

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Annual Report - 23 May 2003

Recovering Ukraine's Lost Steppe - A Unique Opportunity

1. Darwin Project Information

Project title	<i>Recovering Ukraine's Lost Steppe Land: a Unique Opportunity</i>
Country(ies)	<i>Ukraine</i>
Contractor	<i>Dr D.W. Minter, CABI Bioscience</i>
Project Reference No.	<i>162/11/026</i>
Grant Value	<i>£165,600</i>
Start/Finishing dates	<i>April 2002 / March 2005</i>
Reporting period	<i>October /March 2003</i>

2. Project Background

Current conditions in Ukraine's agriculture and military sectors provide a unique opportunity to recover steppe.

Agriculture. Large areas (much originally steppe) lie derelict through economic stagnation and a declining but increasingly urbanized population. As part of Rio commitments, Ukraine's government favours restoration to natural landscapes: in Crimea alone, 37,000 ha are identified as suitable.

Military. Training areas and other military lands are often important for nature. The UK Ministry of Defence routinely considers conservation when managing such areas, knowing its public relations value. Ukrainian military also has custody of many important natural landscapes, including large areas of steppe, but conservation is not a factor in their management. In September 2001, Ukrainian and UK Ministries of Defence signed a Memorandum of Understanding which, for the first time, included agreement to co-operate over ecology.

3. Project Objectives

The "log-frame" from the original proposal is included in this Report (Appendix 1). The objectives of this project, as stated in the original proposal were to:

Agriculture. The present project aims to:

- gather Ukrainian scientists with appropriate restoration skills;
- give them practical experience (on problem areas of existing reserves);
- accumulate suitable materials, including seeds and seedlings of steppe plants;
- pass those skills and resources to villagers with suitable land adjacent to reserves;
- empower villagers to maintain and extend recreated natural landscapes, and use them sustainably.

Military. The present proposal aims to:

- establish links between Ukrainian biologists, Ukrainian military administrators, and suitable UK personnel, through study trips and seminars explaining the importance of nature conservation, and its public relations value;
- [if possible] formalize those links into a national Joint Advisory Panel where Ukrainian scientists can advise military administrators about conservation issues, helping disseminate that advice, perhaps through further local panels.

The objectives have not been modified over the last year.

4. Progress

- The offer of grant from the Darwin Initiative was dated 26 June 2002, and work began immediately. This report at the end of its first year covers all activities of the project up to now. 2003 is my tenth year of continuous collaboration in Ukraine. During that period, which included two earlier Darwin Initiative projects, I have built up an enthusiastic and active team there, with a wide range of activities, all related to conservation of the country's biological diversity. The following description of progress over the last year has attempted to describe the present Darwin Initiative project in the context of those activities. Inevitably, given the long history of collaboration, some elements of our present work develop achievements resulting from those earlier projects. The following activities have been undertaken during the first year of the project.
 - **June 2002.** Project started. I visited Kiev and communicated objectives of project to colleagues there. Agreement was reached to prepare a book reviewing the current state of expertise on steppe conservation in Ukraine, and to publish it through this project.
 - **July 2002.** Work at Opuk Nature Reserve started. Several trailer-loads of rubbish cleared from the reserve. The only spring on the reserve was cleaned and made functional again, with a trough and stone surround constructed.
 - **July 2002.** Website for the *XIV Congress of European Mycologists* went live with Darwin Initiative support.
 - **July 2002.** Dr Tetiana Andrianova participated in the BioNET-INTERNATIONAL *3rd Global Workshop*, Pretoria, as representative of Ukraine. **Comment.** Although not strictly part of the objectives of the present project, attendance at this meeting helped realize the exit strategy of my previous Darwin Initiative project "*Biodiversity Conservation in the former Soviet Union*" by taking its results (including the Directory "*Who's Who in Biodiversity Sciences in the former Soviet Union*") to BioNET-INTERNATIONAL's periodic global forum where infrastructural questions are decided. Dr Alex Ryss (St Petersburg, Russia), Dr Konstantin Baikov (Novosibirsk, Russia), Dr Galina Nam (Almaty, Kazakhstan) and Prof. Ashot Charchoghlian (Yerevan, Armenia), all involved in that previous Darwin Initiative project, also participated in the Pretoria meeting. At that meeting, BioNET-INTERNATIONAL appointed Dr Alex Ryss as co-ordinator of an embryonic LOOP (Locally Organized Operating Partnership) for north-east Europe and Asia, and with that appointment, BioNET-INTERNATIONAL has taken over the infrastructural development for biodiversity sciences in that part of the world initiated by my previous Darwin Initiative project.
 - **August 2002.** Dr Tetiana Andrianova participated in the *7th International Mycological Congress*, Oslo, as an invited speaker. **Comment.** Again, not strictly part of the objectives of the present project, but too good an opportunity to miss, since I was already driving in my old Land-rover to Oslo with two Cuban mycologists funded through my Cuban Darwin Initiative project and my Cuban British Council project, camping en-route, so that the marginal costs were relatively small when weighed against the very real benefits of ensuring that Ukrainian mycology kept a place on the world stage. The outcome more than justified the decision: Dr Andrianova was elected at that meeting to the Executive Committee of the *International Mycological Association*.
 - **August 2002.** Ms Tatiana Krivomaz participated in the *4th International Congress on Systematics & Ecology of Myxomycetes* in Brussels. **Comment.** Again, not strictly part of the objectives of the present project, but too good an opportunity to miss. Ms Krivomaz was already in the UK helping with the collection and packing of a large consignment of computers and other equipment for Cuba and Ukraine. A mutual friend and amateur working with myxomycetes provided her with free transport to and from Brussels, and with free accommodation and opportunities for collaborative fieldwork for part of her time in Britain, making the costs involved marginal compared to the benefits gained.
 - **August 2002.** Work at Opuk Nature Reserve continued. Two wells were cleared and made functional again. Seeds of *Triticum boeoticum* an important, endangered steppe endemic plant, were collected. A small building on the reserve was repaired to function as a store room for first aid and fire-fighting equipment, and as a rest place for reserve staff.

