

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Ethnobiology of proposed traditional use zones of Crocker Range Park
Country	Malaysia
Organisation	The Global Diversity Foundation
Project Ref. No.	162/13/009
Report date	20 November 2006

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months 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).

This reporting period has been a substantially busy time for the project. In field research, we have been consolidating datasets on key ethnobiological resources, including a recently completed rattan inventory and preparation for an ethno-ornithological survey, both conducted with Sabah Parks specialists and community members. Two further Master's Field Research Grants have been awarded to investigate agricultural patterns, particularly swidden cultivation and home gardens. We have intensified investigations on subsistence hunting patterns, which expands upon preliminary data collected over the last year, and we will be spending the following months documenting the areas accessed for hunting, hunted species and off-take. Crucially, the community mapping initiative conducted in collaboration with PACOS has advanced substantially and we are on track to produce a detailed GIS of the Resource Catchment Area (RCA) that shows the areas accessed by the local community and locations of key resources used. The RCA GIS will be linked with the entire database of ethnobiological resources created throughout this project. Our progress has been well received by Sabah Parks, who are especially interested in the contribution of the RCA GIS towards the formulation of the Community Use Zone (CUZ) Management Agreement. Sabah Parks will be preparing the first draft of the CUZ Management Agreement by January 2007, with our assistance.

In this period, we have additionally conducted a mid-term participatory community evaluation, over a series of community discussions and workshops to evaluate the Research Agreement and project progress. We received tremendous feedback from the evaluation, with requests for the project to continue in the longer-term to provide more training in ethnobiological techniques and community-based methods to document and monitor resource use.

In training, we completed Modules Three (Ethnobiological Knowledge Systems and Communities, Conservation and Tourism in April & May) and Four (Ethnobiological Data Analysis in November) of the Ethnobiology and Conservation training course. Both Modules were delivered by lecturers from UKC and UMS and were well attended (17 participants in Module Three and 12 participants in Module Four). Module Five, on Conservation Education and Returning Results, will be given by Ian Bride of University of Kent at CRP headquarters in Keningau in June 2007 followed by a field methods workshop. The two UMS Master's students who received grants attended the courses, which provided concepts and methods for their research on the impact of swidden agriculture on soil fertility and the floristic structure and composition of home gardens.

A great deal of dissemination has taken place over this period, with papers presented at the following fora:

- 26th Annual ESRI International User Conference in San Diego, California: paper on the role of the RCA GIS in the collaborative management of the CRP; August 2006 (Wong, Murphy, Agama & Martin)
- Indigenous Peoples and the CBD National Capacity Building Workshop: paper on FPIC

and Research Agreement with local communities in Buayan-Kionop; October 2006 (Agama & Miki)

- A package of papers on the Darwin Initiative project was delivered at the 10th International Congress of Ethnobiology in Chiang Rai, Thailand from 5-9 November 2006:

Paper presentations:

- Integrating Community Resource Use with Biodiversity Conservation: Community Use Zones in the Crocker Range Park, Sabah, Malaysian Borneo (Spait, Apin & Nais)
- The Ethnobiological Classification of Forest and Land Types of the Buayan-Kionop Dusun in the Crocker Range, Sabah, Malaysian Borneo (Miki, Agama & Martin)
- Mapping Cultural Landscapes: Using Participatory Approaches to Incorporate Local Ethnobiological Knowledge into GIS (Wong, Murphy, Agama & Martin)
- Understanding Local Uses and Perceptions of Animals: An Ethnobiological Study of Key Animal Resources in Buayan-Kionop, Sabah (Murphy, Agama, Wong, Miki & Martin)

Poster presentation:

- Ethnobiology of proposed traditional use zones of Crocker Range Park (Martin, Mohamed, Nais, Agama, Harrop, Miki, Puri & Wong)

The project supported the attendance of an impressive Sabah contingent comprising Gary Martin (GDF Director), Agnes Lee Agama, James Wong, Yassin Miki (GDF-Sabah), Adam Murphy (Field Grant recipient), Jamili Nais (Sabah Parks Assistant Director), Maipol Spait and Ludi Apin (Sabah Parks). While we were unable to convene a symposium on the Darwin project, due to the tight scheduling of the congress, our paper and poster presentations were delivered in two symposia focussing on Cultural Landscapes and Ethnobiology, which were attended by an international audience. We delivered a short presentation about the field methods used in our project in a Methods Workshop organised by Gary Martin and Raj Puri (University of Kent), with a focus on the process of applying ethnobiological techniques for conservation purposes, especially in the context of community-based approaches to ethnobiological assessments of resource use.

In September 2006, we were invited to teach at the UNDP-GEF Klias Peat Swamp Conservation Training Course for Forestry Rangers. We were able to disseminate information about the participatory research approaches and tools used in our project in two one-week modules of this course.

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

Unexpected developments: We would like to report five significant developments that are favourably influencing the impact of our project:

(1) Sabah Parks has proposed an Amendment to the Parks Enactment to legally enable the creation of Community Use Zones (CUZs) around protected areas. The proposal is being vetted by the state Attorney General and will be presented to the State Assembly. One of the incentives for this significant policy shift has come from our Darwin Initiative project on resource use in Buayan-Kionop, which has attained a high profile locally.

(2) a Master List of Protected Areas in Sabah is being drafted and will soon be endorsed by the state government. The total protected terrestrial area currently covers 17.1% of the state. Of particular importance for our efforts is a recent trend towards creating IUCN Category V (Protected Landscape/Seascape) and Category VI (Managed Resource Protected Area) sites

which were formerly absent from Sabah's conservation efforts. These categories imply the establishment of CUZs, which occupy an increasingly important place in Sabah's conservation strategy.

