

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	EIDPO13
Project Title	Integrating Evolutionary History and Phylogenetic Measures of Biodiversity into Conservation Planning
Country(ies)	South Africa
UK Organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew)
Collaborator(s)	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) University of Cape Town (UCT) University of Johannesburg (UJ)
Project Leader	<i>Dr Vincent Savolainen</i>
Report date	<i>31 October 2007</i>
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR 2</i>
Project website	http://www.sanbi.org/research/dnabank.htm (original project website)

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

All agreed objectives set in the baseline timetable detailed in the last annual report and project application have been met as follows:

All results of the post-project have been presented by Drs Michelle van der Bank, Renaud Lahaye and Vincent Savolainen and Mr Olivier Maurin at the Kruger National Park (KNP) Science Network Meeting (15-20 April 2007).

The results of the post-project were also presented at an International conference, the Evolution meeting in New Zealand (June 2007); presentation of results was by Drs Savolainen and van der Bank. In addition, attendance and presentation of the results by Dr T. Jonathan Davies, on behalf of the Dr Savolainen, at the 21st Annual Meeting of the Society of Conservation Biology in South Africa (July 2007); discussion of the DNA barcoding of the flora of the KNP with the conservation authorities of the park.

Two international press releases have publicised results of the post-project; one on preserving the evolutionary potential of the Cape flora (in Kew Scientist, April 2007 issue; http://www.kew.org/kewscientist/ks_31.pdf), and one on the barcoding of the KNP (in UJ News magazine; Autumn 2007 edition).

A major South African television network (SABC; South African Broadcasting Corporation) ran a news item on the barcoding of the KNP (September 2007), which afforded great publicity for the project.

Mr Jonathan van Alphen Stahl was hired as Extinction Risk Analyst at UCT (summer 2007); Mr Martyn Powell has assumed the responsibility for the post of Darwin Initiative project officer (October 2007) at RBG Kew.

Several visits to RBG Kew were made by South African project partners to work on various aspects of the project. Ms Keshni Gopal (DNA bank manager at SANBI) visited the DNA bank managers at RBG Kew to receive further training (2 July to 15 July 2007). Dr van der Bank (UJ) visited Dr Savolainen to discuss progress of the project (2 July to 9 July 2007). Dr Lahaye (UJ)

visited RBG Kew (22 July to 18 August 2007) to continue the collaboration between the two institutions by analysing two datasets and writing a paper to identify a universal DNA barcode for the flora of the KNP; resulting from this visit one paper has now been submitted to a high-impact journal (Lahaye *et al.* 'DNA Barcoding the Floras of Biodiversity Hotspots').

The target of producing 250 barcodes of the flora of the Kruger National Park (KNP) has been exceeded, with 786 potential barcodes produced thus far.

A conservation article was submitted to the popular press by Drs John Manning & Felix Forest ('The future of biodiversity', *Vled & Flora*, 93: 150-152, 2007).

As a reflection of the successful working relationship between the project partners, a Royal Society grant was recently awarded to RBG Kew and UJ to work on 'Regional patterns of biodiversity and conservation in South Africa: the flora of the Kruger National Park as a case study' until 2012.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments 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.

None encountered.

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

No issues have been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat, and as such no changes have been made to the original agreement.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	no/yes, in..... (month/yr)
Changes to the project schedule/workplan:	no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**