

DARWIN

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Newsletter of the UK Darwin Initiative



Promoting biodiversity conservation
and the sustainable use of resources

The Darwin Initiative is a small grants programme that aims to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources around the world. The Initiative is funded and administered by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, (Defra).

NEWS

Special issue: a year of achievement

In this and the next issue, we present short articles from project annual reports that give an insight into the broad range of Darwin Initiative activities.

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You can find out more about any of these projects from the Darwin Initiative website, in the *Projects* section.

<http://www.darwin.gov.uk>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/darwin>

Evaluating Approaches to Public Engagement in Saiga Conservation

E.J. Milner-Gulland

Project ref.: EIDPO18

Imperial College London; Centre for Ecological Projects (leader), Centre for Wild Animals; Chernye Zemli Biosphere Reserve; Stepnoi Sanctuary; Dharma Centre; Yashkul School; Arshan Children's Home.

The project has made spectacular progress in terms of regional and international partnerships.

We enabled our key collaborators to travel to the First Meeting of the Range States to the Convention on Migratory Species MOU on saiga conservation, at which the MOU came into force. This was a milestone in saiga conservation, and the inclusion of our Kalmykian partners in the meeting enabled them to highlight the excellent work that they have been doing for saigas in an international forum. This has also allowed them to link up with others working for saigas in the region, as well as with international policy-makers. Project partners were heavily involved in preparing the scientific documentation for the meeting and facilitating the associated Technical Workshop. As a result of this, the CMS has sub-contracted us to monitor range states' progress towards fulfilling their obligations under the MOU over the next two years.



Dancers rehearse the traditional Crane Dance before the opening of the CWA Visitor Centre

We have founded the Saiga Conservation Alliance, a network of professionals working together to promote the conservation of the saiga at all levels from the grassroots upwards, and both locally and internationally. This organisation is growing fast and Darwin project members are key to its success. The SCA has been made a "start-up partner" of the Wildlife Conservation Network in recognition of our achievements in saiga conservation. This gives our team access to donor networks and planning, marketing and strategic support. The WCN has also (March 2007) awarded one member of our Kalmykian team, Nadezhda Arylova, a Sidney Byers scholarship to support her PhD research on saiga antelope ecology, which is a prestigious award that will help her to complete her research and build partnerships internationally. ■

Ethnobiology of proposed community use zones of Crocker Range Park

Gary J Martin, Agnes Lee Agama, Adam Murphy, James TH Wong, Yassin Miki

Project ref.: 13/009

Global Diversity Foundation; Sabah Parks, Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ITBC) Universiti Malaysia Sabah

An outstanding achievement not only during this reporting period but throughout our project has been the level of participation by community members. We would like to suggest that 'community participation in conservation' be a theme for a future Darwin Workshop, as it would build nicely on the livelihoods and conservation theme set for this year. In our project, participation has come to fruition this year, building on the process of community consultation, free prior information consent that led to the signing of a community research agreement at the beginning of the project. Two additional elements that we developed are participatory community evaluation and participatory video.

An important lesson is that participatory community evaluation (fully described in Appendix 18) is a valuable and essential part of the project. It not only enabled a mid-term review of field progress with the community, but additionally provided an open forum where community members could discuss and review aspects of the project that were important for them. The highly interactive approach was crucial in allowing issues to emerge from within the community, thereby enabling the project to assess our impact (e.g. the heightened motivations in the community to carry out their own research on important resources) and respond to community reactions to the project (i.e. prevent overlapping research questions, train more community field assistants). The design of the evaluation was documented in the form of a Process Sheet (in the local language) as an individual component of our Training Manual. The evaluation process and results are being translated to English for inclusion in the Best Practices Handbook.

Another lesson is the importance of having regular and less formal sessions with the community to return results. Feedback obtained from community expositions have been a valuable source for clarifying data, thereby enhancing the design and implementation of field activities.