(3) the Japanese-funded Borneo Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation (BBEC) programme – one of our partners in the Darwin project – is likely to approve an additional three years of funding, with a specific focus on CUZs of the outside border of Crocker Range Park (CRP).

(4) Sabah Parks has established a control post in Buayan with the intention of creating an intensive collaborative management initiative for the CUZs in this interior area of CRP. The substation was inaugurated on 15 November 2006.

(5) The Collaborative Management Learning Network (an initiative of the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, CEESP-IUCN, Forest Peoples Programme, and IWGIA) has selected the CRP as the Malaysian field site for its 5-year project, which will focus on creation of CUZs.

Because CUZs are now of high priority and visibility in Sabah, Sabah Parks has requested that GDF assist in the implementation of Community Use Zones in Buayan-Kionop (our field site in the interior of CRP) after the current Darwin project ends in July 2007. Their specific request is that we build the capacity of park managers, community members and NGOs to set up community-based monitoring of culturally and ecologically important animal and plant species, with participatory GIS as one of the tools. This effort will provide a model for other CUZs to be implemented in the state, and regionally. We have decided to submit a proposal for Darwin post-project funding in January 2007 for this initiative.

Notable problems: As noted in a letter of 15 May 2006 to the Darwin Initiative Secretariat, we have been successful in recruiting only three of eight Malaysian MSc students that we had anticipated. We proposed to use the extra MSc funds to (1) increase our support for current MSc grantees, for example by offering them additional capacity building options and support for academic fees and (2) provide consultancies for collaborators to work on specific research themes. This will ensure that we obtain the results that we require to support empirically the Community Use Zone Management Agreement that is being developed by Sabah Parks and GDF, and that is at the heart of our project.

We proposed another modification (in form rather than content) in outputs. Our interim manuals on ethnobiological resource inventory, local agriculture & traditional agroecosystems and subsistence hunting in Community Use Zones have taken the form of community protocols in local language for direct use in field research by the GDF field team. We have produced 15 of these 'process sheets' that have guided the collection of a significant amount of empirical data on the use and management of biological resources and landscapes in our Crocker Range Park field site. We are now translating these process sheets into English to present them as research techniques in our "Best Practices for Assessing Traditional Use Zones" handbook that will be one of the final outputs of the project. We are collating and analysing the data that derive from the use of the process sheets, to be included as 'worked examples' in the handbook, as well as in the final report on viability of Community Use Zones that we will submit to Sabah Parks. This means that the written output is not being produced in discreet manuals according to our original project implementation timetable and measurable outputs table, but in the form described above. Related to this way of conducting our research, we decided to postpone preparation of manuscripts for submission to peer reviewed journals, as we would like to present more advanced analyses of project results rather than preliminary descriptions of our intentions.

As noted in point 3, we have attempted to discuss these modifications with the Department but have not succeeded in obtaining official acknowledgement of these changes to the original agreement. The changes were endorsed in the generally favourable second annual review of our project, which raised only one question to which we respond here: *Will the reduced number of MSc research projects have an effect on the amount of data concerning the ecological impact of resource use?*

Shifting funds from MSc students to local consultants will enhance the amount of data that we are collecting. The consultants we are contracting have extensive experience in data collection. For example, Jusimin Duaneh – who recently conducted the survey of rattans – was trained in a WWF-Unesco-Kew project on ethnobotany around Kinabalu Park from 1992-1998. Based on a free list of 45 Dusun names of rattans assembled by community research assistants, he made high quality, georeferenced herbarium collections of rattans over the course of two months. We are contracting another consultant, Berhaman Bin Ahmad of UMS, to identify these rattans and other species. He will complete this consultancy in December 2006 before going to the University of Aberdeen to begin his doctorate in plant ecology. Alim Bium, a naturalist at Sabah Parks, will be contracted to document diversity and local knowledge of birds in the Buayan-Kionop area. An experienced ornithologist, he already has an extensive list of birds of Sabah.

The MSc students, because of their relative inexperience and need to complete coursework and other degree requirements, take longer to produce research results. In addition, students may have difficulty divulging their data before completing their dissertations, if so guided by their supervisors. This fortunately does limit our access to results from the studies of MSc students Yassin Miki and James Wong who are employed directly by the Darwin project, but it could have an impact in other cases.

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

The lag time required for DEFRA reimbursements, about which we noted our concern in the last half year report, has much improved. However, we have been left in limbo over modifications to our project that we requested on 15 May 2006. As we submit this report, six months later, we still have not received official approval of these changes. We have proceeded to conduct the project as outlined in our 15 May letter and subsequent correspondence, in the hope that we will not receive a *post hoc* denial of the modifications we proposed. Here is a record of the correspondence thus far:

- On 4 July, we received an e-mail from the Darwin Secretariat, acknowledging the requests in our 15 May letter and noting "Before we can approve any of the modifications you have requested, it would be helpful if you could provide us with i) exact details of these modifications and how they would benefit the project, and ii) with all the costs involved."
- On 17 July, we sent a detailed justification and costing of the first request (using MSc funds to increase support for fewer MSc grantees, and to provide consultancies to produce specific research outputs) after consultation with our team in Sabah.
- On 25 July, we sent the detailed justification and costing of the second request (modifying the form of the methods manuals) after further consultation with our team in Sabah.
- On 13 September, we resent the justifications with a note that our requests were fully supported by the external review of our annual report that we received on 31 July.

We would breathe easier if we received timely official confirmation of the modifications requested.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, Email: Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk