



***Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species
Annual Report***

Community-driven conservation and ecotourism in the Mara ecosystem,
Kenya

Durrell Institute of Conservation & Ecology,
University of Kent

April 2002

Darwin Project Information

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| Project title | <i>Community-driven conservation and ecotourism in the Mara ecosystem, Kenya</i> |
| Country(ies) | <i>Kenya</i> |
| Contractor | <i>DICE, University of Kent</i> |
| Project Reference No. | <i>162/10/003</i> |
| Grant Value | <i>£136,566</i> |
| Start/Finishing dates | <i>May 2001/October 2003</i> |
| Reporting period | <i>May 2001 - March 2002</i> |

Project Background

Much of Kenya's biodiversity lies outside protected areas, and human-wildlife conflict both inside and outside protected areas threatens the viability of large mammal populations. Equally, local communities adjacent to protected areas are seeking sustainable means to utilise their biodiversity resources, in ways that limit conflict between wildlife and people.

The previous Darwin Initiative project in Masai Mara (162/6/131) identified that, despite being promoted as a sustainable use of natural resources, tourism in and around the Masai Mara was not benefiting local communities or wildlife in an area where human-wildlife conflict was prevalent, due to the fact that it was not locally driven and did not fully engage local communities. These findings suggested the need for a new approach to resource utilisation in unprotected communal areas where large mammals reside.

At the same time, DICE staff in Kenya were approached by a local community adjacent to the Masai Mara, in partnership with a Kenyan ecotourism operator, requesting technical and training assistance with the sustainable development of resource utilisation in their area, through the establishment of a locally run ecotourism and wildlife monitoring centre. This provided an excellent opportunity to (1) pursue an action-based exit strategy for the previous Darwin Initiative grant, and (2) assist a local community in the development of truly sustainable resource utilisation with built-in biodiversity conservation, from the outset of the development process.

This project aims to assist a community living adjacent to Masai Mara National Reserve to develop sustainable utilisation, including ecotourism. Through training and the establishment of a wildlife and conflict monitoring centre, the project will build local capacity in (1) wildlife conservation and management, and (2) the provision of low impact tourism facilities.

Project Objectives

Purpose:

To develop and implement a community-driven conservation, conflict resolution and ecotourism programme that will protect endangered wildlife and alleviate human-wildlife conflict outside the formal protected area network.

Activities:

- Train two local co-ordinators to MSc level at DICE.
- Train local scouts in improved wildlife and conflict monitoring.
- Train local staff in tourism management.
- Establish a local wildlife association with resource planning responsibilities.
- Produce a land use and resource utilisation strategy.
- Establish a centre for ecotourism and wildlife monitoring.

See log frame attached at end of report.

Progress

Project activity began early, in February 2001, when steps were taken to establish a community wildlife group with a constitution. This was achieved during the year, well ahead of schedule. The project officer and Kenyan project partner formally took up position in May 2001, and spent July and August 2001 undertaking planning meetings and initial wildlife surveys with trained community scouts. The aims of the survey were:

- To provide factual baseline information on the wildlife of the area.
- To increase local awareness of wildlife and conservation by involving and training local community members in wildlife monitoring.
- To develop and test a method for community-based wildlife monitoring that could be used in future surveys both here and elsewhere.

During data collection, 18 foot patrols were made by three teams operating simultaneously. Each team consisted of a literate team leader responsible for recording data in a notebook, and 2-3 community members. In total eleven community members participated, on the basis of literacy for team leaders and proximity to the study area for others. On each of the data collection days, each team conducted two patrols, beginning the first patrol as soon as it was light between 0630 and 0700, and finishing the second patrol by early afternoon. Each patrol was designed to cover a particular habitat type (riverine, dry valley, hill slope or ridge), and at least three examples of each habitat type were represented in the survey. Each patrol was designed to be between 2-5 km in length, with some variation depending on the habitat and location.

Due to the thick nature of the bush and the hilly terrain, direct observation of wildlife was limited. As a result, all fresh signs (up to a week old) of all mammals above the size of a rat were recorded along the patrol route, including sightings, sounds, spoor (footprints), dung, resting places and browsing/feeding evidence. The species and type of evidence were both recorded. Where possible, group size or an estimate thereof was also recorded. One record was made for each animal or group of animals for which independent evidence was available. Therefore, if an animal crossed the path of the patrol on more than one occasion, it was only recorded once. Equally, if an animal had left several categories of sign together, such as spoor and dung, but was clearly the same animal, then only one record was made. Difficulties in identifying whether signs some distance apart were independent may have led to some double counting, but as long as consistency was maintained in deciding whether signs were independent then a comparable measure of evidence density can be attained.

