



# Sustainable Development Goals and the Darwin Initiative

The Darwin Initiative supports developing countries conserve biodiversity and reduce poverty.

Funded by the UK Government, the Darwin Initiative provides grants for projects working in developing countries and UK Overseas Territories.

Projects support:

- the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)
- the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
- the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

This learning note outlines just some of the projects supported by the Darwin Initiative that contribute to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), generating environmental, economic and social benefits for developing countries.

Credit L King

## Genesis of the Darwin Initiative – the Earth Summit

In 1992, the world's nations got together and agreed that the environment was a priority and signed momentous agreements to make changes to the way we interact with it. The Convention on Biological Diversity was one of three environmental conventions (along with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification) opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio 1992.

The Darwin Initiative was launched by the UK Government at the Earth Summit in 1992, to support developing countries meet their objectives under the new Convention on Biological Diversity.

## Integrating poverty into biodiversity

In 2010, the UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) combined forces with the Department for International Development (DFID) giving the Darwin Initiative a new dual objective:

- to conserve biodiversity in order to contribute to poverty alleviation.

It was recognised that biodiversity and poverty go hand-in-hand and that the Darwin Initiative was well-suited to tackling issues of sustainable use and poverty alleviation to the benefit of the world's poor.

## The Darwin Initiative today

Since its launch in 1992, the Darwin Initiative has funded 943 projects in 159 countries with £113 million provided by the UK Government.

Darwin Initiative projects are recognisable in their delivery of solid practical actions on the ground that have resulted in significant progress in meeting commitments under the biodiversity conventions and the Millennium Development Goals.



Credit L King

**Small-holder cotton farmers in Ethiopia are being supported by the Darwin Initiative to adopt organic methods and reduce harmful pesticide use which is providing health benefits for farmers and has led to increases in cotton yields due to a healthier ecosystem.**

## Darwin and the SDGs

This learning note outlines just some of the projects supported by the Darwin Initiative that are already contributing to the new SDGs.



Credit Equipe Cousteau

**Fishers in Cambodia are being supported by a Darwin project to establish Cambodia's first MPA to secure fishing rights and improve catches.**

## Sustainable Development Goals

**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

**Goal 2:** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages

**Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

**Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

**Goal 6:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

**Goal 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

**Goal 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

**Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation

**Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries

**Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

**Goal 12:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

**Goal 13:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts\*

**Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

**Goal 15:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

\*acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.



## SDGs

**1: end poverty**

**2: end hunger**

**5: achieve gender equality**

**8: promote inclusive economic growth**

## Integrating Batwa cultural values into national parks management in Uganda (19-019)

In 1991, the Ugandan Government sought to protect forests providing critical ecosystem services including as a refuge for some of the remaining populations of mountain gorilla. With the gazettement of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and

Mgahinga National Park, the Batwa an indigenous forest dwelling people were evicted. With this eviction they lost not only their cultural identify but also their only way of life. As a result the Batwa are a marginalised group that suffer from significant stigma in Uganda.

A Darwin-funded project has been successful in changing attitudes towards the Batwa (at least outwardly), negotiating their inclusion in park management and thereby increasing their access to the forests which are spiritually and culturally important to them.

In addition the project has made some headway in improving the life of Batwa outside the parks through various livelihood interventions including establishing an ecotourism venture. This has resulted in fewer illegal incursions by the Batwa into the National Park and greater collaboration between park authorities and the Batwa.



Credit L King



Credit L King



Credit ZSL

## SDGs

**1: end poverty**

**8: promote inclusive sustainable economic growth**

**14: conserve marine resources**

## Linking community resilience and sustainable coastal protection in the Philippines (21-010)

In recent years the central Philippines has experienced two massive natural disasters: Bohol earthquake and Typhoon Haiyan. Although the country has >1000 marine protected areas (MPAs), these disasters have demonstrated an urgent need to increase coastal habitat and community resilience in response to climate change.

are recycled into carpet tiles.

The project has established a community-based supply chain for these discarded fishing nets. Communities are paid for nets, encouraging beach clean-ups and reducing ghost fishing. Nets are exported and recycled into carpet tiles.

