

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise

Project Ref. No.	162/12/020
Project Title	Building Nicaraguan and Costa Rican capacity in biodiversity conservation
Country(ies)	Nicaragua and Costa Rica
UK Organisation	University of Wales, Bangor
Collaborator(s)	Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad, Costa Rica; CATIE, Costa Rica
Report date	31.10.2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 3
Project website	http://darwin.bangor.ac.uk

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).

Good progress has been made in the first six months of the final year of the project. The rapid biodiversity assessment (RBA) of the project area has been completed for both plants and insects (beetles) and results from this were presented at the British Ecological Society Annual Meeting 2005 in September (an oral paper on vegetation and a poster on beetles).

Nicaraguan students who had attended the capacity building courses in the first and second years of the project carried out fieldwork in Nicaragua to gain practical experience in the methods learned on the course. In July they visited Costa Rica for a follow-up course which focussed on the taxonomic identification of their plant and insect specimens utilising the existing collections in INBio. In addition during their stay in Costa Rica they visited CATIE where project partners provided training and guidance in the appropriate statistical methods to analyse their data. The students have produced reports of their work.

To date we have established and measured 12 one hectare permanent sample plots (PSP). The individuals measured have been identified to species in ten of the plots (a total of 4444 individuals) and the remaining two will be completed by the end of November 2005. In addition, beetles have been sampled in the PSPs and the final samples in the last two plots will be completed in November 2005. The plant species list for the project area has reached 835 species from 128 families and over 1000 specimens have been collected. A draft of the plant species guide has been produced which includes 80 species important for conservation. We plan to publish this as an interactive guide on the world wide web.

An important development in the project field area of Maquenque, northern Costa Rica has been the designation of the Maquenque National Wildlife Reserve in June 2005. This designation was a result of wide consultation with stakeholders by the Centro Cientifico Tropical (CCT), who found that many were opposed to a national park and thus proposed the establishment of a national refuge which contains both strict conservation areas and multi-use areas. The Darwin project has continued to be involved in the planning of conservation action in the Maquenque region and has attended meetings to discuss the conservation strategy for the area. This includes the management plan, further research and continued monitoring in collaboration with other organisations including the Ministry of the Environment (MINAE), the San Juan-La Selva Biological Corridor committee and the Lapa Verde Project of the CCT.

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.

No notable problems or unexpected developments.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

N/A

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?

No.

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.**