed and shared with the National Ramsar committee at the Ministry of Water and Environment	

Activity 2.2. Synthesize and analyse data against Ramsar criteria and complete the Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) for the National Ramsar Committee		Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) draft completed and shared with the National Ramsar committee at the Ministry of Water and Environment.	Finalisation of Lake Bunyonyi wetland systems a Ramsar site processes
Output 3. Community stakeholders engaged in the implementation of community conservation agreements	3.3 Ten CCAs representing ten community groups signed between communities and district government authorities by EOP	Ten Community Conservation Agreements were signed between community groups and NatureUganda were witnessed by the respective District Authorities of Rubanda and Kabale (see Annex iv).	
Activity 3.3. Facilitate the development of CCAs and signed between communities and district authorities		The development of CCAs was completed (signed pages of all reports attached see annex~~….~~) iv)	
Output 4. Wise use/sustainable use strategies and plans developed, demonstrated and adopted to improve community livelihoods	4.2. Three farmer field schools established and demonstrating benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement activities by end of yr2.	4.2 Five farmer field schools have been established. Whereas three Farmer field schools (FFS) were in the planned project design, two more FFS were created on demand from other communities. This was the first signal of the acceptability and the value of these capacity building and training centres.	
	4.3 Ten community groups (1000 HH) trained in and using appropriate SWC methods	4.3. Directly, 850 HH (impacting over 4000 people) were trained in Soil and Water Conservation methods, soil fertility improvement, and establishment of fodder banks and sustainable farming practices. The project estimate that BEOP, over 5,000 farmers will, directly and indirectly, benefit from the training knowledge and skills gained or disseminated to the wider communities. Knowledge transfer has already been witnessed with the case of trenches and check-dams that reduce rapid runoffs along the steep hillsides in the landscape.	
	4.4. 1500 farmers adopt soil fertility improvement practices, establish fodder banks in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetland-based livelihoods BEOP	4.4. Similarly, the uptake and replication of the Napier/elephant grass, Grevillea and Calliandra (for fodder, bean stakes and stabilization of trenches) has been adopted by all trained households. Noteworthy is that while every group member is required as by the Conservation Agreement to engage in the initiatives, the fast uptake by neighbouring communities is commendable.	
	4.5 1,000 HH (5,000 people) trained and practicing sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying. BEOP.	4.5. See 4.2, 4.3, 4.4. In addition, Sustainable enterprises have been supported including rearing animal husbandry for selected ruminants (goats, sheep). Other communities were supported with pigs for income generation, boat for tour guides, other are tailoring and embroidery for skills and income, Music Dance and Drama to raise awareness and education. Three community groups have been supported to establish sheep enterprises, one with goat enterprise, one with pig enterprise, one supported in the Music, Dance and Drama venture, and another one in tailoring and embroidery skill improvement and finally another one supported with 20 Life jackets and a boat (20 seater capacity) for tourism development.	
	4.6 At least 20% of community group members establish sustainable enterprises, in particular, ten 'zero-grazing goat rearing units and fourteen modern beekeeping units	4.6. See 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. The tour guides will also undergo training tour guiding, customer care and safety skills especially safety skills on the boat	

	by end of yr2. 4.7 At least 10 tourism guides trained and a tourism development association registered to support tourism services BEOP	 4.7. Over 15 tour guides are already involved and members of the association. Our previous experience shows that not everyone will persist in this enterprise especially when there is low international visitors. However, with growth of interest in domestic tourism, the project target will be achieved.
Activity 4.2. Establish three farmer field schools and demonstrating the benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement		Five farmer field schools were established. However, monitoring, refresher training will continue in the third year of the project for its effectiveness and sustainability.
Activity 4.3. Ten community groups (1,000HH) trained in and using appropriate SWC methods on their land		Five community groups (438 farmers) were trained in SWC methods. However, monitoring, refresher training will continue in the third year of the project for its effectiveness and sustainability.
Activity 4.4. Support 1,500 HH to adopt soil fertility improvement practices and establish fodder banks in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetlands-based livelihoods		Five community groups (438 farmers) were trained in soil fertility improvement practices and fodder banks establishments. However, monitoring, refresher training will continue in the third year of the project for its effectiveness and sustainability.
Activity 4.5. Train 1,000 HH (5,000 people) in sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying		Five community groups (438 farmers) were trained in sustainable farming practices. However, monitoring, refresher training will continue in the third year of the project for its effectiveness and sustainability.
Activity 4.6. Support at least 20% of community group members to establish sustainable enterprises, in particular, ten zero-grazing goat rearing units and ten modern beekeeping units		Seven community groups are supported with sustainable enterprises specifically sheep (36), goats (12), pigs (12), MDD costumes and props and tailoring, knitting machines and start-up materials (capital). Modern beekeeping units will be established in the third year. Routine monitoring of these sustainable enterprises will continue even in the third year of the project to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.
Activity 4.7. Support the establishment of tour guiding operations and train guides around lake Bunyonyi to increase awareness of tourism opportunities available BEOP		We established one tour guide group (Lake Bunyonyi tour guide association) and are registered with the government of Uganda. The Training of tour guides in tourism development will be in the third year of the project to increase awareness of the tourism opportunities.
Output 5. Lessons from management of wetlands in Kabale shared at national, regional and international levels for future replication to protect peat wetlands	5.2. At least 2 Learning visits annually to/from other communities outside the project area to share expertise and experiences throughout the project 5.3 Project outcomes and lessons shared in at least 5 forums, local radio/TV programmes in local language and print media BEOP 5.5. Publicity materials on the project results including newsletters, posters and policy briefs circulated BEOP	5.1. Completed in Yr 1 5.2. Two district council learning visits and two visits by the district technical teams 5.3. 5 Radio talk show were held, 3 TV news cast, 3 publications in the local print media and various appearances on the website based publication. 5.4. 2021 Year planner, and Naturalist were published and shard on the website.

