

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	14-040
Project Title	DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION NETWORK FOR PRIMATES IN ECUADOR (PRIMENET)
Country(ies)	Ecuador
UK Organisation	The University of Sussex
Collaborator(s)	Murcielargo Blanco, QNCE (National Herbarium of Ecuador : administrators - Corporación Botánica Ecuadendron), Los Cedros Biological Reserve
Project Leader	Dr Mika Peck
Report date	30th September 2007
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	Half Year 5
Project website	www.primenet.org.uk

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 summary: All outputs on schedule and summarised below

Primate Survey (Murcielargo Blanco MB, University of Sussex US)

Primate field surveys initiated in the lowland buffer zone of the Cotocachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve (CCER). Innovative 'playback' method has been trialled and found successful for *A. fusciceps* (MSc in Primate Conservation at Oxford Brookes University, cofunded by Primate Conservation International (PCI), Association of British Wild Animal Keepers (ABWAK) & the International Primatological Society (IPS)). This is a vital development as *A. fusciceps* has just been declared in the top 25 most endangered primates worldwide. All data georeferenced and updated to the PRIMENET database.

Parabiologist training (MB, Corporacion Botanical Ecuadendron CBE)

Communities were visited in the SE buffer zone of the CCER and members invited to attend the second PRIMENET parabiologist workshop' (June 11th – 15th, Cristóbal Colón, Esmeraldas Province). 25 parabiologists attended the workshop from 9 communities and completed the course as certified parabiologists. Post workshop activities: parabiologists engaged with field survey teams to assess primate and habitat status in forests of the SE buffer zone of the CCER (ongoing). Additional work (MB) funded by the Network for Social Change (NSC) included organisation of a community exchange programme between Cristóbal Colón and El Chontal. The aim was to facilitate dissemination of sustainable livelihood alternatives.

Production and dissemination of education material (MB)

3000 copies of the PRIMENET magazine were published and freely disseminated to schools and communities in the educational and community outreach programme.

Habitat Assessment (Botanical Team, Corporación Botánica Ecuadendron CBE)

Review of plant identification to species from the Los Cedros Reserve completed (total 298 species from 2654 individuals). Species-level identification underway of samples from Esmeraldas Province collected Jan – Feb 07. **Botanical field support and collaborative projects:** Botanical expertise provided for 1) Ecuadorian student studying primate feeding behaviour at the Los Cedros Reserve. 2) UK Master's student from MSc Primate Conservation, Oxford Brookes (June – July). **Development of rapid habitat assessment techniques:** the

CBE botanical team investigated the potential of using structural data as a rapid habitat assessment tool to identify biodiverse forest in a new collaboration between PRIMENET and Bournemouth University (August – September).

MA in Participation, Power and Social Change: Karina Paredes (MB) registered and started the MA in Participation, Power and Social Change at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. **MSc Botany** undertaking thesis fieldwork with PRIMENET.

University of Sussex: PI spent 5 weeks in Ecuador. Attended the parabiologist training workshop at Cristobal Colon and supervised fieldwork projects by University of Sussex students (cofunded by the Henrietta Hutton Foundation), University of Bournemouth Projects (cofunded by the RGS) and MSc project (cofunded by PCI, ABWAK, IPS). The PI ran a parabiologist training course in the use of camera traps to monitor large mammals at the Los Cedros Reserve and the Santa Lucia Reserve (funded by the NSC). This is an extension of PRIMENET work and forms part of the exit strategy. **PRIMENET Database:** bespoke database programming completed and under review (This database is an additional output). **Exit strategy:** secured Earthwatch funding from 2008 – 2011, funding proposals aiming to engage parabiologists in developing management plans for ‘community protected areas’ submitted to Rufford (Innovation award), NSC & Holly Hill Trust.

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.

The MA in Participation, Power and Social Change has changed course format which means the Ecuadorian student will complete her studies in Feb 2009. There is no impact to budget as the fees and maintenance costs are paid in advance but the timetable needs updating to include an extension to the end date for the MA and the associated thesis.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Change of MA to year 3 discussed 08/05. Change to schedule of IDS MA to be discussed.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: **yes, in 08/07**

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: **yes, in 08/05**

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin’s management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

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 email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at 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**