

DARWIN INITIATIVE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SPECIES

SIX MONTHLY MONITORING FORM

Project Details

Project Reference No. 162/6/052_____

Project Title Plant Information and technology_____
transfer for Nepal.

Institution The NAatural History Museum_____

Round 1 (please tick)

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PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

- a) Outline progress over the last six months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project. If some milestones have not been achieved or have slipped, explain reasons for this.

This period covers six project milestones.

1. Training of second Nepalese post-graduates (Darwin Scholars)

The second Nepalese Darwin Scholars arrived at the Natural History Museum in April 1999 and completed their scheduled three months training. As well as working at the NHM they also worked at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew and Edinburgh during this period.

2. Second Project Review Meeting

This took place in May and was attended by project staff and the independent consultant Dr Henry Nolte (Edinburgh). Progress was reviewed and adjustments made to both the list of outputs anticipated and the timetable for the final phases of the project.

3. Attendance at the International Botanical Congress.

Dr KK Shrestha and Prof. S. Blackmore attended this major meeting in July where they spoke at a specially arranged workshop for data repatriation and the flora of Nepal. A poster was exhibited and a prototype of the database demonstrated.

4. Provision of computer equipment to Nepalese Node.

The computer equipment for the Nepalese partner was purchased at the beginning of September. The delay on this milestone was at the request of the Nepalese partner (Tribhuvan University) to coincide with the return of the second Darwin Scholars and to give as long a period of warranty as possible.

By purchasing locally (but to standards set by the project) costs were sufficiently reduced to establish three nodes instead of one as originally envisaged. These nodes are Tribhuvan University Kathmandu, Natural History Museum Kathmandu and Tribhuvan University Biratnagar.

5. Completion of databases

The compilation of the databases and image library was finalised at the beginning of September. All information was written to CD-ROM. The information covers the following:

- Baseline data (electronic version of original "Enumeration of flowering plants of Nepal")
- Type specimens
- Collectors
- Gazetteer of place names

- Bibliography of related literature
- Bryophytes
- Library of digital images of type material

6. Final workshop.

This took place in Kathmandu over eight days in September and was opened by the Nepalese Minister for Education. The first two days were devoted to presentations and demonstrations of the project and the databases as well as the official hand-over of the information and equipment to the Nepalese partner. The remaining time was spent visiting the node set-up and herbaria, in discussions with botanists intending using the information and in a short field excursion with the four Darwin Scholars to an area which has generated many of the specimens recorded in the database. The workshop was attended by over 100 people.

- b) What progress has the project made in achieving its objectives over the last six months? Is the project still expected to achieve all the original objectives which were specified? Explain any problems/difficulties which have been encountered to date in achieving the objectives of the project (or any which you envisage may be encountered in the future).

All but one of the objectives for the project have now been achieved. The final one – publishing information from the project – will depend to a large extent on publishers' schedules.

- c) What lessons can be learnt from your experiences (both good and bad) over the last six months?

- d) If the project timetable has slipped or changed, provide an updated project implementation timetable for the remainder of the project. *(Please note that projects are expected to adhere to their original timetable and that the timely completion of projects is an important factor taken into account by the Department when assessing project performance. However, from time to time projects may be delayed unavoidably. Where a project is falling behind schedule, details on the revised programme of work should be provided below.)*

The project has kept to timetable.

- e) What is the estimated completion date for the project?
The completion date is October 1999 and all main work will be completed by then. However, there is uncertainty regarding publication schedules (and possible redrafting to meet house style). With this in mind, an extension has been agreed with the Darwin Office, initially to December 1999 but possibly needing until April 2000 to allow time for all bills to clear etc.

- f) Is this different to the completion date set out in the original application form?

Yes

(please tick)

No

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Please use this space to provide any further information on the progress of the project over the last six months, or on the Darwin Initiative as a whole. For example, are there any issues you wish to raise on management/monitoring/financial procedures or on any other matters?