In year 1, two villages have become operational with nets feeding into the Net-Works business unit in Bohol. The volume of nets collected in the 2 sites is averaging 40-50 kilos a month. 2.5 kilos of nets is equivalent in value to 1 kilo of rice.

A Darwin-funded project is supporting communities in the Philippines to increase MPA effectiveness through diversification of income. This includes the establishment of an innovative business whereby discarded monofilament fishing nets



Credit ZSL



## Leveraging markets to conserve mangrove biodiversity and alleviate poverty in Madagascar (19-016)

The coastline of Madagascar contains the second largest extent of mangrove forests in the Western Indian Ocean. These 'blue' forests are currently facing a range of anthropogenic pressures resulting in the loss of mangroves at a rate exceeding 1-2% per year.

Madagascar's mangroves represent not only the key source of livelihoods for much of the country's coastal population, they also host a range of unique and endangered biodiversity, and have a potentially important role to play in relation to both climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

This Darwin-funded project is helping coastal communities earn income from the sale of carbon credits, charcoal and timber through the sustainable management of mangrove forests.



Credit Blue Ventures

### SDGs

- 1: end poverty**
- 5: gender equality**
- 13: action to combat climate change**
- 14: conserve marine resources**
- 15: restore terrestrial ecosystems**





Credit Hough Doulton

## A participatory conservation programme for the Comoro Islands (17-011)

The Moya region of Anjouan in the Comoro Islands has suffered from a high rate of deforestation in the past 20 years, resulting from poverty, population pressure, unsustainable agricultural methods and a lack of governance. Deforestation has put biodiversity at risk and caused further problems for the human population leading to increased poverty and vulnerability.

This Darwin-funded project aimed to protect endemic terrestrial biodiversity and its forest habitat whilst at the same time improving the livelihoods of the human population.

The project supported over 1,700 smallholder farmers to intensify their activities through practical innovative methods of conservation agriculture. It has also developed five village natural

resource committees to improve natural resource management by implementing collective projects (e.g. improving access to water for approximately 8,000 beneficiaries).

Anjouan's forests (and a further two islands) were mapped using satellite imagery and species distribution models were produced for key indicator taxa for the three islands. These were the first ever maps of the three islands in the Comoros (Grande Comore, Anjouan and Mohéli) based on high-resolution satellite imagery.

The results are being integrated into the government-led protected area planning process in partnership with the United Nations Development Program.

**SDGs**  
**1: end poverty**  
**2: end hunger**  
**6: sustainable management of water**  
**15: restore terrestrial ecosystems**



Credit Hough Doulton

## SDGs

**1: end poverty**

**2: end hunger**

**5: achieve gender equality**

**12: sustainable consumption & production**

**15: restore terrestrial ecosystems**

Credit Indrias Getachew

## Conservation of Ethiopia's wild coffee using participatory forest management (19-025)

In Ethiopia making coffee, the national drink, is primarily women's work, one imbued with cultural significance. Making sure that women benefit equally from the activities of the Darwin Initiative funded Wild Coffee Conservation project in Ethiopia has been an important concern from the start.

The project is testing a new approach by using Devolved or Participatory Forest Management in the conservation of wild *Coffea arabica* in the Afromontane forests of south west Ethiopia.

Women bear the burden of deforestation due to its impacts on firewood and water collection, both female responsibilities. This project aims to preserve forest biodiversity,

preventing deforestation and improving degraded forest by adding value to the forest through active forest management, silviculture and the development of Non-Timber Forest Products - particularly wild coffee, honey and spices and their supply chains.

At the same time, Forest Management Associations manage and monitor forest health and protect the forest from outsiders at the community level. Importantly, women can be members of these in their own right. Forest Management Agreements give legal rights of access and a sense of ownership to communities, whilst also protecting against illegal activities.



*The Darwin Initiative is funded by the UK Government and aims to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources around the world including the UK's Overseas Territories.*

*Since 1992, the Darwin Initiative has committed over £113 million to over 943 projects in 159 countries.*

This learning note was produced by LTS International [www.ltsi.co.uk](http://www.ltsi.co.uk)

**For more information on the Darwin Initiative see:**

**<http://darwininitiative.org.uk>**

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