

***Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species***

**Building constituencies for site-based  
conservation in Myanmar**

**162/12/025**

***Annual Report to 31 March 2006***

**BirdLife International**

**Biodiversity and Nature Conservation  
Association (BANCA)**



## **Annual Report**

### **1. Darwin Project Information**

Project Ref. Number	162/12/025
Project Title	Building constituencies for site-based conservation in Myanmar
Country	Myanmar
UK Contractor	BirdLife International
Partner Organisation(s)	Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA)
Darwin Grant Value	GBP 157,236
Start/End dates	1 October 2003-30 September 2007
Reporting period (1 Apr 200x to 31 Mar 200y) and report number (1, 2, 3...)	1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 Third annual report (but only the second covering a 12 month period)
Project website	BirdLifeindochina.org
Author(s), date	Jonathan C. Eames, Khin Ma Ma Thwin and Aung Kyaw Nyunt, 31 May 2006

### **1. Project Background**

To conserve global biodiversity, BirdLife International has identified a global network of Endemic Bird Areas (EBAs). These landscapes contain aggregations of endemic biodiversity and, therefore support a disproportionately high percentage of life on Earth. Within EBAs, BirdLife seeks to identify networks of Important Bird Area (IBAs). Within any given EBA, the identification of IBAs is an important first-step towards developing site-based conservation. The process for identifying IBAs involves a broad local constituency in order to obtain the most accurate information available and to ensure local ownership of the process and conservation priorities that the process sets. Crucial to this is the identification of specific communities who know the site well, depend on natural resources to support their livelihoods, and are committed to the long-term conservation of the area. Such Site-support Groups (SSGs) are a form of community-based organization, which, together with good governance, can achieve the goals of sustainable development. BirdLife has demonstrated the utility of SSGs in achieving the goals of the CBD in Europe and Africa, and is now adapting this approach to the Asian context. Project outputs, including biodiversity assessments and a partial IBA network, will meet Myanmar's need to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and policy to protect 5 percent of total land cover within the protected areas system. This project will tackle these issues by directly supporting the development of a pre-existing indigenous non-governmental organization called the "Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association." The geographical focus of the project will be the Eastern Himalayas (Chin and Kachin States) and the Sundaic Lowlands (Tanintharyi Division) EBAs

### **3. Project Purpose and Outputs**

The main objectives of the project are: 1) to strengthen the institutional capacity of BANCA to prioritise, plan and undertake high quality applied research and use the results to achieve greatest benefits for conservation; and 2) to develop SSGs at 4 sites of global conservation importance, empowering communities to manage natural resources and improve their quality of life.

This project will identify a network of IBAs within the Eastern Himalayas and Sundaic Lowlands EBAs of Myanmar, two remote natural landscapes about which little is currently known. The IBAs will be identified through biological surveys and strategically assessed to identify those sites where the probability of conservation success is highest. The project will facilitate the establishment of SSGs at a minimum of 4 IBAs. These initiatives will produce a significant amount of original scientific data (including newsworthy discoveries), strengthen the capacity of Burmese nationals to develop community-based conservation activities, and provide a low-cost and sustainable model for site-based conservation planning and management in Myanmar. Theological framework for this project is presented as Appendix 1.

### **4. Progress**

#### **Progress to 31 March 2004**

During the first half of this project, the focus has been on identifying IBAs and seeking additional donor support for long-term conservation of these sites. Specific progress by outputs are summarised below: Conservation assessments of two EBAs (Eastern Himalayas and Sundaic Lowlands) have been published. BANCA staff participated in field assessments and contributed to the reports. BANCA staff has received training during field activities. Two IBA SSGs have been established in the Eastern Himalayas EBA. SSGs were established during a workshop involving key stakeholders. Representatives of the groups have been involved in planning development activities and initiating patrols to monitor and deter hunting and use of the Natmataung National Park. The project will work to establish a further two SSGs in the Eastern Himalayas EBA rather than in the Sundaic Lowlands EBA where the project has been focusing efforts on extending Lenya National Park to incorporate the IBAs identified. BANCA staff has been working closely with the warden of Natmataung National Park to identify development and conservation priorities for the SSGs. SSGs at Okpo and Hilaung villages have been involved in patrol activities targeted at hunting in Natmataung National Park. The activities are being carried out in return for development projects financed by the project to address food and water shortages. The project has appealed to donors for continued funding to support development activities in these villages. Long-term sustainability for these initiatives remains an issue. The community awareness programme will be established during the next year of the project. The project will now focus only on the Eastern Himalayas EBA where the SSGs (and most people) are located. The project has been very active in seeking additional funding to extend its conservation work related to the two EBA areas. It co-ordinated a multi-stakeholder meeting to reach consensus on a conservation strategy (“unofficial biodiversity action plan”) for Myanmar and is likely to receive £150,000 from the British Bird Watching Fair, \$500,000 from Global Conservation Fund, and Skr 50,000 from the Swedish Bird Watching Club to support the establishment and expansion of Lenya National Park. The project has also featured in national and international press releases and raised its profile with the British Embassy in Yangon.

## **Progress to 31 March 2005**

### **Conservation assessment of Eastern Himalayas EBA undertaken**

The planned GIS analysis of forest cover in Eastern Himalayas undertaken in continued collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution was not undertaken because the Smithsonian Institution have not had staff time available to devote to this. Jonathan C. Eames met with Dr Peter Leimgruber on 18 February 2006 to review lack of progress and agreed to follow-up after April when Peter thought he would have a student available. We planned that during the reporting period we would be able to secure permission for the export of bird specimens. This was not possible because of the need for a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between BirdLife and the Forest Department. Therefore despite Jonathan C Eames and Frank Steinheimer both being available for work at The Natural History Museum to undertake diagnosis of material, no progress was made.