Activity 5.2. Organise learning visits to other communities outside the project area to share expertise and experience BEOP	Learning visits for District local councils (politicians) and district technical teams were conducted resulting in the support. Learning visits for the community groups will be held Yr 3.
Activity 5.3. Share project outcomes, experiences and lessons in at least 5 meetings and forums BEOP	We have used available forums such as district councils and workshops as well as the media, outlets including print media, radios and TV. Sharing of the project outcomes is a continuous process and will be increased in the last year of the project.
Activity 5.5. Develop and disseminate publicity materials on the project results including newsletters, posters and policy briefs	More articles in the media and newsletter are planned in the next reporting period. In addition, we shall develop policy briefs based on the outcomes of the project to share experiences and lessons. Target will be the Districts to integrate project activities in the district development plans.
Activity 5.6. Raise awareness on the outcomes and results of the project through radios, TVs and public print media	More awareness and education will be conducted on Radio and TV. The next media publicity will be based on the outcomes of the project. Ramsar site designation will also attract more media attention when it is completed.

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Conserved wetlands with restored habitats for threatened species sustainably provide ecosystem services to improve the livelihoods of communities and mitigate against the causes of climate change			
Outcome: 10,000 households benefit from the wise use of wetlands and ecosystem services, mainly water, biodiversity and secure long-term conservation of the three wetlands in Kabale.	0.1. 40% of 10,000 households show improved wellbeing (eg. access to water, better health, and benefits from wetlands etc) due to project intervention by end of project. 0.2. Improved biodiversity scores as determined by IBA monitoring showing no further loss on baseline levels. 0.3. Lake Bunyonyi and surrounding wetlands designated as Ramsar site BEOP.	0.1 Baseline, annual and end of project reports 0.2. Baseline, annual and end of project biodiversity (IBA) monitoring reports. 0.3. Minutes of the National Ramsar Committee endorsing the Ramsar designation of the Bunyonyi wetlands	Stable political environment is maintained We think this will hold true because there has been political stability for over three decades Project interventions in sustainable farming practices, alternative incomes and CCAs will reduce the impact on wetlands. Holds true because with clearer rights, roles and responsibilities for communities, articulated through a CCA and supported by improved agricultural methods outside the wetlands and better methods to wise-use of wetlands will result in better wetland management.
Output 1 1. Wetland ecosystem values known and availed to local and national decision-makers	1.1. Comprehensive ecosystem valuation report available and shared with national lead agencies and Conventions Focal points to inform national policy implementation and reporting by end of yr1 1.2. Synthesis and summary reports and graphics on the value of wetland services and 10,000 leaflets in local language distributed to residents by end of yr2. 1.3. Local district council members discuss the valuation report to integrate results into local government development plans by end of yr2. 1.4. The quantity of peat carbon stocks in the project area assessed by end of yr 1 1.5. The relative impact of different farming practices and conservation activities on emissions assessed by end of yr 1.	1.1. Valuation report available and shared 1.2. Reports, graphics and leaflets depicting the wetland values. 1.3. Minutes of local and national assembly debates on wetlands management in Kabale 1.4., 1.5. Report on peat carbon stocks and impact of conservation activities on emissions	Wetland ecosystem values known and availed to local and national decision-makers Conduct ecosystem valuation of the three targeted wetlands; Kiruruma, Nyamuriro, Bunyonyi Develop and disseminate materials for public awareness on the values of the wetland resources

