

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Kenyan Important Biodiversity Areas: Improving monitoring, management and conservation action
Country	Kenya
Organisation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Project Ref. No.	162/11/003
Report date	October 2003 (report period April 1 st to Sept 30 th 2003)

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

1. Project systems in place

Regular project team meetings have been held. The UK project leader visited the project in late May and the Chief Trainer in August. It has proved hard to get people together for advisory and NLC meetings but the NLC met in July and extensive consultations have been undertaken with each, both through one on one meetings and through electronic media. Meetings of both are planned shortly.

2. National site monitoring system established and covering all IBAs

Following the first series of monitoring and survey training in November 2002, the project team has continued to make a number of follow up visits to some of the IBAs where training has already been undertaken.

Efforts have been redoubled to turn training and discussion into action through the completion and return of monitoring forms for as many IBAs as possible. While the detailed monitoring has proceeded well there have been some delays in circulating forms to some of the IBAs concerned. Distribution through institutions responsible for managing the IBAs is essential for long term sustainability but we are also pursuing additional methods both through mailing and opportunistic distribution.

3. Detailed monitoring carried out at key IBAs feeds into improved management planning

Site Support Group training leading to enhanced effort on detailed monitoring has taken place for 5 IBAs – the first in May for the Papyrus swamps of Yala and Dunga was attended by more than 20 local members including representatives from government agencies and local authority. Then similar numbers attended a training workshop at Kinangop Plateau IBA (~20) in July, Kikuyu Escarpment Forest (~25) in August and Mukurweini (~23) also in August. Training manuals have been produced for each of these courses reflecting the different habitats involved.

4. Effective feedback loops established between monitoring and national conservation action and reporting

Training was delivered to a small group of practitioners in database management and analysis in August 2003. An Africa wide meeting on IBA monitoring and database management was held in Kenya in August which provided an opportunity to discuss the results and experiences so far with representatives of around 15 countries. This was followed up at the annual Council of the African Partnership meeting in Tanzania in September.

The measures outlined under output 2 has improved the rate of return of monitoring forms and we expect to be on track to produce a second IBA status report in early 2004, in time for the next CBD CoP in March 2004.

5. Conservation interventions made as a result of threats or opportunities identified by monitoring

Information from site monitoring is starting to informally influence strategies at NatureKenya site projects. However data has yet to be analysed so it is too early to see real impacts for this output.

6. Mechanisms identified and capacity built to sustain the collection and use of practical monitoring information in the longer term

Two staff members of NatureKenya and one from national Museums of Kenya visited RSPB in August 2003 to receive formal and informal training on project development and fundraising. Each came with a concept project to be developed into an active proposal for funding and these were worked on after return to Kenya with inputs from RSPB staff.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments, that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will effect the budget and timetable of project activities. Have any of these issues been discussed with the Department and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Staff turnover in the collaborating institutions (NMK and Forest Department) has in some cases led to either delays in planned activities or slowed progress in executing activities. The suspension of all senior Forest Department officials in Kenya in October 2003 is also likely to cause some serious though temporary impacts, particularly with regard to return of monitoring forms.

Some delays have occurred in a few activities. Management plans are likely to develop further following training in October 2003. We consider the database training more or less complete but some additional training may occur later in the project to ensure that more people are aware of the systems used. Some equipment purchase has been further delayed but will be completed before the end of Year two.

An advisory group meeting was not held in May but the group have been circulated material and involved in decisions prior to the next meeting in November 2003. The project has found public promotion difficult but some was achieved through the visit of the UK Environment Minister just after this reporting period. Some changes will be made on project delivery and advocacy strategy to fit most effectively with the next two CBD CoPs planned in March 2004 and again in summer 2005, when more detailed national reporting is anticipated.

Financial spends have been more or less on track – a number of events are planned in Oct/Nov 2003 which will increase expenditure to nearer the predicted level. Some predicted overspends e.g. on the advisory group will probably not occur due to tie-ins with other meetings and non availability of one or two members.

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures. Thanks for the recent feedback on our annual report. We have tried to flag up one or two responses to issues above but may respond on other matters once they are reflected upon. Can we clarify whether you would like to receive now additional material referred to but not annexed in the annual report, or whether we should simply note the desirability of including such material when preparing our second annual report in April 2004? We will note the other points raised for the future and review project indicators at the next opportunity.