

## Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity Annual Report

### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	DARCC036
Project title	Building Capacity for Reciprocal Watershed Agreements in the Tropical Andes
Country/ies	Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador
Lead Partner	Fundación Natura Bolivia
Project partner(s)	Corporación Autónoma Valle de Cauca (CVC), Instituto del Bien Común (IBC), ETAPA ((Empresa de Telecomunicaciones, Agua Potable, Alcantarillado y Saneamiento de Cuenca)
Darwin Initiative grant	£199,428
Start/end dates of project	01/04/2023 - 31/03/2025
Reporting period/number	Apr 2023 – Mar 2024, Annual Report 1
Project Leader name	Maria Teresa [REDACTED]
Project website	<a href="http://www.naturabolivia.org">www.naturabolivia.org</a>
Report authors and date	Maria [REDACTED] and Gloria [REDACTED] (with input from Richard [REDACTED], Dennis [REDACTED] and Marco [REDACTED]), May 31 <sup>st</sup> 2024.

### 1. Project summary

The most biodiverse Protected Areas around the world are severely under-financed. For example, Bolivia's Amboró National Park hosts 10% of the bird species on planet earth (the same number as in the entire country of Costa Rica), but park authorities currently count on one vehicle to move staff around its 636,000 hectares. Natura Bolivia pays for the car's petrol, while the Bolivian government pays only for the salaries of the 25 park guards. Around Amboró are hundreds of small communities, the home of thousands of poor subsistence farmers and their families, many of whom clear forest next to the park to plant crops.

Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (RWA) are an innovative form of incentive-based conservation by which the water users who benefit from watershed protection can help upstream communities undertake cover the costs of conservation. In and around Key Biodiversity Areas, this means providing residents with development projects such as honey or fruit production or irrigation systems, in exchange for written 5- or 10-year commitments to protect their watersheds, forests and wildlife.

In the last ten years, more than a hundred municipalities from across the Andes have experimented with RWA. This project is building capacity and capability to adapt and improve the RWA model to finance biodiversity management and to further expand the scale and scope of the model. The four core facilitating organizations (Natura (Bolivia), CVC (Colombia), IBC (Peru), and ETAPA (Ecuador)) are also building their and their partners capacity to use the RWA model more effectively to support conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas.

## 2. Project stakeholders/ partners

The four core partners on this project have worked together for more than a decade, and already have high levels of trust and engagement. Partners were selected based on two criteria: 1) they were part of a GEF-funded, RARE-coordinated project that initiated and promoted Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (RWA) across the Andes from 2010-2017, and 2) their RWA projects have thrived and expanded since then. For reasons of resources, scope, scale and advances, we have differentiated between:

- **Senior partners (Natura Bolivia and Corporación Autónoma Valle de Cauca (CVC):** Natura and CVC implement RWA as a fundamental core institutional priority in more than 15 municipalities (and in the case of Natura, almost 100), and already work at scale and are expanding. These institutions act as primary trainers in the project.
- **Junior partners (Instituto del Bien Común (IBC) and the Cuenca Water Company ETAPA):** IBC and ETAPA are implementing RWA in approximately 3-7 municipalities. While both have a long experience with RWA, they so far have limited geographic scope. Both institutions are experts in certain components of the RWA methodology (e.g. social marketing/behavior change) but do not have RWA as an institutional core priority. One of the project's goals is thus to help them to replicate and scale.

Notwithstanding this learning “hierarchy”, each of four partners have played a fundamental role in project design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and decision making, and each plays the lead role for training and mentoring in their own country.

We have incorporated each of the core partners' local partners into the project. For example, in Colombia, the second level partners include the Rh+ Positive Foundation, 14 municipal government and hundreds of landowners, while in Bolivia, local partners comprise 96 local governments, three city governments and three state governments. These local partners include almost all the institutions with which the core partners are currently implementing RWA.

## 3. Project progress

### 3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

We successfully undertook a series of activities in this reporting period

#### **Output 1: The Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model is refined and adapted to enhance Management of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)**

**Activities: 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 and combined both lesson-learning and where possible new training:

- 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 40 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 San 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 (KWRA) undertook a virtual session, but we concluded that post COVID such a virtual modality was neither useful nor needed. We therefore focused on developing variations of our in person program: five days for Colombian partners and three days for Peruvian partners.

