



*Kenya's Important Biodiversity Areas:
improving monitoring, management
and conservation action*

First Annual Report

submitted by



*The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK*

in partnership with

Nature*Kenya*



April 2002 – March 2003

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Annual Report

1. Darwin Project Information

Project title	Kenyan Important Biodiversity Areas: Improving monitoring, management and conservation action
Country(ies)	Kenya
Contractor	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds with Nature Kenya
Project Reference No.	162/11/003
Grant Value	£98,337
Start/Finishing dates	1 April 2002 to 30 June 2005
Reporting period	1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003

2. Project Background

The project will establish and co-ordinate an effective, sustainable monitoring system at 60 Important Biodiversity Areas throughout Kenya, track the status of the IBA network and feedback directly into improved site management, conservation action and national reporting. Nature Kenya considers the conservation of IBAs as a key part of their conservation programme to conserve birds and wider biodiversity. This current project is building on the earlier successes in developing a functioning national network and some local initiatives to conserve these sites.

Government and non-Government organisations and institutions concerned with biodiversity conservation in Kenya have recognised the key importance of IBA monitoring for conservation planning, evaluation and timely targeting of intervention efforts. Unfortunately, the capacity for monitoring in Kenya remained weak at the start of this project. This need was emphasised by the data gaps and skills shortages made apparent during development of the World Bird Database, which seeks to generate and maintain long term information about the status of the world's birds and the key sites that they inhabit. Outside of work by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) monitoring team, what monitoring information existed was not being collated at the national level and seldom used to inform conservation decision making.

Nature Kenya therefore requested support for relevant training and technical support towards establishing this system. Partners will be trained in ecological survey, data management, management planning, project management, advocacy and training skills. They will train and support a network of local people and government field staff. Particular focus will be on priority sites where community-based Site Support Groups are established.

Project Objectives

The purpose of the project is *'Improved monitoring, management and conservation action is taking place in Kenya's Important Biodiversity Areas*

The outputs are

1. Project systems in place
2. National site monitoring system established and covering all IBAs
3. Detailed monitoring carried out at key IBAs feeds into improved management planning
4. Effective feedback loops established between monitoring and national conservation action and reporting
5. Conservation interventions made as a result of threats or opportunities identified by monitoring
6. Mechanisms identified and capacity built to sustain the collection and use of practical monitoring information in the longer term

See logframe attached as Annex 1. The project objectives have not been amended since the start of the project.

3. Progress

Background

This is the first year of the project. At the beginning of the project, there was a series of draft monitoring protocols for key habitat types. The IBA National Liaison Committee had agreed to form a monitoring sub-committee. Some site support groups were beginning to put the protocols into practice on a sporadic basis.

Progress to date

An assessment of progress towards achieving the results and their indicators is included in the logframe attached as Annex 1.

The project has begun well and is on track. All staff are in place, the Advisory Committee has been constituted and has met three times (once by telephone and once in part in Kenya). The Kenya IBA monitoring sub-committee has also been constituted and a Kenyan based project team has met regularly. RSPB staff have visited Kenya five times and a meeting of key stakeholders in August undertook a training needs assessment and finalised the training programme. This was then followed by the first training courses on survey and monitoring techniques and subsequently training of trainers. Follow-up visits have been made targeting all the government officers and Site Support Groups trained in the first survey and

monitoring course. Forms for basic monitoring recording have been finalised and widely distributed to IBA field staff. Equipment and follow on training needs have been identified for each of these sites. Action points for each of the sites have been discussed and agreed on by the project team and a programme of execution is in place.

A baseline status report on IBAs has been prepared. Seven priority IBAs for additional project input have been agreed and the first training courses planned for these groups. The protocols for monitoring continue to develop based on field experience. The project has appeared in two RSPB/BirdLife International publications and in the Nature Kenya Bulletin and Newsletter. We have met twice with WWT to discuss potential collaboration in our respective Darwin projects.

The timetable has slipped a little partly because of an agreed delay in starting activities, partly because of work overloads among project staff and partly because of the need to schedule activities when other organisations can best participate. The integration of the monitoring programme into the routine work schedules of key partner organisations to ensure sustainable activity remains this project's biggest challenge. A good start has been made, especially with the close links with KWS monitoring unit and with the National Museum and with the development of monitoring as a key objective of the Forest Department. We need to increase both the support given to field staff of those organisations and also enhance further the profile of and support for the programme amongst senior officials.