Output 2 Wetlands biodiversity assessed, indicator species monitored and data obtained and used to evaluate Ramsar status of the sites to enable designation.	2.1. Biodiversity assessment reports available and indicator species identified by end of Yr2 2.2. Synthesis and analysis of the data against Ramsar criteria and support the Govt with completion and submission of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) to the Ramsar Secretariat 2.3. A monitoring framework for biodiversity developed and administered throughout the project period to provide information on impact of project on biodiversity.	2.1. Baseline and biodiversity reports highlighting international significant elements of the wetlands 2.2. Ramsar Information sheet (RIS) completed and submitted to the national Ramsar focal point 2.3. Minutes of the National Ramsar Committee (NRC) 2.4 Monitoring reports for indicator species eg. Grey-crowned Crane	National government remains committed to wetlands conservation *We think this will hold true because government is in process of reviewing wetlands policy and laws and wetlands agencies has committed to providing support to the project implementation.*
Output 3 Community stakeholders engaged in the implementation of Community Conservation Agreements to sustainably manage and wisely use wetlands	3.1 Ten community groups trained in the setup, management and governance of Community Conservation Agreements (CCAs) by end of Yr1 3.2 At least 500 community group members have a good understanding of the laws and regulations regarding protection and wise-use of wetlands by end of yr 2 3.3 Ten CCAs representing ten community groups signed between communities and district government authorities by EOP 3.4 Ten community groups implementing conservation activities and biodiversity monitoring guided by Conservation Action Plans by end of yr 2	3.1a Training and evaluation reports showing disaggregation of gender involvement 3.1b Charter describing the governance and management of CCAs and action plans on achieving the targets of CCAs 3.2 Reports on Training and pre and post training interview 3.3 Signed CCAs documents between community groups engaged and local government authorities 3.4a Conservation action plans in place 3.4b Biodiversity (IBA) monitoring reports re: indicator species	Local politics remain conducive We think this will hold true because local councils have been supportive of NatureUganda and community stakeholders and local government have provides support letters to the project which indicates commitment to conservation of wetlands. Also the clearer rights, roles and responsibilities for communities, articulated through a CCA with oversight from local government to ensure its enforcement coupled with improved agricultural methods outside the wetlands and better methods to wise-use of wetlands will result in better wetland management
Output 4 Wise use/sustainable use strategies and plans developed, demonstrated and adopted to improve community livelihoods.	4.1 A baseline report on upland soil quality in the study area assessed to inform establishment of FFSs by end of Yr1 4.2. Three farmer field schools established and demonstrating benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement activities by end of yr2. 4.3 Ten community groups (1000 HH) trained in and using appropriate SWC methods 4.4. 1500 farmers adopt soil fertility improvement practices, establish fodder banks in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetland-based livelihoods BEOP	4.1 Baseline study report 4.2 Farmer field schools reports showing demonstration activities 4.3, 4.4, & 4.5 Training manual/reports on SWC, SFI & SFP 4.6a. Project enterprises support reports 4.6b Monitoring reports showing improved soil productivity as a result of manure from goats and Soil and water conservation activities 4.7. Report on tourism related interventions by the project.	The rainfall patterns remain conducive for farming Communities are receptive to mew methods of farming and alternative livelihoods: We think this will hold true as recent experience show it will especially working with local experts with support from local government relevant departments, affirmative action in enterprise selection and learning visits to support communities Political stability allows foreign tourists to

	4.5 1,000 HH (5,000 people) trained and practicing sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying. BEOP 4.6 At least 20% community group members establish sustainable enterprises, in particular ten 'zero-grazing' goat rearing units and fourteen modern beekeeping units by end of yr2. 4.7 At least 10 tourism guides trained and a tourism development association registered to support tourism services BEOP		visit the region We think this will hold true because tourism is critical foreign exchange earner for the country and all efforts are made to ensure security and safety of visitors. With improved status of wetlands as Ramsar site, increased publicity, sufficient tourists visit the area and provide employment opportunities for the tourism operators. We think this will hold true because tourism is a well-developed activity based on neighbouring forests in the catchment (Bwindi Mgahinga National Park for Mt Gorillas and Echuya Forest for bird watching) and tourism based on open water and wetland biodiversity will be an added quality and product to the tourist experience.
Output 5 Lessons from management of wetlands in Kabale shared at national, regional and international levels for future replication to protect high altitude wetlands	5.1 Project communications plan in place end of yr1. 5.2. At least 2 Learning visits annually to/from other communities outside the project area to share expertise and experiences throughout the project 5.3 Project outcomes and lessons shared in at least 5 forums, local radio/TV programmes in local language and print media BEOP 5.4 At least one paper on wetlands management through Community Conservation Agreements published in a refereed journal 5.5. Publicity materials on the project results including newsletters, posters and policy briefs circulated BEOP	5.1a Communications plan and its monitoring and evaluation schedule 5.1b Materials and scripts used in communications 5.2 Reports of learning visits 5.3 Reports on forums attended and radio programmes aired 5.4 Article accepted by a refereed journal 5.5. Publicity materials produced and available	Lessons learnt from project inspire wetlands conservation in the region We think this holds true because of government commitment to conservation of wetland and also the realisation of the decline of ecosystem services such as water when such habitats are lost

