

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 2023

Project reference	DI 27-003
Project title	Creating a sustainable landscape for the Tau-Buid and the Tamaraw
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Philippines
Lead partner	Re:wild
Partner(s)	D'Aboville Foundation and Demo Farm Inc.
Project leader	<i>Mike Appleton</i>
Report date and number	22/10/2023 HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.rewild.org/wild-about/mounts-iglit-baco-natural-park

The project continues to progress well towards its objectives and is on track to achieve most of what it set out to achieve by the time it ends (31 December 2023).

Output 1 A sound understanding of the structure, culture and needs of Tau-Buid communities in and around the Tamaraw habitat and of the options and needs for sustainable land use and landscape rehabilitation.

1.1 Commission a study of Tau-Buid agriculture and resource use and food security from a national specialist.

1.2 Conduct socio economic and ethnographic studies of one Tau-Buid village in order to understand how new practices in agriculture and land use can best be assimilated.

We continue to accumulate and document knowledge and understanding about the Taobuid with each encounter and meeting we have with them. Over the last few months members of the tribe have 'opened up' and share more information not previously available to us.

Publication of this information is a challenge as this would require the explicit consent of the Taobuid. However, a great deal of the information gathered has been used by the tribe and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples in pursuit of their Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (e.g. boundaries, locations of settlements, locations of sacred sites) and in the development of the Community Conservation Plan (e.g. traditional hunting and harvesting areas, systems for regulating resource management, individual territorial boundaries).

We have also learned a lot more about internal systems of governance among the Taobuid, which has enabled us to identify specific influential individuals with whom we should work.

1.3 Conduct exchanges, training events and study visits from the Tau-Buid to other Indigenous initiatives in the Philippines

The main activity was the technical visit of the Philippine Permaculture Association (PPA) consultants from May 9 to 15, 2023, which included a workshop on bamboo use.

1.4 Establish an area inside MIBNP for trials and demonstrations of agriculture and agroforestry techniques.

- The tree nursery at ranger station 2 is thriving and supplying planting materials for the 'food forest' and for the restoration area.
- From October 2022 to May 2023 more than 600 kgs of food have been produced in the permaculture garden.

- A special area for attracting pollinators has been established. Monthly monitoring of the habitat restoration experimental area is showing good tree survival and growth rates.
- The regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has informed us that the Bureau of Soils and Water Management wishes to document the experience of initiative at Station 2 as an example of a good practice in sustainable land management.

Output 2 At least two Tau-Buid communities (approximately 200 men, women and children) are engaged in implementing agreed plans of activities to improve sustainability of resource and land use and rehabilitate damaged landscapes in and around Tamaraw habitat.

2.1 Hold participatory resource management planning events with the Tau-Buid

2.2 Support participatory identification of location and boundaries of Community Conservation Plan (CCP) areas inside MIBNP

2.3 Support participatory development of management & action plans for CCP areas.

Progress on the Community Conservation Plan has been excellent and beyond our expectations. Increasing numbers of Taobuid have been actively engaged in meetings, planning events and site visits. The final two of 5 community planning events were held on 18 May and 21 June 2023.

In August, the draft Community Conservation Plan (CCP) was approved by the MIBNP PAMB Technical Working Committee (TWC) on Community Management and Indigenous Peoples.

2.4 Work with at least one selected village to enable and encourage uptake agricultural extension advice

Since we do not have access to the Taobuid villages, our approach remains to experiment and demonstrate new approaches and encourage dialogue with Taobuid who visit the demonstration area. There are now regular visits from Taobuid residing in the local settlements, including from one emerging tribal leader. They usually come to help in the work in exchange for rice and other products, they help in collecting planting materials, barter food products in exchange for products that are not available in the uplands. Two have requested planting materials of oregano that they want to plant in their land because of its medicinal properties.

2.5 Identify and mobilise potential sources of additional extension support for implementing CCPs.

We have applied for a Darwin Extra grant to continue this work.

2.6 Develop and implement strategies and joint actions for fire management, erosion control and invasive species control.

These actions are embedded in the community conservation plan.

