



Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No	EIDPO043
Project Title	Participatory management and sustainable use of walnut-fruit forests in Kyrgyzstan
Country(ies)	Kyrgyzstan
Lead Organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Collaborator(s)	Kyrgyz NGOs Bioesurs and JFDF
Project Leader	Liesje Birchenough
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	HYR2
Project website	

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).

Output 1: Sustainable grazing management plan developed for one forestry unit

Activity 1.1: Project partner JFDF have concluded the field research and held focal group discussions and interviews. Activity 1.2: JFDF have produced the grazing assessment report outlining the current situation and including recommendations for more sustainable management of livestock. Activity 1.3: Work is now underway to consult further with stakeholders and develop a grazing management plan.

Output 2: Use of natural resources made more sustainable by providing alternatives (e.g. to firewood) or adding value (to non-timber forest products)

Activity 2.1: Wood lots of fast growing trees (black willow) have now been established in two villages, under the care of the local forestry teams. Activity 2.2: During the report period, the willow whips were planted at Kyzyl Unkur, and at Kara Alma 3 plots were ploughed and planted, and fenced where necessary. At both sites the saplings are being watered and weeded.

Activity 2.3: The building for the small processing unit has been renovated and the equipment ordered. After discussion it was agreed to purchase walnut sorting and shelling machines, and a fruit drier. A local management group has been established to run the facility which will start functioning by November.

Output 3: Sustainable diversified income generating initiatives supported in 8 villages through provision of vocational and business training and small grants.

Activity 3.3: Training on business and marketing was provided at both sites, with 30 participants at each event. Following positive feedback, further training is planned from the same trainer to build on this introductory session, and in other related topics. A peer-to-peer learning event was organised on community-based tourism with 12 women and the project's community coordinators visiting another village where tourism is much more advanced. The experience exchange generated enthusiasm and ideas which the project will support over the next few months. Training was also given on two subjects requested by the community: fish-raising (2 sessions of 30+ people) and poultry farming (27 people).

Activity 3.4: All grants and resources have been disbursed to the small initiative groups and activities are well underway. In July the Project Leader and Manager visited each initiative to monitor progress and meet the group members, with very positive results observable at nearly

all the supported initiatives. The local project team is continuing to mentor the small grant recipients as necessary and a participatory impact assessment is planned for November (Activity 3.5).

Output 4: Capacity of two local forest service teams to protect and restore forest enhanced through targeted training and resource provision.

During this period there was regular communication with representatives from the two forest service teams. The tree nurseries were visited during the Project Leader's visit in July and appeared satisfactory. Two further training sessions and additional equipment provision is planned in the final project period.

Output 5: Climate adaptation measures integrated into project plans and activities to increase resilience of forest ecosystem and local communities.

Activity 5.1: Following the stakeholder workshops in Year 1, the climate adaptation plan has been completed with locally relevant adaptation responses. Activity 5.2: Preparation work for the community level workshops has been undertaken and the first community workshop held, with further workshops planned shortly. At the workshop information was shared about predicted climate change, and likely impacts and potential adaptation responses were explored with local stakeholders. Activity 5.3: The workshops will allow us to validate potential locally-appropriate adaptation responses and facilitate local discussion on how best to implement priority actions, and identify the steps required.

2a. 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.

Very sadly, one of the project partners Dr Almaz Orozumbekov passed away suddenly in April. This information has already been communicated to LTS International and will have a small effect on the budget but no overall effect on project delivery.

Project partners Bioresurs found it took longer than expected to source and procure fruit and nut processing equipment for the community facility so the unit will start to function later than planned. This is fine for the walnut harvest, but unfortunately it will now be too late this year to use the equipment to dry harvested fruit – however the facility will be available for next year.

The summer and early autumn is a very busy time for the forest service and communities; this has resulted in some activities (e.g. training workshops) being delayed to later in the year.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (eg 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 as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. 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 and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

It is looking like we will have an underspend on certain budget lines (e.g. fieldwork travel & subsistence) and I will submit a Change Request to see if we can reallocate these funds to other activities.

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.

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 eg Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**