2/486

Submit by 21 January 2005

DARWIN INITIATIVE APPLICATION FOR GRANT ROUND 13 COMPETITION:STAGE 2

Please read the Guidance Notes before completing this form. Applications will be considered on the basis of information submitted on this form and you should give a full answer to each question. Please do not cross-refer to information in separate documents except where invited on this form. The space provided indicates the level of detail required. Please do not reduce the font size below 11pt or alter the paragraph spacing. Keep within word limits.

1. Name and address of organisation

Name:	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	**Address:**	RSPB Headquarters, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL

2. Project title (not exceeding 10 words)

Important Bird Area conservation and capacity building in Central Asia

3. Project dates, duration and total Darwin Initiative Grant requested

Proposed start date: 1 June 2005.		**Duration of project:** 2 Years 10 Months			
Darwin funding requested:	**Total**	**2004/5**	**2005/6**	**2006/7**	**2007/8**
	(£) 193,593	**(£)** 0	**(£)** 76,663	**(£)** 77,808	**(£)** 39,122

4. Define the purpose of the project in line with the logical framework

The purpose of this project is 'to strengthen conservation capacity in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan through the development of Important Bird Area (IBA) inventories, providing the basis for consistent and coordinated conservation action'. Drawing on extensive UK experience, a network of 45 fieldworkers and 30 biology students will be trained to document the conservation status of the habitats and species in these three Central Asian countries. This new data will be collated with existing data in a bespoke project database. For the first time, the full dataset will be assessed against a benchmark set of internationally approved criteria to identify the key sites for bird conservation efforts in each country. For all three countries, both the resulting inventory and a National IBA Conservation Action Plan will be compiled, published and launched. This process will form the foundation for a co-ordinated approach that will enable concrete conservation actions at these key sites for globally threatened bird species in the region, including the White-headed Duck, Dalmatian Pelican, Siberian Crane, Sociable Lapwing and Saker Falcon.

The technical and institutional capacity of the project partners will be strengthened considerably to enable them to develop and implement biodiversity conservation projects in future and to establish the means to monitor conservation impacts on the IBAs. Achieving these objectives will remove major impediments to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Central Asia. The project will improve local, national and regional nature conservation knowledge and will build a strong foundation for regional cooperation for the conservation of priority areas and species in this biologically rich, but poorly known region that currently has limited conservation measures in place.

5. Principals in project. Please provide a one page CV for each of these named individuals

Details	Project Leader	Kazakhstan Project Coordinator	Uzbekistan Project Coordinator	Turkmenistan Project Coordinator
Surname	Brombacher	Sklyarenko	Kreuzberg-Mukhina	Rustamov
Forename (s)	Michael	Sergey	Elena	Eldar
Post held	Central Asian IBA Project Coordinator	IBA Coordinator	Scientific Adviser / Executive Director	Adviser and IBA Coordinator
Institution	RSPB	ACBK	UZS	MNPT
Department	International			

Note: CVs for the named individuals are to be found in Annex 2

6. Has your organisation received funding under the Darwin Initiative before? If so, give details

We have been awarded the following funding under the Darwin Initiative.

- £84,000 in Round 3 for a project to compile a directory of important ornithological sites in Tanzania. This project has been completed successfully.
- £136,000 in Round 7 for a three-year project entitled *Management planning for conservation of mesotrophic fen mire biodiversity in Belarus*. This project has been completed successfully.
- £158,000 in Round 9 for a project entitled *Action plans for conservation of globally threatened birds in Africa*. This project has been completed successfully.
- £98,337 in Round 10 for a project entitled *Kenyan Important Biodiversity Areas: improving monitoring, management and conservation action*. This project is currently in its final year.
- £231,975 in Round 11 for a project entitled *Prediction and management of declines in* Gyps *species vultures*. This project has started its second year.
- £154,117 in Round 11 for a project entitled *Empowering the people of Tristan to implement the CBD*. This project is currently in its second year.
- £109,889 in Round 11 for a project entitled *Implementing urgent conservation actions in mesotrophic fen mires in Belarus*. This project is in its second year.
- £78,770 in the first round of Post-Project Funding for a project entitled *Enabling implementation of threatened bird Species Action Plans in Africa* – a follow-up to the Round 9 project described above. This project is in its first year.
- £109,992 in Round 12 for a project entitled *Gurney's Pitta research and conservation in Thailand and Myanmar*. This project has started its first year.
- £133,556 in Round 12 for a project entitled *Pioneering an innovative conservation approach in Sierra Leone's Gola Forest*. This project is in its first year.

7. IF YOU ANSWERED NO TO QUESTION 6 describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. (Large institutions please note that this should describe your unit or department)

Aims (50 words) *n/a*
Activities (50 words)*n/a*
Achievements (50 words) *n/a*

8. Please list the overseas partners that will be involved in their project and explain their roles and responsibilities in the project. Describe the extent of their involvement at all stages, including project development. What steps have been taken to ensure the benefits of the project will continue despite any staff changes in these organisations? Please provide written evidence of partnerships.

