

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	14-005
<b>Project Title</b>	Conservation of Pakistan's Marine Cetacean Biodiversity and Pelagic Environment
<b>Country(ies)</b>	UK & Pakistan
<b>UK Organisation</b>	University Marine Biological Station Millport (University of London)
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Dr. Pirzada Jamal Siddiqui, Dr. Ejaz Ahmad
<b>Project Leader</b>	Dr. Mauvis Gore
<b>Report date</b>	10/10/2007
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	3
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.gla.ac.uk/Acad/Marine/">http://www.gla.ac.uk/Acad/Marine/</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).

In the UK, work has concentrated on data analysis and reporting. A further scientific article was written and published, this one reporting a new cetacean finding for Pakistan.

In addition, two of the lead collaborators from Pakistan, (Prof. Jamal Siddiqui and Mr. Qadeer Mohammed Ali) visited Scotland for one week in August, during which time discussions were held, reviewing progress and planning further work. A further member of the Cetacean Conservation Pakistan (CCP) team (Mr. Umar Waqas) attended in July the Marine Mammal Course at the University's Marine Biological Station in Millport, Scotland (UMBSM). He attended over 20 lectures and participated in fieldwork both in the Firth of Clyde and around Mull on the Scottish west coast, reinforcing the training already received in Pakistan. The Marine Mammal Course has given CCP team members experience of:

- Meeting other participants and sharing knowledge
- Teaching by experienced marine mammals researchers
- Practical work in the laboratory and classroom
- Independent study in UMBSM's excellent marine biology library
- Identifying cetaceans & practicing quantitative survey techniques
- The operation of cetacean tourism in Scotland
- Studying seal and cetacean behaviour & ecology
- Identifying and recording indicator species including pelagic fish and seabirds

In Pakistan, Pakistani CCP team members have continued work during the monsoon season, albeit less intensively than during the principal autumn and spring fieldwork periods. Data from previous fieldwork has been checked and input to computer by one of the research officers, further large sections both the Sindh and Balochistan coasts have been surveyed onshore for cetacean strandings and remains, a series of fisher communities visited to promote public awareness and record local knowledge, and, as the probably highlight of the period, two very successful workshops for fisher's representatives, one in Balochistan, and the other in Sindh. Particular outcomes of this work have included the following:

- Fisher liaisons: socio-economic surveys of the fisher communities have been undertaken at 31 settlements in Sindh and 5 in Balochistan by the World Wildlife Fund – Pakistan (WWF-P) project officers.
- Beach surveys: public feedback resulted in the team being alerted to freshly beached specimens of sperm whale and spinner dolphin, and samples being taken.
- Talks on cetacean conservation and the work of CCP were given by WWF-P staff to family groups, local fishers, business groups and social clubs, amounting to over 1000 people.
- Surveys at sea: while open water surveys were not possible during this monsoon season, University of Karach staff and research officers undertook two surveys of the more sheltered stretches of coast in the Keti Bandar region in south-east Sindh, where humpback dolphins were found to be

moderately common in the extensive creek system at the mouth of the Indus.

- Databank: the database has been updated to include the most recent work and copies given to the partners for safekeeping.
- Press releases and publicity continue to be generated on an *ad hoc* basis, in particular in response to highlights such as the finding of sperm whale and the fishers workshops.

The two one-day Fisher Workshops were held a) in Sindh at The WWF-Pakistan Wetlands Centre at Sandspit, and b) in Balochistan at the IUCN/Pakistan Wetlands Programme Centre in Gwadar. Fifty fishers were invited, 25 attending each workshop, at which lunch and tea were provided. The programmes included:

- Registration, welcome to participants, recitation of the Holy Quran
- An preview of the workshop, its objectives and expected outcomes
- Presentations on cetaceans, conservation issues for cetaceans, the work of the CCP, and whale watching tourism business
- A question and answer session
  - Breakout sessions to discuss the following topics:
    1. What steps, do you think, should be taken to save these animals in our waters?
    2. How to save the environment & habitat of these animals?
    3. How to start whale & dolphin watching businesses in Pakistan?
    4. What threats do you think these animals are facing in our waters?(group leaders of each breakout group presented the outcome and discussion of findings)
- A session for verbal feedback from the fishers and more informal discussion
- An review of the workshop
  - Address by a community leader
- Presentation of certificates of participation, resource materials and specially designed T-shirt with illustrations of Pakistani marine cetaceans on the front, enabling identification of species in the field.

Most recently, during the month of Ramadan, Pakistani project and research officers have taken annual leave, which will continue until the end of the Eid festival.

During the 6 month period just commenced, three UK staff, including the Principal Investigator, will spend periods from November to January in Pakistan, and lead further survey work in Balochistan, up to 100 km offshore of Pasni and Ormara, the sectors where it now appears whales are most likely to be encountered, and in Sindh, extending to the eastern part of the Indus Delta. At the same time work on the annual report will be continued, and work started on a major scientific publication detailing data on the occurrence and distribution of cetaceans in Pakistan to date.

The placing of observers on deep sea fishing vessels has been discussed with Mr. Moazzam Khan of the Marine Fisheries Research Centre, and it has been agreed that it would be most effective to provide a workshop to educate existing fisheries observers located on each vessel, rather make use of CCP team members in this way. The training workshop for these observers has been delayed by administrative changes but is still expected to take place during the next few months.

**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.**

There have not been any notable problems or unexpected developments in the last 6 months. However there has been continuing frustration with delays in transfers of funds and other administrative matters involving the University of London and University of Karachi. It is hoped that recent discussions with University of Karachi staff will have resolved this issue. At the same time links with WWF-P have operated very effectively, and both Pakistani partners have expressed concern that the project should if possible be developed further and continued beyond its original timeframe.

**Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?** no

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat:** no/yes, in..... (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?  no

**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.**

There are no issues at present as noted in this quote from our last annual report review:

"All of the issues raised in the last review have been fully addressed and appropriate actions have been taken where possible. There are currently no concerns regarding the completion of the project's objectives on time and meeting proposed targets."

**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 email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at [Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk) . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**