

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Annual Report

1. Darwin Project Information

Project title:	Monitoring biodiversity for site management planning in eastern African wetlands
Countries	Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda.
Contractor	Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)
Project Reference No.	162/11/002
Grant Value	£174,367
Start/Finishing dates	May 2002 to May 2005
Reporting period	Year 1 (2002-2003)

2. Project Background

Eastern Africa holds some of the most important and functionally diverse wetlands in the world. These wetlands are areas of extremely high biodiversity, as well as providing vital services and functions for many millions of people. They are also a crucial element of the African-Eurasian migratory bird flyway. The socio-economic importance of wetlands in the region, means that their wise and sustainable use are closely linked to the alleviation of poverty and the maintenance of adequate water supplies for drinking *etc.* However, protected sites in many areas are under increasing pressure from a range of non-sustainable activities, and wetlands are often targeted because they are seen as 'wastelands'.

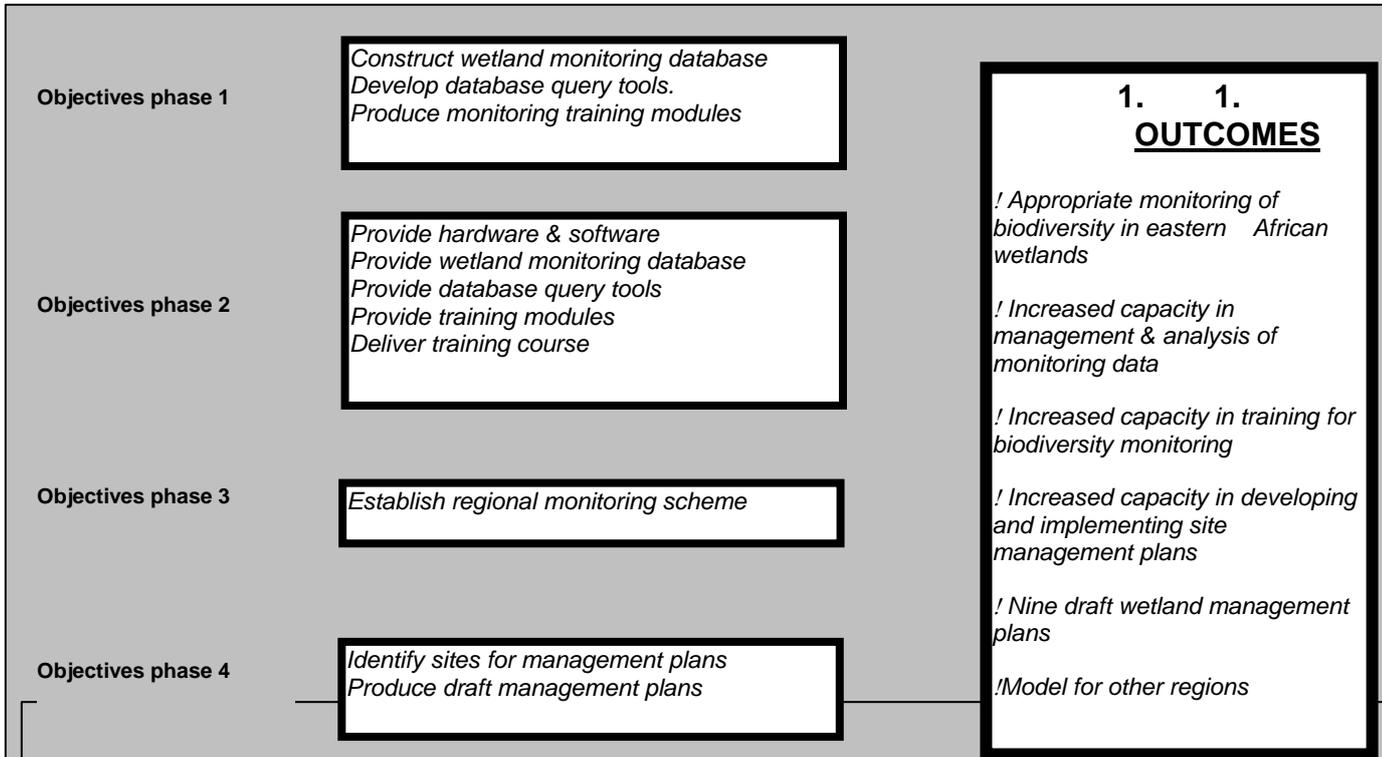
In many parts of Africa, there is insufficient cross-sectoral political support for large-scale conservation initiatives. Since the 1950s, there has been considerable financial and material investment in the eastern African region to support a range of environmental management and training initiatives. This support has come from the European Union, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility, and a variety of bilateral donors. Understandably, a considerable amount of the resulting conservation action has focused on charismatic taxa, particularly large mammals, and most of sectoral expertise remains in the field of wildlife management. This has meant there is a gap in organisational and sectoral capacity across the region in developing and implementing conservation action for non-mammalian taxa and most habitats. There is also a capacity gap in relation to collecting and managing environmental data, and then using it to underpin conservation action and sustainable development planning.

