

## 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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

<b>Project reference</b>	DARCC036
<b>Project title</b>	Building Capacity for Reciprocal Watershed Agreements in the Tropical Andes
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Bolivia
<b>Lead partner</b>	Natura Bolivia Foundation
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Corporación Autónoma Valle de Cauca (CVC), Instituto del Bien Común (IBC), ETAPA ((Empresa de Telecomunicaciones, Agua Potable, Alcantarillado y Saneamiento de Cuenca)
<b>Project leader</b>	Maria Teresa Vargas
<b>Report date and number</b>	HYR2 October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="http://www.naturabolivia.org">www.naturabolivia.org</a>

**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).**

For this half year reporting period we had ten activities programmed:

**1.1.1. Hold partner meetings to share lessons, 1.1.2. Review literature (published articles and internal documents, and reports by each partner's associates), 1.1.3. Draft new document, share for reviews and revise, 1.1.4. Share document with external reviewers for comments, and 1.1.5. Publish finalized version of document and disseminate.**

To initiate the project, we held a series of meetings across Bolivia to share lessons and develop an assessment of “lessons learned” during 20 years of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements. Each of these meetings were either one or two days:

- With the Municipal Government of Coroico to discuss the Municipal Laws and how to incorporate the water cooperative in the process of formation of a Water Fund. The 20 participants comprised managers, townspeople and municipal technicians.
- With forty technicians, counsellors and other politicians from the municipalities of Rurrenabaque, Palos Blancos, Alto Beni, Sanbuenaventura.
- With 29 counsellors, productive development secretaries, and technicians from Coroico, Yanacachi, Teoponte and Coripata municipalities
- With 30 counsellors, politicians, and representatives of farmers unions and water cooperatives in Camargo
- With 34 community- and farmers union members and local governments in Sopachuy
- With 23 farmers union members and local government staff and representatives of the El Palmar Protected Area, in Presto.
- With 19 members of the water cooperative of Santa Fé and San Carlos, and technicians and Carlos municipal governments

- With 23 farmers union members and local government staff and representatives of the El Palmar Protected Area, in Azurduy
- With 24 counsellors from the provinces of Cercado San Lorenzo, El Puente and Uriondo, technicians from the Government and the Domingo Savio University.
- With 31 community members from San Carlos/El Torno municipalities.

Based on these meetings we drafted a document, that we then shared with project partners and other organizations, including the Water Resources Authority of the Government of Kenya.

**1.2.1. Design in-person training program based on published document, and 1.2.2. Design virtual training program based on published document.**

The in-person training program is structured around the “Reciprocal Watershed Agreements” document and comprises five days of teaching, hands of learning and field sessions. During the program participants start the design of their own conservation incentive program. We also piloted a virtual training program, and Kenya’s Water Resource Authority (WRA) undertook a virtual session with 40 participants, after their in-person programme.

**2.1.1. Discuss project with KBA managers and government authorities and invite them and their staff to apply for the training.**

Staff from two KBAs attended the first series of consultation meetings. Partners then worked with other conservation groups to evaluate the location, efficiency and potential expansion and refinement of the Bolivian Key Biodiversity Area system. Information from community monitoring and camera traps in 20 protected areas allowed us to identify threatened mammal species, and to propose 4 new KBAs, within which we expect to work in 2024.

**2.1.2. Select participants through open call for applications, and 2.1.3. Hold training workshops.**

We held two week-long training workshops (“Watershed Schools”) in Bolivia, both in Samaipata municipality, and one short workshop in Kenya Nairobi. For the first and third “Schools” candidate selection was undertaken local and national authorities, while the second workshop had a public call for applications. 35 people representing 20 water providers attended the first “School”, 26 participants from 19 institutions (18 municipalities) attended the second, and 25 Kenyan government staff attended the third.

Although we did not expect to advance on activity **2.2.1. “Provide individual mentoring to 75 participants as they develop their conservation agreement program proposals”** until Q3, we were able to initiate this activity in August of Q2.

- During the first School we committed to promoting a Water Fund for the city of Santa Cruz, along with Cooperatives from the metropolitan area and neighbouring municipalities such as La Guardia, Montero, Cotoca, Warnes and El Torno.
- We started work with the Water providers of the cities of Tarija (Cossalt) and Sucre (ELAPAS) to develop Water Funds there.
- The processes to develop New Water Funds were initiated for Camargo Puerto Quijarro, Puerto Suarez, Sacaba, and Carmen Rivero Torrez.

**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.**

Project staff were able to take advantage of previously planned (and paid for) trip to Kenya, to work with the Water Resource Authority to develop and promote the Reciprocal Watershed Agreements for use in that country. The information exchange and training proved very successful, and we expect to build on this partnership during the rest of the project.

<b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b>	
Discussed with NIRAS:	n/a
Formal Change Request submitted:	n/a
Received confirmation of change acceptance	n/a
Change request reference if known:	

<b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)</b>	
Actual spend: £ <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">██████████</span>	
<b>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)?</b>	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: £
<b>4c. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year. <b>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.</b>	
NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.	
<b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b>	
No	

**If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, 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.**

**All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but should also be raised with NIRAS 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](mailto: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**