The second approach developed this year, participatory video (PV), was launched in Buayan in June 2007. In brief, the fifth module of the of the Ethnobiology and Conservation training course included sessions given by Nick Lunch of Insight a UK organisation that focuses on PV. A community workshop allowed the local research assistants to share what they learned with fellow community members. Together, they created several scripts (storyboards) on issues chosen by community members in collaboration with GDF-Sabah team members: "Land, resources and conservation in Buayan", "Local research assistants, ethnobiology and community use zones" and "Culturally appropriate education in indigenous preschools". Videos on these subjects are under production, and will hopefully be presented at several international fora in 2008, including the Fourth World Conservation Congress in Barcelona. This will allow the community to present its perspectives – including its opinion of the Darwin Initiatives project – in its own words and images. We would like to have the

opportunity to present the videos at the 2008 Darwin workshop and to discuss community participation (including community conserved areas) with leaders of other Darwin projects. ■

Conserving Giant Clams Through Community Reserves in Lakshadweep Islands, India

Andrea Deri, Deepak Apte, Idrees Babu, Karamath Shahib, Avani Patel

Project ref.: 13/029

LEAD International; Bombay Natural History Society
Short stories of outstanding achievements and local leaders are featured on the project website¹.

The most outstanding achievement in Year 2 is the unanimous support of the local community for the establishment to the proposed Agatti Conservation Reserve. Of the 560 people engaged in community consultations, 300 were women. Their organised networks of self-help groups leveraged resources and disseminated project ideas.

Testimonials featured in our documentary film about setting up the marine protected area are moving examples of islanders' passionate commitment to managing resources and eco-system services in a sustainable way.



Globally threatened giant clam. Photo: Deepak Apte

Sandy Beach Cultural and Ecotourism Society in Kavaratti have expanded their activities after their participation in our project's eco-tourism training in Year 1. One of their numerous new initiatives is to purchase a glass bottom boat and offer women – who would not be able to have this experience – environmental education activities out in the lagoon. Beyond their ecotourism activities Sandy Beach Cultural and Ecotourism Society have also undertaken several environmental education activities and got involved in sea turtle protection. BNHS has recently helped them to develop an open air information centre on sea turtle conservation. ■

Community Action for Sustainable Use and Conservation of Coral Reefs

Elizabeth Wood; Irwanshah Mustapa

Project ref.: 14/007

Marine Conservation Society; International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), Cambridge; University of Plymouth; Sabah Parks; Sabah Fisheries Department; Universiti Malaysia Sabah, WWF Malaysia

The **Community Census** has been one of the most successful project activities this year. This ran over a period of several months, and entailed lengthy interviews with each of the 387 households in the Park. It has provided a snapshot of the current socio-economic profile of the Park community that will help to assess people's current activities and needs and can be used to measure future improvements in job opportunities and income. Conducting the census was also a useful capacity-building exercise for the project partners and has helped to continue to build up further dialogue and good relationships with the local community.

The **SIDP (Semporna Islands Darwin Project) Roadshow** has also been of major importance in ensuring that communities both outside and inside the Park are aware of the MPA, the no-take zones, protected species and other conservation initiatives and regulations. Over 50 villages and 18 schools have been visited, plus local government offices and tour agencies. A number of activities were developed to engage both children and adults, one of which was a specially-designed cartoon colouring book that brings home messages about fish blasting, litter and other reef conservation issues through an entertaining story line. The Roadshow team includes the Bajau Laut Liaison Officer, and the project is continuing to cross boundaries and engage closely with all sectors of the local community.

A novel research programme has been launched this year, looking at the potential for **integrating aquaculture with community-based tourism**. The study is the first of its kind and is important because one of the outcomes will be a plan for how these two activities can be combined to improve local community livelihood opportunities in the Tun Sakaran Marine Park. Thus activities such as seaweed farming and giant clam cultivation could provide dual incomes from the product itself and from visitor income, and could also be of value in increasing general awareness about sustainable methods of marine resource use.