- **August 2002.** Preliminary agreement with Nikita Botanic Garden to support development of a steppe plant seed collection. **Comment.** Subsequent events at Nikita suggested that close formal collaboration with that institution would be undesirable at present. See below in the section of this report dealing with problems under **corruption**.
- **September 2002.** I visited Ukraine (funded by a different project), and met the Director of Opuk Nature Reserve in Simferopol'. We reviewed his priorities for the reserve, and he agreed to try to identify a building on or near the reserve suitable to serve as a visitors' centre and reserve museum. A review of conditions in villages near Opuk Nature Reserve suggests that there is some way to go before an bed & breakfast accommodation can be established there. **Comment.** It should be noted that "visitors' centre" means something different from the concept familiar to western Europeans of a building providing exhibits and information for day visitors. In Opuk Nature Reserve, the first stage is to establish a place where visiting scientists can overnight safely while working on the reserve.
- **October 2002.** Plans for winter work at the Khomutovskyi Steppe (part of the National Ukrainian Steppe Reserve) agreed. **Comment.** Horses purchased through a different, now finished project for grazing the reserve to prevent scrub encroachment are being maintained through the present project. 2002 was an exceptionally unfavourable year for hay in southeast Ukraine, where the reserve is located, and at that point there were 12 horses - still fewer than the 15 horses reckoned to be the minimum number for self-sustaining the work. With foals in 2003, the number of horses was expected to reach 15.
- **October 2002.** Manuscript of proposed Darwin Initiative book on steppe conservation ready. **Comment.** The book summarizes experiences of experts involved in conservation of steppe biodiversity in Ukraine.
- **October 2002.** Dr Vera Hayova, Dr Vladimir Isikov and Mr Alexei Korchmit (a member of Balaclava's local administration) visited the UK (travel funded by a different project). **Comment.** The trip gave them experience of public access to military training land (at Worbarrow Bay and Tyneham), re-development of brownfield sites for ecotourism (Cornish china-clay mining), long-distance coastal paths, Dartmoor National Park, the National Trust and its activities and backpackers hostels. Lively discussion identified backpackers hostels as the best option for developing ecotourism in Crimea.
- **November 2002.** Ms Tatiana Krivomaz participated in the *International Myxomycete Workshop* organized in Cuba by Dr Camino through my Cuban Darwin Initiative project. **Comment.** A wonderful opportunity to give a talented young mycologist tropical experience, and to strengthen her position in the world community of scientists working with myxomycetes. As a result, she was subsequently invited to participate in fieldwork in the Great Smoky Mountains of West Virginia, USA.
- **December 2002.** Contact established with Ukrainian military. For further information about this, see the section below on **collaboration with Ukrainian military personnel**.
- **December 2002.** Copies of the UK MOD conservation magazine *Sanctuary*, plus other MOD conservation pamphlets, booklets and posters distributed to all teachers in Ukraine participating in the British Council's *English for Peacekeepers* scheme within the country.
- **December 2002.** First meeting with the Ukrainian military.
- **January 2003.** Poster to publicize Opuk Nature Reserve locally at first draft stage.
- **February 2003.** Copies of the UK MOD conservation magazine *Sanctuary* and other MOD conservation literature distributed to teachers participating in the British Council's *English for Peacekeepers* scheme in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. **Comment.** This has been a real catalytic success story, with ideas about biodiversity conservation on military land being spread far wider than the original plan of Ukraine alone.
- **March 2003.** 4 meetings / seminars held with military by this point. **Comment.** By this point, agreement had been reached for Darwin Initiative / Ukrainian military collaboration for nature conservation on Ukrainian military land. Specifically, by this point, a list of equipment priorities, support for a display about the collaboration, and a study visit to the UK had all been agreed, and action was being taken on all. The meetings are gradually evolving into seminars. Up to the present, average attendance has been about 5 people.

- **March 2003.** Darwin Initiative book on steppe conservation in Ukraine published. **Comment.** Being for home consumption, the book is written in Ukrainian.
- **March 2003.** About 50 more donated computers had been acquired and checked, and were waiting in Britain for transport to Ukraine by this point.

General comment. The project implementation timetable for 2002-2003 is laconic, stating that in December 2002, work on exhibits for a new visitors' centre, draft pamphlets and a draft advisory panel document would have been completed, and that by February 2003, target figures for monitoring the project in its second and third years would have been produced. Although reality is proving somewhat different from that timetable, I believe it is very clear that the project is moving in the right direction, and is making excellent progress.

- **Training 2002-2003.** Training last year closely followed the programme laid out in the original proposal. Dr Isikov and Dr Heluta together with staff at Opuk nature reserve and Khomutovsky Steppe nature reserve have gained practical skills in steppe restoration over the past year, through well and spring restoration, organizing clearance of rubbish, and management of grazing régimes etc. Dr Isikov has gained experience of collecting rare steppe plant seeds for steppe restoration. A study trip (funded through a different project) was used to provide Dr Isikov, Dr Hayova and Mr Korchmit, a member of Balaclava's local administration, with much relevant experience (see previous section on **Progress** under **October 2002**). The expected number of meetings with the Ukrainian military has been held, and they are developing towards a seminar format.
- **Problems 2002-2003.** My health has, thankfully, remained much improved. There have been two specific significant problems, neither new. **Transportation and importing of donated equipment.** This is not a new problem. Although not a specific objective of the present project, the activities of my previous Darwin Initiative projects in the former Soviet Union (acquiring donated computers and other equipment for use in biodiversity conservation) continue. It is not difficult to acquire, check and pack material, nor is it difficult to identify suitable beneficiaries and enable delivery to them from within Ukraine. Transportation between the UK and Ukraine and, in particular, importing into Ukraine remain thoroughly problematic, the main difficulty being the large amount of bureaucracy and the time lost at Ukrainian customs. This has deterred haulage firms which would otherwise have been willing to transport these donations free of charge. In the past the British Embassy has helped by permitting our project to send this material by the diplomatic truck. Unfortunately this year the only truck scheduled was cancelled. At present, therefore, there are about 50 computers acquired, checked and ready for packing, but waiting for a transport opportunity. **Apathy and corruption within relevant Ukrainian Academies.** Not a new problem. **Apathy** has been encountered in respect of work on the Khomutovsky Steppe (part of the Ukrainian National Steppe Reserve). Through the UK Foreign Office's *Environment Project Fund* it was possible to clear several hectares of encroaching scrub which had been destroying that reserve, and to introduce horses for grazing to control scrub levels with remarkable success. An approach to the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, in whose care that reserve resides, for support to help maintain those horses has met complete lack of interest wrapped in bureaucracy. A wonderful opportunity to add a new separate and significant area to the Ukrainian National Steppe Reserve is also, according to scientific colleagues in Kiev, meeting the same lack of interest. What looked strongly like **corruption** was encountered in Nikita Botanic Garden. This botanic garden occupies a superb and prime site on the south Crimean coast, grandly sweeping down to the sea. Visiting the garden in September 2002, I was shocked to learn (and see for myself) that the waterfront had been sold to developers and that hotels were being constructed. This is akin to selling Prince's Street Gardens in Edinburgh, or the area around the pagoda in Kew Gardens to developers for building high-rise apartments, and there is the strong feeling that someone has been getting a back-hander somewhere. As a result, further investment in development of a steppe plant seed collection at Nikita Botanic Garden has been put on hold.
- **Modifications to project design.** Only one modification has been made to the project.
 - It has become clear that the economic conditions in eastern Crimea are such that establishing any form of bed & breakfast style accommodation for sustainable tourism is premature. At the same time, following the study trip to Britain by Dr Isikov, Dr Hayova and Mr Korchmit, there is a strong feeling that backpacker-style hostels are a more appropriate first step in development of sustainable tourism in Crimea. As a result,

