

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise

Project Ref. No.	14-045
Project Title	Sustainable Support for Biodiversity and Forestry in Tomsk Taiga, Siberia
Country(ies)	UK, Russia
UK Organisation	Tree Council
Collaborator(s)	UK: WTA Education Services, British Trust for Ornithology, Forestry Commission, Cambridge University Expedition Society, Price Batch, Traidcraft Russia: Institute for International Environmental Safety, Tomsk State University, Price Batch Altai, Oblcompriroda, Tomsk City Ecological Committee & Department of Local Management for City of Tomsk, Tomsk Region Environment Protection Agency (TEPA), Tomsk State Forestry Agency (TSFA)
Report date	31 st October 2005
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR/1
Project website	www.tomsktaiga.com

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project

Milestones (from Stage 2 Application. Logical Framework, Section 19)

1. May - June 2005 Traidcraft reports, completed in time for visit

Preparation of the Traidcraft reports on potential markets for pine nuts and birch-bark products was delayed pending further investigations into the viability of the production of these products. The decision has been made to commission Traidcraft to produce a report on the pine nut products by the next half-year report. Information is being gathered from other organisations about the viability of birch-bark production and this is to be reviewed in November.

2. April –June 05 IIES, Tree Council and Price Batch agree first potential FSC forests

The first potential forest had been chosen by the end of June. This followed a workshop held by IIES and PriceBatch Russia for forest managers. A number of forest managers showed interest, but the manager of Kaltai forest emerged as most prepared to undergo the FSC certification process.

After two days' work with the Kaltai forest manager, Pricebatch Russia has confirmed that the forest is "very suitable" for certification. IIES is producing a report on the Kaltai forest, assessing which FSC criteria it already fits, and which need further work.. This report, which will form the basis of further actions, has been promised for the end of October. A letter is awaited from Tomsk forest managers, to confirm their participation. IIES is also investigating timber processing (sawmills etc) and potential markets. Will these markets be sufficient to justify the costs of certification? (See also notable problems/unexpected developments below.)

3. July 05 All partners and students meet in Tomsk:

- Workshop on ecological survey and monitoring facilitated by Dr Fuller and Dr Blinova and other Tomsk State University academics

Workshops involving all partners and CUEX and Tomsk students were carried out both in Tomsk and in the field in Kaltai Forest.

- Monitoring and survey fieldwork led by Dr Fuller & Dr Blinova, with UK & Russian students
Eight days of fieldwork were led by Dr Rob Fuller with the participation of Fred Currie (Forestry Commission) and Russian scientists from Tomsk State University and the Tomsk Oblast Environment Department (Professor Tatiana Blinova (ornithology), Professor Marina Olova (Botany), Dmitry Kurbatsky (entomology), Sergey Aushev (dendrochronology)) plus eight student members of CUEX and four from Tomsk State University.

- FSC framework discussions with IIES, Tree Council and Pricebatch, identifying further suitable forests and training their managers to apply for FSC.

IIES is preparing a summary of meetings with foresters and forest agencies to accompany this Half Year Report.

Asevo Forest identified as possible second location and model for development of forest products from the region.

Publicity

UK: Two press releases (see http://www.tomsktaiga.com/Press_releases.htm).

Tomsk: Regional press coverage, including two reports on Tomsk Oblast TV, one at prime time.

Ecotourism

Venues identified include Asevo forest, Tartar villages and geological sites. Hotels, campsites and sanatoria have been evaluated. IIES is very keen to follow this up. This aspect of project is well ahead of schedule. Ecotourist "cruises" on rivers Ob and Tom have potential, but so far boat costs are prohibitive.

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 diversity and quality of habitats of Kaltai forest proved to be somewhat higher than expected (see Dr R. Fuller's report attached). 30 percent of the forest is already part of the regional water protection zone and this area in particular is especially suitable for forming a conservation zone to meet one of the requirements of FSC certification under Principle 6. Data collected within this area in 2005 on habitat structure should demonstrate the biodiversity value of this area as well as establishing a baseline for future monitoring of habitat quality for biodiversity.

The "mismatch" between international fees charged for the FSC certification process and local incomes and revenues has emerged as a possible impediment to achieving FSC status.

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

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.

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 by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**