Some activities have been and will be delivered in a slightly modified manner. For example we specified that monitoring protocols would be finalised and adopted in Year one. In practice we do not wish to be as precise as this. The existing protocols appear to work well but will inevitably evolve slightly in the light of gathering expertise and experience. Similarly we are reviewing the proposals for a series of database management and analysis workshops to hone it better to what is needed at present. A review meeting will now be held in late May rather than February as planned – the project team in Nairobi have meanwhile been continuously reviewing performance in collaboration with RSPB's Project Leader.

One of the Field Officers gained alternative employment at Lake Bogoria IBA and has been replaced – a Nature Kenya staff member fulfilled his role during the intervening period. We have expanded the Advisory Committee to incorporate an additional member from National Museums of Kenya. This may result in one additional airfare in Year two. Following the training assessment, we agreed to expand the number of people attending longer 5 day survey and monitoring workshops. This has some budget implications in year two especially, although we are confident that adjustments can be made to accommodate this. We sourced funds for a good quality computer from another budget which can be used on this project. We have analysed equipment needs and will purchase additional field resources such as binoculars and GPSs to help with site based activities.

Training activities and results

The key training programmes implemented so far were the five day training course on survey and monitoring techniques for field staff operating at individual IBAs. This was delivered by a team of UK and Kenyan project staff and was designed to give both a full understanding of the principles and benefits of monitoring, practical guidance on survey methods, experience of completing the basic monitoring forms

and a chance to design a detailed monitoring strategy for their own IBA. The 28 participants were selected on the basis of the importance of the IBA – the critical sites being favoured, mandate of their institutions in conservation and their likely participation in monitoring at national level. The selection was discussed with employing organisations and the invitations were issued through them. Wetland sites did not feature heavily in this first course, pending further discussion with WWT regarding the level of training of wetland managers likely to feature in their own Darwin project.

The training for trainers course was designed to enable participants to more confidently deliver training in survey and monitoring principles (and other relevant subjects) to both community groups and also their peers in Government organisations. The course brought together 18 participants including members of the project team, representatives of site support groups who will assist in the training of their colleagues and Government officers responsible for other staff at site level.

Difficulties encountered

Difficulties occurring are discussed above. For the training courses themselves no significant difficulties have emerged other than the inevitable ones of finding times when everybody can participate. Mixing Government staff with representatives of community groups has many benefits but also challenges in terms of different experience, attitudes and expectations. Getting the government officers to allocate time within their schedule to incorporate monitoring activities is the key. Although most government officers said (during follow-up visits) that they are involved in some sort of monitoring in their sites, which could in fact contribute significantly to the basic and in some cases detailed monitoring, they still see the scheme as a different activity

Project design

The design of the programme has not been significantly altered and the project logframe remains accurate. We decided to arrange more detailed training for field staff involved in the project than had been planned and we may need to continue to upgrade this through the remainder of the project. The Kenyan based members of the project formed a 'project team' to enhance day to day implementation and communication.

Workplan for 2003/4

See separate attachment as Annex 2.

4. Partnerships

UK-Kenyan partnership

The partnerships, both between RSPB and the lead partner Nature Kenya, and within the Kenyan institutions, are generally working very well. Nature Kenya consider the IBA programme to be the cornerstone of their conservation programme and have accorded a very high priority to this project although it is has been a challenging year for them with the end of major funding programmes and a number of new projects under development.

From the start we have aimed to entrench the monitoring system within the routine work of the Kenyan government institutions. This inevitably results in some delays due to heavy workloads. It is quite hard to maintain good communications with the larger institutions and there have been some disappointments with attendances at particular workshops and at the pace of progress. Senior officials in these organisations, including those on our advisory group have been very helpful in seeking to improve communications.

Collaboration with other institutions and projects

The project has led to the formation of the national IBA monitoring sub-committee. There have been enhanced relationships between Nature Kenya and other Kenyan institutions, especially with the Forest Department and Kenya Wildlife Service monitoring unit and with some sections of the National Museum that they did not hitherto work with closely.

We have collaborated closely with the East African wetlands monitoring project managed by Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. We have held two liaison meetings with them in UK and they also met Nature Kenya staff during their recent visit to Kenya.

Some organisations not immediately associated with the project have expressed an interest in its work. Special mention may be made of the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya Ecotourism Society of Kenya, the Kenya Forest Working Group and BIOTA Project (in one of the critical IBAs) who have been very supportive of the project and keen to be involved. Their participation opens up possibilities to popularise the project in ways that we had not expected.

5. Impact and Sustainability

The project has made satisfactory progress in these areas although it is rather early to judge impact and sustainability. The project has not so far received wide public profile in Kenya as impacts have yet to become very evident in the field. The best opportunity for media work unfortunately fell just before December's General elections. However we have secured good profile within the implementing organisations – the monitoring workshop in November was opened by the Chief Conservator of Forests in Kenya and the Deputy Director (Monitoring and Planning) of Kenya Wildlife Service is on our advisory group.