Activities:
Activities (each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

Output 1. Wetland ecosystem values known and availed to local and national decision-makers

1.1 Conduct ecosystem valuation of the three targeted wetlands; Kiruruma, Nyamuriro, Bunyonyi

1.2. Develop and disseminate materials for public awareness on the values of the wetland resources

1.3. Organise dialogue meetings with local councils to raise awareness of wetland resources and their values

1.4. Assess the quantity of peat carbon stocks in the project area

1.5. Assess the impact of different farming practices and conservation activities on emissions

Output 2. Wetlands biodiversity assessed, indicator species monitored and data obtained and used to evaluate Ramsar status of the sites to enable designation

2.1. Assess biodiversity of the wetlands and identify the indicator species

2.2. Synthesise and analyse data against Ramsar criteria and complete the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) for the National Ramsar Committee

2.3. Develop a monitoring framework for indicator species to provide information on impact of project on biodiversity throughout the project period.

Output 3. Community stakeholders engaged in the implementation of Community Conservation Agreements to sustainably manage and use of wetlands

3.1 Train ten community groups in the setup, management and governance of Community Conservation Agreements (CCAs)

3.2 Organise a workshop for every community group covering at least 500 community group members to promote good understanding of the laws and regulations regarding protection and wise-use of wetlands

3.3 Facilitate development of CCAs and ten MOUs signed between communities and district authorities

3.4 Facilitate and support ten community groups (ten workshops) to develop and implement Conservation action plans

Output 4. Wise use/sustainable use strategies and plans developed, demonstrated and adopted to improve community livelihoods..

4.1. Assess the baseline of upland soil quality in the study area, prior to the establishment of the farmer field school by end of Yr1

4.2. Establish three farmer field schools and demonstrating benefits of soil and water conservation (SWC) and soil improvement activities

4.3 Train ten community groups (1000 HH) in using appropriate SWC methods

4.4. Train 1500 farmers to adopt soil fertility improvement practices and establish fodder banks in the uplands to reduce their dependence on wetland-based livelihoods.

4.5 Train 1,000 HH (5,000 people) in sustainable farming practices that do not expose peat wetlands to oxidation and excessive drying

4.6 Support at least 20% community group members to establish sustainable enterprises, in particular ten ‘zero-grazing’ goat rearing units and ten modern beekeeping units.

4.7 At least 10 tourism guides trained and a tourism development association registered to support tourism services BEOP

Output 5. Lessons from management of wetlands in Kabale shared at national, regional and international levels for future replication to protect peat wetlands

5.1 Develop a communications plan for the project

5.2 Organise learning visits to other communities outside the project area to share expertise and experiences
5.3 Share project outcomes, experiences and lessons in at least 5 meetings and forums
5.4 Publish at least one paper on wetlands management through Community Conservation Agreements in a refereed journal
5.5. Develop and disseminate publicity materials on the project results including newsletters, posters, policy briefs
5.6. Raise awareness on the outcomes and results of the project through radios, TVs and public print media

Observation:
Added assumptions in the former reports (outcome level), e.g., on C.19.
The table need to be updated.

We need to include the feedback from the last year review report highlighting areas of concern

Sharing of M&E framework/Plan in the next reporting

Annex 3: Standard Measures

Please expand and complete Table 1: new projects should complete the Y1 column and also indicate the number planned during the project lifetime. Continuing project should cut and past the information from previous years and add in data for the most recent reporting period. Quantify project standard measures over the last year using the coding and format from the Darwin Initiative Standard Measures (see website for details: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/reporting-forms-change-request-forms-and-terms-and-conditions/) and give a brief description. Please list and report on relevant Code Numbers only. The level of detail required is specified in the Standard Measures Guidance notes under 'definitions and reporting requirements' column. Please devise and add any measures that are not captured in the current list. Please note that these measures may not be a substitute for output level objectively verifiable indicators in the project logframe.

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Gender of people (if relevant)	Nationality of people (if relevant)	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
Established codes								

In Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Mark (*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	√
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	√
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	√
Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	√
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	√
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	