In 2000, WWT attended a meeting at Makerere University in Uganda hosted by Wetlands International. At the workshop, specific needs in relation to national and regional monitoring of wetlands and their biodiversity were identified, as well as needs associated with how to use monitoring data. As a result of behind the scenes talks, a multi-national partnership was formed with the aim of funding a project to develop a new regional monitoring scheme for wetland biodiversity. In 2001, WWT submitted a successful bid to the Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species. The new scheme will enhance and expand on the existing foundation of monitoring that currently takes place under the auspices of the African Waterbird Census (AfWC). This programme is administered by Wetlands International, a key partner on the project. In addition to launching the new regional scheme, the project will: (a) develop and deliver a new regional wetland biodiversity database, (b) deliver training and training material in the running of a national monitoring scheme,

and (c) training in the conservation use of monitoring data including the drafting of site and species management plans.

3. 3. Project Objectives

The project consists of four integrated and phased objectives, linked to a specific set of outcomes. These are summarised in the schematic below. The project’s logical framework is attached as an appendix. No changes have been made to the objectives during the course of the first year of work.



The database was due for completion in March 2003, and a working 'Beta' model was produced by that date, including demonstration front-end screens. Data from each of the partner countries (i.e. in addition to the currently used Kenya data) will be uploaded once received. The system will require further testing and comments from the African partners, and the final version will be completed in July 2003 after a visit to Wetlands International in the Netherlands by WWT's IT specialist.

The text for the monitoring scheme manual and training material has been drafted. A detailed and protracted search of already available training material (both general to wetland biodiversity and specific to Africa), provided a good steer for the content of our training documents and how to avoid unnecessary duplication. After receiving final comments from partners (July 2003), time has been scheduled with the WWT design group to produce the final documents. The monitoring scheme logo has also been produced and this is currently going through the final design stages. A scheme brochure has also been approved by partners and will be published in June 2003.

The delivery of the training programme in the second year of the project (2003/2004) will be moved from April to October/November. The partners felt that there were benefits to linking the Darwin training event to the annual management planning training event held at the Naivasha Institute in October/November. It was also felt at the steering committee meeting, that the launch event for the monitoring scheme should be closely linked with the training event, and that having it later in the year would allow time to get some key people lined up for the event. This is currently being developed by Oliver Nasirwa now that he is back in Kenya. The delivery of the hardware and software to WWT has occurred. The machines are currently being configured and the new database will be mounted on each machine prior to despatch. We have arranged shipment appropriate to each partner country with a company that deals with transportation for other NGOs (e.g. Oxfam).

Research, training, and technical work

The project is not research oriented, and training activities will occur in the second year. The key technical issue for 2002/2003 has been the development of a bespoke regional monitoring database. After considerable discussion with the partners, a conceptual model was developed for the data entry, management and retrieval. This is based on the fact that the partners already have their own analysis tools for data (a wide variety of software), and the need was for a database 'front end' that provided a quick and logical query facility that could then be output to a wide variety of different software tools. Data entry was also a key issue, and the data model developed is one where a species list is 'prompted' on the screen based on past information for a site within the database. Validation routines were also an important issue and many cross-reference routines have been incorporated. 'Local' names for species are also validated against a regional species dictionary, and the system can be switched between English and French (three of the partner countries are Francophones). The database model has been tested and evaluated using the Kenyan national dataset and this will be expanded to data from all partner countries.

Significant difficulties

This has been a busy and highly productive year for this ambitious and large scale project. No really significant difficulties have occurred in terms of producing deliverables. We had some problem in getting the raw national data for the final validation of the database, but this issue now seems to have been resolved.

Enhancement of project design

A number of refinements in the project occurred in relation to ensuring that the timing of projects events, matches more closely the needs of the partners (see above). In terms of project management, we have been using Microsoft Project software to track progress and

provide a Gantt chart of tasks. This has helped enormously in group planning, with the additional benefit of having been able to send updated versions to the African partners.

Another modification is that at the steering committee meeting in Africa, the partners identified a need for a ‘Strategic Workplan’ for the new monitoring scheme. This will be an aspirational document which will guide the scheme during the first five years after the Darwin project. It is therefore closely linked with the exit strategy and provides a method of quantifying cost needs/implications for the future.

Two other small refinements were also made. First a short and non-technical summary document was produced that outlined the ‘benefits’ to partner organisations of being linked to the project. This was requested by the partners in response to questions by their line managers and others within their organisations. Second, a small glossy promotional ‘flyer’ is being designed and produced to further market the new monitoring scheme within organisations and internationally.

Major work elements for the next reporting period (2003/2004)

Finalisation of monitoring scheme logo and associated promotional material	June 2003
Delivery of hardware and the regional database to partners	August 2003
Launch event for regional monitoring scheme	October/November 2003
Delivery of training and training material to partners	October/November 2003
2 nd project steering committee meeting	October/November 2003
Press releases, TV and radio items in Africa and UK	Throughout year
Production of project exit strategy	End 2003
Production of draft strategic work plan	End 2003

5. Partnerships

The first year of the project has been largely concerned with developing the database and training material. This has required considerable input and communication from the whole partnership, and this has been achieved to a remarkable extent. This has been due to a positive attitude to the project by partners (enhanced by a very successful meeting in Africa), and benefited from the employment of Oliver Nasirwa, a well known figure in biodiversity conservation in eastern Africa, and known to many of the partners prior to the start of the project. As a result there is now a good feeling and dynamic between partners, who feel ‘included’, as well as being informed of the state of play with the different project elements that have taken place in the UK. The focus of the project moves back to Africa in 2003/2004 and this will also be reflected in the roles of the partners. Some difficulties were experienced in obtaining signatures for the MoUs (now resolved), due largely to within-organisation bureaucracy.

6. Impact and Sustainability

The main impact of the project within each country is planned to occur during 2003/2004 with the launch of the new monitoring scheme. One of Oliver Nasirwa’s tasks on returning to Africa will be to organise and promote a launch event. Within the UK the project has been in all of WWT’s recent magazines, reaching an audience of 110,000 members. In relation to the project’s exit strategy (due for completion at the end of 2003), the most significant development has been the establishment of links with a multi-million dollar bid to the Global Environment Facility (GEF). We were approached by Chris Baker (Wetlands International GEF co-ordinator) to see if the future of our Darwin project could be linked to

the GEF bid, and it clearly could. An email outlining the key areas of overlap is presented in Appendix 3. The bid is currently running six months late in submission due to difficulties with the Dutch government contribution levels. This issue is currently being worked on and it is hoped that the bid will be submitted soon.

7. Post-Project Follow up Activities (max 300 words)

8. Not applicable: first year report.

9. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

Table 1. Project Outputs

Code	Quantity	Description
5	1	10 months work in UK by Kenyan Darwin Project Officer in the Research Department at WWT Slimbridge. This included training in developing and using monitoring databases, running a monitoring scheme, and many other issues relating to general biodiversity conservation through science.
8	4	Planning and steering group meetings.
12A	1	Beta version completed; final version in production (see text above).
15A	9	Press release.
15C	6	Press release, 3 articles in WWT magazines, report in Bonn Convention magazine, report in Wetlands International magazine.
15D	2	Press release and radio item in Gloucestershire.
17A	1	E-mail discussion group
20	18,000	Computers presently being configured with database at WWT, to be delivered to partners this year.
23	28,134	In-kind contributions

Table 2: Publications

Type *	Detail	Publishers	Available	Cost £
Not relevant in this year of project.				

10. Project Expenditure

Table 3: Project expenditure 2002/2003.

Item	Budget	Expenditure
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The salaries expenditure was lower than expected as a result of the late start of the Darwin Project Officer (DPO) from Kenya (employed for 10 months in 2002/2003 not for full year). The additional office costs came from the need to support the recent refurbishment of the office that will be used by the DPO on return to Africa. The reduced capital items expenditure resulted from bulk-purchase agreements negotiated with our IT retailers. The increased 'others' expenditure is largely the result of the fact that we paid for all nine partners to attend the week-long steering group meeting, rather than a few representatives from a smaller number of partners. This was on the recommendation of the partners, who felt it important that everyone should be present at the meeting. There was also an increase in expenditure resulting from increased accommodation costs at the Training Institute at Naivasha, and additional travel costs associated with the transport of delegates between Nairobi and Naivasha.

