

# Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

## Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	14-029
<b>Project Title</b>	Monitoring and simulating threats to aquatic biodiversity in the Okavango Delta
<b>Country(ies)</b>	UK / Botswana
<b>UK Organisation</b>	UCL
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	HOORC, University Botswana
<b>Report date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2006
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	1
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/~mtodd/accord">http://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/~mtodd/accord</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 during the last 6 months has gone exceptionally well, with respect to both training and research.

**Planning Workshop (Apr 2006)** A workshop was held at HOORC at which researchers, local government officials and stakeholders within the Delta were invited. We presented talks on aims of the project and the need to monitor and evaluate aquatic biodiversity (Mackay), biodiversity in the Okavango Delta (Murry-Hudson) modelling hydroperiod (Wolski), current work on bioassessment in the Delta (Mosopele) and on the Darwin programme in general (Mackay).

**Training:** At the start of this reporting period, 2 scientists from HOORC attended intensive advanced-level training courses held in the UK in Macrophytes (30<sup>th</sup> April - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2006) (Ms Belda Mosepele, the Darwin Research Fellow) and in Diatoms (5<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> June 2006) (Ms Philippa Mapila, associated research fellow on the project). At HOORC, training in macroinvertebrate analysis has been an on-going process now for c. 6 months, led by Belda Mosopele. All the staff below, plus two permanent field assistants at HOORC have been trained in sampling macroinvertebrates and their identification.

In the last report we did not give any details on the staff employed at HOORC on our project. Here we would like to rectify this. The Darwin Research Fellow is Ms. Belda Mosopele, who previously worked for Conservation International (which has since closed its offices in Botswana). She will also register for a PhD in South Africa / Botswana starting August 2007. We will use one of the MPhil monies to cover her PhD fees. We have also employed Mr Richard Mazebedi as the first technician on the programme. He will also register for a higher degree (MPhil) at the University of Botswana (Jan 07), and we will use Darwin monies to cover his fees. The other technical salary has been used to employ 4 new staff, who will work on the Darwin programme as laboratory technicians and field assistants. However, they are also receiving biological organism training, including at the moment macroinvertebrates and macrophytes; and in the future basic zooplankton and diatom analysis. The staff are: Mr Rebaeone Moshongo (33 yrs); Kelejangw Kutoro (31 yrs); Florah Joshua (25 yrs); Uanee Kauheva (24 yrs) and Laone Pitso (26 yrs). It is worth noting that many of these staff were previously employed on a short-term contract, investigating impacts of Government spraying programme for tsetse fly in the Delta. Darwin funds have ensured continuity of employment in this respect, thus preserving capacity for future development.

Anson Mackay and Tom Davidson (AM, TD) visited HOORC and the Delta for 3 weeks (29<sup>th</sup> Aug - 17<sup>th</sup> Sept). The first five days of this visit was spent training up to 11 staff and students on chemical and biological sampling techniques in the Delta (including water chemistry, sampling for diatoms, phytoplankton, zooplankton, macroinvertebrates). Staff trained included the personnel mentioned above,

