

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

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
Project Leader	Ian Barber
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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).

The last six-months has seen progress made on several fronts including the IBA mapping exercise and the appointment of an IBA Advocacy Officer based in Delhi both of which should raise the profile of IBA conservation with decision makers in the longer-term. Two main activities which are still behind schedule are the establishment of the website and securing longer-term funding for the network. These are discussed below.

One full workshop was held in Jammu and Kashmir and the programme has been finalised for the remaining workshops to be completed by March 2008. In order to facilitate co-operation between the Government and NGO sector, Government departments are increasingly getting involved in participating in the workshops. This was evident in Jammu and Kashmir where the workshop was jointly organised with the State Forest Research Institute and the Wildlife Protection Department.

In order to develop a broader constituency for IBA conservation and to circumvent the restrictions that the monsoon season brings (June-Sept), it was decided to hold a series of one-day lectures on the IBCN and IBA conservation at various colleges across the state of Maharashtra close to the BNHS HQ. Attendance was high and resulted in the recruitment of several new members. One workshop was for two days and was aimed at including monitoring of IBAs as part of the Master's dissertation. Feedback from the workshops will be analysed and presented in the final report.

BNHS, with RSPB funding, appointed an IBA Advocacy Officer in April who is now based in Delhi. His main role is to raise the profile and promote IBA conservation, identify and respond to threats and empower stakeholders such as IBCN members. He has developed further the advocacy sessions at the workshops and is working on a separate short advocacy workshop to target key areas and stakeholders.

Considerable effort has gone into addressing the shortfall in maps for non-protected IBAs. This exercise involves consultation with local IBCN members and with the recent appointment of a GIS specialist within the IBA team at BNHS (again with RSPB funding) we expect the majority of maps will be finalised before the end of the Darwin project.

Discussions have also taken place with the Asia Development Bank and World Bank about computerising all IBA data and making it available to decision makers through a central