11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

Given the nature of key individual project tasks, the key outputs from the first year of the project are easily quantified (see above). However, qualitative assessment is also relevant in relation to: (a) the regional database, (b) the training material, and (c) scheme name and logo.

In terms of quality control for the database, the whole sub-project has been built around the *needs* of the partners in relation to the management and use of national level data. They have looked at and made comments/improvements on the beta version of the database, and will do the same for the final version. Importantly, the database has also been developed in collaboration with Wetlands International (WI) in west Africa (who administer the African Waterbird Census database), and the final version will shortly receive comments from Wetland International technical staff based in the Netherlands. These people are responsible for setting international standards for such monitoring databases. We are therefore confident that the database will be fit-for-purpose (partners needs) and be of an internationally accepted standard. WWT also administers the UK national waterbird monitoring database (WeBS), and staff from that unit have been very helpful in establishing the underlying structures, models and query tools.

In terms of the training materials, again Wetlands International staff have extensive experience in the production of training material for use in developing countries. Staff from WI and other colleagues in the UK and Africa will thus effectively form an 'editorial board'. The final 'design' of the material is being handled by WWT's design team who have produced a wide variety of printed material for educational use.

The adoption of an appropriate name and logo will be important in marketing the new monitoring scheme and will affect its sustainability. After extensive discussion at the first project steering committee meeting, it was decided that the scheme would be known as the Wetland Biodiversity Monitoring Scheme – Eastern Africa. A picture for the scheme logo has also been produced by an artist, and WWT's design team is currently converting this to a proper logo. The partners have led this process with what they feel is appropriate. One of the tasks of the DPO on his return to Africa will be to contact key organisations and evaluate the suitability of the name and logo for use in eastern Africa, and to check that there will be no conflicts with other organisations. The key lessons of the first year have been in relation to some of the regional politics and sensitivities. The project involves 9 countries but is being 'hosted' by Kenya. We will have to continue to be sensitive to the view of the work being 'Kenyacentric'.

12. Author(s) / Date

Dr Mark O'Connell, Dr Seb Buckton & Oliver Nasirwa **30th May 2003**

Appendices attached below:

APPENDIX 1 Logical framework.

