

# 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>	162/13/033
<b>Project Title</b>	Combating alien invasive plants threatening the East Usambara mountains in Tanzania
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Tanzania
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Centre for Ecology & Hydrology & Tropical Biology Association
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Amani Nature Reserve & Sokoine University of Agriculture
<b>Report date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2005
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR1
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sections/ed/Usambara_project_page.html">http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sections/ed/Usambara_project_page.html</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).**

Progress to date has closely followed the agreed baseline timetable. The project start was initiated by the two UK partners undertaking a 10day visit to Tanzania in April 2005. Key meetings were held with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Forest and Beekeeping Division. Mr. Isaya Y. Mwangwone, Assistant Director Research, Training and Statistics was especially enthusiastic about the project. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was subsequently drawn up relating to the training and research provision inherent in the Darwin Project. This meeting was followed up with the Tanzanian Forest Research Institute(TAFORI) in Morogoro where the Director General, Mr L Nsubemeki, approved the project and emphasised the increasing need for capacity building in the area of biological invasions. Discussions were also held with Universities. In Dar es Salaam University (Institute of Resource Assessment), Prof. Yanda and Dr Schechambo provided information on their plans to establish a GIS for the Eastern Arc Forests and MSc training opportunities. More formal meetings were arranged at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro (Faculty of Nature Conservation). A round table meeting to discuss the project was held with the Heads of several departments. Subsequently an MOU was signed between the University and the TBA that covers the research and training elements of the Darwin project. The third group of stakeholders approached were the NGOs including the Eastern Arc Mountain Conservation and Management Project (Dr Neil Burgess) and Eastern Arc Mountain Conservation Endowment Fund (Mr Shedrack Mashauri). Again biological invasions were seen as a major knowledge gap in conservation activities and considerable information exchange took place to the benefit of all parties. Over the summer the TBA coordinating the advertising and interviewing of candidates for the Darwin Scholar MSc positions at Sokoine University. Considerable interest was generated by this opportunity (>30 applications) and a strong shortlist drawn up for interview in Morogoro. The two successful candidates were Mr John Richard and Mr Ezekiel Edward. As well as being high calibre and enthusiastic students, they provide strong links to partner institutions TAFORI and SUA. The TBA ran a week long course on proposal writing in Morogoro in August. Further contribution to the training component of the project was made by NERC in supporting a three-year PhD student, Mr Wayne Dawson, whose thesis will be closely allied to the aims of the Darwin project. Mr Dawson participated in the month long TBA Tropical Ecology field course in Amani, East Usambara Mts during September in which both the UK partners participated. The course had a major emphasis on biological invasions and training was given to an additional three Tanzanian students as well as 20 international students. September saw further meetings between the UK partners and national partners.

