

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.	13-012
Project Title	Integrated River Basin Management in the Sepik River
Country(ies)	Papua New Guinea
UK Organisation	WWF-UK
Collaborator(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- PNG Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC)- Ambunti Local Level Government- HELP Resources Incorporated- Project area communities
Report date	1 April - 30 September 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	3
Project website	http://www.wwfpacific.org.fj/where_we_work/png/index.cfm

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).

Overview

After a slower than expected first year, the recruitment of an excellent Freshwater Programme Officer (David Peter) in February meant that the Darwin Sepik project moved forward significantly in this reporting period. Highlights in the six months from April to September 2005 included consolidation of partnership agreements with a range of local partners including HELP Resources Incorporated (a social NGO) and the relevant local government organisations; collection of baseline monitoring data; and the establishment of a Sepik IRBM “steering team” including local stakeholders.

In addition, WWF PNG and WWF-UK have taken stock of progress during the first 18 months of the Darwin Sepik project through a “mini-review”, and have rephased the activities and the budget. The outcome of this is a request for a no-cost extension of Darwin funding through 2007-08 to ensure full delivery of the project outputs (relevant papers attached).

Progress towards project milestones since last report

i) Confirm partnership agreements:

In the previous period, we reported that partnership agreements had been reached with DEC and HELP Resources. Further discussions were in progress with the Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative, Sepik River Basin Watch Group, East Sepik Provincial Government and Ambunti Local Level Government.

Progress in this reporting period included:

- HELP Resources Incorporated: Negotiations were well advanced with a view to signing a partnership agreement by end 2005 to provide a Field Coordinator who will be based with HRI at the project site in Ambunti.

- Ambunti Local Level Government: At a meeting in Wewak in August 2005, the District Administrator made a commitment to support the Sepik IRBM planning process through the provision of two buildings that WWF and the other project partners can use as an office and residential accommodation for the Field Co-ordinator. The intention was that a Memorandum of Understanding for the use of the buildings would be signed between HELP Resources Incorporated, Ambunti Local Level Government and WWF in by end 2005.
- East Sepik Provincial Government: The Provincial Government also committed to support the IRBM process. The WWF team was required to put together a Provincial Executive Council (PEC) information paper within 24 hours on behalf of the Ambunti District Administration so that it would presented in the provincial assembly meeting next day. The WWF team, led by the Freshwater Programme Officer, put together the submission and handed it over to the provincial government through HELP Resources Incorporated.
- Small grants were given to Sepik Wetlands Initiative Management in late September 2005 for awareness work on the protecting of the crocodile habitat and nesting sites.

ii) Consultants and staff hired:

In the previous period we reported that a Freshwater Programme Officer, David Peter, had been hired by WWF PNG, and that the DEC had agreed to fund a Sepik Catchment Management Officer as this position is within their organisational structure. The Catchment Management Officer will move to the project site when DEC set up all the logistical arrangements. In the meantime WWF is working closely with a DEC Field Officer based in Ambunti and several senior staff of DEC in Port Moresby.

Progress in this reporting period included:

- Sepik Field Co-ordinator (referred to as ADLEF Field Coordinator in the Darwin agreement): This position was advertised in June and July 2005 by HELP Resources Incorporated. The coordinator (when hired) will be supervised administratively by the HELP Resources Inc. Subject to agreement from the Darwin Initiative, the position will be funded by WWF through the Darwin project budget.
- Mr. Ted Mamu was hired on a consultancy basis between August 2005 and late September 2005 to collect baseline data on the biophysical, environmental and social aspects of the Sepik River Basin and to identify the data gaps.

iii) Complete background reviews of programme sites:

In the previous period we reported that two field trips had been undertaken by WWF PNG staff to review project sites and identify key stakeholders.

Progress in this reporting period included:

- In August 2005 a stakeholder capacity assessment exercise was carried by the consultant Mr. Ted Mamu. He had both formal and informal meetings with the selected stakeholders and assessed their interest and the capacity to work effectively with WWF on the Darwin Sepik project.

iv) Formulate education strategy and produce awareness materials:

In the previous period we reported that a leaflet about the Darwin Sepik project had been drafted.