Output 3 The Tamaraw population is well protected, stable or increasing and occupying an increased protected zone of at least 2,500ha.

3.1 Support development of and implement refined census techniques for Tamaraw

3.2 Conduct and analyse annual Tamaraw census.

On May 4, 2023, the proposal for tamaraw population monitoring methods at MIBNP was presented in a meeting at the DENR MIMAROPA Regional Office. A copy of the proposal has been sent to and discussed with the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP), MIBNP PAMO, DENR MIMAROPA regional office, and the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) in the last quarter.

Our 37-page "Proposal for new tamaraw population monitoring methods at Mts. Iglit-Baco Natural Park" proposes a set of indices of ecological change (IEC) as alternative tools for the monitoring and management of large herbivores: abundance index; animal performance index; and index of impact on the vegetation.

3.3 Agree an enlarged no hunting area with the Tau-Buid (linked to 2.2)

Negotiations on the enlarged no hunting area have been part of the Community Conservation Plan. We are delighted with progress on this; the tribe has in principle agreed that the area should be enlarged from its current 1,600 hectares to 3,400 ha. The precise area will be determined following participatory demarcation of the boundary to be completed in November.

3.4 Train, equip and support rangers to improve protection and monitor and plan activities using SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) software.

3.5 Collate statistics and publish an annual law enforcement and wildlife crime prevention report

Re:wild has assisted the PAMO and TCP teams to update their SMART systems and to load SMART mobile on to their Smartphones.

3.6 Conduct an awareness campaign on the management of MIBNP need for tamaraw conservation. Focal groups - Park edge communities - Local government units and official agencies with an interest in MIBNP.

The series of videos on the project has been substantially expanded.

- The third video on the permaculture-based system for food production and ecosystem. [<https://youtu.be/ZpYN5rxGQ-A>]
- “Meet the Team” videos: Cleo Hechanova (DAF staff) – [<https://youtu.be/Bf28VpHZ5XM>]; Fransly Ignacio (DAF staff)– [<https://youtu.be/rk4Fh8Ybenk>]; Jackie Belmonte (DAF staff)– [<https://youtu.be/sKvC8V007pk>]; Diego Agman (DAF staff) – [<https://youtu.be/fOz2RaaALT4>]; Narcisa Damaso (MIBNP PAMO staff) – [<https://youtu.be/7I7oqSoms04>]; Fernando Garcia (DAF staff) – [<https://youtu.be/qrvdAR03vw0>]; Manu Schutz (DAF staff) – [https://youtu.be/xnVEfFycpUQ?si=_uidmzRDN3e7v8V5 M]
- A video titled “100 years of Mindoro in 100 seconds.”

Output 4 A claim for the rights of the Tau-Buid in their Ancestral Domain is prepared and submitted by the end of the project.

4.1 Provide resources to support the CADT and ADSDPP process, based on the requests of the Taobuid and the NCIP

4.2 Clarify the processes required to obtain a CADT and complete the ADSDPP in MIBNP

4.3 Formalise agreement with the Tau-Buid and NCIP for provision of support.

4.4 Provide resources to support the CADT and ADSDPP process, based on the requests of the Tau-Buid and the NCIP.

4.5 Complete documentation of all requirements for CADT and ADSDPP inside MIBNP

The project has supported completion the official participatory delineation of the Taobuid Ancestral Domain Boundary, including support for calibration and repair of surveying instruments and travel and subsistence for the survey team on two missions: June 7-11 and June 15-18. The survey is now complete, and the initial boundary map has been plotted. The next steps are to resolve boundary disputes and validate the map with the Taobuid Community.

NOTE ON INDICATORS. We aligned our indicators with the new indicator framework in Table 1 in our last annual report. These indicators remain relevant and useful.

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.

There have been no major/unexpected issues. The project has proceeded well, and it has been beneficial that the leadership of Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park has been stable in this period. We are currently working on a budget review for the remainder of the project to ensure complete and balanced expenditure and to take in to account substantial exchange rate fluctuations. We may need to make a minor change request during November.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known: n/a

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: ██████████

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes **No** Estimated underspend: £

4c. 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.

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

None