The RSPB is working in formal partnerships with four organisations in the three neighbouring

countries. All partners are members of the BirdLife International network of national conservation organisations. Key representatives from each partner organisation attended a regional project-planning workshop to develop the Central Asian IBA programme in May 2004 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Subsequent to this meeting, this project has been jointly developed by the partners, all of whom have sent letters of support for this project (see Annex 1)

The Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity in Kazakhstan (ACBK): ACBK will lead the implementation of this project in Kazakhstan and will continue the work initiated by this project after Darwin funding ends. Founded in 2003, ACBK has led the preparatory activities for a Kazakhstan IBA programme since its inception with support from the RSPB and the BirdLife International Secretariat. ACBK has its headquarters in Almaty and currently has a network of seven local groups. The number of these groups is anticipated to increase as ACBK forms local groups adjacent to newly identified Kazakh IBAs.

The Uzbekistan Zoological Society (UZS): UZS will lead the implementation of the project in Uzbekistan. UZS was founded in 1994 and decided to develop their national IBA programme in 2004 after the regional project-planning workshop in Almaty. UZS has its headquarters in Tashkent and currently has five local branches that relate to some key biodiversity sites in Uzbekistan. This network is preparing to expand in readiness for nationwide coverage of monitoring and protecting key areas.

The Ministry for Nature Protection of Turkmenistan (MNPT) and The Turkmenistan Society for Nature Conservation (TSNC): MNPT and TSNC will jointly lead the Turkmenistan project implementation. The MNPT is the primary governmental conservation authority in Turkmenistan and strongly endorses the national IBA programme. TSNC supports these activities with their expertise of a partially non-governmental organisation (the only one in Turkmenistan) by providing knowledge, skills and a network of local collaborators. Both of the partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the RSPB on the joint implementation of the national IBA programme in the country (please see Annex 3). A preparatory national IBA workshop was held in Autumn 2004 that developed the framework for the proposed IBA programme in Turkmenistan. The outcomes of this workshop form the thinking behind the Turkmen components of this project application. MNPT and TSNC have formed an IBA working group comprising 10 members of both institutions The partners cover significant areas of Turkmenistan's key biodiversity sites through a network of existing nature reserves and in conjunction with local collaborators.

ACBK, UZS and TSNC / MNPT will host the national project coordinators who will lead on project implementation in their respective countries. They will liaise closely with the RSPB Project Leader throughout the project. Each national coordinator will identify and manage at least 15 fieldworkers and 10 biology students who will receive training during this project. They will deliver and coordinate the training and research activities and will supervise the compilation of all printed outputs such as field guides, manuals and other training materials in addition to national public relations activities.

Each partner organisation is fully committed to this project. To ensure that any staff changes will not lead to a loss of expertise gained from the training element of this project, the partners will take steps to minimise this loss by preparing training manuals, knowledge exchange opportunities and the training of new staff where appropriate. The RSPB has recently established a 2005 - 2010 organisational capacity-building support programme with these partner organisations that will extend beyond the proposed Darwin Initiative project. A central theme of the support programme is the development of the IBA programme in the region.

9. What other consultation or co-operation will take place or has taken place already with other stakeholders such as local communities? Please include details of any contact with the government not already provided.

This project concept has been discussed and developed with government officials including the national CBD focal points from the national conservation authorities (Ministry of Nature Protection in Turkmenistan and State Committees in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan). These organisations have fully approved and endorsed this application (Please see letters of support in Annex 1. The CBD Focal Point in Kazakhstan have pledged their support to the project, but unfortunately have not been able to supply a letter of support before the application deadline). Relevant government staff will be closely involved in project implementation through regular advisory meetings, will be invited to project meetings and workshops, and will be sent all project information. Constructive dialogue and information exchange with these government officials will continue throughout and beyond the duration of this project.

In Kazakhstan, ACBK is well linked to national, regional and local governmental authorities and engaged within a nationwide network of conservation NGOs called EcoForum. The EcoForum network is comprised of a number of local initiatives, NGOs and individuals and provides excellent connections to local governments, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders. The IBA programme in Kazakhstan was endorsed after a Parliamentary Hearing on Protected Areas held in March 2004 and its methodology is now well established within parliamentary groups.

In Uzbekistan, UZS have well-established links through their local groups and nationwide through research and conservation activities with local government authorities. These links include administrations of Protected Areas as well as local and regional state conservation departments and other relevant stakeholders. UZS advises the State Committee for Nature Conservation (the primary conservation authority in Uzbekistan) on key conservation questions. Through this an excellent working relationship between UZS and the State Committee has formed. This helped to ensure the endorsement of the Uzbekistan IBA programme.

In Turkmenistan the national network of Protected Area staff (that form part of the MNPT) and local Protected Area Administrations have participated in developing this project and have represented the significant local interests reflected in this project plan.

The project is very well linked at the local level through the partners' networks of local groups, individual conservationists and existing conservation and research initiatives. The local groups and individuals involved in the project are dominated by volunteers from within the local communities and will therefore help represent the communities' interests to a large degree. It is anticipated that the partner organisations will form up to 30 new local groups associated with new IBA sites within the three countries.

PROJECT DETAILS

10. Is this a new initiative or a development of existing work (funded through any source?) Are you aware of any other individuals/organisations carrying out similar work, or of any completed or existing Darwin Initiative projects relevant to your work? If so, please give details explaining similarities and differences and showing how results of your work will be additional to any similar work and what attempts have/will be made to co-operate with and learn lessons from such work for mutual benefits.

