

# 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**

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	162/13/004
<b>Project Title</b>	Developing a model for the conservation of Croatia's grassland biodiversity
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Croatia
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Žumberak-Samoborsko Gorje Nature Park (ŽSGNP) and the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER)
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2005
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR -2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.ppzsg.org/darwin">www.ppzsg.org/darwin</a>

**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).**

Since April the project's main focus has been in developing grassland surveying protocols and providing training to staff of the ŽSGNP in grassland biodiversity and its surveying. Park staff were shown how to assess grassland biodiversity and its threats, and were given training in four different types of grassland survey techniques: i) rapid biodiversity assessment, ii) rare plant, iii) plant community and iv) past and present land management.

In July the project extended its training in grassland surveying to other protected areas in Croatia by holding a four day workshop in the ŽSGNP. The workshop was attended by protected area representatives from the length and breadth of Croatia. It was opened by the Assistant Minister, and received much publicity with two radio broadcasts and an interview on Croatia's popular TV programme "Good Morning Croatia".

In the last six months further professional training was provided to the Park's conservation manager, Biljana Janev Hutinec, and the Darwin scholar, Zrinka Mesić. Biljana attended a five day workshop in the Peak District National Park on "Grassland management for Nature Conservation" and a three day conference on Landscape scale conservation at the University of Wales, Bangor. Zrinka has just completed her three month study visit to IGER, where she gained knowledge and experience in integrated grassland conservation and learnt many new skills in grassland surveying and the analysis of data. So much so, that she has been conducted a preliminary analysis of the plant community data collected this spring. In addition, she attended a conference at Nottingham University on Landscape Ecology: Planning, People and Practice.

Following the training in stakeholder participation earlier in the year Učka Nature Park has been busy interviewing stakeholders towards the development of their first ever management plan.

The next issues of the project's newsletters, *Grass Cuttings* (UK and International) and *Kosilica* (Croatia) were produced and circulated in October.

**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.**

Unfortunately, the production of the two handbooks, one on management planning the other on grassland surveying, is delayed. This is an inevitable consequence of the late project start up, which meant that many of the grassland surveying outputs in the first year had to be postponed till the spring/summer of this year. This has impacted on the production of the handbooks. However, we already have drafts of the handbooks and they should be completed and printed by March 2005. The delayed production of the handbooks should not affect the budget as they will be produced within this financial year (2005-2006).

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

No, the above issues have not been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat but they will be informed shortly of the change in project timetable.

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat:**                      **no**

**Changes to the project schedule/workplan:**    **yes, a minor delay in an output**

**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](mailto: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.**