Another achievement this year was to organise a **fish stock enhancement trial**. This involved the release of small numbers of juvenile humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*) and mouse grouper (*Cromileptes altivelis*) into one of the newly-created 'no-take' zones in the Park. The trial not only highlighted the existence of the Conservation Zone to the public, but also illustrated the positive actions that can be taken to help promote the recovery of biodiversity. The mouse grouper trial was in collaboration with the Sabah Fisheries Department, who had cultured the fish, and provided a positive conservation story for a CBBC Saving Planet Earth feature that will be screened later this year. ■

¹ <http://www.lead.org/page/89>

limbovane Outreach Project: Exploring South African Biodiversity and Change

Kevin Gaston, Kirsten Mahood, Brigitte Braschler, Natasha Kruger, Sue Shaw, and Steven Chown

Project ref.: 14/012

Biodiversity and Macroecology Group – University of Sheffield (UoS); DST-NRF Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology (C-IB) – University of Stellenbosch

The delivery of 10 laboratory quality stereo-microscopes, laptop computers, reference collections and image-based keys was a highlight of the year. The delight and wonderment the learners experienced when working with this equipment for the first time was tangible. This equipment will have a sustained impact on learners and the teaching of life science in these schools, as each new year-group will have an opportunity to work with it. Teachers were amazed at how taken learners were by especially the microscopes, with learners bringing a range of different items to be viewed under the microscope, from crystals grown in the physics class to mould grown in the classroom. Additionally, the excitement learners experienced when working in the field for the first time overwhelmed the limbovane team. The relationships that were built so quickly and easily between team members and learners were inspiring, with fun comments such as “Ooh-eh-eh!” after spending the day in the field, and in-depth questions on science and science careers coming naturally from learners. ■

Youth Participation in Protected Area Management in Rodna Mountains, Romania

Anna Lawrence, Alina Szabo, Claudiu Iusan, and Susan Canney

Project ref.: 14/019

University of Oxford; The Administration of Rodna Mountains National Park (APNMR)

The value of this project has been greatly enhanced by a very encouraging initiative taken by the coordinators of the Darwin Clubs, together with the directorship of the Rodna Mountains National Park.



EcoRodna members

These clubs were established by the project to encourage and support communities and schools around Rodna Mountains in both learning about the park and contributing to knowledge and management decisions by carrying out biodiversity monitoring projects. The coordinators find that they and their students enjoy the work, and the rewards of working closely with the park administration. Realising that the project lasts only three years, and that their national influence and fund-raising ability depends on their legal constitution, the eight clubs

joined together to form their own non-government organisation, EcoRodna. This has already brought benefits; an EU project designed to build capacity in Romania's national parks has focused on working together with EcoRodna rather than developing their own links with the surrounding communities. ■

A market-led conservation response to the domestic bird-trade in Indonesia

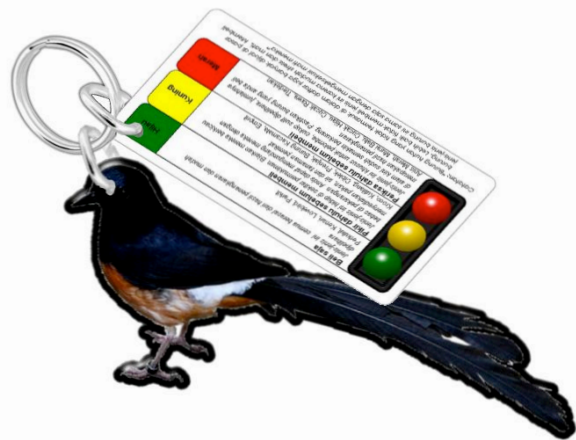
Paul Jepson

Project ref.: 14/031

University of Oxford, Environmental Change Institute; BirdLife Indonesia (now Burung Indonesia)

The vibrant economies of Asia are placing huge demands on the world's dwindling wildlife resources. As consumption and trade of wildlife returns to the top of the conservationist agenda there is a growing recognition that the regulatory approaches designed in the 1970s and enshrined in the CITES convention are have limited effect in Asia. The research, funded by the Darwin Initiative, is extending market-based mechanisms developed to bring sustainability to tropical timber to supply chains in birds.

Bird-keeping is hugely popular in the cities of Java and Bali and vast numbers of birds are taken from the wild each year. This project is assessing the efficacy of switching the supply-chain from wild-caught to captive-bred birds. A particular innovation is to extend the consumer choice 'pull' approach of market-based mechanisms to include broader collective action whereby hobbyists mobilise for change.



Outreach: motor-bike key-ring printed with the traffic light classification to be included as a gift in Fancy bird-foods.

The research has involved qualitative and quantitative research on key aspects of the bird-keeping pastime. At the centre of this research has been a major household survey in six cities on Java and Bali. The market-research company ACNielsen shared with us their sampling frame and protocol and as a result we have a robust data set that enables statistical projections to the population. Some of the headline results are that 1-in-3 households in the six cities keep a bird and nearly 1-in-7 have kept a bird at sometime in the last ten years. Over 1.4 million of the birds kept are wild-caught but similar numbers are captive-bred. Four of the most popular wild-caught birds are favourites at bird song-contests. The 450 song-contests organised in Java & Bali bring together people

from all ethnicities and backgrounds in a common interest.

Songbird keepers in the six cities spend approximately £43 million a year on their hobby. Of this £14 million is spent on birds; nearly £9 million on live-food and £4.5 million on cages. The hobby makes substantial economic and livelihood contributions. Our study of bird-breeding business models found that many are social enterprises that deliver social benefits as well as profits. Bird breeding is labour intensive and the rearing of tiny birds, and farming and collecting of live food (crickets, ants eggs) generates employment in the community for the old, young, disabled or uneducated.

A key insight emerging from this research is that catching birds from the wild, whilst contributing a livelihood supplement to some people, undermines the potential to create a bird-breeding industry that would provide large numbers of jobs for urban and rural Indonesians. The second phase of the project will involve a social marketing campaign, the developing of a system to certify captive-bird birds and activities to expand bird-breeding. Our research has shown that the key conditions necessary to 'switch' a supply chain from wild-caught to commercial breeding are present in Java. With the right investments and tenacity we can imagine a time 10-15 years hence where an appreciation of birds remains central to the Javan and Balinese cultural identities but where catching wild birds is unthought-of. ■

Building University Capacity to Train Future Cambodian Conservationists

Jenny Daltry and Callum McCulloch

Project ref.: 14/037

Fauna & Flora International; The Harrison Institute; The Natural History Museum; Frontier; Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh; Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), Ministry of Environment (MoE); Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (MAFF)

The most significant achievement of this Darwin Project has been to establish an international-standard Masters course in Cambodia where none existed before. This marks a very major step forward in rebuilding Cambodia's own technical capacity, almost thirty years after the Pol Pot Regime exterminated most of the country's scientists, educators and intellectuals.

The feedback from students and trainers has been excellent, and there has already been considerable interest in the final-year students from prospective employers in the environmental sector. Staff, equipment and other resources are being put in place at the Royal University of Phnom Penh to ensure that the Masters in Biodiversity Conservation programme can be sustained for years to come.

The Darwin Project has also made good progress in bringing different groups together to promote and support conservation and sustainable development in Cambodia. Well over 30 organisations have become involved in this programme, including 10 Cambodian governmental departments, 9 Cambodian non-governmental organisations, and 15 international organisations. These include groups involved in guest lecturing, study tours, reference collection development and student research placements. Making use of this new informal network, the Masters students and ten Darwin Scholars have embarked on more than a dozen collaborative research projects with multiple organisations.



Student field trip to Phnom Samkos Wildlife Sanctuary

The establishment of the National Reference Collection at the Royal University is also tremendously significant, as this is the first in Cambodia. In the past, almost all botanical and zoological specimens were sent to collections overseas, depriving Cambodian scholars and conservationists of the opportunity to learn about their biodiversity. The new collection facilities (herbarium, zoological museum and quarantine room) mean that plant and animal specimens can now be properly stored and catalogued in Phnom Penh. The facilities have been well received by visiting scientists, most of whom have promised to add specimens to the small but rapidly growing collection. ■

Ha Long Bay Environmental Awareness Programme

David Brown

Project ref.: 14/038

Fauna and Flora International; University of East Anglia; Ha Long Bay Management Department

The thousands of towering limestone islands of Vietnam's Ha Long Bay have been for centuries the stuff of legends. The Bay is magically beautiful. It well deserves its designation as a World Heritage Site. Yet lately it has been hammered on all sides by high-speed economic growth.

Landfills, toxic waste, sewage runoff, dredging, mangrove destruction, over-fishing and reef destruction threaten the marine environment and the livelihoods of many people who live there.