### **Conservation assessment of Eastern Himalayas EBA published**

Two journal papers were prepared by project staff during the reporting period. These report on the ornithological survey work undertaken in the lowlands of Kachin State between 2003-2005. The papers, attached as Annex 1 and Annex 2 are entitled:

- The historical and current status of Pink-headed Duck *Rhodonessa caryophyllacea* in Myanmar
- Avifaunal surveys in the lowlands of Kachin State, Myanmar, 2003-2005

These papers will be submitted for publication in *Natural History Bulletin of the Siam Society*, journal of the Siam Society and *Bird Conservation International*, published for BirdLife International by Cambridge University Press. Additional papers reporting on work undertaken at Mount Bwe Pa, Chin State, Mounts Ma Jed and Imawbun, and in Thanintharyi Division are in preparation.

### **Ornithological surveys of representative habitats in Eastern Himalayas EBA undertaken and IBAs identified**

Two further surveys were undertaken in northern Kachin State. The first survey in autumn 2005, co-financed by BirdLife International was focused on rediscovering the Pink-headed Duck. The second in early spring 2006 represented a continuation of the bird collecting work begun last year at Mount Ma Jed. The 2006 expedition was to nearby Mount Imawbun.

A BirdLife/BANCA survey team spent from 11 October to 1 November 2005 searching wetlands and grasslands in northern Kachin State for the Pink-headed Duck. This survey focused on the ox-bow lakes and floodplain grasslands of the Nat Kaung River north of Kamaing and south of Shadusup. Based at a series of camps along the river the team used elephants and smaller boats to search the grasslands and ox-bow lakes in the area. In advance of the survey the team prepared a large full-colour poster which was widely distributed in restaurants, tea houses and government offices across northern Kachin State, and offered a substantial reward for anyone leading the team to a living Pink-headed Duck. All reports received of Pink-headed Ducks during the survey on further investigation always proved to be White-winged Ducks *Cairina scutulata*. Despite the best efforts of the team in the extensive grasslands which were discovered during the survey, there was no confirmed sighting

of a Pink-headed Duck. However, significant numbers of other Globally Threatened bird species were recorded. Options for further survey in 2006 include searching further south including the Mandalay areas and Arakan from where the species was recorded historically, are being considered.

Throughout March 2006 a Birdlife/BANCA team undertook an ornithological survey of the Mount Imawbun area in North-east Kachin State close to the border with Yunnan, China. The objectives of the survey included to make representative bird skin collections from 500 and 3,000 m (two elevations not sampled from Mount Ma Jed in 2005), and to determine whether any Restricted-range species typical of the Yunnan Mountains EBA extended into the area. The area qualifies as an IBA because it supports significant numbers of Globally Threatened species and the survey recorded seven of the 22 restricted-range species that define the EBA. The relatively few Restricted-range species recorded reflects the fact that the team concentrated on higher elevations (above 3,000 m asl) where bird diversity is lower, and only passed through more diverse forest at lower elevations which were sampled on nearby Mount Ma Jed in 2005. Although the team did not find White-speckled Laughingthrush *Garrulax bieti*, or Yunnan Nuthatch *Sitta yunnanensis*, they did find Brown-winged Parrotbill *Paradoxornis brunneus* which had been previously collected in north-east Kachin State.

### **A suitable site for the establishment of a third and fourth SSG in the Eastern Himalayas EBA identified**

### **Series of workshops result in the establishment of 2 IBA SSGs in the Eastern Himalayas EBA and mobilized support for conservation**

During 2005 two more villages were selected and Site-support groups (SSGs) established by senior project staff. The villagers of Khun-ein village approached U Aung Kyaw Nyunt and U Shein Gay Ngai requesting that their village be included in the project on the basis of project results at the first two villages. Hlalaungpan village had been previously selected as a village for an ecotourism project by the People Resources Conservation Foundation (PRCF) and was recommended for inclusion in the project by U Htin Hla on this basis. Both villages threaten the integrity of the national park because of hunting and through encroachment. The Hlalaungpan village SSG in Kanpetlet Township was established in December 2005 and the SSG at Khun-ein village in Mindat Township was established during June 2005 following village-level workshops at both villages in June. Beginning in June 2005 at Hlalaungpan village a 1,500 gallon concrete water storage tank was constructed. In addition a 40' x 40' nursery with 8,000 small and 1,000 large earth-filled plastic bags were provided. Guided by the Village SSG and the warden of Natmatuang National Park, patrolling and monitoring was undertaken by a team comprising 16 villagers and a national park staff on Mondays and Thursdays. At Khun-ein village a 1,500 gallon concrete water storage tank was constructed to provide potable water and to irrigate the nursery. Another 40'x40' nursery with 10,000 small and 1,000 large earth-filled plastic bags was also established and provided. Under the supervision of the village SSG and the warden, patrolling and monitoring was done by a team comprising 16 villagers and national park staff.

Between December 2005 to March 2006 at Hlalaungpan village activities focused on provision of improved potato varieties and the distribution of maize seed. 2,000 Viss (1.59 kg=1 Viss) of seed potatoes were brought from Shan State, and distributed to all the households in the village on the condition that all were to be sown in March and following the harvest in July stored as seed potatoes for the following year. A total of

293 baskets of native maize seed were bought and distributed to all village households with the stipulation that some are to be stored for planting in March 2006. At the nursery 10,000 coffee and 1,000 avocado seedlings were being tended in the nursery.

At Khun-ein village 4,500 Viss of potatoes were brought from Shan State, and distributed to all the households with the same conditions of use as imposed at Hlalaungpan village. A total of 598 Baskets of native maize seed were bought and distributed to all households with the same conditions of use as at Hlalaungpan village. A total of 10,000 coffee seedlings and 1,000 avocado seedlings were being regularly watered and looked after in the nursery. At meetings held on 7 and 17 January 2006 between project staff, Natmataung National Park staff and the two village SSGs with the patrolling teams, the need for and strengthened anti-poaching activities was stressed to combat the illegal extraction of forest products including wild orchids, measures to reduce forest fires and encroachment for shifting cultivation

With the financial assistance from the British Embassy (Yangon), patrolling equipment was supplied to patrolling teams in Hilaung and Oakpo villages. These are the first two villages where SSGs were established. The full report on SSG activities in this reporting period can be found at Annex 3.