This project is a new initiative for Central Asia although it is based on methodology that has been successfully implemented in many countries and regions across the World. The project was developed as an outcome of the regional project development workshop held in May 2004. Prior to this workshop, contacts were established with capable and motivated organisations in all five Central Asian countries, and participants were invited from these organisations to the workshop to discuss and plan the implementation of an IBA programme in the region (the workshop report is attached as Annex 4). During the meeting, the participants signed a resolution and agreed a provisional work programme for IBA work in Central Asia, pending the availability of funding. This project application is focused on Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan because of their shared habitat structure and biodiversity. These linkages will enable more cost-effective implementation of training and other project methodologies, and will build cooperation and regional conservation capacity. This project will run in line with separate fundraising activities for the parallel implementation of planned IBA work in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The IBA process developed by BirdLife International is a worldwide initiative proven to identify, protect and monitor a network of critical sites that conserve the world's birds and other key biodiversity. Selected using standard criteria, IBAs are sites that hold internationally significant populations of threatened and congregatory birds. Due to the diverse habitats required to sustain the populations of birds, IBAs have been proven to support other globally important biodiversity as well. The unique strength of the IBA process is that after site identification is complete, the process provides a framework for local, national and international actions to ensure the sustainable management of these priority sites for conservation. Furthermore, it strengthens the conservation capacity at local, national and regional levels through a combination of training, experimental learning and networking efforts. This process has been proven during many other comparable projects delivered by the RSPB and BirdLife International partners to build sustainable conservation capacity from a local to national and international levels. The Darwin Initiative has previously supported some of these initiatives (see question 6).

The IBA programme will provide an excellent framework for many small-scale and local site monitoring and conservation projects that can run concurrently with this project. All our national project partners will cooperate with these projects to ensure that data is shared and resources combined for increased efficiency.

We are not aware of any other Darwin Initiative project in Central Asia with comparable objectives, either currently running or to be submitted as a Round 13 application. It is worthwhile noting that WWF is conducting an EcoNet project (Co-funded by the Global Environment Facility [GEF] and implemented through the United Nations Environment Programme) in Central Asia that utilises a remote sensing based approach to identify key ecosystems for conservation. With a clear training and capacity building component, this RSPB Darwin Initiative project will complement this WWF project and more importantly it will lay the foundations for many other site based conservation projects in the region.

In Kazakhstan, ACBK and the RSPB are working in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme on biodiversity conservation projects they are undertaking in Kazakhstan, especially a wetlands conservation project at three pilot sites. This GEF funded project will be beneficial to this IBA inventory project, as it will fund concrete conservation actions at three of the sites that are highly likely to be included within the Kazakhstan IBA Inventory.

RSPB is in close contact to Wetlands International who are developing site based conservation, monitoring and capacity building work alongside the Central Asian Flyway. Both organisations have agreed to share information and to run complementary project activities where appropriate

11. How will the project assist the host country in its implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity? Please make reference to the relevant article(s) of the CBD thematic programmes and/or cross-cutting themes (see Annex C for list and worked example) and rank the relevance of the project to these by indicating percentages. Is any liaison proposed with the CBD national focal point in the host country? Further information about the CBD can be found on the Darwin website or CBD website.

Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are all signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This project will assist the host countries in implementing a number of aspects of the CBD, In particular, **Article 7**, asking the contracting parties to "*identify components of biological diversity important for its conservation and sustainable use...*" (20%).

This project includes a substantial research and training component and will largely support the implementation of **Article 12**. (20 %)

As one of the project outputs will be national IBA conservation strategies, the project will also support the implementation of both **Article 6** that asks contracting parties "*to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity….*" (5%), and **Article 10** relating to the sustainable use of biodiversity (5%)

The project prepares the basis for **Article 8** relating to measures for in-situ conservation, as it will prescribe recommendations for the conservation of IBAs identified as part of this project. In addition to this, practical conservation projects at key sites will be developed towards the end of, and following on from, this project. (5%)

Through various planned public awareness activities, the project will contribute to the implementation of **Article 13** relating to public education and awareness" (5%)

The project will assist in the implementation of crosscutting themes including protected areas (15%), indicators (10%), sustainable use and biodiversity (10%), and public education and awareness (5%)

In all three countries, the project has been discussed with the CBD focal points and the relevant governmental institutions have formally stated their endorsement by providing written support (Please see letters of support in Annex 1. The CBD Focal Point in Kazakhstan have pledged their support to the project, but unfortunately have not been able to supply a letter of support before the application deadline). The project partners maintain a good relationship with the CBD focal points (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) or hosts them (Turkmenistan).

12. How does the work meet a clearly identifiable biodiversity need or priority defined by the host country? Please indicate how this work will fit in with National Biodiversity Strategies or Environmental Action Plans, if applicable.

The three project countries are critically important to the region in terms of bird migration routes and wetland biodiversity. These countries stand at a crossroads of several migration routes and encompass the centre of the Central Palaearctic Flyway. Millions of birds migrating annually through this area depend on wetlands, forests and oases as vital stopover sites before crossing the vast inhospitable deserts and mountain massifs that form the southern border of this region. Central Asia holds at least 540 bird species, of which 17 are globally threatened species (three critically endangered, two endangered, 12 vulnerable) and 11 near-threatened species.