we are now exploring the possibility of setting up a small network of backpacker-style hostels including existing accommodation in eastern Crimea (Feodosia) and, possibly, a new hostel in western Crimea (Balaclava). A suitable building in Balaclava has been identified, and the local authority seems keen to collaborate. At the time of writing, costings for renovation of that building are being prepared.

- **Proposed timetable (workplan) for the next reporting period.** Timings approximate; activities not exhaustive.
 - **April 2003.** Co-ordinator visits Ukraine (Kiev and Crimea). Meeting in Kiev with Col. Kovalevsky to arrange forthcoming visit to Britain. Visit to Opuk Reserve (Crimea): meeting with reserve director; examination of building designated to be visitors centre; review and discussion of what structural repairs are necessary for the building; agreement of budget and timetable for repairs; transfer of funds necessary for repairs. Visit to Balaclava (Crimea): meeting with town council authorities; examination of building designated to be backpackers hostel; discussion of budget and timetable for preparation of building. Visit to Katsiveli (Crimea): preparation of *XIV Congress of European Mycologists*.
 - **May 2003.** Visit to UK by Col. Kovalevsky, Dr Kachynsky, Dr Hayova and Ms Kryvomaz. This is scheduled for 11-18 May, to include visits to Salisbury Plain training area, Aldershot training area, Porton Down, a former atomic weapons establishment site in Cardiff where decontamination has been a problem, Sennybridge training area, and the Royal Armouries Museum at Fort Nelson, Portsmouth. Dr Hayova will stay on for some days to visits other non-military sites where agricultural practice has been modified to enhance nature conservation. By the end of May 2003, three desktop computers, one laptop, one printer and one scanner are scheduled to have been delivered to Ukraine for use in nature conservation on Ukrainian military land.
 - **June 2003.** Co-ordinator visits Ukraine (Kiev and Crimea) for further meeting with Col. Kovalevsky and for preparing the *XIV Congress of European Mycologists*.
 - **June 2003.** Dr Hayova visits Balaclava with Mr David Pert from the British Embassy in Kiev to look at project work in Crimea and discuss the idea of setting up a network of backpacker hostels, including development of a new hostel in Balaclava.
 - **July 2003.** Ms Kryvomaz to participate in an expedition surveying myxomycetes in the Great Smoky Mountains of West Virginia, USA.
 - **September 2003.** *XIV Congress of European Mycologists*, and post-Congress excursions. The Congress is shaping up well, with almost exactly the 100 predicted participants. The post-Congress excursion to eastern Crimea and Opuk Reserve (listed as a milestone in the current Darwin Initiative project) is fully subscribed.
 - **September 2003.** Review of progress with restoration of building for visitors' centre at Opuk. By this point, the visitors' centre should be weatherproof, and have simple, but sound interior walls, ceilings and floors. Electricity should be available, and it should be possible for visiting scientists to overnight there. Space for a small exhibition in one of the rooms should by this point be allocated.
 - **October 2003.** *British Council Forum for Business & Sustainable Development*, a meeting associated with and partly stimulated by my team's work in Crimea, will be held in Balaclava. Dr Hayova and I are helping with organization.
 - **November 2003.** Participation by the Ukrainian military in a large exhibition to be held in Kiev, with a stand showing work done through Darwin Initiative collaboration.