Progress in this reporting period included:

- The printing of three thousand copies of the brochure in time for the launch in Ambunti during a planning meeting in early November.
- Discussions with the staff of HELP Resources Incorporated to develop the education strategy. The other option being considered was to conduct a meeting with the curriculum unit of the PNG Department of Education to find ways to develop this strategy. A consultant may be required to lead this process.

v) Training in IRBM:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- The WWF PNG Freshwater Programme Officer started an online IRBM course offered run by UNESCO-IHE (based in the Netherlands). The programme started in September 2005 and was due to end in December 2005.
- Plans were advanced for a series of three IRBM workshops in PNG in November 2005 for WWF staff and local stakeholders. One workshop was to be held in the capital, Port Moresby, for national level stakeholders, e.g. from DEC. Two others were to be held for, respectively, those involved in the Darwin Sepik project and a sister project run by WWF PNG with separate funding in the Kikori River Basin. The intention was that the WWF-UK project leader, Dr David Tickner, would attend at least one of these workshops and would bring experience from other IRBM projects run by WWF around the world.

vi) Design for implementing integrated river basin management policy in the Sepik basin:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- Proposals were advanced for the establishment of the Sepik Steering Committee by end 2005. The Committee is to consist mostly of major stakeholders and will be the decision-making body for the Sepik River basin.

vii) Monitoring database and baseline established:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- As discussed in ii) above, Mr. Ted Mamu, a former employee of WWF PNG, was hired on a consultancy basis to collect baseline data on the biophysical, environmental and social aspects of the Sepik River Basin and to identify the data gaps that need to be filled in order to facilitate the development and implementation of the IRBM plan.
- The consultant collected data from other organisations and individuals on their knowledge on river management, what environmental issues they address and their plans to work along the Sepik River.
- As he collected data, the consultant visited various organisations in the Sepik and held discussions with them to see their stake in the Darwin Sepik project, their interest to work with WWF and to assess their capacity to contribute effectively to the IRBM process. A database of these organisations and individuals was developed for future reference.
- A draft report on the data collection exercise was produced and will be finalised during the next reporting period. The data was collected from early August to late September 2005. It was to be circulated to the stakeholders that provided the data and information before being finalised in December 2005.

- In addition, an application was lodged with Ausaid for two volunteers to assist in gathering of additional data and information on the biological, social and economical aspects of both the Sepik River Basin and the Kikori River Basin. This would be an additional resource for the Darwin Sepik project. The outcome of the application will be made known in March 2006.

viii) Communications materials on values of the Sepik River:

In the previous period we reported that a leaflet about the Darwin Sepik project had been drafted (see iv above), that a Sepik Tourism brochure was planned and that HELP Resources Incorporated and the Bauabaua Theatre Group were keen to develop further communications materials.

Progress in this reporting period included:

- As discussed in iv) above, the printing of the Sepik Culture and Tourism brochure.
- Power points/slides showing the values of the Sepik River were prepared and shown to stakeholders in most of the stakeholder meetings and gathering. Once the office at the project site is established HELP Resources Incorporated will be working with WWF to produce awareness materials as part of their community awareness program.

ix) Initiate awareness campaign:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- Meetings with stakeholders on IRBM principles and the biological values of the Sepik River. As discussed in viii) above slide shows have been presented in the meetings.
- A draft concept paper for a Sepik River Festival, using crocodiles as an iconic species was prepared and circulated to stakeholders for comments.

x) Begin management planning in protected areas:

No progress was made on this activity in this report period but plans for next period include:

- From March 2006 onward meetings on protected area management planning will be held with the local communities with the assistance of the WWF PNG protected areas officer. Relevant staff of DEC will be engaged to undertake this task.

xi) Define mechanism for operationalising Total Catchment Environment Management Policy:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- As discussed in vi) above, plans were advanced for the establishment of the Sepik Steering Committee in by end 2005.
- Two meetings were held with the officers of DEC to discuss the TCEM Policy. It is understood from the meetings that DEC is struggling to implement the TCEM Policy, partly due to lack of resources. A priority for the future of the Darwin Sepik project will therefore be for WWF to help DEC to get to grips with the implications of the TCEM Policy and the challenges of implementation.

xii) Assist DEC in the preparation of draft catchment management plan:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- An initial planning meeting between stakeholders was held in Wewak in August 2005 with the aim of developing a joint work plan for the Sepik River. The meeting was attended by representatives from DEC, East Sepik Provincial Government, Ambunti District Administration, HELP Resources Incorporated, Oxfam, East Sepik Council of Women, Ambunti Council of Women and Bauabaua Theatre Group. The next meeting will be held with the local community based organisations and communities at the project site in November 2005.
- In the meeting, each representative 1) listed activities undertaken by his/her organisation along the Sepik River; 2) described potential activities within the next five years; and 3) set out main partner organisations. This information was brought together within a single workplan.
- The single workplan was then refined to agree with the key milestones of the Darwin Sepik project and WWF's Sepik River Basin strategy. Future management of the workplan and its development will be co-ordinated by the Sepik Field Coordinator, funded through the Darwin project and based in the HELP Resources Incorporated office in Ambunti.

xiii) Form catchment management institutions:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- As discussed in vi) above, plans were advanced for the establishment of the Sepik Steering Committee in December 2005.
- Plans were also agreed for the formation of a working team that will coordinate the activities of the stakeholders' workplan by end 2005. The intention was that the working team would be formally established during a second stakeholder meeting on the project.

xiv) Assist communities to declare new wetlands protected areas and complete management plans:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- The PNG government committed to gazette three protected areas in the upper Sepik by early 2006. The areas include; Uma (36,363.54 ha), Me'ha (10,770 ha) and Andep (12,525 ha). The submission for gazettal was to be made by the respective landowner representatives during the Pacific Island Forum in Port Moresby in October 2005. Jim Leape, Director General (designate) of WWF International, John McLeod, British High Commissioner to PNG, and William Duma, PNG Minister for Environment & Conservation, were invited to lead the ceremonies.

xv) Support LLG legislation and District development plans that reflect integrated river basin management objectives:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- Inclusion of IRBM principles within the Ambunti district development plan, following discussions with Ambunti Local Level Government and the East Sepik Provincial Government (discussed in i).
- A meeting was arranged for November 2005 to develop the five year development plan for Ambunti district. The plan will be launched in early 2006.

xvi) Continue awareness campaign:

There was no progress in this reporting period but see ix) above for related activities.

xvii) Support community management and enterprise initiatives:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- Two areas - Pukapuki and Niksek - were identified as eaglewood management areas. The WWF PNG Sustainable Resource Use Trainer took the lead in this area.

xviii) Monitor changes to baseline environmental conditions and achievement of planned activities:

Progress in this reporting period included:

- The sources of the monitoring data kept by DEC, The University of Papua New Guinea, WWF and others were identified by Ted Mamu (see ii above).

Next steps

Between October 2005 and March 2006, the focus of the Sepik IRBM project will be on ;

1. Hiring of Sepik Field Co-ordinator and renovation of the office and staff house in Ambunti;
2. Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between HELP Resources Incorporated, Ambunti Local Level Government and WWF on the use of the buildings (staff house and office) in Ambunti;
3. Establishment of the Sepik working team, the steering committee and partnership agreements;
4. Assisting the development of five year development plan and the incorporation of the IRBM principles in the plan;
5. Launching of the Sepik Tourism Brochure in Wewak;
6. Review of the total catchment management policy (TCEM Policy);
7. Submission of three protected areas for gazettal; and
8. Training for WWF staff and partners on the principles of IRBM.

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.

In this reporting period, no significant problems or unexpected developments have been encountered. However, inevitably we are still playing catch-up given the lack of progress in the first year of the project. Much effort has been given to instilling momentum into the project and to achieving milestones, but there remains a need to re-schedule the budget and timetable in order to fully achieve the project objectives. For this reason we are requesting a no-cost extension of 12 months.

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

The proposed no-cost extension to the project is the subject of a separate papers in this submission to the

Darwin Secretariat. Previous discussion between the UK project leader, David Tickner, and Sarah Moon in the Darwin Secretariat took place prior to the submission of this report.	
Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	no/yes, in...December 2005 (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.**