### **Conservation awareness materials developed in appropriate local languages and extended to villages in Eastern Himalayas EBA**

In preparation for developing awareness materials four teachers working at schools situated in the buffer zone of Natmataung National Park were selected to visit Yangon for training and to assist BANCA staff in design of awareness materials and an awareness programme. Topics covered with them included BANCA's mission and activities, the goals and objectives of the project, Why we should conserve our natural resources, important species of Myanmar, the importance and values of Natmataung National Park, livelihood issues for villagers around Natmataung National Park, awareness messages to be conveyed, how to inform and change attitudes of local children. It was finally decided to produce an exercise book, leaflet, poster and wall hanging each communicating conservation messages relating to promoting the sustainable management of Natmataung National Park (Annex 4). A work plan was then developed to extend these materials via township level workshops to the teachers in Mindat and Kanpetlet Townships.

The educational workshops were conducted by Khin Ma Ma Thwin, with the assistance of U Moe Zaw Thwin and the staff of Natmataung National Park. The Park Warden of Natmataung National Park invited local school teachers to attend the workshops to be held in Kanpetlet and Mindat townships. The first workshop was held on 31st August in Kanpetlet Township and the second in Mindat on 2 September 2005. The programme and format was the same in both workshops. In total nearly 100 teachers, mainly primary school with some secondary schools, attended. Each workshop was divided into two sessions. The first session was focused on delivering conservation messages including the value of conserving the national park, and solutions to co-management. In this session the exercise books, leaflets, posters, wall hangings and pencils were distributed to the teachers who would then be taking them to their own villages and conducting village level workshops with the same content. A second session comprised lectures on ecology, conservation of natural resources, the value of Natmataung National Park and the role of native people and school children in the sustainable management of Natmataung National Park. Workshop participants later broke into groups to discuss a number of key conservation issues facing Natmataung National Park. Following a refreshment break raconteurs reported in

plenary. In addition all educational materials were distributed to all households in the four villages with SSGs. Vinyl posters, paper posters, leaflets and wall hangings were distributed to the township authority personnel and Natmataung National Park staff, the departmental offices, tea shops, churches, monasteries and all those who asked!

### **Toolkits to expand approach to other IBAs prepared**

A set of six toolkits were developed and translated into Burmese (Annex 5). Five of these comprise a set that BirdLife is using to ensure that projects at IBAs have the participation and ownership of local people and to help project staff and others design actions that achieve the linked objectives of improved livelihoods and IBA conservation. The toolkit is designed to be part to a linked and complementary set. The set comprises

- Basic IBA monitoring guidelines: Toolkit part 1
- Stakeholder analysis guidelines: Toolkit part 2
- SSG institutional analysis guidelines: Toolkit part 3
- Problem analysis and log-frame guidelines: Toolkit part 4
- Participatory Poverty Assessment guidelines: Toolkit part 5
- Water tank and nursery specification guidelines: Toolkit part 6

### **Additional support to protected areas within the Eastern Himalayas EBA leveraged**

During the reporting period proposals were developed and funding sought from several sources. In addition a collaborative memorandum of understanding (MoU) was sought with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Care, to agree a joint approach for development activities in the townships around Natmataung National Park. In 2005 Spring BirdLife and BANCA staff met with representatives from CARE and UNDP to discuss collaboration since both organizations plan major development projects planned for Kampelet and Mindhat townships which both have improved natural resource management and poverty alleviation foci. BirdLife and BANCA believe the project should try and secure an MoU and agree work plans such that BirdLife and BANCA can advance the conservation goals of the Darwin project. Failure to do so will deny the project future resources and the uncoordinated actions of the CARE and UNDP projects in the Darwin project focal area (Natmataung National Park) may undermine the conservation goals achieved to date. BirdLife and BANCA seek that (at least) CARE and UNDP project funds are channelled into SSGs in villages in the buffer zone. BirdLife and BANCA will provide continued funding for BANCA staff as the budget of the Darwin project permits, but if additional funding were available to meet these costs, this would be ideal (but not expected). We are not seeking any transfer of CARE or UNDP project funds to BirdLife/BANCA but rather to guide their use, through prior agreement and by fielding our own project staff.

During the reporting period a concept was developed for the TMF programme funded by the Dutch Government and administered by BirdLife (Annex 6) and Euros 30,000 were secured from the fund to continue and expand SSG work in the Natmataung National Park buffer zone.

A proposal to undertake a survey of vultures was developed jointly between BANCA, BirdLife and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) staff. Two of the target species are considered Critically Endangered and Myanmar is believed support an internationally important population that may require conservation management. This programme of work will be lead by BANCA staff and will begin in autumn 2006. The proposal is included at Annex 7. Additionally and finally, Asia Bird Fund provided funding for the autumn 2005 Kachin wetlands survey.

### **Scientific information fed into national conservation strategies, plans and programmes**

In 2005 BirdLife signed a contract with UNDP for the publication of a document entitled *Myanmar: investment opportunities in biodiversity conservation*. This document identifies opportunities for investing in biodiversity conservation in Myanmar, via NGOs and academic institutions, to address immediate conservation needs and build a solid foundation for future efforts (Annex 8). It is based upon the results of two stakeholder workshops held in Yangon on 4-5 August 2003 and 9 July 2004. With the participation of over 30 stakeholders from NGOs, academic institutions, government institutions and donor agencies, these workshops were the first attempt to reach multi-stakeholder consensus on geographic, taxonomic and thematic priorities for biodiversity conservation in Myanmar.

This document is also vital for the conservation of threatened species, critical sites and habitats, and wider biodiversity throughout the country, and may serve as a foundation for a future conservation agenda in Myanmar. It proposes high priority actions that could be taken by donors, government, NGOs and academic institutions over the next five years to conserve globally important biodiversity. It gives due consideration and priority to the areas that are nationally important, regionally significant and globally outstanding. Importantly, the document highlights 48 Priority Species, 37 Priority Sites and eight Priority Corridors (landscapes) for conservation investment over the next five years. The Eastern Himalayas and Sundaic lowlands are both considered urgent priority landscapes for conservation investment. Following publication two launch events were held in Yangon and in Bangkok. It is planned that this document will serve as a *de facto* terrestrial biodiversity action plan and a cornerstone for any future National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

### **Darwin Initiative and British Embassy featured in national an international press**

During the reporting period the project was regularly featured in our quarterly e-newsletter *The Babbler*. In addition BirdLife is now discussing with the leading German wildlife film production company MARCO POLO FILM AG, (<http://www.marco-polo-film.de/en/index.htm>). Producers Klaus and Annette Scheurich, would like to make a documentary about the Darwin project which would be shown on German and British television, with the working title of; Natural history museums to conservation. Briefly, they would accompany our project team on a field expedition, probably to north-east Kachin State, to illustrate how we use science to prioritize areas for conservation. The second part of the film would then focus on our village-based conservation activities in four villages in the buffer-zone of Natmataung National Park.

## **Ornithological surveys of representative habitats in the Sundaic Lowlands EBA conducted and IBAs identified**

A short survey planned for Spring 2005 to determine northern limits of Gurney's Pitta *Pitta gurneyi* was not undertaken because of the poor security situation. Further work on this species will be conducted under an on-going Darwin-funded project entitled *Gurney's Pitta research and conservation in Thailand and Myanmar* which is managed by RSPB and implemented by BirdLife in Myanmar.

## **Additional support to existing protected areas within the Sundaic Lowlands EBA leveraged**

The British Bird watching Fair was once again held at Rutland Water on 18-20 August 2005. In 2005 the fair was in aid of BirdLife's project to establish an expanded Lenya National Park in Tanintharyi Division and was entitled *Saving Gurney's Pitta and its forest home*. The 2005 fair was the largest to-date and attracted 18,000 visitors. In total GBP 200,000 were raised for the project. In January 2006 the fair organizers presented the cheque to BirdLife International. Having previously endorsed a proposal to co-finance the above mentioned BirdLife project, the Global Conservation Fund finally confirmed they would provide US \$ 250,000 for this project. This followed their successful application for a US Treasury licence.

## **SSGs in the Eastern Himalayas EBA report conservation outcomes**

1. Following the awareness activities 100 schools in Kanpetlet and Mindat townships have increased understanding of conservation. This activity has reached c. 5,000 children and perhaps 2,000 households.
2. A total of c. 70 anti-poaching patrols have been undertaken in the buffer zone (c. 50 by the first two SSGs).
3. A total of 40 metal snares have been confiscated by anti-poaching patrols.
4. As a result of the awareness-raising following SSG establishment project, project staff report significantly reduced levels of hunting, and reduced encroachment for shifting cultivation in the national park.
5. Violations of shifting cultivation are now routinely reported to national park staff (which they weren't before).
6. Project staff report reduced levels of interest in shifting cultivation by participating villages.
7. Four more villages now wish to join the project and establish SSGs.

## **Press releases highlighting outcomes of SSGs reported in the news**

During the reporting period a press release focusing on the SSG activities at Natmataung National Park was featured in the local press (Annex 9). An approach has been made to Myanmar Television but they have not clarified the costs of making a programme for television about project activities. Jonathan Eames was interviewed by a journalist working for the Journal *Nature* and an article entitled Conservation in Myanmar: Under the gun appeared in June 2005 (Annex 9).

### **Small grant proposals to strengthen SSGs in Eastern Himalayas EBA developed**

During the reporting period, and following training given in proposal writing, BANCA secured funding directly from the British Embassy in Yangon to continue SSG activities at a further two villages for a project entitled “Strengthening livelihoods and promoting environmental stewardship at Namataung National Park (NP), Chin State.” As part of this new funding initiative, BANCA will establish two new SSGs at Yalaung Pan and Makyauk-Ar villages. The project will provide water storage tanks for the villagers and perennial tree-crop nurseries to support income generation. Also it will provide basic educational materials to four villages. The project will also provide the anti-poaching patrol units with basic field equipment. BANCA also developed and submitted a proposal to the United States Embassy for a project entitled *Awareness Raising Program in buffer zone of Natmataung National Park*.

### **Medium-sized grant proposals developed to expand IBA Programme initiatives**

Following the launch of *Myanmar: Investment opportunities in biodiversity conservation*, BirdLife was approached by the European Commission and asked to develop a project concept for direct funding. The proposal developed is entitled *Site Conservation for Improved Local Livelihoods in Myanmar*. The proposed project will put in place a foundation of knowledge, capacity and best practice, to develop site conservation that delivers enhanced biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods for human communities dependent on natural resources. This will be achieved by addressing strategic weaknesses of the formal protected area system, through diagnostic studies, gap analysis, and piloting of informal and participatory approaches to site conservation through grassroots and national civil society means. In this way, the action will provide all parties involved with relevant information for planning of future site conservation interventions that reconcile local communities' needs with biodiversity conservation.

### **BANCA awarded membership of the BirdLife Partnership**

The BirdLife Global Council at its 26th Meeting in 2005 approved BANCA's nomination as BirdLife Affiliate in Myanmar. With this new status, BANCA will have more opportunities to strengthen its capacity and give more support to conservation work in Myanmar. Between 21-23 September 2005 the Darwin project and RSPB facilitated an organizational development workshop for the BANCA executive committee the output of which was an organizational strategy (Annex 10).

**Timetable (work plan) for the next reporting period (1 April-31 March 2007)**

<b>Milestone/activities</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>
<b>Conservation assessment of Eastern Himalayas EBA undertaken</b>												
<i>GIS analysis of forest cover in Eastern Himalayas undertaken in conjunction with Smithsonian Institution</i>				X	X	X						
<i>Journal paper drafted</i>							X	X	X			
<i>Permission for export of bird specimens obtained</i>					X							
<i>Diagnosis of bird specimens at The Natural History Museum</i>					X	X						
<i>Journal paper drafted</i>						X						
<b>Conservation Assessment of Eastern Himalayas published*</b>												
<b>Ornithological surveys of representative habitats in Eastern Himalayas EBA undertaken and IBAs identified</b>												
<i>Singu-Mandalay area/Rakhine State/Kachin wetlands</i>									X			
<i>Kakaorazi NP or India border areas</i>										X		
<i>Kachin Vulture survey</i>						X	X					
<b>Scientific information fed into national conservation strategies, plans and programmes</b>												
<i>Continued lobbying of Myanmar government to endorse proposals for an expanded Lenya NP</i>			X			X			X			X
<i>Publication of an advocacy leaflet for Lenya NP</i>				X	X							
<i>Participation in inception workshop for National Biodiversity Action Plan</i>			X									
<b>Darwin Initiative and British Embassy featured in national and international press</b>			X			X			X			X
<i>BANCA newsletter published</i>	X						X					X
<i>Marco Polo film project</i>									X	X	X	X
<i>One national TV feature</i>							X	X				
<b>SSGs in the Eastern Himalayas EBA report conservation outcomes</b>			X			X			X			X
<i>IBA SSG network developed to share information</i>				X	X	X						
<i>Publsih a glossy lessons learnt document</i>							X	X	X			
<i>Hold national workshop in Mindat or Kampelet</i>								X				
<i>Hold cross visits between SSGs</i>					X			X			X	
<i>International conference attend to present scientific findings</i>			X									
<b>Press releases highlighting outcomes of SSGs reported in the news</b>			X			X			X			X
<b>Medium-sized grant proposals developed to expand IBA programme initiatives</b>												
<i>Proposal developed to EU Tropical Forests budget-line</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X						
<i>Evaluation of BANCA staff indicates significantly increased skills and knowledge base in biodiversity assessment, conservation planning and programme management</i>									X	X	X	X

## 5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews

In the Annual Review Report for project activities to 31 March 2005 the reviewer requested a response to four points. We responded to these in the following half Year Report to 31 September 2005 and our responses but not the questions, here:

1. During August BANCA Chairman U Uga and Director of Research and Field Operations Dr Htin Hla, and Jonathan C Eames, BirdLife International *in Indochina* visited the United Kingdom with the purpose of assisting fund-raising by supporting the British Birdwatching Fair, seeking additional donor support for BANCA, promoting BANCA and promoting our joint efforts to establish Lenya National Park. The outcome was that GBP 190,000 was raised for future activities at Lenya National Park, US \$ 20,000 was pledged by RSPB for future research on vultures in the Eastern Himalayas Endemic Bird Area. Importantly also, plans were finalized for a strategic planning workshop for BANCA, scheduled for 21-23 September in Yangon to be facilitated by RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) and BirdLife Asia Division staff. Also during the reporting period, the British Embassy in Yangon confirmed its intent to provide c. US \$ 12,000 to BANCA for additional Site-support Group (SSG) activities in the buffer-zone of Natmataung National Park.

During the reporting period project staff continued provision of regular support to the two existing SSGs and further established two new SSGs, again in the buffer-zone of Natmataung National Park. This involved facilitating workshops to help villagers understand and articulate their development needs, and the support the project could provide, and their responsibilities. This process, we believe, strengthens the villager's capacity for self reliance and meeting their basic needs. Also four local teachers received training in developing advocacy and educational materials in Yangon and together with BANCA staff held a series of workshops for teachers in the two districts within the Natmataung National Park buffer zone.

BANCA, BirdLife and our local partners would like to continue to extend the SSG model to additional villages in the Natmataung National Park buffer zone. We recognize that there is a developing donor dependency and issues of sustainability. The recent grant to BANCA from the British Embassy is a welcomed stop-gap measure. We have held discussions with CARE to try and dovetail ours and their development plans in the area, where CARE's larger livelihoods and natural resource management project could adopt the SSG approach. Another opportunity is presented by a new UNDP initiative in the area. Follow-up is now required by BANCA/BirdLife to try and secure an institutional link. Both the newly developed strategic plan for BANCA and the new CARE and UNDP initiatives can be incorporated into the work plan once the strategic plan is finalized and discussions are more advanced with CARE and UNDP.

2. Emphasis has shifted away from establishing SSGs in the Sundaic Lowlands to promoting the establishment of Lenya NP. Darwin project resources for SSG establishment in the Sundaic Lowlands have now been committed and spent on establishing two new SSGs in the Eastern Himalayas EBA during this reporting period. In the work-plan for the next reporting period Darwin project resources for staff time, travel and advocacy will be used to further promote the establishment of Lenya National Park. 2005 BirdFair and GCF monies relate to a separate project to establish Lenya National Park. 2005 BirdFair monies will not be available until February 2006 and no final agreement has yet been reached with GCF regarding the level or timing of their support. A revised log frame can be appended to the next Annual Report to reflect these changes.

3. We fully recognize that this is a major challenge and this is a tough question. It may take years before villagers perceive a link between improved livelihoods and rational and sustainable use of natural resources, and their responsibilities as Myanmar citizens living in the buffer-zone of a national park. The southern Chin Hills suffer extraordinary levels of deforestation and desiccation and it must be clear to many that their livelihoods will never improve without reduced demand for natural resources. Rural depopulation precipitated by improved economic opportunities is probably the only dynamic force that will conserve any natural forest in the southern Chin Hills. However, BirdLife and BANCA's strategy for the time being is to continue to replicate the SSG model based on provision of development assistance in buffer-zone villages since there is already evidence of incremental livelihood improvement and decrease in hunting levels. Beyond a certain number of villages the programme will hopefully reach a critical mass which with appropriate leadership and management can be a force for improved management of the national park. We would then seek to extend the model to other Important Bird Areas in the Chin Hills, eventually establishing a state-wide network of SSGs. In addition to the direct conserve gains for the sites involved this approach will create a foundation of local support for conservation, and hopefully a constituency of support for BANCA. It will empower local people and improve governance.

4. This is a useful suggestion and we will incorporate advocacy and awareness raising activities in relation to Lenya National Park in our future work-plan.

## **6. Partnerships**

BANCA has now become an Affiliate of BirdLife International (see above), thereby formally establishing an institutional arrangement between the organizations. At an operational level the relationship also remains good and no problems have been encountered. BirdLife also continues to pursue a memorandum of understanding with the Forest Department but this continues to remain elusive.

The Darwin Initiative funded project entitled, *Gurney's Pitta conservation in Thailand and Myanmar* is in its second year of the same BANCA staff involved with implementation of both projects. In 2005 senior BANCA staff met with Bird Conservation Society of Thailand staff for the first time.

Expatriate project consultants were involved in fieldwork and project planning. They included Dr Frank D. Steinheimer, currently at the ornithological Department of Berlin Museum and a Scientific Affiliate of The Natural History Museum. Frank provided liaison with Marco Polo Films. Tim Appleton, Reserve Manager at Rutland Water Nature Reserve, and an employee of Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, participated in the 2005 Kachin wetlands survey and provided training in field survey techniques. Lastly, Karin Eberhardt a resident Burmese speaking conservation and development consultant participated in the 2005 Kachin wetlands survey and lead discussions with UNDP and Care on a joint operational MoU.

## **7. Impact and Sustainability**

The profile of the project especially with donors and international NGOs within Myanmar is increasing. This increased profile arises from BirdLife and BANCA efforts to seek collaborative relationships with UNDP and Care around Natmataung National Park. The profile of the project within the Burmese media was not great in the reporting period and a greater effort should be made to do so.

BirdLife and BANCA have sought and committed substantial additional resources to develop new projects at Lenya National Park, and to expand the programme of work with SSGs in the Natmataung National Park buffer zone. This is reported in detail above.

## **8. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination**

We have chosen below to evaluate progress against the schedule of project outputs, rather than the project implementation timetable.

*Seven technical staff of BANCA will receive over 24 months of on-the-job training in survey techniques, biological assessment, and conservation extension and project management.* It is estimated that so far, nine BANCA and three Forest Department staff have already received a total of 40 man-months of training.

*Over 50 villagers at four separate sites will receive skills training in conservation planning, environmental awareness extension and monitoring techniques.* It is estimated that at this point in project implementation, 160 villagers (100 teachers, 60 SSG members) have received some training.

*Conservation awareness toolkits (including posters brochures and notebooks with environmental messages) will be developed in appropriate local languages and modified for extension in four remote areas in Myanmar.* Task completed and reported above.

*A total of 50 weeks will be spent by UK staff on project work in the host country.* It is estimated that 67 weeks have already been spent by British (and German) staff on project work.

*Two separate biological assessment reports for Eastern Himalayas and Sundaic Lowlands EBA including maps identifying IBAs for these 2 areas* A conservation assessment of the Eastern Himalayas EBA was undertaken and published in *Important Bird Areas in Asia* ISBN: 946 88854X (BirdLife International 2004). We propose to undertake *an additional analysis*, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution further analysis of forest cover in the Eastern Himalayas EBA using GIS.

*A minimum of 2 scientific papers will be published in peer reviewed journals.* One scientific paper has already been published and two more have been submitted for publication. Four more papers detailing results from this project are in preparation.

*The above mentioned biological assessments will include annotated lists of bird species found within the two EBAs for which little is currently known. It is anticipated that previously undescribed bird species will be identified.* Annotated lists are included in papers in press and in preparation. Although diagnosis of specimens collected has not yet occurred we believe it unlikely that any new species will be described resulting from work undertaken by the project.

*A minimum of 2 sets of bird collections will be established and handed over to the host country* Bird skin and alcohol collections were taken from Mount Bwe Pa in the Chin State in 2004, from Mount Ma Jed in the Kachin State in February/March 2005, and Mount Imawbun in March 2006. Lack of interest by BANCA in retaining this material makes it more probable that the collections will be donated to the The Natural History Museum.

*A minimum of eight village-level workshops will be organized to establish and strengthen 4 SSGs and one national workshop will be organized to share lessons.* We have held one large workshop on 7 October 2004 at Mindat Town Hall. In

addition we presented project results at a workshop in Yangon on 7 February 2005. During the latest reporting period four further SSG workshops were held.

***A minimum of one international conference will be attended by UK staff who will present scientific findings of the Darwin project.*** The California Academy of Sciences proposed to host a national conference on biodiversity in Myanmar in March 2005, at which Jonathan C. Eames had accepted to present a paper on the results of the Gurney's Pitta research. However, the Government of Myanmar postponed the conference.

***A minimum of 9 national press releases in the host country.*** At this point of the project we had made five national press releases. Thus we have four remaining for the remainder of the project.

***A minimum of 9 local press releases in the host country.*** Since there is no local press, only national press it is not possible to achieve this output.

***A minimum of 3 national press releases in the UK.*** To-date we have had one UK press release.

***BANCA will establish a quarterly newsletter, which will produce about 10 issues before the end of the project..*** BANCA has produced one issue. Two more are planned within the life of the project.

***The project will develop a network of 4 SSGs that can share information through group exchanges and letters. As more SSGs become established, this community based conservation network will expand.*** Workshops and cross visits are planned.

***A minimum of 1 national TV feature in the host country*** Myanmar TV has been approached.

***A minimum of 4 local TV features in the host country.*** This will not now be possible since local TV is non existent.

***Approximately GBP 5,750 worth of computing and field equipment will be handed over to BANCA and local SSGs at the close of the project.*** Computer and field equipment has been purchased and is stored in the BANCA/BirdLife office in Yangon.

***Approximately GBP 30,000 will be leveraged by BirdLife International to match Darwin project funds. In addition a minimum of two small-sized grant proposals and two medium-sized grant proposals will be developed.*** BirdLife has already now provided GBP 10,000 directly via the Asia Bird Fund. In addition BirdLife has developed and secured funding from two donors (reported above). BirdLife has also secured SKr 50,000 from Nikon via Sweden's Club300 and US\$ 30,000 from UNDP in Yangon.

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

<i>Code No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Year 1 Total</i>	<i>Year 2 Total</i>	<i>Year 3 Total</i>	<i>Year 4 Total</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
6A	<i>Training in bird survey techniques, site evaluation for conservation, use of mist nets, bird handling, preparation and storage of bird study skins, data analysis, drafting technical reports and scientific papers, and drafting proposals provided to the following individuals; U Uga, U Htin Hla, Khin Ma Ma Thwin, U Aung Kyaw Nyunt, U Haung Mang, U Sein Myo Aung, U Saw Moses, Khin Min Min Thwin, U Shein Gay Ngai, U Maung Nu, U Samyo Zaw, and U Ngwe Lwin.</i>	10	12			12 <i>Burmese</i>
8	<i>Jonathan C. Eames</i>	12	12			24 weeks
8	<i>Andrew W. Tordoff</i>	4	6			10 weeks
8	<i>Tim Appleton</i>	4	4			4 weeks
8	<i>Karin Eberhardt</i>	4	6			10 weeks
8	<i>Frank Steinheimer</i>	4				4 weeks
11B	<i>Book: Important Bird Areas in Asia ISBN: 946 88854X (2004).</i>	1	1			2 books
	<i>Book: Myanmar: Investment Opportunities in Biodiversity Conservation</i>					
11B	<i>Journal paper: Rediscovery of the Gurney's Pitta in Myanmar</i>	1	2			3 papers
	<i>Journal paper: The historical and current status of Pink-headed Duck Rhodonessa caryophyllacea in Myanmar</i>					
	<i>Journal paper: Avifaunal surveys in the lowlands of Kachin State, Myanmar, 2003-2005</i>					
13A	<i>Collections: 56 bird skins from Mount Bwe Pa, 150 bird skins, plus c. 30 alcohol specimens from Mount Ma Jed, 13 Skins from Mount Imawbun</i>	2	1			3 <i>collections</i>
23	<i>US\$ 250,000 raised from the Global Conservation Fund of Conservation International for project implementation.</i>		1			1 <i>proposal</i>
23	<i>GBP 190,000 raised from British Bird watching Fair 2005</i>		1			1 <i>proposal</i>
23	<i>US \$ 5,000 raised from Asia Bird Fund</i>	1	1			2 <i>proposals</i>
23	<i>US\$ 30,000 raised from UNDP Yangon</i>		1			1 <i>proposal</i>
23	<i>US\$ 84,000 raised from the Darwin Initiative for Conservation of Gurney's Pitta in Thailand and Myanmar</i>		1			1 <i>proposal</i>
23	<i>US \$ 12,000 raised from the British Embassy, Yangon for the project Strengthening livelihoods and promoting environmental stewardship at Namataung National Park (NP), Chin State.</i>		1			1 <i>proposal</i>



## **10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons**

Progress with the implementation of this project has been monitored by regularly reviewing progress against six-monthly work plans and directly against the milestones and outputs in the project document. The co-team leaders and Chairman of BANCA are in weekly email and telephone contact and we hold regular (quarterly) project review sessions. Staff performance is monitored against their work plans and terms of reference. Without the human and financial resources provided by this project BANCA would not have otherwise achieved these conservation outcomes. Since most outcomes and outputs have been achieved, this can only be because the project purpose is being fulfilled. Finally it is clear that we are attempting to implement this project in one of the most difficult operating environments imaginable.

*Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2005/2006*

<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Measurable Indicators</i>	<i>Progress and Achievements April 2004-Mar 2005</i>	<i>Actions required/planned for next period</i>
<p><i>Goal: To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>			
<p><i>Purpose (insert original project purpose statement)</i></p> <p><i>1. To strengthen the institutional capacity of BENCA to prioritise, plan and undertake high quality applied research and use the results to achieve greatest benefits for conservation.</i></p> <p><i>2. To develop SSGs at 4 areas of global conservation importance, empowering communities to manage natural resources and improve their quality of life.</i></p>	<p><i>(insert original purpose level indicators)</i></p> <p><i>1. Sustained capacity of BENCA in conservation planning and management, including their ability to independently conduct field surveys and develop sound conservation initiatives.</i></p> <p><i>2. Effective conservation management at 4 IBAs, serving as pilots to be monitored, strengthened and replicated in other areas of global conservation importance.</i></p>	<p><i>(report impacts and achievements resulting from the project against purpose indicators – if any)</i></p> <p><i>1.1 Participation of BANCA in designing conservation and development interventions at 2 IBAs.</i></p> <p><i>1.2 Participation of BANCA in the elaboration of an organizational strategic development plan.</i></p> <p><i>1.3 Participation of BANCA in drafting two further journal papers.</i></p> <p><i>1.4 Two extended periods of fieldwork undertaken in 1 EBA.</i></p> <p><i>1.5 Two proposals developed by BANCA to British and USA Embassies. Only one done with BirdLife support</i></p> <p><i>2.1 Two further SSGs have been established by senior BANCA and national park staff at two villages in the buffer-zone of Natmataung National Park. Development inputs have been provided in return for supporting national park regulations and undertaking anti-poaching patrols.</i></p> <p><i>2.2 MoU developed with UNDP to facilitate future collaboration in Natmataung NP buffer</i></p>	<p><i>(report any lessons learned resulting from the project &amp; highlight key actions planning for next period)</i></p> <p><i>1.1 BANCA has continued to demonstrate its ability to develop conservation and development interventions at site level. It will be important to incorporate village-level feedback into new activities, including at new sites and to conclude the MoU with UNDP for collaboration in the buffer zone.</i></p> <p><i>1.2 Assistance will be required to begin implementation of strategic plan</i></p> <p><i>1.3 Only 2 BANCA staff has good written English skills.</i></p> <p><i>1.4 Further field work planned for Eastern Himalayas EBA.</i></p> <p><i>2.1 Sustainability of EBAs remains an issue but TMF funds and collaboration with UNDP will provide additional major resources. Additional SSGs will be established with British Embassy funds. Lessons learnt document on SSGs will be produced. SSG evaluation is proposed.</i></p> <p><i>2.2 MoU must be finalized.</i></p>

		<i>zone has been developed.</i>	
<i>Outputs</i>			
<i>(insert original outputs – one per line)</i> <i>1.1 Published conservation assessments of 2 EBAs.</i>	<i>(insert original output level indicators)</i> <i>1.1 Minimum of 4 staff from local partner institution trained to conduct surveys, analyze data and draft assessment reports.</i>	<i>(report completed activities and outcomes that contribute toward outputs and indicators)</i> <i>1.1 A minimum of 12 staff, including 8 from BANCA comprising U Uga, U Htin Hla, Khin Ma Ma Thwin, U Aung Kyaw Nyunt, U Haung Mang, U Sein Myo Aung, U Saw Moses, Khin Min Min Thwin, U Shein Gay Ngai, U Maung Nu, U Samyo Zaw, and U Ngwe Lwin received training during the reporting period. During the reporting period Myanmar: Investment Opportunities in Biodiversity Conservation was published, with U Uga as co-author. Project staff contributed to the two journal papers in press. BANCA staff drafted to project proposals.</i>	<i>(report any lessons learned resulting from the project &amp; highlight key actions planning for next period)</i> <i>It was again not possible to complete the GIS analysis of forest cover in the Eastern Himalayas EBA, so as to identify IBAs. This is now proposed for the next reporting period.</i> <i>Four journal papers are now in preparation variously detailing Gurney's Pitta population size, records of Globally Threatened Bird from Tanintharyi, and details of the two bird collections so-far made. The signing of the pending MoU between BirdLife and the Forest Dept is necessary before specimens can be exported for diagnosis at The National History Museum.</i>
<i>1.2 Establishment of 4 IBA SSGs within the 2 EBAs.</i>	<i>1.2 Conservation activities undertaken by 4 SSGs.</i>	<i>1.2 Conservation activities undertaken by the SSGs at Okpo and Hilaung villages have comprised regular foot patrols in Natmataung National Park. They have advised hunters of the illegality of their actions and have confiscated traps from the forest. Their activities have been documented in detail in log-books.</i>	<i>1.2 SSG activities to be extended to further villages in the Natmataung National Park buffer-zone under the British Embassy funded project.</i>
<i>1.3 Strengthened capacity of BANCA staff to undertake conservation planning</i>	<i>1.3 Conservation planning activities lead by BANCA staff.</i>	<i>1.3 U Uga (BANCA Chairman) and U Shein Gay Ngai (Warden of Natmataung National Park), plus locally recruited staff, identified villages using established criteria. They then convened village-level meetings to learn more about village development and household</i>	<i>1.3 New SSG activities at two new villages will again be lead by U Uga (BANCA Chairman) and U Shein Gay Ngai (Warden of Natmataung National Park), plus locally recruited staff, and the village headmen.</i>

		<i>issues, before jointly designing and agreeing development inputs to be provided by the project, in return for village-level support to reduce hunting pressure in the national park.</i>	
<i>2.1 Conservation undertaken by SSGs at 4 priority IBAs.</i>	<i>2.1 Local stakeholders develop and implement conservation activities at 4 IBAs.</i>	<i>2.1 See 1.2 and 1.3 above</i>	
<i>2.2 Increased community awareness to protect birds/environment at priority IBAs.</i>	<i>2.2 Conservation awareness materials used by local villages.</i>	<i>2.2 Conservation awareness materials developed and distributed to 100 teachers during 2 workshops.</i>	<i>2.2 BANCA will continue to develop, produce and distribute conservation awareness materials under the new British Embassy funded project and as part of the effort to conserve Lenya National Park. Professional support should be obtained to guide this process to ensure maximum success</i>
<i>2.3 Follow-on proposals to scale-up SSG approach in other IBAs developed.</i>	<i>2.3 Minimum of two proposals to replicate SSG approach to other IBAs and support BANCA.</i>	<i>2.3 Euros 30,000 secured from TMF funds of Dutch government to scale-up SSG activities in Natmataung National Park buffer zone.  The British Bird watching Fair and Global Conservation Fund has provided GBP 190,000 and US\$ 250,000 respectively for establishment and expansion of Lenya National Park. This project includes a project component to support the institutional development of BANCA.</i>	<i>2.3 Outcome of small grant proposal to USA Embassy pending  BANCA still require close guidance on proposal development to ensure that small proposals they develop independently dovetail with ongoing and planned project activities.</i>

*Note: Please do NOT expand rows to include activities since their completion and outcomes should be reported under the column on progress and achievements at output and purpose levels.*