

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	23-002
Project title	<i>Important Plant Areas, Republic of Guinea</i>
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	<i>Republic of Guinea (Guinea)</i>
Lead organisation	<i>Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew</i>
Partner(s)	<i>HNG-UGANC, COSIE-MEEF, Guinée-Ecologie</i>
Project leader	<i>Martin Cheek</i>
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>31st Oct. 201 (HYR2)</i>
Project website/blog/social media etc. (DFID/Defra)	http://www.herbierguinee.org/ztips-darwin.html
Defra	https://www.kew.org/science/projects/tipas-guinea-conakry-2016-2019
	http://www.herbierguinee.org/des-chercheurs-de-hng
	<i>twitter @HerbierGuinee as we will be using this for the regional flower campaign.</i>

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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 to end September).

The appointment of Charlotte Couch as Guinea-based Darwin Initiative Technical Adviser in May 2017 has consolidated the progress of the project. Her place as project co-ordinator has been taken by her colleague at Kew Xander van der Burgt.

Highlights in the last 6 months have been the rediscovery in September by Pepe Haba of *Felicadamia*, a single species point-endemic genus not seen since 1950. The project will now be able to ensure that this threatened species is protected from extinction by including it in an IPA and alerting local communities and authorities as to its global importance.

Although the 2016 GCRF capacity building bid led by Kew to support the socio-economic aspects of the Guinea IPA project was not funded, the reviews in March 2017 were so favourable that the UK partner institutes agreed to respond to a new call for GCRF research hubs announced in July 2017. An outline proposal has been drafted (Oct. 2017) that will include four other tropical African countries. However, Guinea remains the main focus. In the course of developing this bid Charlotte linked the project with United Purpose, a not for profit organisation present in Guinea that works with local communities to improve livelihoods of communities from NTFPs. Whether or not we go ahead with GCRF, this alliance will help to advance our work with local communities in the buffer zones of the IPAs that we are in the course of evidencing. This engagement will help motivate those communities to protect, rather than destroy, their natural habitat, in line with the projects objectives.

Reporting against the logframe:

1.1 Data-gathering for redlist assessments continues on target. 10 additional species were placed on the online iucn redlist in the Sept/Oct 2017 update. Two papers describing priority species for Guinea were being prepared for publication in June-October 2017.

1.2 Submontane (cloud) forest has been mapped (completed Sept. 2017). Work is advancing mapping all 8 other priority habitats.

1.3 Identification and mapping of the IPAs is proceeding steadily.

2.1 During July, September and October 2017, the in-country based project Technical Adviser, Charlotte Couch met again with all Guinean project partners including representatives of industry, the Minister of Higher Education & Research, to take forward the project's programme. She also met (new contacts) Conservation NGOs including United Purpose and also USAID, to engage as partners. As a result of the USAID meeting she was invited by West Africa BiCC to a workshop on setting up a working group for threatened species in Guinea.

2.2 Field reports are delivered to MEEF regularly. The data sheet for the first IPA was drafted in September, has been edited and designed ready for discussion with and use by MEEF in Guinea.

2.3 Local government in Fouta Djallon have been engaged in the cause of saving from extinction two narrowly endemic Guinea species (*Vernonia djalonensis* and *Emilia guineensis*) found by our project to be at risk of extinction due to habitat destruction.

3.3 3xMSc student projects at UGAN are in progress on socio-economic species in relation to our IPA project, supported by Charlotte.

3.4 Community outreach on the importance of unique habitats and species is advancing as indicated under 2.3. In September and October Charlotte with project partners in Guinea have set up the organisational structures needed to roll-out the "Favourite Flower" programme across the country. The expectation is the Government itself will be involved in selecting the species that will become the official "National Flower". The 14 posters were drafted, designed, translated, printed and have been sent to Guinea in the diplomatic bag.

2a. 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.

No notable problems have occurred in the last 6 months. One industrial partner looked set to withdraw funding but when the risks of doing so were alluded to, the decision was dropped. Unexpected developments have all been favourable and none budget-negative.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? Not necessary.

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project,

please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. 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. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**