The need to monitor IBAs has certainly become more widely recognised. So far 28 (21 survey + monitoring & 7 for ToT) people from Government agencies have attended formal training courses, along with 2 people from NGOs and 15 people from community groups. As a result 37 monitoring forms have been submitted from 17 IBAs. The Forest department has established a new biodiversity committee – the committee will be in-charge of coordinating biodiversity monitoring activities within the Forest Department and harmonising monitoring with other functions of the pre-existing Forest Biodiversity Unit. The committee will play a major role in streamlining information flow and designing an appropriate feedback mechanism in collaboration with Nature Kenya from the field to the headquarters.

Nature Kenya have recently been awarded a grant of around £50,000 by DANIDA to strengthen the capacity and networking of Kenya's site support groups. While not directly related to site monitoring and management, this programme should

strengthen the groups as a whole and increase their ability and enthusiasm for monitoring and their understanding of how it fits into and assists their work to expand community benefits from natural resource management.

The exit strategy is unchanged since the beginning of the project. All project activities have emphasised that there is a need to integrate this work into organisation's workplans. We have been careful to avoid incurring financial costs which could not be sustained once project funds are no longer available.

6. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

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

Code No.	Quantity	Description
5	4 people	Progress on track except that one of the 2 Field Offices gained alternative employment. Nature Kenya staff stepped in to cover this work and after some delay he has now been replaced. Their work is being focused more directly on monitoring. The interns at Mukurweini and South Nandi are working well
6A	20 x 1 28 x 5 4 x 1.5 17 x 3 = 220 = 43.4 weeks	The courses have been refocused a little with more emphasis placed on the survey and monitoring aspects. The project development and training needs workshop was restricted to one day for those likely to be involved in organising project activities. A 5 day workshop on monitoring and training was held for field staff followed by a (poorly attended) 1.5 day resume for Nairobi based staff. 17 people attended the training for trainers course in March 2003.
6A	35 people	20 Government officers, 9 members of SSGs and 2 representatives from other conservation NGOs attended a 5 day workshop on ecological survey and monitoring techniques from 19-23/11/02 and a further 4 attended a 1.5 day review meeting from 25/26/11/02.
8	3.2 weeks	The Project Leader spent 16 days working on project related activities in Kenya
8	35 people	20 Government officers, 9 members of SSGs and 2 representatives from other conservation NGOs attended a 5 day workshop on ecological survey and monitoring techniques from 19-23/11/02 and a further 4 attended a 1.5 day review meeting from 25-26/11/02.
8	6 weeks	The Chief Research Trainer spent 15 working days in Kenya by end Nov 2002. There has been more involvement in the training by advisory group members than anticipated. Two members spent 10 and 5 days respectively in Kenya in lieu of involvement by the other Research trainer to date.

8	1 week	RSPB's Youth and volunteer training Officer spent one week in Kenya delivering the Training for Trainers course in March 2003
8	15 days = 3 weeks	Two of three UK Advisory Group members (apart from Project Leader and Chief research trainer) have spent between 5 and 10 days each in Kenya by end November 2002. The other advisory group member missed this meeting due to illness though he did visit Kenya privately in December 2002 and spent time working with project team members.
12	1 database	The database has continued to be populated throughout the project period. In addition RSPB has funded additional input of ornithological records since Oct 2002
13B		Very little progress with developing specimen collections so far as detailed monitoring is at an early stage and reference collections have not been established.
15C	1 press release	Press Release issued by RSPB in November 2002
15C	1 article	The project featured in Winter 2002 edition of Birds
16A/B	50 people circulated	Workshop material circulated to 50 people. This comprised training briefings, extracts of the IBA accounts for different sites, copies of 'A Handbook of Conservation' by Bill Sutherland and copies of 'Expedition field techniques for bird surveys' by BirdLife/Expedition Advisory Centre.
17A	1 committee	IBA monitoring sub-committee established as part of National Liaison Committee. They have met 3 times, individual members have also met severally informally during other conservation fora where monitoring issues have been discussed. A wider network of active field staff has been developing subsequent to the monitoring and survey training. A Kenya based Project Team is also in place and has met 8 times.
18A	0	Efforts to get coverage by the Kenyan media was unsuccessful partly because the workshops were not viewed as breaking news and partly because of the general elections which took away attention from other issues in the country. SSGs work (including indirectly monitoring) has featured once on Kenyan Television.
19A	0	One radio recording covering IBAs in central part of Kenya was undertaken but has not been aired to date
20	£2160.79 Capital spend Darwin	1 computer purchased (with matched funds) 15 GPS, 30 pairs binoculars, books
22	50	40 sampling plots established in Kinangop Plateau and 10 Permanent Sampling Plots in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest

Performance of outputs against expectation

Training has taken place more or less according to schedule with some modifications described above. The first training session for site support groups was due to take place in March but has been delayed until May 2003.