<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Measurable indicators</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Important assumptions</i>
<p><i>Goal</i> To assist countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources with the conservation of biological diversity and implementation of the Biodiversity Convention</p>		National reports to CBD and related conventions (Ramsar, AEWA)	Participant countries are signatories to CBD
<p><i>Purpose</i> To build and maintain capacity in the monitoring of wetland and waterbird biodiversity in Eastern Africa, to provide information for the development of site management plans.</p>	Establishment of the Eastern African Wetland and Waterbird Monitoring Scheme (EAWMS); trained personnel, site management plans	Launch of EAMWS (year 2); trainee questionnaires; steering committee feedback and project evaluation workshop; management plans lodged with management authority	Eastern African regional countries identify this as a priority need and have the human resources and desire to manage the scheme
<p><i>Outputs</i> Regional steering committee</p> <p>Modular curriculum and related training materials</p> <p>Personnel trained to train others in home countries</p> <p>Personnel trained in database management and data use</p> <p>Database to organise and analyse wetlands monitoring data for the region</p> <p>East African Waterbird and Wetland Monitoring Scheme</p> <p>Management plans for one key site per participating country</p>	<p>Steering committee meetings</p> <p>Execution of training programme in the region</p> <p>Two trained personnel in appropriate institutions in each country (end of year 2)</p> <p>Two trained personnel in appropriate institutions in each country (end of year 2)</p> <p>Fully operative database in place by the end of year 2</p> <p>Scheme up and running</p> <p>Management plans completed</p>	<p>Steering committee minutes</p> <p>Training materials. Steering committee reports</p> <p>Steering committee feedback and project evaluation workshop</p> <p>Steering committee feedback and project evaluation workshop</p> <p>Steering committee feedback and project evaluation workshop</p> <p>Launch event, annual report</p> <p>Management plans lodged with relevant management authority</p>	<p>Sufficient members</p> <p>Training materials and trainers available. Demand.</p> <p>Sufficient personnel available</p> <p>Sufficient personnel available</p> <p>Computing facilities and trained staff available</p> <p>Data, National Co-ordinators and volunteers available</p> <p>Data to assess management needs. Staff trained in management planning process</p>
<p><i>Activities</i> Recruit Project Officer</p> <p>Establish regional steering committee to integrate and co-ordinate training issues</p> <p>Develop a modular curriculum of wetland monitoring courses</p> <p>Produce material for the above courses for both trainers and trainees</p> <p>Deliver the training curriculum for identified trainees</p> <p>Train appropriate staff to deliver the curriculum after the end of the Darwin project</p> <p>Deliver a ready-to-use monitoring database with technical training</p> <p>Training in the multiple uses of the monitoring database in host countries</p> <p>Develop management plans for a key site in each participating country</p>	<p>Inputs: Advertising, interviewing</p> <p>Annual meetings of steering committee in the region</p> <p>Appointment and training of Darwin Project Officer</p> <p>Production of training materials for all modules</p> <p>Regional training courses</p> <p>Provision of training, hiring of training centre</p> <p>Provision of computers and software, training, hiring of training centre</p> <p>Provision of training, hiring of training centre</p> <p>Establish management boards, write management plans</p>	<p>Project Officer appointed</p> <p>Steering committee feedback and evaluation workshop</p> <p>Training materials produced, steering committee feedback</p> <p>Training materials given to National Co-ordinators; steering committee feedback</p> <p>Standard trainee questionnaire, reported to steering committee</p> <p>Standard trainee questionnaire. Steering committee feedback</p> <p>Publications produced using reporting protocols</p> <p>Standard trainee questionnaire. Steering committee feedback</p> <p>Plans lodged with management authorities</p>	<p>Candidates available</p> <p>Sufficient candidates for steering committee; able to meet on a regular basis</p> <p>Capacity to develop curriculum</p> <p>Curriculum completed</p> <p>Trainers available to deliver curriculum. Sufficient staff to receive training</p> <p>Sufficient staff to receive training</p> <p>Computing facilities provided</p> <p>Appropriate staff available</p> <p>Data for assessing needs, staff trained in management planning</p>

APPENDIX 2 Agenda of first project steering group meeting

23/02/2003	AM	Participants arrive in Nairobi, Kenya	
	13:00	Depart from Nairobi to Naivasha	
	15:00	Arrive at KWSTI in Naivasha and Check-in	
24/02/2003	09:00	Introductions, objectives of the meeting and agenda for the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants name, organisation and job • <u>Objectives:</u> To build the partnership To exchange information about the Darwin project To agree and plan progress of project To discuss structure of proposed monitoring scheme To discuss administration of proposed monitoring scheme • Meeting agenda
	09:30	Darwin Project: outline, updates & project timetable	History of project Darwin Initiative WWT What achieved so far Project timetable/flow chart
	10:30	Tea/coffee break	
	11:00	Country reports (10 minutes per country)	Brief introduction to wetlands in country (Ramsars/IBS) Involvement in AfWC Volunteers Sites Counts Data management Data use
	12:30	WI/AfWC	East African region in relation AfWC WI perspective on proposed monitoring scheme
	13:00	Lunch	
	14:00	Project partnership issues	Comments on issues associated with partner's involvement in project
	14:30	The Eastern African Waterbird Monitoring Scheme	Roles Computer: hardware, software Database Strategic workplan
	15:30	Tea/coffee break	
	16:00	Continue above discussion	As above
		Evening talk by WWT	
25/02/2003	09:00	Recap of yesterday and today's agenda	
	09:15	Data issues	Existing data/AfWC data Data ownership/sharing Data distribution and flow Coordination of data collection
	10:30	Tea/coffee break	
	11:00	Wetland management plans	Who's responsible/methodology established ? Group of experience Proposal for one plan per country Progressing the proposals
	12:00	Publicity and press releases and project launch event	As per agenda item
	12:30	Project exit strategy	Achieving the sustainability of the project beyond Darwin funding
	13:00	Lunch	
	14:00	Project exit strategy (continued)	As above
	14:30	Training modules and content	Review draft training module content
	15:30	Tea/coffee break	
	16:00	Delivery of training	Methods, timing and duration, materials, participants.
	16:30	AOB	

APPENDIX 2 *Message from Chris Baker in relation to GEF bid*