

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	14-041
Project Title	Strengthening the Indian Bird Conservation Network to Safeguard Key Sites
Country(ies)	India
UK Organisation	RSPB
Collaborator(s)	Bombay Natural History Society and the Indian Bird Conservation Network
Report date	31 October 2006
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Project website	

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 over the last 6 months has been difficult due to staff changes at BNHS. At the beginning of April the in-country Project Manager, Zafar-ul Islam unexpectedly left the employment of BNHS to take a post in Saudi Arabia and shortly afterwards the recently appointed IBA Advocacy Officer resigned. With the first State Coordinators workshop due to take place in May at Corbett National Park, this placed an unexpected responsibility on the remaining members of the IBA team.

The relative inexperience of the IBA team in facilitating workshops and making presentations resulted in the workshop being less successful than anticipated and needed a greater input from the RSPB Project Leader and Principal Trainer who attended the workshop. It was expected that at least 20 State Coordinators from across the country would attend the workshop but due to the long travelling and leave from work required (the State Coordinators are all volunteers) only 15 participated in the workshop and all of these were from the north of India.

Because of the staff shortages and the need to engage State Coordinators from the south of India, some of the outputs anticipated for this period were not achieved and will be undertaken in the next period. These include the draft Strategic Plan for the IBCN and placing the training course resources on the website. Due to the difficulty in travelling during the monsoon season, the next series of workshops will be in October 2006 in the Western Ghats and will include State Coordinators from southern India.

On a more positive note, it is clear from the first workshop that a lot of work is already ongoing within the network and drawing this together and disseminating the information will facilitate meeting some future outputs. A lot of press and media interest was generated by the workshop and several articles appeared in local and national newspapers. Two editions of "Mistnet" the quarterly IBCN newsletter were published and a 7 pages article on the first workshop was included in the April-June 2006 edition. Work has also started on producing advocacy material for use at a State and IBA level that will help safeguard and protect IBAs.

A new Project Manager, Prashant Mahajan, was appointed in August. He was previously responsible for establishing and managing the BNHS Environmental Education programme and has a solid background in running and presenting at workshops.