The project has failed to secure coverage in the popular media so far. In Kenya this was partly due to the all consuming coverage of the General elections. More effort is needed on this as well as a refinement of the media approach to make the project appear more appealing.

We undertook more extensive and detailed training of field staff than had been planned. The project team was an additional innovation. RSPB funded additional data input and database development which although aimed at a separate programme will have knock on benefits for this project.

We were probably over optimistic in expecting detailed monitoring to get going in all sites where SSGs will be given training over the following year. As a result some outputs such as sampling plots and reference collections are behind schedule at this stage.

Table 2: Publications

Type * (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (title, author, year)	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. contact address, website)	Cost £
Unpublished Report	'Current monitoring conservation status' Lead author: Wanyoike Wamiti March 2003	IBA and Nature Kenya/Natio nal Museums of Kenya	Nature Kenya	Free
Unpublished Report	'Survey monitoring training report' Lead author: Chris Bowden March 2003	RSPB/ Nature Kenya	RSPB/Nature Kenya	Free
Unpublished Report	'Training Trainers' workshop report Lead authors: Ivan Nethercoat/ Solomon Mwangi March 2003	RSPB/ Nature Kenya	RSPB/Nature Kenya	Free

The report outlining the current monitoring and conservation status is included at Annex 3.

Information provision

Government and non-Government field staff associated with IBAs, as well as decision makers and HQ staff, have been provided with considerable quantities of information both during and after formal training sessions. This will continue. We have taken trouble from the outside to set in place only support and modes of working which can be sustained at a low cost once the monitoring network is established. The partner organisation, Nature Kenya has made informal presentations in two workshops funded by the Global Environment Facility to develop Biodiversity Indicators for National Use. Nature Kenya has been nominated to participate in the National Steering Committee for this project. It is anticipated that the project will provide opportunities for raising awareness of the project and its objectives.

7. Project Expenditure

Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period

Item	Budget	Expenditure
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Nb Above expenditure relates to component funded by Darwin initiative only.

The project underspent in the first year for a number of reasons. In particular expenditure was low on travel and subsistence, conferences and seminars, capital expenditure and printing. The first two items were related to careful budgeting of costs, restructuring of the needs assessment meeting in August (with a shorter more targeted meeting) and the delay in setting up the first training sessions for SSGs (scheduled for March - now to be held in May 2003). Rescheduling of these sessions and the more intensive training planned for IBA network members in Year two (5 days rather than 2 days) will necessitate this funding to be spent in the remainder of the project's lifespan.

Capital spend was lower due to a delay in deciding on optimal equipment requirements, especially for SSGs. The RSPB managed to secure a suitable computer

from a different budget which enables more funds to be spent on essential equipment for the monitoring network itself – this will mainly be in the form of GPSs, binoculars and field guides. We were intending to purchase additional GPSs in March but they are currently out of stock.

Printing has been lower than expected, partly because ongoing costs have not been separated from other admin expenditure. We have not formally published any outputs as yet but we are likely to produce a newsletter in Year two and also produce a more formalised IBA status report prior to the CBD COP in early 2004.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

Monitoring and evaluation methods

The main methods/organs of project monitoring are the advisory group which has met (in whole or part) three times, the regular visits by the RSPB project leader (four times this year) and the meetings of the Nature Kenya/National Museums project team. The main training sessions on ecological monitoring and survey and on Training for Trainers have been separately evaluated.

Achievement of the project purpose will depend upon the development of a skilled, equipped and motivated network of people based at the site level. Our efforts have been geared to that end and show promise, although it is probably too early to judge long term success. The indicators of success will be measured according to the indicators and means of verification in the project logframe although we will continue to monitor the relevance and reliability of these.

Lessons learned

Nature Kenya have identified three particular lessons learned from the first year of the project:

1. Inviting participants through their institutions (involving them in the selection process), although a long and tedious process has proved to be an effective method of enhancing government institutions' understanding of the project, gaining support and building sustainability
2. Formation of a project implementation team with diverse experiences and backgrounds as a hands-on implementing body within the project management structure has been a strong point in ensuring execution of the project activities. The project will continue working in its present composition in the rest of the project's lifespan, and hopefully beyond.
3. The need for flexibility in the work plan to allow for time of reflection, and follow-up before the next activity, and also to give time for unexpected events i.e. projects and activities that contribute to the overall programme goal but which were not anticipated in the work plan.

9. Author(s) / Date

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