

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	29-017
Project title	Sustainable management of wetlands and grasslands: enhancing biodiversity and livelihoods.
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nepal
Lead partner	Bird Conservation Nepal
Partner(s)	Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Buffer Zone Management Committee
Project leader	<i>Ishana Thapa</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>31 October 2021 (HYR1)</i>
Project website/blog/social media	www.birdlifenepal.org

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).

As per the Nepal Government process, project documents have been submitted to the Social Welfare Council (SWC) which is the NGO/INGO project monitoring and evaluation authority in Nepal. Also pre-consensus letters from District Coordination Committee of Saptari and Sunsari districts have been submitted to SWC as a required document from project site local government.

Two field-based project staffs i.e. Project Officer and Project Assistant were recruited in July 2022 and they have started working for the project since August 2022. Implementation of project activities was discussed among the project team during first week of August.

Darwin project field office has been set up in a rented house at Dharahara tapan, Barakhshetra municipality ward no. 9, Sunsari district. Office furnishing and purchase of other materials has been done.

A planning workshop was carried out at Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve on 31 August 2022 with an objective of providing insights on annual plan and activities for the project and bring all the concerned authorities and stakeholders in a common platform for exploring mutual cooperation for the successful project implementation. The workshop was organized in collaboration with Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve office. Representatives from Buffer Zone Management Committee, Buffer Zone User committees, Barakhshetra Municipality office, Koshi rural municipality office, Kancharup municipality office and local conservation groups attended the workshop. The participants actively shared their opinions and suggestions on the project's annual plan during the workshop.

Project start-up meetings were done with Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve office, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Bufferzone Management Committee, Barakhshetra Municipality office, Koshi

rural municipality office and Kancharup municipality office. The meetings were focused on effective implementation of the project activities and achieving project objectives.

The project team visited and discussed on enhancing livelihoods of local communities with Prakashpur Bufferzone User Committee, Goriya community (Fishermen) of Barahkshetra Municipality, Madhuban; Beruwa Barmajhiya Bufferzone user committee in Kancharup municipality; Urao and Sardar communities of Koshi rural municipality; Community livestock service center, Madhuban.

On the occasion of International Vulture Awareness Day this year, an interaction programme on "importance of vultures and role of humans to protect the critically endangered vultures" was carried out among Purba-pipara Dharampur Ghoganpur buffer zone users of Kancharup municipality, Saptari.

Trainings on monitoring of population and threats to threatened bird species; Participatory monitoring of globally threatened and nationally threatened bird species and their threats; and surveys on fish stocks in Koshi have been planned for next quarter.

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 were some delays during this initial stage of the project implementation. It took longer than anticipated to establish the new field office and acquaint the project team members with the stakeholders in the project area. The local communities in the project sites are thought to have higher expectations from the project however this won't have significant impact on the project as the project's objectives have been clearly presented during the planning meeting.

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: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance 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?

None.

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**