It is critically important that a better balance be found. Popular attitudes about waste disposal must change. Strengthened public policies are needed to preserve the Bay's seascapes as a tourist mecca and its unique habitats as a regional reservoir of biodiversity.

With those goals in mind, FFI and the Ha Long Bay Management Department have launched a community Environmental Awareness Programme in the communities that border the Bay, home to nearly a million people. The programme's centerpiece is the

EcoBoat -- a floating classroom that uses the bay as its campus.



The EcoBoat

During the nine month-long Ha Long Bay summer, youth groups from nearby Vietnamese cities and towns board the EcoBoat for a hands-on adventure. Sometimes they are joined by classes from international schools elsewhere in south east Asia. The teenagers explore caves, mangrove forests and tidal lakes, interview fishers and their families, learn skills in systematic observation of reefs, water quality and navigation, and take part in lively debates on how best to preserve the bay's unique culture and biodiversity.

Other FFI activities are drawing community leaders into discussion of policies that reconcile the twin imperatives of economic development and environmental protection.

The Darwin Initiative-funded programme will morph by mid-2008 into a successor organization that is rooted in and owned by the community, is committed and equipped to continue the aims of the project, and advocates effectively for sound management policies and environmentally friendly decisions on matters affecting the bay.

To learn more, visit www.ecoboat.org. ■

Mpingo Conservation Project – Community Forestry in Kilwa, Tanzania

Matt Walpole, Steve Ball & Lizzie Wilder

Project ref.: 14/043

Fauna & Flora International (FFI); Mpingo Conservation Project (MCP)

In 2006 the Mpingo Conservation Project helped establish the first Village Land Forest Reserve (VLFR) in Kilwa District, south-eastern Tanzania. The new VLFR (454ha) was set aside by Kikole Village who now own and manage all the natural resources within the forest. The reserve yielded quick dividends when an oil prospecting company felled a number of trees in laying out a seismic line, and paid the village TZS >800,000/- (~£325) in compensation. Villagers also took their own initiative in constructing check points at either end of the road that passes through the VLFR, and are mounting regular patrols. This practical action shows that the community have fully bought into the idea of Participatory Forest Management, and the patrol teams have already noticed an increased presence of wild animals enjoying their natural habitat. Neighbouring villages have been much encouraged by Kikole's example and are clamouring to establish their own VLFRs as quickly as possible.



The black heartwood of Mpingo is used in the construction of high quality musical instruments.

On top of this Kikole have asked the project for help in establishing a much larger VLFR (>5,000ha) the other side of Matandu River in an area which contains substantial stocks of a number of different hardwoods including mpingo (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), the tree used to make clarinets and oboes. Sustainable harvesting of such valuable timber species has the potential to bring in significant additional income for desperately poor rural communities. An exploratory study commissioned by the Mpingo Conservation Project's UK partner Fauna & Flora International has shown that instrument manufacturers are concerned about the source of wood they use to make their instruments and would be prepared to pay a substantial premium for wood certified to have been sustainably and equitably harvested. Certification - the partners' goal over the next two years - will thus enable community managed forests to differentiate their product from other timber which is being looted from the forests of south-eastern Tanzania in an epidemic of illegal logging. ■

Sustainable tourism supporting species conservation in the Srepok Wilderness, Cambodia

Maryann Greig-Gran, James MacGregor and Nick Cox

Project ref.: 14/046

IIED; WWF-UK; WWF Cambodia

1. Wildlife monitoring captures first images of a female leopard with cubs, and elephant with calf in the MPF, (02/07, and 03/07) illustrating critical success in securing the protected area to the extent that key species are reproducing.

2. Participatory 3-Dimensional Modelling (P3DM) As reported in the last annual report an output of this training was that the participants assembled the 3-Dimensional model of the Mondulkiri Protected Forest (including the adjacent Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary). During the wet season (October 2006 to March 2007) the SWA Project's Community Extension Team have continued working on this 3D model of the landscape. The following has been achieved:

- community members from the three community clusters have been invited and supported to attend

workshops where they have indicated traditional use areas (within the draft sustainable use, community, conservation and core protection zones)

- eight communal boundaries now depicted on map
- information on map digitized into GIS
- 3D model map used as exhibition and information tool when visiting delegations visit WWF Cambodia's office in Sen Monorom (capital of Mondulkiri Province).



First camera trap photo from MPF (and Cambodia) of Leopard with cubs (Feb 07)

3. Study tour to Namibia - six staff from SWA project Ranger Unit and CNRM Unit travelled to Namibia, and were hosted by WWF Namibia's LIFE Programme. This activity was funded with matching funds from Habitat, Darwin, and WWF International. Staff were exposed to community-based natural resource management practices as well as government managed protected areas (Etosha NP, Caprivi, and Waterberg NP and conservancies). The study tour allowed for the investigation of the Management Orientated Monitoring System (MOMS) that assists communities and governments in the management of natural resources; this system is now being prepared for adaptation for the local situation in the MPF. ■

Protecting Key South African Biodiversity Sites through Community-based Conservation

Paul Buckley; Daniel Marnewick; Andrea Lockwood
Project ref.: 15/012

RSPB; BirdLife South Africa (BLSA)

In 2006, BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) launched an innovative project at three key biodiversity sites in South Africa. This project aims to develop links between the conservation of critical wetland and forest habitat for birds, and the livelihoods of local people. Some key activities include site-based training in conservation and monitoring, and the creation of small local enterprises and other income-generating activities.

The project developed crucial partnerships in its first year with government and NGO stakeholders. For example, as a result of meetings with local government, project activities at the Wakkerstroom wetland in the Province of Mpumalanga are now included in the municipality's local economic development plan. Our partnership with a rights-based development NGO in the Eastern Cape has added an entirely new dimension to their work. Conservation had not previously been part of their

mandate. As a result of our partnership, this NGO is now committed to helping us conserve the Cape Parrot, a bird that occurs in the indigenous forests of the Eastern Cape. There are only about 1,300 Cape Parrots remaining in the wild. Our collaboration will link the creation of income-generating activities with local efforts to conserve this endangered bird.



Women from the Grass and Reeds project in Wakkerstroom making mats and bags from locally harvested grasses and reeds to be sold to local tourists

In Soweto, we are partnering with an organisation that provides services to disadvantaged children, the aged and those infected with HIV/AIDS. This innovative collaboration represents an exciting opportunity to link poverty alleviation in Kliptown's informal settlements with the conservation of an urban wetland that provides habitat for over 130 bird species. ■

Biodiversity and sustainable development of butterfly production (Lepidoptera) in Guyana

Doreen Winstanley

Project ref.: 15/013

University of Warwick; Natural History Museum, Kew Gardens, Matthews Payne & Bond LLP; Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development, The University of Guyana

The interest and enthusiasm from all age groups in the community for the butterfly project in Guyana was greater than anticipated. Some of the older members of the communities were knowledgeable about the butterflies and their caterpillar host plants or had first hand experience of lepidopteran pests of their crops. Understanding the lifecycle and behaviour of lepidopteran pests will help them in controlling these pests.

One of the communities, Fairview, on the edge of the Iwokrama Rain Forest Reserve willingly made land available to develop a pilot /demonstration farm. They helped to clear the site and will provide materials for its construction. Pilot farms will also be developed in other communities with their co-operation.

An unexpected bonus has been the involvement of the wildlife clubs from communities encouraged principally by Samantha James and Verley Jackobus. The children are extremely enthusiastic and will learn about butterfly development and identification. These children will

provide the interest to maintain future butterfly farming or conservation in their region.



Walk way enabling baited trapping in canopy

The Iwokrama forest and North Rupununi district have a rich diversity of butterflies, many of which will have a high retail value for the butterfly houses of UK and the USA. We have identified at least 10 abundant, easily farmed butterfly species with a known value to European displays and exhibitions, which could generate income for the communities. ■

Managing wetlands for sustainable livelihoods at Koshi Tappu, Nepal

Seb Buckton, Hem Sagar Baral, Bhagawan Raj Dahal, Ishana Thapa

Project ref.: 15/014

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust; Institute of Fisheries, University of Stirling; CABI Bioscience; Bird Conservation Nepal, Koshi Camp, Tribhuvan University, PCP-II, IUCN-Nepal

Over 150 local residents participated in six Participatory Rural Appraisals carried out in the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve buffer zone in 2006. In addition, 60 household surveys were carried out. These enabled a better understanding of the reality of the values of wetland resources for local people and the problems associated with their use.



