

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Education and training for restoring tropical forest biodiversity
Country	Thailand
Organisation	Horticulture Research International
Project Ref. No.	162/11/023
Report date	<i>April to September 2003</i>

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

Excellent progress has been made over the last 6 months, and the project outputs are mostly on schedule. Demand for the educational services has far exceeded expectation, so additional education events have been undertaken.

Bimonthly Workshops: Three workshops scheduled for the last 6 months were completed as planned. The target groups reached were English-speaking volunteers with NGO's (run in English to showcase Darwin education services); eco-tour operators and a group of forest officers and community members from southern Thailand, who wish to replicate FORRU's work there to restore habitat for the critically endangered Gurney's Pitta.

School events: Forty-two school events (in classrooms and at FORRU's field sites) were run during this reporting period (83 since the project began) reaching 2,188 children and involving 141 teachers.

Unscheduled education events: Darwin Education Officers (DEO) provided teaching at two village tree-planting events in May, hosted a visit from 25 Forest Department officials in July and a visit from 11 Bhutanese foresters in June. DEO's presented their work at a conference for school teachers at the Queen Sirikit Botanical Gardens in July.

Newsletter and Website: The bilingual reforestation newsletter was compiled in May. Four hundred Thai and 100 English versions were distributed by post. A further 50 copies were distributed by hand from the Unit. The September edition is currently being produced. DEO's attended a training course in website design and have launched a project website (<http://www.forru.org>). This website, which has been online for the past 5 months, has generated many new enquiries about the project and allows direct downloading of the newsletters. The project is also featured on the UNEP-WCMC website (<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/restoration/docs/Thailand.pdf>).

Media: The Indochina Media Memorial Foundation made a documentary about the project to be broadcast in Thailand and neighbouring countries. The DEO's presented 3 radio broadcasts (each one lasting about an hour). A popular article has been submitted to the local magazine "Guidelines" which should go to press in November. Work is underway on a scientific paper on silvicultural techniques.

Forest Restoration Manual: Good progress has been made on the Manual. Most of the text is at an advanced stage of drafting. Illustrations have been commissioned and layout of two chapters completed. Although we are slightly behind schedule with first draft completion, we will accelerate testing of the manual to compensate and are confident that a final publication date of October 2004 is achievable.

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?

Due to a lengthy illness, Dr Blakesley's visit to Thailand scheduled for early 2003 had to be postponed. This visit will now take place in January 2004. Dr Blakesley's other responsibilities within the programme were carried out as normal. The Utilisation Workshop and associated media events have been delayed until November to accommodate the participants. This has no effect on the budget or overall project objectives of the second year. There has been one change of staff during the reporting period. Mr Kunakorn Boonsai has left to manage a forest restoration project in the South of Thailand (with which FORRU now collaborates) and has been replaced by Mr Wasun Leerat, who is now undergoing training.

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Funding three months in arrears continues to create problems for the Thai partner, who is forced to borrow money to cover salaries and running costs of the Darwin programme. Consequently, our Thai partner has once again asked if it is possible to receive payments in advance, please.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, Email: stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk