

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2022

Project reference	26-022	
Project title	Uprating community forest management in Nepal: enhancing biodiversity and livelihoods	
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nepal	
Lead partner	ForestAction Nepal	
Partner(s)	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (BRGE) Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL) Federation of Community Forest User Groups (FECOFUN) Jhapa Division Forest Office Jhapa	
Project leader	Naya Sharma Paudel, PhD	
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR4	
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.facebook.com/JalthalBiodiversity https://twitter.com/BiodiversityNep https://www.flickr.com/photos/184289092@N07/albums	

<p>1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).</p>
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We are towards to end of the project. In terms of activities, most of the activities were completed within projects regular life (Project was supposed to end in May 2022). However, some of the activities could not be completed in projects originally agreed time mainly due to COVID-19, and they were transferred to extended time (until March 2023). This report presents activities undertaken during April-September 2022. Progress against relevant Activities under each outputs have been presented. Figure in the parenthesis represent the activity number from the time table and supporting reports have been cited if applicable.

Output 1 Forests are sustainably managed with greater diversity, enhanced structural complexity and improved productivity, and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation enhanced

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) Field expedition (Which lagged behind due to covid-19 was organised in the leadership of Dr, Mark Watson in September 2022 (1.7, Doc 01). Earlier Dr Bhaskar Adhikari and Axel Poulsen from RBGE also visited Jalthal for Botanical exploration.

Output 2 Mikania invasion substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through ‘site management’.

Several meetings were organised at local level to plan and carryout Mikania removal (2.2, Doc 01, 02). Mikania and other invasive species have been removed from over 31 hectares of Degraded forest (2.3, Doc 02). The project has piloted production of compost by using biomass of invasive species. Five Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) have been initiated production and use of compost. Some CFs already started generating cash by sell of compost (2.4, Doc 02, 03). Agroforestry has been piloted in Mikania controlled areas and a satisfactory result have been achieved in growing shade crops and trees (2.6, Doc 03). The results will be shared as a blog soon. Awareness programs have been organised to local people and students on biodiversity conservation and invasive species management (2.7, Doc 01). A biodiversity infographic, which highlights conservation significance, of Jalthal forest has been published in both English and Nepali language and disseminated both in print and online (2.8, Doc 04). A special issue of *Hamro Ban Sampada*-a magazine about forest management in Nepali language-will be published before end of the December. This will be a major output towards knowledge management of this project.

Output 3 Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication materials highlighting biodiversity conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders

Most of the activities towards this output have already been completed. A seminar will be organised during January-February 2023.

Output 4 Forest based micro enterprises including ecotourism facilities established and operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods

We have supported a group of women who are practicing traditional weaving of clothes. They are provided with necessary materials so that their production capacity and market access will be increased (4.6, 4.7, Doc 01, 02).

2. 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.

Not applicable

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS-LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes/No

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

Change request reference if known:

4a. 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: £

4b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

We are towards closing of this project. Major activities have been already completed. Just few field activities and RBGEs field expeditions were planned for this year. We are comfortable in completing all planned activities according to the plan.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**