Participatory workshop to assess parameters of household wealth and resource use

Subsequently, there was active initiation and participation by local people in the development of a community action plan for the sustainable management of local wetland resources. At the same time, an action plan committee was formed by local people to monitor and evaluate the activities of the action plan. An inventory

and categorization of buffer zone ponds has been carried out. Water samples have been collected from 30 different pond sites and analysed for chemical and biological parameters, and field sites established for long term monitoring of the water quality and quantity. These data will provide the basis for identifying the root causes of success and failure in existing fisheries management in the buffer zone, and enable recommendations for future, sustainable, management to be made.

Local people at Koshi for the first time now have an action plan for sustainable and wise use of wetlands in their area. Similarly, wider coverage of project activities in the local and national media has raised the awareness of sustainable and wise use of wetland resources. This has built a strong sense of community ownership of the local resources. A good network among key stakeholders and local communities has been the foundation for an effective project. ■

Certifying Peccary Pelts in Peru to Catalyze Community-based Wildlife Management

Richard Bodmer; Tula Fang

Project ref.: 15/029

Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent (DICE); Wildlife Conservation Society Peru (WCS); Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales (INRENA); Universidad Nacional de la Amazonia Peruana (UNAP)

Bushmeat hunting of tropical forest mammals is commonplace in the tropics and currently one of the greatest conservation issues in tropical forests. Rural people hunt mammals for subsistence food and to sell meat and hides in urban markets.



Peccary pelt

Bushmeat hunting is an important economic resource that has been traditionally used by rural poor of the Peruvian Amazon. If well managed, bushmeat hunting can provide long-term socio-economic benefits to local communities and help conserve Amazonian biodiversity through maintaining intact rainforests. If poorly managed, bushmeat hunting will lead to the extirpation of animal populations, reduced socio-economic benefits that rural people obtain from wildlife, and a decreased value of intact forests.

Subsistence hunting is permitted in Peru by rural and native communities and the communities are permitted to sell peccary pelts if the animals were hunted for subsistence. Peccary pelts are exported to European countries, including the UK, where they are used in the manufacture of luxury gloves and shoes. A peccary pelt certification programme is being set up in the Peruvian Amazon as a mechanism to add value to the pelts in communities that manage their bushmeat hunting sustainably, through a process that certifies those communities that meet the standards of certification. The peccary pelt certification programme is a means to manage bushmeat hunting using the international trade in peccary products.

Local communities will only be certified if they manage all of their bushmeat hunting sustainably. There are 11 communities involved in the pilot programme from the Yavari, Tahuayo and Pastaza river systems. The Peruvian government strongly supports the pilot programme, as does CITES, the International Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species.

Funding from the Darwin Initiative will be key in setting up the peccary pelt certification programme as a means to manage bushmeat hunting, and in turn help conserve Amazonia biodiversity by involving local people. ■

Darwin Initiative contacts

Defra Darwin Initiative Secretariat

Defra
International Biodiversity
Policy Unit
Darwin Initiative Secretariat
Area 3D, Third Floor, Nobel House
17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR

Tel. +44 (0) 207 238 5256
Fax. +44 (0) 207 082 8436
darwin@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Applications information and procedures

Eilidh Young
ECTF Darwin Applications Management
Pentlands Science Park,
Bush Loan, Penicuik,
Edinburgh EH26 0PH darwin-applications@ectf-ed.org.uk

Tel. +44 (0)131 440 5181
Fax +44 (0)131 440 5501

Monitoring and Evaluation programme

Eilidh Young
ECTF Darwin Monitoring and Evaluation Programme
Pentlands Science Park,
Bush Loan, Penicuik,
Edinburgh EH26 0PH darwin-projects@ectf-ed.org.uk

Tel. +44 (0)131 440 5181
Fax +44 (0)131 440 5501

Darwin News and website

David Baird dave@zerofive.co.uk