The conservation of this internationally important natural heritage is currently undermined by the extremely difficult economic situation in the region, especially within rural areas. Economic hardship has resulted in a lack of basic field equipment (binoculars, telescopes, and other scientific equipment) and resources (human and transport), which has led to an almost complete cessation of all research and monitoring activities undertaken during the Soviet era. In addition, many highly experienced conservationists and researchers have emigrated from the region in search of employment.

Due to these factors, no modern standardised or comprehensive conservation research methodology is currently applied in the region. At the same time during this transition period rapid economic growth enjoys a much higher priority in political decisions than environmental and nature

conservation concerns. Consequently, a sharp loss of wildlife in terms of numbers and diversity has been observed in these countries since the collapse of the Soviet Union, caused through illegal fishing and hunting, overuse of habitats and deforestation amongst other impacts. In all three countries the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) make comparable observations.

In **Kazakhstan**, Chapter 2 of the NBSAP concludes that "the existing reserves far from ensures the conservation of the unique floristic and faunistic diversity in Kazakhstan" and therefore the enlargement of the currently insufficient set of Protected Areas is made a key priority in the NBSAP together with a request for efficient management and monitoring at these sites.

In **Uzbekistan**, a key objective in Part 3 of the NBSAP is "to establish a sustainable and diversified system of protected areas with strong legal protection and effective management which is properly representative of the range of Uzbekistan's ecosystems and species and which covers at least 10% of the country"

In **Turkmenistan**, Chapter 1.4 of the NBSAP states "one of the priority tasks in biodiversity conservation is the creation of a system of specially protected areas (SPAs), as a positive measure for the restoration of degraded ecosystems, and the protection of rare and endangered species".

An inventory of key sites for birds or other biodiversity using consistent, internationally applied criteria (such as the IBA programme) has never been conducted in any of the project countries. As a result, the existing protected areas network within the region does not adequately reflect the real biodiversity value these countries hold. Appropriate conservation action in these countries on a broader scale should only be accurately planned and implemented by using a clear and detailed overview of the status of birds, their habitats and related fauna and flora. This project will help give decision makers and other stakeholders the information they need to form such a detailed overview.

13. If relevant, please explain how the work will contribute to sustainable livelihoods in the host country.

Due to the after effects of the economic collapse of the Soviet Union, sustainable income generation and local employment are essential factors for successful conservation programmes in all three project countries. This project will address this issue in three ways.

There is strong evidence that both national and external donors have great confidence in the IBA process and resulting designation of protected areas. Therefore, this frequently results in funding for species, habitat and community based management projects. It is RSPB policy to work with local communities to ensure that conservation management projects inject income into areas adjacent to IBAs and directly generate local employment whenever possible.

A key output of this project will be three National IBA Conservation Strategies. Each one will clearly outline projects that will encourage community-based activities that provide sustainable livelihoods for local communities. After identification of IBA sites, an assessment will be made of local people's resource utilisation (e.g. fish, water birds and grazing ground) at key sites to determine if it is sustainable or if it is adversely impacting biodiversity. The RSPB's long-term commitment to this region means that any unsustainable utilisation issues will be addressed as a priority.

Publication of national IBA books is closely followed by the birdwatching tourism industry. Upon publication of the three IBA books, the RSPB and national partners will promote these through the international birdwatching media, and will work with key companies that take tourists to Central Asia to ensure that local income is generated for communities adjacent to IBAs and protected areas.

14. What will be the impact of the work, and how will this be achieved? Please include details of how the results of the project will be disseminated and put into effect to achieve this impact.

This project will help to transform and modernise conservation planning, management and monitoring in the region. For the past 20 years high quality data and information on a national scale and in standardized and easy-to-analyse format has not been available. Partly due to this, conservation knowledge and management action within the host countries has been limited to a small number of large protected areas. Smaller areas with nationally and internationally important avian biodiversity have not yet been identified or managed as priority conservation sites. This project will bring about the compilation of the first ever inventory of *all* key sites for avian biodiversity in the project countries. The high quality and broad coverage of the IBA data will facilitate a considerable change in the ability to set new conservation priorities in the three project countries. As part of this project, national IBA Conservation Action Plans for the sites identified by the project will be developed based on data from the inventory and it is anticipated that all three governments will adopt these plans as binding documents. The national project partners, with UK support, will begin implementation of this plan in year 3 of this project. IBA inventories have already proven highly successful tools to promote the designation of new protected areas, and to secure funds for their management.

Through training, financial and technical support, the capacity of the existing and potential local volunteer collaborators, both in terms of technical knowledge (field methods, census techniques) and equipment (binoculars and field guides) will be substantially increased during the project. Hand in hand with this, the institutional capacity of the national partners in the field of conservation project development and management will be greatly strengthened. In addition, the network of qualified (locally and regionally spread) field staff will be the basis for ongoing IBA management and monitoring activities, a key necessity for IBA conservation.

Information dissemination at all stages will be an important element of the project. As the IBA inventory is compiled, any initial results and analysis will be published in the Cental Asian IBA programme newsletter (available in both Russian and English) that will be distributed throughout the project region. Interim reports summarising the work so far will also be disseminated to interested parties. Immediate conservation action, if urgent, could be started through separate projects during the inventory compilation process. Public awareness about the conservation status of and action plans for IBA sites will be raised through meetings, other public events and national media activities. There will be various national and regional coordination meetings to share experience, best practice and political advocacy and awareness.

15. How will the work leave a lasting legacy in the host country or region?

The project will provide a backbone for future conservation activities in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. It will produce the first IBA inventory for each country, which will be published in each national language as a book and used by decision makers as a basis for ongoing conservation prioritisation and action. The project partners will continue to maintain the IBA databases over the long term, thus ensuring that up-to-date information about the IBA sites are available at all times.

All data and information gathered in future will be shared with all relevant governmental and non-governmental organisations and conservation organisations at the local, national and international level. Data sets will also be accessible through IBA programme websites. The international links this project has via the BirdLife International partnership will enhance international knowledge and awareness of the region and the globally threatened species that it contains, and may attract fundraising opportunities from international sources in future for the national partners.

The project will incorporate extensive training components to ensure the maximum lasting benefit to the project partners. This will increase the capacity of the partners and their conservation networks, and will leave as its legacy a functioning network of equipped, trained and motivated conservationists (75 people are directly involved in training) able to plan and implement conservation action both locally and nationally and to cooperate internationally. Furthermore, the project will produce high quality training and information materials such as training manuals,

guidebooks and field guides, all translated to the local language, which will be of great use for future nature conservation training and action in the project countries.

At a national level this project will nurture a substantial increase in conservation knowledge and methodology with the government organisations in the host countries. The conditions for nature conservation in the region suffered heavily and still suffer from the difficult transition process of these former Soviet republics. Recently, however, governmental structures are becoming settled and conservation NGOs are developing. Now is the ideal time for adopting modern and internationally approved conservation policies and standards in these countries, within the framework of the CBD. This project has a unique chance to influence and advise this process now, and to ensure IBAs are central to conservation management in the these three neighbouring countries in future.

16. Please give details of a clear exit strategy and state what steps have been taken to identify and address potential problems in achieving impact and legacy.

This project has very clear milestones and outputs that create opportunities for species, site and community based action. All the project partners are stable and permanent institutions and well established in the project countries. The long-term support (both financial and technical) provided by the RSPB to the project partners, and their inclusion in the BirdLife International network of conservation NGOs will encourage further training activities and exchange of experience beyond the end of this project.

Fundamentally important to the success of the project is the participatory approach of its development and implementation. All project partners have jointly developed the project logical framework jointly during the project-planning workshop. The input provided by experts from the partners at that stage has put the project on a stable foundation. The project has been discussed with the key governmental conservation authorities in the project countries to ensure all stakeholders are engaged.

The monitoring and project administration methodologies that will be employed will provide the opportunity for ongoing adaptive management of the project. Whilst we are aware that the project timetable is quite challenging in some areas, this should not affect the overall project progress to a significant extent and we are confident that all project outputs will be delivered to time and on budget.

Further fundraising opportunities will be explored during this project to fund a solid base of ongoing activities resulting from this project. Any future projects will be implemented by a highly trained and experienced national partnership of conservation NGOs and governmental stakeholders. The project has been developed with cost-effectiveness in mind and therefore will not leave major running costs once ended.

17. How will the project be advertised as a Darwin project and in what ways would the Darwin name and logo be used?

A communications plan for the overall project, and national communications plans will be developed by the RSPB and national partners to ensure the most effective ways to promote this project and its results. Key messages and priority audiences will be identified, and the best mechanisms for communicating to them will be determined for the life of the project. This will give widespread recognition to the Darwin Initiative in Central Asia, the UK and elsewhere.

Within the plan, for example in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the project will be officially launched with events and press conferences in Almaty, Ashgabat and Tashkent that will engage with governmental, intergovernmental, and bilateral institutions, including UK Embassy staff, and representatives of the scientific, development, corporate, and NGO sectors, and the media. From that point, all major project activities and outputs (e.g. publication of IBA books) will be promoted regularly through the national and regional media releases naming the Darwin Initiative, in workshops branded with the Darwin Initiative name and logo, and on the websites of all the partner organisations.

Within the UK, the project activities and results will be promoted to the RSPB's over 1,100,000 members and other stakeholders using events, electronic and print media such as the RSPB website and '*Birds*' magazine. UK and international media releases will be made on the publication of the IBA inventories and if other notable findings are made. Any scientifically significant results discovered during the IBA research and preparation (e.g. identification of new populations, internationally significant sites, or the discovery of urgent conservation issues) will be published both in scientific, conservation and wider media nationally and internationally with reference to funding from the Darwin Initiative.

Publications and other information material will be key outputs throughout this project. The project will publish high quality capacity building and information materials including training manuals, guidebooks and field guides, all translated into the local language, as well as national IBA inventories and national IBA Conservation Plans. These will all acknowledge the financial support of the Darwin Initiative, will prominently display the Darwin Initiative logo and will be disseminated to key stakeholders in Central Asia, the UK and internationally.

18. Will the project include training and development? Please indicate who the trainees will be and criteria for selection and that the level and content of training will be. How many will be involved, and from which countries? How will you measure the effectiveness of the training and will those trained then be able to train others? Where appropriate give the length and dates (if known) of any training course. How will trainee outcomes be monitored after the end of the training?

The training components are critical to the success of this project. A nationwide training programme will be designed and delivered that adopts and translates modern field methodologies in conservation research to each of the project countries - in most cases for the first time ever. Training will be carried out in various fields and at various stages in the project offices in each country, in the field, by accompanying field work teams by UK researchers and in training facilities at RSPB's Headquarters in the UK.

At least 45 semi-professional or professional fieldworkers (15 in each host country) and 30 students (10 in each host country) will be trained to carry out the IBA inventory work and ongoing high quality conservation research. Participants for the field training will be nominated from a list of suitable local and regional IBA coordinators for each country. These candidates live and work in different regions of the countries and will have professional or basic scientific background that can be built upon through the training sessions. Students will be selected by application. The training opportunity will be advertised at universities as well as through other relevant media (e.g. websites, newsletters). The description and duration of the 5 identified training modules are as follows. Further details of each module can be found in the detailed training plan (Annex 6)

Introduction into IBA programme and standardized data sampling – 1 block of 2 days each per host country (total 6 days).

Field research training – 2 blocks of 10 days each per host country (total 60 days).

Application of training through joint field trips with UK researchers – 2 blocks of 3 weeks each per host country (total 18 weeks).

GIS training – 1 block of 8 days per host country (total 24 days).

Project development and fundraising – 1 block of 3 days per host country (total 9 days).

The project partners and field staff will be equipped with adequate manuals, optical equipment and field literature to put their training into practice. The RSPB will provide six trainers to provide international expertise and experience to share with the national trainees. The trained participants will then be able to disseminate and replicate the training methodology to other staff in their organisations and local support groups. Training manuals and handbooks in Russian, Kazakh, Uzbek and Turkmen will be printed and disseminated to project staff and other stakeholders throughout the region.

Through informal approaches, the trained field staff will introduce various local hunters, fishers, and herders to the IBA programme and approach and provide training for basic fieldwork and data provision thus enabling the local people to contribute to the IBA inventories. This target group,

potentially very important for the future IBA monitoring programme, will be invited to join fieldwork activities when appropriate.

The effectiveness of the field research training will be monitored and evaluated in two ways. Firstly, data and information provided by the trained field staff will be sent immediately to the National Project Coordinator, who will monitor the quality of the data before adding it to the IBA database. BirdLife International Secretariat staff will also perform checks on the data after they receive it from the National Project Coordinators. Between different modules, training content can be adjusted if the monitoring uncovers weaknesses. Additional training could be a solution if required. Secondly, trainers will undertake fieldwork with various field teams to ensure the training is put into practice. This will also give the trainers an opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the workshop training in the field.

GIS training will be followed up and monitored by the RSPB Data Management Unit. Trainees will have the opportunity for further assistance and advise from this unit whenever it is required. Successful and efficient fundraising training will lead to direct and immediate fundraising success- an eminent indicator of the quality of the training. All project development and subsequent fundraising will be overseen by the Project Coordinator, who can ensure the quality of funding submissions, and advise on improvements where needed.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

19. Please enter the details of your project onto the matrix using the note at Annex B of the Guidance Note. This should not have substantially changed from the Logical Framework submitted with your Stage 1 application. Please highlight any changes.

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Goal: **To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve** • **the conservation of biological diversity,** • **the sustainable use of its components, and** • **the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources**			
Purpose To strengthen conservation capacity in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan through the development of Important Bird Area (IBA) inventories, providing the basis for consistent and coordinated conservation action	• IBAs acknowledged in each of the three countries National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.	• National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.	• The region's political and social environment remain stable to ensure continued IBA conservation efforts
Outputs			
Project management and coordination structure is established and sustained	• Expected outputs are delivered according to project plan	• Project reports	
Existing available data on the status of the region's species and habitats is collected, processed and analysed	• ≥ 50% of IBA shadow list dataset compiled from existing data	• IBA database records	
Existing and potential fieldworkers are introduced to IBA work, trained and equipped	• Number of trained IBA fieldworkers in region increased ≥ 70 by t[4]	• Training reports	• Turnover of trained project staff is minimal
New data on the status of the region's species and habitats is gathered through field work	• Comprehensive IBA dataset, augmented with new field data finalised by t[3]	• IBA database records	
An IBA Inventory for each country is compiled, published and disseminated	• Inventory sent to key decision makers by mid t[3]	• Acknowledgement letters	
Conservation strategies for IBAs in the region are developed and their implementation started	• IBA Action Plans adopted by all governments by t[4]	• Governmental announcements	• Governments remain open to collaboration
Public awareness of national nature value, its conservation and IBA protection is increased	• Number of local partner groups increased to 30 by t[4]	• Project partners membership records	

Activities	Activity Milestones (Summary of Project Implementation Timetable)
Project management and coordination structure is established and sustained	Yr 1: Project steering group established; Key staff employed and inducted; project equipment, and other resources purchased; Project development and fundraising training provided. Yr 1-3: Steering group meetings held; Regular newsletter produced.
Existing available data on the status of the region's species and habitats is collected, processed and analysed	Yr 1: Bespoke IBA database created; IBA criteria and thresholds adapted for region; IBA data application guidance disseminated; Project staff trained in standardised data sampling; IBA shadow list compiled; Yr 1-3 Existing regional conservation status data collated, processed, analysed and stored in IBA database.
Existing and potential fieldworkers are introduced to IBA work, trained and equipped	Yr 1: 75 fieldworkers trained in ornithological methods; Fieldwork equipment and resources purchased; Fieldwork methodology guide and basic field guide compiled and translated with 4400 copies disseminated to project staff and other participants.
New data on the status of the region's species and habitats is gathered through field work	Yr 1: 75 fieldworkers, including local & regional IBA Coordinators inducted in fieldwork implementation; Fieldwork plan prepared. Yr 1-2: >100 Potential IBA sites surveyed and data processed.
An IBA Inventory for each country is compiled, published and disseminated	Yr 2: GIS training provided for 3 staff. Yr 2-3 IBA boundaries digitised and linked to IBA database through GIS; Inventory compiled. Yr 3: IBA inventory published, publicised and 4000 copies disseminated
Conservation strategies for IBAs in the region are developed and their implementation started	Yr 3: 9 National workshops held to identify and document conservation strategy within identified IBAs; National IBA Action Plan developed and its adoption to National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and subsequent implementation sought.
Public awareness of national nature value, its conservation and IBA protection is increased	Yr 1: project launch held in all 3 countries. Yr 1-3: local and regional population kept informed through c.36 meetings, c.54 press releases, etc. Yr 3: Workshop held to discuss how local traditions can help promote nature conservation in IBAs

Note: A complete list of project activities can be found in Annex 5.

20. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities.

Project implementation timetable		
Date	**Financial year**	**Key milestones**
By July 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	National Project Coordinators in host countries hired.
By July 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Project office space allocated and equipment purchased.
By July 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Induction trip to UK for National Project Coordinators.
By Aug 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Project launch held in each host country.
By Sep 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Bespoke IBA Database set up for each country.
By Sep 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Fieldwork equipment and resources purchased.
By Oct 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Memorandum of Understanding with relevant conservation authorities (Ministries) signed.
By Oct 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Project field staff inducted into IBA programme and trained in standardised data sampling.
By Oct 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	IBA shadow list compiled for each host country.

Project implementation timetable		
Date	**Financial year**	**Key milestones**
By Nov 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	IBA criteria and thresholds adapted for each country and adopted by BirdLife Secretariat.
By Nov 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Fieldwork plan prepared focusing on sites where no information is currently available.
By Dec 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	75 Field staff identified and trained in ornithological field methods (wintering/migration season).
By Dec 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Fieldwork methodology guide and basic field guide compiled, translated and disseminated.
By Jan 2006	Apr-Mar 2005/6	IBA data application guidance compiled as handbook for each host country in national language.
By May 2006	Apr-Mar 2006/7	75 Field staff trained in ornithological field methods (breeding season).
By Mar 2007	Apr-Mar 2006/7	GIS training provided at RSPB Headquarters in UK
From Sep 2005 until Sep 2007	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	Potential IBA sites surveyed and data processed.
By Sep 2007	Apr-Mar 2007/8	3-day training course for key project and project partner staff on project development and fundraising held.
By Sep 2007	Apr-Mar 2007/8	National workshops held to identify and document conservation strategies within identified IBAs
By Sep 2007	Apr-Mar 2007/8	Workshop held to discuss how local traditions can help promote nature conservation in IBAs
From Apr 2006 until Oct 2007	Apr 2006 – Mar 2008	Existing regional conservation status data collated, processed, analysed and added to IBA database
By Dec 2007	Apr-Mar 2007/8	IBAs mapped, boundaries digitised and linked to IBA database through GIS
By Dec 2007	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	IBA data analysed, assessed and inventory compiled
By Jan 2008	Apr-Mar 2007/8	IBA inventory published, publicised, launched and disseminated
By Aug and Feb of each year	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	Meetings with key governmental bodies and other stakeholders in each host country held twice yearly.
By Mar 2008	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	In each host country, Project Steering Group members established and meetings held (one per year)
By Mar 2008	Apr-Mar 2007/8	Final Project Evaluation meeting held in each host country.
By Mar 2008	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	Financial Claims (quarterly) and Progress Reports (six-monthly) submitted to Darwin Initiative
By Sep and Mar of each year	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	In each host country, National IBA project newsletter compiled, published and disseminated twice a year.
By Mar 2008	Apr-Mar 2007/8	At least 4 follow-up projects to provide conservation action based on IBA Action Plans submitted to funders.
By Mar 2008	Apr-Mar 2007/8	National IBA Action Plans developed and its adoption to NBSAPs and subsequent implementation sought
All months	Apr 2005 – Mar 2008	Local and regional population kept informed through meetings, press releases etc

Note: A project Timeplan can be found in Annex 7

21. Set out the project's measurable outputs using the separate list of output measures.

PROJECT OUTPUTS		
Year/Month	**Standard output number (see standard output list)**	**Description (include numbers of people involved, publications produced, days/weeks etc.)**
Training Outputs		
Dec 05 – May 06	4A, 4B	**9** weeks of ornithological field methodology training delivered to **30** students (10 from each host country)
Dec 05 – May 06	6A, 6B	**9** weeks of ornithological field methodology training delivered to **45** fieldworkers (15 from each host country)
Dec 05 – May 06	6A, 6B	**40** local hunters, rangers, herdsmen informally introduced to IBA programme and fieldwork
Mar 07	6A, 6B	GIS training provided to **3** project staff for **8** days at UK RSPB facility (1 from each host country)
Sep 07	6A, 6B	**9** Project staff provided with **3** days training in project planning and fundraising (3 from each host country)
May 07	7	**3** IBA information posters in national languages produced and disseminated (6000 copies)
Research Outputs		
Dec 05 – May 06	8	**24** weeks spent by UK research project staff on project work in the host countries
Jan 08	9	**3** National IBA conservation recommendations (prior to development of Action Plan) produced and disseminated
Mar 08	9	**3** National IBA Action Plans produced and disseminated (500 copies of each)
Dec 05	10	**4** fieldwork methodology guides compiled in national languages (2000 copies)
Jan 06	10	**4** national language IBA manuals compiled (400 copies total)
Aug 06	10	**4** basic fieldwork guides compiled in national languages (2000 copies)
Jun 05 – Mar 08	11A	At least **10** papers published in peer reviewed journals
Jun 05 – Mar 08	11B	At least **20** papers submitted to peer reviewed journals
Sep 05 – Mar 08	12A	**3** Computer based databases (IBA Inventories) to be established and handed over to the host countries
Dissemination Outputs		
Oct 05	14A	**3** two-day workshops organised by project trainers to train 75 project field staff in standardised data sampling (1 workshop and 25 field staff per host country)
Aug 05 – Mar 08	14B	**24** meetings / seminars/ launch events /press conferences to be attended at which finding from Darwin project work will be presented (8 per country)
Aug 05 – Mar 08	15A	At least **8** national press releases in each of the host countries (total of 24)
Aug 05 – Mar 08	15B	At least **10** local press releases in each of the host countries (total of 30)

PROJECT OUTPUTS		
Year/Month	**Standard output number (see standard output list)**	**Description (include numbers of people involved, publications produced, days/weeks etc.)**
Aug 05 – Mar 08	15C	At least **2** national press releases in UK
Sep 05 – Mar 08	16A	**6** newsletters published for each of the host countries
Sep 05 – Mar 08	16B	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the host countries is **500**
Sep 05 – Mar 08	16C	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in UK and elsewhere is **200**
Jun 05 – Mar 08	17B	**3** dissemination networks to be extended (partner's local group networks - up to 30 new local groups)
Aug 05 – Mar 08	18A	At least **10** national TV programmes / features in each of the host countries
Aug 05 – Mar 08	18C	At least **15** local TV programmes / features in each of the host countries
Aug 05 – Mar 08	19A	At least **15** national radio interviews/ features in each of the host countries
Jun 05 – Mar 08	19B	**1** national radio interviews / features in UK (BBC World Service or Radio 4 are possibilities)
Aug 05 – Mar 08	19C	At least **15** local radio interviews / features in each of the host countries
Jun 05 – Mar 08	19D	**1** local radio interviews / features in UK
Jan 08	*(Additional Output)*	**3** National IBA book publications in national languages launched and disseminated
Physical Outputs		
Jun 05 – Mar 08	20	**£19,675** Physical assets handed over to host countries
Financial Outputs		
Jun 05 – Mar 08	23	**£108,007** raised from other sources for project work

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

22. Describe, referring to the Indicators in the Logical Framework, how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, including towards delivery of its outputs and in terms of achieving its overall purpose. This should be during the lifetime of the project and at its conclusion. Please include information on how host country partners will be included in the monitoring and evaluation.

Scientific monitoring is an integral project element. Once the IBAs in the three project countries have been identified, their boundaries will be mapped using a Geographic Information System and the IBA data will be published in the inventory and on the web (jointly with other IBA data). The task of establishing and running monitoring schemes for the identified IBAs will begin in earnest immediately after the identification phase. The project will ensure this monitoring is undertaken by increasing the conservation research capacity in the project countries. We expect the number of qualified and equipped field workers capable of ongoing monitoring work will have increased by up to 65% in the three project countries. These experts will play important roles in the local groups that are integral to the success of the IBA conservation network.

With regard to overall project management, a Project Steering Group (PSG) will be established for each country that will comprise key project staff and will be chaired by the Project Leader. The President or Director (or equivalent person) from the partners will attend these PSG meetings held twice a year. The representatives from the host country partners will feedback the views of their local groups and initiatives at these meetings. At the inception of the project a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed to assess the indicators shown in the Project Logical Framework, the project timetable and milestones. This plan will be discussed during PSG meetings and any necessary adjustments will be made accordingly. To maximise conservation success of the project, regular meetings will be held with relevant governmental authorities, and project progress assessed and evaluated in order to combine efforts and resources and plan joint implementation of activities if possible.

Key project materials, the publication and dissemination of which are indicators of project success in their own right, will be launched during the project. This includes the national IBA inventories, database records, and Conservation Action Plans.

A final evaluation meeting will be held upon completion of the project that will develop recommendations as how to take the follow-up programme forward in the future. An evaluation report will be compiled from this meeting. A series of follow-up project proposals focusing on implementing practical conservation measures will be developed and submitted to donors.