## **Output 2. Capacity of consortium staff and their local partners is enhanced through training courses in how to implement and finance the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model**

### **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 2024-2025.

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

We held two 5-day training workshops (“Watershed Schools”) in Bolivia, both in Samaipata municipality, and one 5-day workshop in Cali, Colombia, and a 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, 32 Colombians attended the third school, and 28 Kenyan government staff attended the fourth.

### **2.2.1. “Provide individual mentoring to 75 participants as they develop their conservation agreement program proposals”**

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. Advances have since been slow, but this is the nature of working with large public authorities. We also started work with the Water providers of the cities of Tarija (Cossalt) and Sucre (ELAPAS) to develop Water Funds. Both these City funds have since been announced, but activities in the field have not yet started.

### **2.3.1. Help at least 20 workshop participants to finalize and present their Reciprocal Watershed Agreement financing proposals to funding agencies and governments**

In our most successful examples, we worked with the potentially large water funds of the cities of Tarija (COSSALT) and Sucre (ELAPAS). We provided Watershed School participants Jose

Luis Patino and Edwin Gonzales with legal support to help their respective city governments. The Tarija fund was in process prior to the Darwin project, but the training and support we provided Jose Luis has been critical to help him advance. Sucre has a population of approximately 287,000 inhabitants, and we helped Edwin design its Water Fund as a financial mechanism for the conservation and preservation of its water sources. In its first iteration, FONAS will gather economic resources from the Autonomous Municipal Government of Sucre, the Sucre Water Services Provider Entity (ELAPAS)

### **2.3.2. Review literature and partner documents to learn lessons about network design.**

The literature review and partners consultations have been completed, and discussed in a series of telephone meetings

### **2.3.3. Develop, disseminate for review, and finalize publication that describes learning network for "Reciprocal Watershed Agreements as support for KBA Management"**

This document has been drafted but we are slightly behind schedule in editing. We expect to complete this and disseminate the document by mid-July.

## **3.2 Progress towards project Outputs**

### **Output 1: The Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model is refined and adapted to enhance Management of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)**

***Output indicator 1.1.** One document is published and distributed that describes a new KBA focused version of the Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model (by October 2023, baseline 0 models designed)*

A Spanish language document was completed and distributed to workshop participants. The final version of this was reflected in the proceedings of the Cali workshop, which is attached as an Annex to this report.

***Output indicator 1.2** Two training workshops are designed to build capacity for managing watersheds within and close to KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by December 2023, baseline 0 workshops designed)*

We modified the standard Bolivian training workshop outline and held two five-day workshops in the town of Samaipata and a series of shorter training sessions across the country. Two new workshops modalities were designed, the first, for five days, to support the "aqueductos" of Colombia to design and implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements.

After a series of discussions, we concluded that a virtual learning modality was no longer useful nor needed post COVID. The Cali workshop was successfully held following the new design, while the second design, for a three-day modality to support the JASS of Peru, will be piloted at a workshop in June and then adapted again for Ecuador.

We were also 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 Agreement model for use in that country. The information exchange and training – designed quickly and at the last minute based on the Bolivian experiences – proved very successful and we will continue to follow up on this partnership, and track progress of the Kenyan trainees during the rest of the project.

### **Output 2. Capacity of consortium staff and their local partners is enhanced through training courses in how to implement and finance the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model**

***Output indicator 2.1.** 100 consortium staff and local partners are trained to manage KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by July 2024, baseline 0 trainees)*

We held two 5-day training workshops in Bolivia. 35 people representing 20 water providers attended the first "School" and 26 participants from 19 institutions (18 municipalities) attended the second. We also held a series of one- and two-day events in Bolivia training approximately

213 protected area staff and partners. We then trained 32 Colombians at the Cali workshop, and as an unexpected bonus were able to train 25 Kenyan government staff in Nairobi.