5. Partnerships

- **Collaboration with Ukrainian scientists and nature reserve staff.** Collaboration remains uniformly positive, with most friendly and trusting relations being maintained on both sides. These relationships contain many advantages, but no unforeseen or new aspects within the last period of reporting.

Collaboration with Ukrainian military personnel. Contacting the Ukrainian military required particular care and how it was successfully achieved may be worth recounting. Attempts to make contact were only begun after considerable preparation, including taking advice from the British Embassy in Kiev, the British Council in Kiev, and the Ukrainian Embassy in London. There was some nervousness on the part of Ukrainian

scientific partners, perhaps not surprising in view of the country's history in general and, in particular, the Ukrainian Secret Service's activities against scientists in Sebastopol' participating in a different Darwin Initiative project less than two years previously. Both Embassies were very helpful and the advice from all quarters was to make the initial approach through a written letter. Captain Rob Drewitt, the Military Attaché at the British Embassy in Kiev proposed that we contacted General-Lieutenant Lytvak, and provided an address and fax number. A suitable letter, in Ukrainian, was prepared and sent by fax around early December 2002. Advice from the British Embassy in Kiev was not to expect too much, and to be ready for the possibility of no interest at all on the part of the Ukrainian military. The first fax evoked no response (it is possible that it failed to arrive), and a second fax was sent shortly after. That message was clearly received, because a member of Gen.-Lt. Lytvak's team, Col. Vladimir Kovalevsky (Head of the Department of Ecological & Radiation Safety, Deputy Chief, Department of NBC Protection Troops, General Staff of Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kiev, Ukraine), telephoned urgently to ask for a meeting as soon as possible. His call was unfortunately received very shortly before I was due to check-in for the return flight to London of that particular visit. I therefore made an additional trip to Kiev in late December 2002 with the sole objective of meeting him.

Happily the misgivings expressed by Capt. Drewitt have not materialized. A friendly and positive collaboration has begun with Col. Kovalevsky. To date, four meetings have been held, all on the neutral territory of a rented room in a Kiev museum. At the first meeting, both sides introduced themselves, and listened to the objectives of the other party. Agreement was reached to organize any donations of equipment through the *Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds*, a suitable intermediary, and informal links with that society were established for that purpose. At subsequent meetings, the material needs of the Ukrainian military for nature conservation on its training areas were reviewed, and a simple plan was prepared for delivering some of those items of equipment. Furthermore, agreement was reached to support the Ukrainian military in preparation of a display for a forthcoming exhibition in Kiev in autumn 2003. Lastly, plans were made for a visit to the UK by Col. Kovalevsky and his superior, Gen.-Lt. Lytvak to see how conservation is organized by the MOD in Britain. The war in Iraq, combined with his responsibility for the team of decontamination experts sent by Ukraine to Kuwait, has meant that Gen.-Lt. Lytvak has had to withdraw from this visit, and he has been replaced by Dr Anatoly Kachynsky (Head of the Department of Ecological Policy, National Institute of Strategic Research, 7a Pirogova Street, 01030 Kiev, Ukraine).

- **Collaboration with other bodies.** Over its first year, this project has established links not only with the Ukrainian military, as planned, but also with *Defence Estates*, the UK Ministry of Defence's department responsible for conservation on British military training areas. In addition, contact has been made with the *Ukrainian Society for Protection of Birds* and the British Council's *English for Peacekeepers* scheme. The project also interfaces with the 14th *Congress of European Mycologists* being organized by my team, and with the *International Mycological Association*, through Dr Andrianova's election to its Executive Committee. Partly through the kind support of BioNET-INTERNATIONAL, Dr Tetiana Andrianova was able to attend BioNET-INTERNATIONAL's third global workshop in Pretoria (July 2002).

