

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

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| Project Ref. No. | EIDPO028 |
| Project Title | Phase II - Building University Capacity to Train and Support Cambodian Conservationists |
| Country | Cambodia |
| UK Organisation | Fauna & Flora International |
| Collaborator(s) | Royal University of Phnom Penh, Ministry of Environment (Cambodia) and Harrison Institute (UK) |
| Project Leader | Dr Jenny Daltry |
| Report date | 26 October 2009 |
| Report No. | HYR 1 |
| Project website | www.conservationcambodia.org |

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

Planned Project Implementation Timetable: Financial Year Apr 2009-Mar 2010. Key Milestones (Q1 & Q2): Initiate development process for Centre for Biodiversity Conservation; Deliver MSc Biodiversity Conservation curriculum; Enable final year student research projects; Undertake recruitment process for additional Darwin Research Officers and conduct original research in collaboration with other organisations; Issue call for and peer-review of papers for the Cambodian Journal of Natural History (CJNH).

Actual Project Implementation Timetable:

April: The fourth cohort of Master students completed courses in 'Natural Resources Management' and 'Environmental Impact Assessment', delivered by Dr Brad Pettit and lecturers from the Department of Environmental Science at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, respectively. A survey of frog consumption and trade in several provinces was initiated by a Darwin Research Officer in collaboration with the Angkor Centre for Conservation of Biodiversity, Cambodia. The first call for manuscripts to the Cambodian Journal of Natural History was issued on 15 April.

May: The fourth MSc student cohort completed courses in 'Project Cycle Management' and 'Protected Area Management', delivered by Richard Paley (Cambridge University). A recruitment process was initiated for a new in-country project manager. Two Darwin Research Officers completed a course in DNA extraction techniques at the Cambodian Research Development Institute.

June: The fourth student cohort completed exams with respect to courses during the spring semester, after which the summer break began. A consultation process to review options for establishing the Centre for Biodiversity Conservation was initiated. Shortlisted candidates for the post of in-country project manager were interviewed. Several guest lectures were hosted by the project at the Royal University of Phnom Penh.

July: Appointment of a new in-country project manager (Dr Neil Furey). Upon his arrival, a hand-over process was initiated, including a review of ongoing project research initiatives and final thesis examinations for two MSc students. A 10-day training course in herpetological research, including a field survey in Monduliri province, was delivered to students at the Royal University of Phnom Penh by a Darwin Research Officer in collaboration with Dr Jodi Rowley of the Australian National Museum. Manuscripts submitted to the journal were peer-reviewed.

August: Students from the first cohort presented the findings of their MSc research at a heavily-attended workshop held at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, resulting in several articles in national newspapers and periodicals. Students from the third cohort were assisted to develop proposals for their dissertation projects in collaboration with other organisations. Two students studying differing aspects of animal ecology and conservation attended a GIS training course in Belgium with project support.

September: Start of autumn semester: students from the fourth cohort completed courses in 'Evolution' and 'Behavioural Ecology', delivered by Dr Carl Traeholt. A series of advertisements for the MSc course were placed in leading newspapers, broadcast on national radio stations, and circulated among in-country environmental NGOs and government agencies. Twenty-three candidates from a wide range of backgrounds subsequently applied (at the time of writing). Preparations began for an international workshop in bat conservation at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (in collaboration with the Harrison Institute, UK).

NB All project outputs, including workshops, MSc advertisements, course information packs, and media releases have acknowledged the support of Darwin Initiative and/or featured the Darwin logo. Copies are available on request.

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.

As the main counterpart for the project at the Royal University of Phnom Penh was absent for an extended period (due to a two-month study tour in Europe), slight delays were experienced in recruiting Darwin Research Officers and formal activities to establish the Centre for Biodiversity Conservation. As several enabling activities were undertaken during the reporting period, however, the project budget and timetable for forthcoming activities will not be affected.

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

Not applicable.

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?

FFI wishes to propose that the role of Darwin Project Leader be transferred from Dr Jenny Daltry to **Dr Neil Furey**. Dr Furey is based in Cambodia and permanently attached to this project. He is very well qualified for this role (cv will be submitted to the Secretariat). Dr Daltry will continue to be involved as an adviser and editor of the Darwin Project journal.

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**