**Output indicator 2.2.** *Proposals to implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements in or around KBAs are developed by 75 training course participants (by October 2024, baseline 0 proposals)* 90 trainees (from the Bolivia and Colombia workshops) have developed the first drafts of their funding proposals, during the trainings. The Kenyan trainees are awaiting passage of appropriate legislation to guide the finalization of their project designs

**Output indicator 2.3.** *Experiences and lessons learned on the use of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements for KBA management are shared by a network of consortium staff and associates (by March 2025, baseline 0 networks)*

Experiences have been collated and shared, and the partners network strengthened, but we are slightly behind schedule in finalizing the lessons-learned document

For **Output 3 (Consortium partners and trainees successfully implement the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model)**, we have made no advances so far.

### 3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Our project outcome is that Management of five Latin American Key Biodiversity Areas is improved through the signing of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements with local landowners. The Outcome indicator we have worked towards in the first year of the project is:

0.1. Capabilities: Knowledge and skills of 100 protected area staff and partners (at least 50% of whom are female) have been developed for the implementation of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by October 2023, baseline 0 staff trained) (KPI: Extent to which intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change, 10 trainees are able to sign conservation agreement projects implemented by March 2025, baseline 0 trainees)

We have fully achieved this indicator, with more than 300 protected area staff and partners with developed knowledge and skills thanks to a series of trainings and workshops and validated by post-workshop surveys. However, we do not yet know if these advances will lead to the KPI of transformational change as this is planned for the second year of the project. These indicators appear adequate for measuring the first part of our intended outcome.

We have not started activities that will contribute to output 3, and so do not yet know if outcome indicators 0.2 and 0.3 are appropriate. However, we have no evidence to suggest that they are not. We therefore fully expect to achieve the outcome by end of funding.

### 3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

**Assumption 1:** The existing basic Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model, that has been used by project partners to benefit 30,000 people, and protect 500,000 hectares, can be refined/focused to improve Key Biodiversity Area management

**Comments:** We have refined and focused existing Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model and trainees and partners assure us that it can improve Key Biodiversity Area management. However, we will only know this with certainty at project end.

**Assumption 2:** Training will help partners/associates to better implement the model.

**Comments:** According to our surveys of participants, training appears to help them.

**Assumption 3:** Agreement financing is available. We know of various potential sources, which during the short timeframe of the project, will most likely be from local governments.

**Comments:** We have yet to fully test this assumption, but presume it is still valid, and project partners assert that it is.

**Assumption 4:** Local communities will agree to sign and implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements. We have already signed agreements in more than 100 municipalities.

**Comments:** We have yet to fully test this assumption, but presume it is still valid, and project partners assert that it is.

### 3.5 Achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction

In the application form, we identified the following expected changes and benefits in the short- and long-term and the potential to scale our approach:

#### In the short-term:

- 100 protected area staff and their local partners who will be trained in how to design and implement the agreements and at least 50% of these beneficiaries will be female. By project-end, at least five of these trainees will have built their capacity sufficiently to have been able to implement RWA with communities around their protected areas.
- 100 local families will receive \$20,000 worth of development projects
- 10,000 hectares around five Key Biodiversity Areas will be under improved management

#### In the long term:

- Documenting experiences we will help other institutions implement and improve the conservation agreements model.
- Consortium partners will increase our own capacity to implement more effective RWA around KBAs

Our scaling strategy is to promote, present and discuss the results of this lesson learning in the hundreds of municipalities where consortium partners are already active. Our vision is that we will exit the implementation, guiding and financing space, and focus instead on helping partners to design develop and finance their own conservation agreement programmes.

We also hope to work with the Darwin Initiative post project to develop a partnership in which the lessons and experiences of all our 150+ implementing institution partners, plus the 150 + local governments with which we work, can help other Darwin grantees.

**Update:** we have already trained three times more people than expected, albeit many of these people (mainly policy makers and municipal councillors) were trained in short programs (2 days or less) rather than the five-day programs that is our signature program. We have held these longer workshops in Bolivia, Colombia and Kenya and have trained ~ 100 people, with two more workshops planned for Peru and Ecuador for 2024-2025.

