

# Darwin Initiative

## Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

**PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise**

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	EIDP09/10-030
<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Consolidating local capacity for biodiversity surveys in Papua New Guinea</b>
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>UK Organisation</b>	University of Sussex
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Prof. V. Novotny
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2005
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	1
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.entu.cas.cz/png/">www.entu.cas.cz/png/</a>

### **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).**

This report covers the first three months of the project (1 July to 30 September, 2005).

#### **Team- and facility-building activities:**

- The Binatang Research Centre (BRC) contracted Ela Builders (Madang) to build the Darwin-sponsored staff dormitory. Construction was started in August, slightly later than planned, and will be completed by the end of 2005.

- After loss of some staff members, BRC initiated a search for five new parataxonomists. This exercise was designed also as a training/learning experience for the senior parataxonomist staff who fully participated in the process. Advertisements were placed in both major national newspapers, and these advertisements (promising hard work in remote field sites and in the laboratory, up to 70 hours a week) generated an extraordinary response with 368 applications for the four vacancies. 50 short-listed candidates were invited for interviews and five appointments were made.

- BRC recruited for the post of parataxonomist team 'Training & Research Co-ordinator', part funded by the Darwin grant. Mr Joe Egenoe has been appointed.

- BRC has also created a new post of 'Office Accountant', to relieve the current Office Manager of accountancy duties. This post has now been filled.

#### **Training of parataxonomists:**

In view of the need to make the above appointments, the decision was made to delay some of the training activities until the parataxonomist team was up to full strength again. Now that this process has been completed, the sequence of training courses originally scheduled can be recommenced.

- Darren Bito, the BRC Research Supervisor, conducted in-house training of parataxonomists on computer data management, 2 days, August 2005

- Vojtech Novotny, BRC Director and Darwin project partner, conducted in-house training of parataxonomists in basic mathematics applied to biodiversity survey analysis, 1 day, September 2005

- Steven Sau, a junior parataxonomist, started his driving license training.

### **Environmental awareness and training activities performed by parataxonomists**

- The parataxonomists prepared an exhibit on environmental conservation in PNG and on the Center's activities which was installed at the Goroka Cultural Show (16-18 September 2005), the nation's largest cultural event of the year. Eight parataxonomists guided several hundred visitors through the exhibit during the three days of the Show and answered many questions. They also assisted the Jealmanu Waterfall Ecotourism Project (one of the results of our previous Darwin project) in creating and displaying their own exhibit at the Show.

- Parataxonomists Brus Isua and Kenneth Molem, and the Darwin Project Partner Vojtech Novotny attended a large meeting (200 participants) of seven clans from the Wannang village (Sogeram – Ramu rivers) that set-up a joint rainforest conservation area and provided guidance and support for their conservation project.

- BRC assisted in finalizing the Wiad Conservation Area proposal in Ohu Village (the site of our Darwin training and research activities). This proposal was then submitted to the PNG Minister for Environment, the Hon William Duma, together with 11 other similar proposals from across PNG.

- BRC was visited by J. Holland and T. Laman, a writer and a photographer respectively from the National Geographic Society, to gather information for a story on their activities that will appear in the National Geographic Magazine. This will be primarily about NGS-sponsored research, but the opportunity was taken also to include activities related to the Darwin project in the story.

- BRC was contacted by villagers from Wasab village for advice on their ecotourism project. A set of DI-generated leaflets relevant to the project was provided and two parataxonomists were promised to train the villagers as field guides for eco-tourists.

- The parataxonomists conducted a one-day training course on insect identification and ecology for 30 final-year students of the St. Benedict's Agriculture and Technical School in Danip (Madang Province), a specialized secondary school.

### **Media exposure**

- Darwin activities by BRC featured in a half-page article by Jim Robbins (Natural Resources Institute, PNG) and George Weiblen (University of Minnesota) in the Post-Courier (19 October 2005, p. 12), one of the two major daily newspapers in Papua New Guinea: *Cultural uniqueness. Scientific research benefits for rural communities: economic and educational impacts.*

- Parataxonomists Martin Mogia and Steven Sau were interviewed by local *Nokondi FM Radio* (Simbu Province) during the Goroka Cultural Show (17 October 2005), describing their environmental activities at BRC.

## **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.**

The need to recruit five new members of the parataxonomist team caused some delay to the training programme because it was decided that this should only continue when the team was back up to full strength. Now that all five appointments have been made, we envisage that the training programme will resume as planned. This will not affect the budget, nor do we think this will have any impact on our ability to deliver the project outcomes.



**PHOTO GALLERY**



**Goroka Show Exhibit: Goroka, East Highlands Province, September 2005**



**Training of students from the St. Benedict's Agriculture and Technical School: Parataxonomist Martin Mogia demonstrates different insect taxa**



**Parataxonomist Elvis Tamtiai shows the students from the St. Benedict's Agriculture and Technical School computerized insect collection management**



**Wannang meeting: Parataxonomist Brus Isua shares his experience from forest conservation with Wannang villagers**