The data provided a count of evidence for each patrol, broken down by species and type of evidence. The start and end times of each patrol were also recorded, and team leaders carried a GPS satellite navigation unit programmed to record locations every 30 seconds so as to provide an accurate measure of distance covered and the exact route taken. With both duration and distance of patrol recorded, it was possible to calculate an encounter rate (in sign per hour or per km) for each patrol. This is potentially useful as a comparative measure, both between patrols in different habitat types, and also between repeat surveys over time to assess changes in wildlife populations and communities.

Data were collected on 33 species present in the area (see report submitted in October 2001). A variety of factors affecting data capture were identified for refinement of the method, and at a closing workshop the participants identified a number of issues to improve the survey in future. The results will be used as a baseline for future surveys and monitoring.

At the same time in a different area, plans were drawn up for wildlife conflict monitoring, with funding from WWF. It is hoped that this monitoring will be implemented in this study area during 2002/2003.

In September two community members, the project partner and one other, traveled to UK to begin their MSc training. These candidates were chosen on the basis of education and experience, and the support of the community for their candidacy. The two candidates have performed well throughout the taught part of the course and are currently preparing for their fieldwork which will commence in May 2002.

Some outputs were not achieved during the year. Due to delays in forging appropriate partnerships (see below) it was only possible to provide one week of training to community scouts in wildlife monitoring. However, in a separate exercise one of our planned partners, Friends of Conservation, retrained an equivalent number of local wildlife scouts in wider biodiversity monitoring in the same area after consultation with the Darwin project officer. Although this cannot be claimed as a Darwin output it has achieved the intended purpose. Furthermore, significant additional training of

community scouts on the Darwin program is anticipated from October 2002 with additional funding from WWF that will more than offset the shortfall this year.

Two outputs not yet achieved are the completion of a resource use map and land use plan. These outputs, planned for March 2002, require the input of the community representatives undertaking the MSc at DICE, and so could not be completed until their return to Kenya in May 2002. Workshops are planned to address these issues in May and June 2002, with completion of draft resource use maps and a land use plan scheduled for completion in October 2002.

Although the project is proceeding well in terms of its preliminary outputs, the major outputs, in terms of an agreement between the community and a private tour operator and subsequent development of a joint ecotourism and wildlife monitoring facility, are likely to be greatly delayed from the original timetable. There are a number of reasons for this delay.

First, the original project timetable relied on significant progress being made on a legal agreement between community and tour operator before September 2001, when the project partner was in Kenya to represent the community. Unfortunately the representative of the tour operator was in hospital throughout this period with severe injuries, thus making any negotiations impossible. Since that time the project partner has been in UK and unable to represent the community. Furthermore, the events of September 11th 2001, and the upcoming presidential election in Kenya, have affected the program of investment and expansion of the tour operator, thereby slowing the process of reaching and acting upon an agreement. Furthermore, the project partner representing the community is proceeding very cautiously with regard to any agreement, and it is likely that the process of negotiation could take some time.

With that in mind, it is most unlikely that a pilot tourism operation can be established by October 2002 with associated tourism training of community members. Every effort will be made to facilitate an agreement between the community and a tour operator from October 2002 onwards, so that during 2003/2004 progress can be made on establishing a center for ecotourism and wildlife monitoring with appropriate community training.

It should be stressed that these difficulties will only result in a delay in fulfilling the overall purpose of the project, but that all partners remain committed to achieving that purpose.

The provisional work plan for the coming year is as follows:

- 5/02: Project officer and MSc students travel to Kenya for fieldwork and negotiations; steering committee meeting
- 7/02: Students return to UK to write up MSc dissertations
- 9/02: Students complete MSc
- 10/02: Resource use map and land use plan completed
- 10/02: Community wildlife monitoring training and implementation of conflict monitoring program
- 3/03: Community website constructed
- 3/03: Negotiations for development of an ecotourism venture complete

This will permit development of a camp/center in 2003/2004 with community tourism training and employment, and employment of trained wildlife scouts.

Partnerships

The project officer has a good working relationship with the project partner representing the community, with the tour operator, and with Friends of Conservation (FoC), a local NGO working in the area and which is listed as a minor partner in the project. However, the relationship between the project partner representing the community and FoC is poor, and this has limited some of our activities. However, this situation is not to the overall detriment of the project since support from WWF has become available in the interim.

Both the project partner representing the community and the tour operator currently wish to proceed cautiously with negotiations over an agreement for development. Since this is a community-driven project, we have felt it preferable to allow the project partner to dictate the pace of the project rather than try to intervene and speed things up. When working with local communities, much time, patience and negotiation is needed to develop solid, supported strategies.

Impact and Sustainability

It is too soon to judge the impact of the project. However, if all proceeds well then a solid exit strategy is in place in the form of a sustainable partnership between the community and tour operator. This relationship will continue to support the joint initiative without input from the Darwin project, and could provide a model for community-driven tourism elsewhere.

Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures)

| Code No. | Quantity | Description |
|----------|----------|--|
| 8 | 2 | Project leader in Kenya |
| 8 | 18 | Project officer in Kenya |
| 6a | 11 | Community members receiving wildlife monitoring training |
| 6b | 11 | Man weeks of training |

The resource use map and land use plan scheduled for completion in March 2002 have been delayed until October 2002. This is because this exercise demands the presence in Kenya of the two community members undertaking MSc studies at DICE. They will return to Kenya in May-June 2002 to facilitate workshops to develop the resource use map and land use plan.

Table 2: Publications

No formal publications to date. However, an internal report has been produced and distributed to partners and the Darwin Initiative:

Walpole, M.J. & Martyn, N. (2001) *A Community Wildlife Survey of the Ololarriak-Paraikong area of Olderkessi and Naikarra Locations, Narok District, Kenya*. Unpublished manuscript, DICE, University of Kent, & Olderkessi-Naikarra Community Conservation and Tourism Initiative, pp 27.

Project Expenditure

Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period

| Item | Budget | Expenditure £ |
|--|--------|---------------|
| <i>Salaries (M.J. Walpole + students stipends)</i> | | |
| <i>Rent, rates, heating, lighting etc</i> | | |
| <i>Postage/stationery</i> | | |
| <i>Travel/subsistence</i> | | |
| <i>Conference/seminars</i> | | |
| <i>Capital items</i> | | |
| <i>MSc fees; audit fees</i> | | |
| Total | | |

The budget was almost entirely spent during the period in accordance with planned expenditure. A small carry over of £2,403.83 that amounts to the remainder of the equipment budget line has been approved by Darwin.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

The project has been continually overseen by the project officer, using the logical framework and agreed outputs and milestones for guidance.

The indicators of achievement are the successful completion of project objectives and milestones on time. Although some of these have slipped, all the original objectives and milestones will be reached. On this basis we judge the project to have been successful to date.

Our major lessons are to expect the unexpected, and to allow sufficient time for the development of partnerships that cannot be achieved without the necessary consideration and consultation on both sides.

Author(s) / Date

M.J.Walpole
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30th April 2002

| Project summary | Measurable indicators | Means of verification | Important assumptions |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Goal</p> <p>To assist Kenya, and in particular local communities in the Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem, with the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable management of biological resources.</p> | <p>Declining loss of local biodiversity, and recovery of endangered species.</p> <p>Greater local implementation of the CBD, in terms of number of Articles addressed.</p> | <p>Land use and biodiversity surveys as part of this study and ongoing monitoring.</p> <p>Evaluation against CBD criteria.</p> | <p>Continued peace and political stability in Kenya both nationally and locally.</p> <p>Continued community commitment to sustainable resource utilisation and conservation within and beyond the life of the project</p> |
| <p>Purpose</p> <p>To develop and implement a community-driven conservation, conflict resolution and ecotourism programme that will protect endangered wildlife and alleviate human-wildlife conflict outside the formal protected area network.</p> | <p>An increase in endangered wildlife populations, an increase in local benefits, and a decline in human-wildlife conflict incidents.</p> | <p>Wildlife sighting and formal monitoring records, community accounts and social surveys, conflict reporting records and monitoring data.</p> | <p>Continued community commitment to sustainable resource utilisation and conservation within and beyond the life of the project.</p> <p>An ongoing collaborative agreement by project partners to implement the exit strategy.</p> |
| <p>Outputs</p> <p>Through training and implementation, to establish an on-going ecotourism venture and associated wildlife monitoring and conflict resolution centre.</p> | <p>Establishment of a centre that is staffed and operational.</p> <p>Improved monitoring of wildlife for conservation and conflict resolution in progress.</p> <p>Tourist bed nights being sold.</p> | <p>Written and photographic documentation and ongoing progress reports.</p> <p>Field reports and data gathered.</p> <p>Accounts and visitor book records.</p> | <p>Commitment by all partners to fulfilling the objectives of the project.</p> <p>Provision of sufficient development funds by the private sector partner.</p> |
| <p>Activities</p> <p>Train two local co-ordinators to MSc level at DICE.</p> <p>Train local scouts in improved wildlife and conflict monitoring.</p> <p>Train local staff in tourism management.</p> <p>Establish a local wildlife association with resource planning responsibilities.</p> <p>Produce a land use and resource utilisation strategy.</p> <p>Establish a centre for ecotourism and wildlife monitoring.</p> | <p>The agreed number of candidates complete formal and on-the-job training courses within the agreed timetable.</p> <p>A wildlife association with legal status is established.</p> <p>A land use strategy drafted.</p> <p>An ecotourism and wildlife monitoring centre is constructed.</p> | <p>Formal reports and certification, graduation by MSc students at DICE.</p> <p>Drafted constitution.</p> <p>Physical document produced.</p> <p>Written and photographic documentation.</p> | <p>Availability of suitable and committed candidates for training.</p> <p>Continued community commitment to sustainable resource utilisation and conservation within and beyond the life of the project.</p> <p>Commitment by all partners to fulfilling the objectives of the project.</p> |