

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	162/12/006
Project Title	Transnational conservation planning in the Maputaland ecoregion of southern Africa
Country(ies)	Moçambique, South Africa and Swaziland
UK Organisation	Durrell Institute of Conservation & Ecology, University of Kent
Collaborator(s)	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Department of Biology, University of Swaziland Fórum para Natureza em Perigo, Moçambique
Report date	31 st October 2004
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 2
Project website	http://www.kent.ac.uk/anthropology/dice/research/maputaland.html

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

The Project Officer visited Maputaland during May and June and met with all of the relevant stakeholders to discuss the project's progress and to develop future plans. There was continued support for the project, and key players in the development of the Transfrontier Conservation Area expect to use our proposed planning system as an integral part of their work.

The Project Officer supervised three British students who carried out their research projects as part of the DICE MSc students in Conservation Biology. All three of their dissertations fed directly into the Maputaland project and provided valuable information. The first project developed potential species distribution maps for the large mammals of Maputaland, which also allows information on the financial value of game ranching to be incorporated into the planning system. Another project developed a risk of over-harvesting of natural resources model for Maputaland and the third helped inform the development of a community-based conservation project in the Usuthu Gorge area.

Collecting the fieldwork for the three MSc projects involved training five people from local communities in South Africa for four days. Two men and two women from the Mathenjwa community were trained to collect questionnaire data and to input this information into spreadsheet software. One man from the Tembe community was trained to collect data on the over-harvesting of plant resources and to use GPS units.

One person from Moçambique and one from South Africa started the DICE MSc in Conservation Biology at DICE. Bruno Nhancale works for Fórum para Natureza em Perigo, a Mozambican NGO, and Petros Ngwenya works for Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, the provincial conservation authority in South Africa. Petros Ngwenya also spent one week in June with the three British MSc students to help with their fieldwork and learn relevant data collection techniques.

The CLUZ conservation planning software was completed in July, together with the associated tutorial and manual, and 78 people from 33 countries have registered as users. The Project Officer gave a talk at the Society for Conservation Biology conference in New York in August on our work in Maputaland. He also met with Professor Hugh Possingham, who is responsible for producing the MARXAN software that

acts as a base for CLUZ. Professor Possingham gave his full support for CLUZ and plans to add links to CLUZ on his project website. He also invited the Project Officer to be part of a capacity-building workshop on conservation planning that is being held in Brasilia in July 2005. Transport costs for the four proposed lecturers at this workshop have been requested from Conservation International and we will hear whether the relevant funding application has been successful in the next few months

The Maputaland conservation planning system has been augmented with a 90m resolution Digital Elevation Model and with 4 new Landsat Thematic Mapper satellite images, provided by project partners.

We have been asked to undertake a conservation planning exercise for Swaziland by the relevant project partners. We hope that this process will be funded by the British Council and await the results of our funding proposal. If it goes ahead, it will provide additional valuable data for this project.

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 affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Completing CLUZ well ahead of schedule, gathering additional valuable data for the project through supervising the MSc students, and producing a preliminary conservation plan for South Africa have resulted in delays producing the poster, the standardised data collection forms and the document on setting conservation feature targets. Nevertheless, all of these will be produced by the end of this project year (April 2005).

There were delays in finding the best MSc student from Moçambique, so it was not possible to involve them in the data collection exercises that took place during May and June 2004. Instead, both Darwin Initiative MSc students will carry out field-based research projects in the Summer of 2005, giving them much more in-depth training in collecting and analysing relevant data.

There have been delays in teaching university students and lecturers in conservation planning and using CLUZ, so the Project Officer will run these courses in Swaziland in December and in South Africa and Moçambique in March. The Principal Investigator will also visit Maputaland in December and meet with our project partners in all three countries.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? No: changes are unnecessary, as some milestones have been produced ahead of schedule, giving adequate time to produce those that have slipped within the project year

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

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

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**