

# 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>	14-001
<b>Project Title</b>	Conservation and monitoring of Meso-American orchids
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Costa Rica
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Lankester Botanical Garden, University of Costa Rica
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2005
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 1
<b>Project website</b>	

### **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 the project has been launched, in June 2005, much progress has been made. A workshop at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, has been organised by the project leader and attended by Prof Jorge Warner from the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and all Kew partners. Ms Phyllida Middlemiss, from the Conventions and Policy Section at RBG Kew, has subsequently drafted a MoC, which has been circulated to the Costa Rican authorities and is now close to being signed by both parties.

On 5 September, Mr. Guillaume Gigot was hired to the position of Darwin Initiative project officer at Kew. Mr Diego Bogarin has been provisionally appointed at UCR in Costa Rica as the implementation project officer.

A reference checklist for orchids from Costa Rica has been compiled by Mr Gigot, including 1,441 species taken from the Costa Rican journal *Lankesteriana* (issue 4, May 2002), 266 DNA samples from Kew's DNA bank and 455 samples from Kew's Living Collection. Franco Pupulin, from UCR, has made a list of 378 specimens from Kew's Herbarium that we might want to digitise shortly. These referenced samples will be used for the development of DNA barcodes for Meso-American orchids. In addition, molecular lab work has started and 35 orchid samples have been sequenced for the *trnH-psbA* DNA region (which has been proposed to be one of the best DNA barcodes for plants; published by John W. Kress this year in *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 102, 8369).

During this reporting period, in Costa Rica, 90 orchid samples have been collected in the field by Mr Bogarin and will be included in Lankester Botanical Garden's living collection. Fifty of these samples will be used for DNA barcoding; they will be sent to Kew for DNA extraction once the Lankester Botanical Garden at UCR is CITES-registered. A certificate from Ministerio de Ambiente y Energia (MINAE) is due to be signed by the end of November.

Finally, a general presentation of the project has been written through a press release in Kew Scientist (October 2005 issue available at: [www.kew.org/kewscientist/index.html](http://www.kew.org/kewscientist/index.html)). Another presentation has been written for press release in *Epidendrum* (UCR Lankester Botanical Garden Bulletin) to be published next December.

<b>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.</b>	
Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? N/A	
Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	N/A
Changes to the project schedule/workplan:	no

<p><b>3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b></p> <p>Instead of the initial plan of hiring the Darwin Project officer on July 1<sup>st</sup> (see section 23. table B, page 8 in the project application), Mr Guillaume Gigot has only been hired from Sept 5<sup>th</sup>; we will need to carry forward 2 months and 4 days of salary on the next financial years, so he can be hired for the full 2 years (Mr Des Bennett and Mr George Sarkis, from Kew Finance Department, will be dealing with practicalities of this procedure).</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](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.**