6. Impact and Sustainability

- The delicacy of establishing contacts with Ukraine's military have made it inappropriate to publicize that aspect of our project's work. More obvious impacts may appear later. The project has, however, had a good impact through dissemination of British MOD literature on conservation to the military of 24 former eastern bloc countries through the British Council's *English for Peacekeepers* scheme. Posters to promote local advertizing of the project's work in Opuk Nature Reserve are expected to be ready soon. The positive contacts established with Ukraine's military promise future interest in nature conservation on their lands. Exit strategies remain unchanged.

7. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

- The following table provides a brief summary of project outputs.

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

Code No.	Quantity	Description
1A, 1B	1	not strictly part of the project, but worth noting that Ms Kryvomaz is currently working towards a candidate degree (Ukrainian approximate equivalent of a PhD) with me as supervisor
6A, 6B	3, 20 [estimate]	training for Dr Heluta, Dr Isikov and Dr Hayova in steppe conservation skills and project management
8	6	visits by Dr Minter to Ukraine
11A	1	book published on steppe conservation in Ukraine
14A	4	meetings / seminars with Ukrainian military
14B	3	<i>7th International Mycological Congress, Oslo, 2002 (Dr Andrianova, Dr Minter); 4th International Congress on Systematics & Ecology of Myxomycetes, Brussels, 2002 (Ms Kryvomaz); International Myxomycete Workshop, Cuba, 2002 (Ms Kryvomaz)</i>
20	£3000 [estimate]	new and donated second-hand computers, printers, scanners; oats for horses; materials for repair of spring, wells and buildings
22	1	plot for steppe plants at Opuk nature reserve
23	£8000 [estimate]	travel provided by other projects; donated computer equipment

- The project implementation timetable for 2002-2003 is laconic, stating that in December 2002, work on exhibits for new visitors centre, draft pamphlets and a draft advisory panel document would have been completed, and that by February 2003, target figures for monitoring the project in its second and third years would have been produced. Although reality is proving somewhat different from that timetable, I believe it is very clear that the project is moving in the right direction, and is making excellent progress.
- Publications. Only the main publication of the year, a book about conservation of biodiversity on steppe in Ukraine, is listed here. Information about other publications will be provided in the final report.

Table 2: Publications

Type * (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (title, author, year)	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. contact address, website)	Cost £
book	Збереження Степів України [Conservation of Steppes of Ukraine] Гелюта, В.П.; Ткаченко, В.С.; Вакаренко, Л.П.; Войтюк,	Академпер іодика [Akadempe riodika], Київ [Kiev]	ISBN 966-8002- 52-0. Or try: Dr V.P. Heluta	

Ю.О.; Генюв,
 А.П.; Мосякін,
 С.Л. [Heluta,
 V.P.; Tkachenko,
 V.S.; Vakarenko,
 L.P.; Boityuk,
 Yu.O.; Genov,
 A.P.; Mosyakin,
 S.L.] [eds]. 164
 pp., 2002.
 [Ukrainian, with
 English abstracts
 of each chapter]

- **Dissemination activities.** Copies of the UK MOD conservation magazine *Sanctuary* and other MOD conservation literature were distributed to teachers participating in the British Council's *English for Peacekeepers* scheme in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The British Council and Defence Estates of the UK MOD are expected now to continue distribution of future material without further input from this project.

8. Project Expenditure

- Please expand and complete Table 3.

Table 3: Project expenditure during the reporting period

Item	Budget	Expenditure
Salaries		
Minter		
Ukrainians		
Rent ,rates heating lighting etc		
Office administration costs		
Capital items/equipment		
Others		
Total		

- **Notes.** No changes to the budget were requested. Slight apparent overspend (figures contain modest expenditure from the financial year 2003-2004). It is believed that there was not variation in expenditure greater than +/- 10% of the budget.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

- **Methods.** In the first year of this project, some monitoring and evaluation has been objective (numbers of springs and wells restored, amount of litter cleared, amount of steppe plant seeds gathered, numbers of

seminars, amount of UK MOD conservation literature distributed and to how many countries, amount of equipment donated etc.), but some has been subjective (quality of relations established with the Ukrainian military). For objective monitoring, numbers have been more or less in line with those of the original project proposal. The relations established with the Ukrainian military are clearly good. I believe, as a result, that the project is going well and is in a robust condition.

- **Lessons.** Each year running Darwin Initiative projects brings more experience, but I have not encountered anything I could describe as a major lesson to be learned from the past 12 months in this project.

10. D.W. Minter, 23 May 2003

Appendix 1. Copy of “log-frame” from original proposal

Project summary	Measurable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
<p>Goal</p> <p>To assist countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources with the conservation of biological diversity and implementation of the Biodiversity Convention</p>	<p>Steppe land in Ukraine increases in area, quality of Ukrainian steppe land improved, Ukrainian government supports further work on restoration of steppe and other ecosystems, with local people sharing benefits.</p>	<p>Policy statements by the Ukrainian government, reports from Ukrainian and other NGOs and external observers, reports in quality press and suitable scientific publications outside Ukraine.</p>	<p>Political and socio-economic conditions in Ukraine continue to favour a policy sympathetic to biodiversity conservation. No reversion to obsessive military suspicion, no military errors making work in such areas difficult.</p>
<p>Purpose</p> <p>The objective of this project is to increase steppe land in Ukraine by influencing the country's agriculture and military sectors. Agriculture. The project will support Ukraine's policy of restoring derelict agricultural land. Military. The project will try to establish a Joint Advisory Panel of Ukrainian scientists and administrators to facilitate conservation management of military land.</p>	<p>Agriculture. Experts in place with skills and resources; work communicating those skills and supplying resources to local people begun. Military. Regular meetings of Joint Advisory Panel, ideas generated at those meetings put into practice in management of military areas.</p>	<p>Agriculture. Reports in scientific and popular publications, and evidence on the internet. Military. Minutes of meetings, feedback at Ministerial level.</p>	<p>Agriculture. Experts remain in country (do not emigrate, for example), and remain in jobs where their new skills can be used, Ukrainian governmental policy continues to support steppe restoration. Military. Receptive to new ideas, advisory panel regarded as a priority, information does reaches appropriate Ministers.</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: restoration of reserves; establishment of field plots on the reserve and adjacent lands, a new visitors' centre for Opuk, steppe plant seed banks locally and in Nikita, village(s) prepared for sustainable tourism. In Kiev: increased awareness of public relations value of conservation management on military land; establishment of Joint Advisory Panel for Ukrainian scientists and military administrators.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: wells and field plots functioning, reserve with less rubbish, visitors' centre opened, seed banks in existence, B&B hostel opened, websites functioning. In Kiev: Joint Advisory Panel established and meeting regularly.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: video and photographic evidence, print-outs from websites, reports. In Kiev: reports, minutes of meetings.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: rubbish clearance does not constitute health hazard (eg asbestos), weedy areas can be cleared, sufficient seed stocks of steppe plants can be obtained, seeds and transplants will grow, weeds can be controlled, villagers and other local organizations willing to adapt to change. In Kiev: willingness to participate on part of military administrators.</p>
<p>Activities</p> <p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: restoration of wells, rubbish clearance, weed control, seed and plant collection and identification, sowing and transplanting on field plots, surveys, building renovation, preparation of an exhibition, accumulation of seeds in collections; preparation by villagers for tourists. In Kiev: study visits; seminars for military administrators.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: wells cleared of debris and producing clear freshwater, bags of rubbish removed from reserve, areas cleared of weeds, seeds and transplants collected and identified, seeds sown and planting carried out, surveys made, building renovated, exhibition prepared, collections established, B&B hostel set up. In Kiev: study visits made, seminars held.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: video and photographic evidence of well renovation, rubbish and weed clearance, of seed collection and planting, of building renovation and of new exhibition; reports and notes of these activities; advertisement of B&B hostel on internet. In Kiev: reports of study visits and seminars, minutes of meetings.</p>	<p>On and around Opuk and other reserves: rubbish clearance does not constitute health hazard (eg asbestos), weedy areas can be cleared, sufficient seed stocks of steppe plants can be obtained, seeds and transplants will grow, weeds can be controlled, villagers and other local organizations willing to adapt to change. In Kiev: interest in participation on the part of military administrators.</p>