As one example in Kenya, we trained the Kenyan Government's Water Resources Authority staff: Faith Mutua, Angeline Kithaka, Aisha Salim, Dr. Naomi Olero, Beryl Oyuke, Phoebe Orina, Tacey Makori, Dr Kenneth K'oreje, Millicent Kareithi, Lencer Opiyo, Hildah Cheyech, Jack Mwangi, Jacob Maluki, Willis Memo, Lilian Nkatha, Sumaya Ibrahim, Cloy Adero, Barbara Mumbua, Shirley Odongo, Benson Wanga, Nina Abira, Mary Kiminda, Najim Hussein, and Dennis Munyi. As with all trainees, we will be following these technicians as they start to develop projects based on the workshops (we can provide lists of all trainees if required).

However, we have not yet started to implement the specific projects close to the KBAs, so we do not yet have a sense of how many families and hectares will benefit. Given our progress so far, we expect that we will support more families and hectares than we originally proposed.

## 4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

Natura has a mandate to contribute to Bolivia's NBSAPs under the CBD. These were outlined in the 2019-2030 National Biodiversity Strategy. Our project continues to support Strategic Line 3 by helping with the "Maintenance of environmental functions and Living Well in harmony with Mother Earth, by promoting regional, sub-national and local actions for the conservation of ecosystems and species of flora and fauna under threat" and in the Transversal Lines: "contribute to ecosystem-based adaptation as a strategy for socio-ecological resilience to

climate change in life systems” and “Adjusting programs to gender equality to ensure the equitable participation of women in Integral Management and Sustainable Biodiversity”

As part of its NDCs under the UNFCCC Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia are expected to achieve a series of objectives in mitigation and adaptation by 2030. By training a new generation of managers who can use the conservation agreements tool for watershed management, we are helping “increase the adaptation capacity and systematically reduce the hydric vulnerability in the country” and provide a “Significant improvement of social participation for local water management” and “Increase food production under irrigation.

The Biodiversity COP 16 will be held in October in Cali, the home of the Corporación Autónoma Valle de Cauca (CVC). We are therefore planning a side event to highlight the project, its advances, the role of Darwin Initiative support, and our future expansion and scaling plans.

## 5. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Proportion of women on the Project Board.	50%
Proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women.	50%

GESI Scale	Description	
<b>Sensitive</b>	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups, and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	X

There are two senior project partners (Natura and CVC), and two junior partners (ETAPA and IBC). The project leaders from both senior partners are female (Vargas and Suarez). The Director of one of the junior partners (ETAPA) is female, but the project leaders from both junior partners are male (Huaman and Bustamante).

This project is designed primarily to build local capacity to implement Watershed Agreements. Although we prioritize training females, we are unfortunately constrained by the gender of the crucial person in each beneficiary institution. Participants in the Cali training event were selected by having the local beneficiary institutions identify the most appropriate person. While this selection was not gender empowering, it was sensitive and resulted in a group of trainees, of whom almost 50% (15 out of 32) were female. We also prioritize applications from indigenous and under-represented demographics, and thus include two indigenous leaders in the Cali training. As the project continues, and we select trainees to advance with their projects, we will continue to try to prioritize women, indigenous and other under-represented groups.

## 6. Monitoring and evaluation

Our project outcome is that Management of five Latin American Key Biodiversity Areas is improved through the signing of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements with local landowners. To achieve this outcome, we need to achieve two fundamental tasks:

- a) Train the next generation of water management leaders in how undertake and finance effective conservation (outputs 1 and 2)
- b) Help these newly trained leaders initiate their first biodiversity conservation focused watershed management programs.

In the first year of the project, we have focused on completing Task a (i.e. outputs 1 and 2). This has been successfully achieved, and so we are confident that we have contributed to the outcome and that the project is on track. However, it is only by achieving Task b (i.e. output 3),

will we finalize the outcome. Thus, all we can say at this stage is that the project is proceeding well, and that it seems likely that we will achieve our outcome. After a year's experience, partners and trainees have reiterated our joint assessment that our approach is effective.

