

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.	13-017 (former 268)
Project Title	The Atelopus Initiative
Country(ies)	Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia
UK Organisation	Conservation International-UK
Collaborator(s)	The Natural History Museum, IUCN, NatureServe
Report date	31 October 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 2
Project website	www.andescbc.org/atelopus

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).

The DI yearly report was sent in April 2005. Between that period and now the following activities have been undertaken:

- 1) Website update and maintenance. Updated material for the website is available in both Spanish and English.
- 2) Maintenance and expansion of Tropical Andes Amphibian Network. In progress. The network's listserve (red_atelopus@yahoo.com) currently holds over 100 subscribed members. The listserve has been actively used to post events, disseminate information, facilitate document exchange and overall enhance communications among amphibian specialists of the region.
- 3) Produce a regional survey and monitoring protocol booklet. In progress. Guidelines initially discussed at the Atelopus Initiative's first workshop are in the process of being improved and finalized in the quest to establish standard field survey and monitoring protocols for the Tropical Andean region.
- 4) Bi-annual newsletter. First newsletter of 2005 completed and available as a pdf, second newsletter in progress.
- 5) Training 35 herpetology students in survey and monitoring techniques. The Atelopus Initiative's most recent training course was held in Rancho Grande Biological Station, Henri Pittier National Park, Venezuela, between 25 June and 2 July 2005.
- 6) Conclusion and publication process of the first field mini-guide under the auspices of the Darwin Initiative. The mini-guide's focus is the highly endangered genus *Atelopus* (from which the Initiative takes its name) and is a user friendly

identification guide to the entire genus, including 21 undescribed species. A multitude of regional collaborators partook in this effort, and about 80,000 copies are expected to be produced with DI and counterpart funding.

- 7) Submission of a manuscript on a new *Atelopus* species description: “El descubrimiento de una nueva especie de anuro del género *Atelopus* (Bufonidae) para Colombia: Una luz de esperanza o el ocaso de los sapos arlequines?” (The discovery of a new species of anuran of the genus *Atelopus* (Bufonidae) from Colombia: A light of hope or the demise of harlequin toads?). Acosta-Galvis, A. R., J. V. Rueda-Almonacid, A. A. Velásquez-Álvarez, S. J. Sánchez-Pacheco, & J. A. Peña Prieto. Submitted to the Revista de la Academia Colombiana de Ciencias.
- 8) Completion of six months of monitoring of a new species of *Atelopus* (report in progress)
- 9) Development of the first Endangered Amphibians Conservation Laboratory of the Tropical Andean Region at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia, the lead partner in this effort.
- 10) Assistance in the development of a Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Amphibians in Venezuela.
- 11) Final report: “Quitridiomycosis en ranas arlequines (Amphibia: Bufonidae-*Atelopus*) de los Andes de Colombia” (Chytridiomycosis in the harlequin frogs (Amphibia: Bufonidae-*Atelopus*) of the Colombian Andes). Ruiz-Ramirez, A. & J. V. Rueda-Almonacid.
- 12) Participation in the Amphibian Conservation Summit meeting held in Washington, D.C., 17-19 September, 2005, to draft a first global Amphibian Conservation Action Plan, and leadership of the Site Planning working group.
- 13) Elaboration of a Project Development Facility (PDF Block B) proposal for the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and lobbying in the five tropical Andean nations to obtain official government support for this proposal.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

- No major problems have been encountered. Three activities (bulletin publication, field manual publication and website update) are three months behind schedule, but the causes of the delays are being addressed. Completion of the field manual is dependent on timely chapter hand-in by collaborating authors. We envision that missing chapters may be handed in by the end of 2005.
- The project’s seed research grants are now handled through Conservation International’s Threatened Species Initiative (IEA). Thanks to matching fund agreements in some Andean countries, this increases substantially the funds available for amphibian research. This, in addition to the number of proposals submitted, will likely influence the number of studies (inventories, monitoring, conservation status, database development) conducted, which may differ from our original projections. Fitting in with the IEA call for proposals does delay slightly the allocation of grants; however, on balance, there is a

definite benefit to the project.	
Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?	
The delay of the field manual was explained in the Annual Report of the first year (April 2005). The only change to the agreement was a Year 2 budget modification, which was approved by DI.	
Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	no/yes, in..... (month/yr)
Changes to the project schedule/workplan:	no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

<p>2. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</p> <p>---</p>
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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.**