To evaluate the efficacy of our training we surveyed participants in real time about their experiences. For example, the workshop delivered for the Kenyan Government's Water Resources authority was well-received: 50% of respondents said that the event was "much better" than other professional development events they had attended, while 35% said the event was "somewhat better" while 90% so that they would be "very likely to attend a similar event in the future". The only complaints were that "The content should have been spread over many days. It felt rushed", "Additional time for the workshop", "next time add more days", "a few more days to make it more interactive and learning". Below is the wordmap developed by Kenya participants:



We have not made any changes to the M&E plan over the reporting period, and M&E is being undertaken jointly by all four project partners.

## 7. Lessons learnt

The project is proceeding well. The time we invested in redesigning the training program based on our past experiences proved useful, as we now feel we have a tighter, more effective version, which has incorporated a new module on Protected Area creation and management, which is taught within the existing time framework, and we can use when and if necessary. Our 2-day lesson learning sessions at the start of the project often seemed to merge into the training of new people, as participants comprised a mix of people who knew our model well (and from whom we could learn) and people who knew nothing (whom we could, and did, train).

Contrasting the Cali and Nairobi workshops, which were 5 and 2 days respectively, we were told by the Kenyans that 2 days is too rushed. We had previously concluded this, but it was gratifying that an independent group of trainees reinforced this conclusion. We will thus continue to hold more extended workshops, the next one being in Oxapampa, Peru (the base of IBC) in June, which will combine classroom- (2 days) and field (2 days) learning. A related lesson is that the short sessions (2 day or less) can usefully focus on political leaders and policy makers, to increase awareness and interest in the program, while the technician who are likely to implement projects need at ~ 5 days to gain the necessary technical skills.

An important lesson we have learned is that while there is high interest from our partners within public institutions (i.e. CVC and ETAPA) to invest more in the project and learning, the reality is



that such public institutions move so slowly that new finance cannot be accessed even it is available and desired by all parties. The public sector in Latin America moves very slowly!

However, we do not expect to change our plan next year because of this learning, and so we do not plan to submit a Change Request

**8. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

Not applicable

**9. Risk Management**

No new risks have arisen in the last 12 months, and we have made no significant adaptations to the project design this year to address risk

**10. Sustainability and legacy**

We had the unexpected bonus of being asked to support the Kenya Water Resources Authority (KWRA), a government agency which has been charged with regulating the management and use of water resources, has established a 5% conservation fee in its regulations, with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of water sources. Project staff took advantage of being in Kenya for other reasons, to hold a workshop the trained twenty-eight KWRA officials from regional offices, headquarters and sub- regional offices. In thus workshop we pulled together a multidisciplinary team, comprised of experts in law, planning, sociology, community development, water quality, hydrology, finance and engineering to initiate the design of a robust and effective framework for the implementation of the conservation levy.

The fact that that another country’s government has heard about the project, and wanted to benefit from it, suggests that we are effectively increasing interest and capacity. We also registered interest, and have signed an agreement to the effect that we will expand and amplify the project across Colombia and the rest of Latin America. Given this success so far, we are confident that the project will continue after Darwin support has finished.

**11. Darwin Initiative identity**

All workshop materials use the logo to publicise the Darwin Initiative. Darwin is currently the only donor for the Watershared School, and so the School and Darwin have a clear, connecting link. We have been in constant contact with the UK Ambassador to Bolivia, who we visited at his residence to discuss the project, and he attended one of our events in Santa Cruz.

**12. Safeguarding**

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	No
Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes, Tatiana [REDACTED]
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 0% 0 Planned: 20% [15]
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.	No

Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants.  
None

Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved.  
No

### 13. Project expenditure

**Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)**

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items				
Others				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96,100</b>	<b>96,100</b>		

Note: the above numbers are draft and indicative

### Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			CVC, Natura
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)	0	0	

### 14. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

None

### 15. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes.

In March 2024 the Darwin Initiative supported Watershared School travelled to Colombia to lay the groundwork for the creation of the Latin American Water School. Natura Bolivia, the Autonomous Regional Corporation of the Valle del Cauca (CVC), the Common Good Institute and the Cuenca Water Company (ETAPA) held the first Watershared School in Cali, Colombia. In this first edition, 19 small-scale water providers from the rural area of Cali embarked on a

learning journey to implement the Watershared Agreements (Acuerdos Recíprocos por Agua, ARA), an innovative tool for sustainable water management. Julián Torrico, Richard Estrada and Nigel Asquith of Natura Bolivia, worked together with Gloria Suarez, Dennis Huaman and Marco Bustamante, to teach 32 workshop participants about the ARA methodology for establishing conservation agreements, and how such agreements can protect water sources and key biodiversity areas. As the next phase of their Darwin project, the partner institutions from Peru, Ecuador and Colombia also signed an agreement to join forces for the construction of a Latin American ARA School,

A similar workshop was held in Nairobi, Kenya in late 2023. The Kenya Water Resources Authority (KWRA), a government agency charged with regulating the management and use of water resources, has established a 5% conservation fee in its regulations, with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of water sources. However, the implementation of this fee required a comprehensive and expert-led analysis, which was led by Maria Teresa Vargas (Bolivia) and Elizabeth Diego (KWRA). The Watershared School trained twenty-eight KWRA staff from regional offices, headquarters and sub- regional offices, who came together to participate in a roundtable discussion that marked the beginning of a transformative collaboration. This multidisciplinary team, comprised of experts in law, planning, sociology, community development, water quality, hydrology, finance and engineering, were supported by the Darwin Initiative project as they initiated the design of a robust and effective framework for the implementation of the conservation levy.

<b>File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)</b>	<b>File Name or File Location</b>	<b>Caption including description, country and credit</b>	<b>Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)</b>	<b>Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)</b>
Images	To be sent	Workshop participants and activities in Cali, Colombia		No
Images	To be sent	Workshop participants and activities in Nairobi, Kenya		No

## Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Indicators of Success for Financial Year 2023-2024

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024	Actions required/planned for next period
<b>Outcome</b> Management of five Latin American Key Biodiversity Areas is improved through the signing of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements with local landowners		
Outcome indicator 0.1. Capabilities: Knowledge and skills of 100 protected area staff and partners (at least 50% of whom are female) have been developed for the implementation of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by October 2023, baseline 0 staff trained) (KPI: Extent to which intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change, 10 trainees are able to sign conservation agreement projects implemented by March 2025, baseline 0 trainees)	More than 300 protected area staff and partners have attended training events in Bolivia, Colombia and Kenya	A 3-day workshop is planned for June, in Peru.
Outcome indicator 0.2. Financing: At least \$20,000 in new funding to finance agreements is accessed by training programme participants (by December 2024, baseline \$0)	Trainees developed the first drafts of their funding proposals, during the training workshops	We will mentor trainees to further develop their funding proposals
Outcome indicator 0.3. Threat reduction: Management is improved on 10,000 hectares around 5 Protected Areas by putting them under conservation agreements (KPI: Number of hectares where deforestation has been avoided; 10,000 by March 2025, baseline 0 hectares under agreements; and KPI: Net change in greenhouse gas emissions; 7 million tCO <sub>2</sub> e by March 2025, baseline 0 tCO <sub>2</sub> e emissions reduced, KPI Number of people whose resilience has been improved; 100 families by March 2025, baseline 0 families)	No advances so far	
<b>Output 1</b> The Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model is refined and adapted to enhance Management of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)		
Output indicator 1.1 One document is published and distributed that describes a new KBA focused version of the Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model (by October 2023, baseline 0 models designed)	A Spanish language document was completed and distributed to workshop participants.	Activities completed
Output indicator 1.2 Two training workshops are designed to build capacity for managing watersheds within and close to KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by December 2023, baseline 0 workshops designed)	Two training workshops modalities were designed, the first, four days, to support the “aqueductos” of Colombia, and the second, three days, to support the JASS of Peru, to design, and implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements. After a series of discussions, we concluded that a virtual learning modality was no longer useful no needed post covid	Workshop Design is complete. The second modality (for the JASS of Peru) will be piloted at a workshop in June.

<b>Output 2.</b> Capacity of consortium staff and their local partners is enhanced through training courses in how to implement and finance the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model		
Output indicator 2.1. 100 consortium staff and local partners are trained to manage KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by July 2024, baseline 0 trainees)	We held two week-long training workshops in Bolivia. 35 people representing 20 water providers attended the first “School”, 26 participants from 19 institutions (18 municipalities) attended the second. We also held a series of one- and two-day events in Bolivia training approximately 213 protected area staff and partners. We trained 32 Colombians at the Cali workshop, and as an unexpected bonus were able to train 25 Kenyan government staff in Nairobi	A 3-day workshop is planned for June, in Peru.
Output indicator 2.2. Proposals to implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements in or around KBAs are developed by 75 training course participants (by October 2024, baseline 0 proposals)	90 trainees (from the Bolivia and Colombia workshops) developed the first drafts of their funding proposals, during the trainings	We will mentor trainees to further develop their funding proposals
Output indicator 2.3. Experiences and lessons learned on the use of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements for KBA management are shared by a network of consortium staff and associates (by March 2025, baseline 0 networks)	Experiences have been collated and shared, and the network strengthened but we are slightly behind schedule in finalizing the lessons-learned document.	Edit, finalize and disseminate publication that describes learning network for Reciprocal Watershed Agreements as support for KBA Management
<b>Output 3.</b> Consortium partners and trainees successfully implement the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model		
Output indicator 3.1. Reciprocal Watershed Agreements are implemented or being negotiated in or around 5 Key Biodiversity Areas (by March 2025, baseline 0 Protected Areas)	No advances so far	We will initiate all activities related to this output indicator in the next reporting period.
Output indicator 3.2. 100 families have signed a Reciprocal Watershed Agreement and have received an economic development project in exchange for their conservation commitment (by March 2025, baseline 0 families)	No advances so far	We will initiate all activities related to this output indicator in the next reporting period.
Output indicator 3.3. Reciprocal Watershed Agreements worth \$20,000 have been signed (Value of agreements signed by December 2024, baseline \$0)	No advances so far	We will initiate all activities related to this output indicator in the next reporting period.

**Annex 2: Project’s full current Indicators of Success as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)**

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification
<p><b>Outcome</b> Management of five Latin American Key Biodiversity Areas is improved through the signing of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements with local landowners</p>	<p>0.1. Capabilities: Knowledge and skills of 100 protected area staff and partners (at least 50% of whom are female) have been developed for the implementation of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by October 2023, baseline 0 staff trained) (KPI: Extent to which intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change, 10 trainees are able to sign conservation agreement projects implemented by March 2025, baseline 0 trainees)</p> <p>0.2. Financing: At least \$20,000 in new funding to finance agreements is accessed by training programme participants (by December 2024, baseline \$0)</p> <p>0.3. Threat reduction: Management is improved on 10,000 hectares around 5 Protected Areas by putting them under conservation agreements (KPI: Number of hectares where deforestation has been avoided; 10,000 by March 2025, baseline 0 hectares under agreements; and KPI: Net change in greenhouse gas emissions; 7 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e by March 2025, baseline 0 tCO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reduced, KPI Number of people whose resilience has been improved; 100 families by March 2025, baseline 0 families)</p>	<p>0.1. Survey interviews with training participants in which they detail what they have learned about applying the Reciprocal Watershed Agreements Model, and how they will implement their knowledge, contracts with agreement holders</p> <p>0.2. Confirmation of financing letters or contracts</p> <p>0.3. Maps of areas under agreements, confirmation of location and size from relevant jurisdictional (local, state or national) government, standard carbon calculations using carbon content per hectare</p>
<p><b>Output 1</b> The Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model is refined and adapted to enhance Management of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)</p>	<p>1.1. One document is published and distributed that describes a new KBA focused version of the Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model (by October 2023, baseline 0 models designed)</p> <p>1.2. Two training workshops are designed (one for in-person and one for virtual learning) to build capacity for managing watersheds within and close to KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by December 2023, baseline 0 workshops designed)</p>	<p>1.1. Published document in printed and PDF format</p> <p>1.2. Training course program published in printed and PDF format</p>
<p><b>Output 2</b> Capacity of consortium staff and their local partners is enhanced through training courses in how to implement and</p>	<p>2.1. 100 consortium staff and local partners are trained to manage KBAs through Reciprocal Watershed Agreements (by July 2024, baseline 0 trainees)</p>	<p>2.1. Training course attendance records</p>

<p>finance the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model</p>	<p>2.2. Proposals to implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements in or around KBAs are developed by 75 training course participants (by October 2024, baseline 0 proposals)</p> <p>2.3. Experiences and lessons learned on the use of Reciprocal Watershed Agreements for KBA management are shared by a network of consortium staff and associates (by March 2025, baseline 0 networks)</p>	<p>2.2. Technical and financing proposals</p> <p>2.3. Network design document, participation in network through google groups records, WhatsApp messages, and phone, webinar and zoom call records</p>
<p><b>Output 3</b> Consortium partners and trainees successfully implement the refined Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model</p>	<p>3.1. Reciprocal Watershed Agreements are implemented or being negotiated in or around 5 Key Biodiversity Areas (by March 2025, baseline 0 Protected Areas)</p> <p>3.2.1. 100 families have signed a Reciprocal Watershed Agreement and have received an economic development project in exchange for their conservation commitment (by March 2025, baseline 0 families)</p> <p>3.2.2. Reciprocal Watershed Agreements worth \$20,000 have been signed (Value of agreements signed by December 2024, baseline \$0)</p>	<p>3.1. Written confirmation by local, state or national government officials</p> <p>3.2. Signed agreements describing delivery of economic development projects and maps showing location and polygon size</p>

<p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>1.1.1. Hold partner meetings to share lessons.</p> <p>1.1.2. Review literature (published articles and internal documents, and reports by each partner's associates).</p> <p>1.1.3. Draft new document, share for reviews and revise.</p> <p>1.1.4. Share document with external reviewers for comments.</p> <p>1.1.5. Publish finalized version of document and disseminate.</p> <p>1.2.1. Design in-person training program based on published document.</p> <p>1.2.2. Design virtual training program based on published document.</p> <p>2.1.1. Discuss project with KBA managers and government authorities and invite them and their staff to apply for the training.</p> <p>2.1.2. Select participants through open call for applications.</p> <p>2.1.3. Hold training workshops.</p> <p>2.2.1. Provide individual mentoring to 75 participants as they develop their conservation agreement program proposals</p> <p>2.2.2. Help at least 20 workshop participants to finalize and present their Reciprocal Watershed Agreement financing proposals to funding agencies and governments</p> <p>2.3.1. Review literature and internal partner documents to learn lessons about network design.</p> <p>2.3.2. Develop, disseminate, and finalize publication that describes learning network for Reciprocal Watershed Agreements as support for KBA Management</p> <p>2.3.3. Support network participants in their peer-learning process</p> <p>3.1.1. Mentor the workshop participants ("Implementers") who will be setting up Reciprocal Watershed Agreements around their KBAs.</p>
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3.2.1. Assist "Implementers" in final design of their agreements, building on the consortium partner's experiences of more than 7,000 community and individual agreements signed in 4 countries

3.3.1. Support and mentor Implementers, virtually or with site visits, to overcome political and technical implementation challenges

#### **Important Assumptions**

1. The existing basic Reciprocal Watershed Agreements model, that has been used by project partners to benefit 30,000 people, and protect 500,000 hectares, can be refined/focused to improve Key Biodiversity Area management

2. Training will help partners/associates to better implement the model.

3. Agreement financing is available. We know of various potential sources, which during the short timeframe of the project, will most likely be from local governments.

4. Local communities will agree to sign and implement Reciprocal Watershed Agreements. We have already signed agreements in many municipalities: Natura, 80; CVC 14; ETAPA, 7; and IBC, 5.



## Annex 3: Standard Indicators

**Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	People	Men	170	50
DI-A01	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	People	Women	130	50
DI-A03	Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.	Organisations	Organisation type	40	80
DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.	People	Men	10	40
DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.	People	Women	10	35

**Table 2 Publications**

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
No documents have been published						

## Annex 4: Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

Annex: Proceedings of the Cali workshop: although this file is quite large, we think it useful to include it all, as it provides the best evidence so far of project achievement. This document describes both the workshop and our latest thinking on what should be incorporated in the training program (i.e. output indicators 1.1., 1.2.). It also documents the learning process of all 32 participants and even shows the first drafts of their projects (i.e. output indicators 2.1. and 2.2.).

### Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	Yes
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	No
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	Yes
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Yes
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 15)?	Yes
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes