

## ***Darwin Initiative Annual Report***

### **Important note:**

To be completed with reference to the Reporting Guidance Notes for Project Leaders – it is expected that this report will be about 10 pages in length – Submission deadline 30 April 2007

### **Darwin Project Information**

Project Ref Number	15/012
Project Title	Protecting Key South African Biodiversity Sites through Community-based Conservation
Country(ies)	South Africa
UK Contract Holder Institution	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
UK Partner Institution(s)	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Host country Partner Institution(s)	BirdLife South Africa (BLSA)
Darwin Grant Value	£169,077
Start/End dates of Project	1 July, 2006 to 30 June, 2009
Reporting period	1 July, 2006 to 31 March, 2007  Annual report number 1
Project Leader Name	Paul Buckley
Project website	<a href="http://www.birdlife.co.za/index.php?p[Igcms_nodes][Igcms_nodesUID]=ccb18029b28e2f6bc62d6c4b3cec84d0">http://www.birdlife.co.za/index.php?p[Igcms_nodes][Igcms_nodesUID]=ccb18029b28e2f6bc62d6c4b3cec84d0</a>
Author(s), date	Paul Buckley, Head, Global Country Programmes, RSPB  Daniel Marnewick, Division Manager, Community Based Conservation, BLSA  Andrea Lockwood, International Officer, RSPB  30 April, 2007

## 1. Project Background

The RSPB has collaborated with BLSA since 1995. Once focused on birdwatching and surveys, BLSA has broadened the scope of its activities to include conservation initiatives during this time. In March of 2007, BLSA created a new division that focuses on community-based conservation projects. Daniel Marnewick, the manager of the current RSPB/BLSA project, is now also the manager of this new division. The current project is the division's flagship project.

Community-based conservation is internationally recognised as a critical conservation intervention. There has been considerable work in this area in South Africa since 1994, although it has mainly focused on communities around large protected areas. In implementing this project, BLSA is building on experiences and lessons learned elsewhere in the country. It is also building on models developed by BirdLife International, the RSPB and their country partners in Africa. These models offer dynamic and resilient multi-pronged approaches to the integration of conservation and development. These approaches are founded upon BirdLife International's site-support group (SSG) model, which engages local communities in conserving and monitoring critical sites for birds. Daniel has extensive knowledge of community-based conservation practices, particularly through his prior work with communities living around the Kruger National Park.

The project is being implemented at three sites in Soweto, the province of Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape. Annex 3 provides a map indicating the locations of the three sites. BLSA had already been active in the Soweto and Mpumalanga areas prior to initiation of the current project. However, the focus of its activities was rather different. The sites in Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape are Important Bird Areas (IBAs). BirdLife International has identified over 10,000 of these IBAs worldwide. Criteria used to designate IBAs are internationally agreed, standardised, quantitative and scientifically defensible. These criteria are based on the occurrence of key bird species that are vulnerable to global extinction or whose populations are otherwise irreplaceable (<http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/index.html>). This project aims to develop links between the conservation of critical bird habitat at the three sites and the livelihoods of local people. Key to the development of these links will be the creation of income-generating activities (IGAs) around the development of small local enterprises and ecotourism.

The Klipspruit Wetland in Soweto near Johannesburg is heavily polluted by the goldmines of the Witwatersrand. At the same time, informal settlements on the banks of the wetland in an area of Soweto called Kliptown are a source of human, livestock and solid waste, which empties into the wetland. Residents of these informal settlements do not benefit from the tourism industry in Soweto, or enjoy opportunities to market locally produced goods.

The small town of Wakkerstroom, situated about three hours east of Johannesburg in Mpumalanga, is well known as one of the best birding destinations in South Africa. Its large wetland is home to a number of globally threatened bird species, such as the white-winged flufftail, the wattled crane and the blue crane. Inns and hotels have sprung up to cater for the growing influx of tourists. However, impoverished residents of Wakkerstroom's black township (eSizamaleni) enjoy little benefit from the tourist trade. Two of the threats to the wetland include cattle grazing and hunting of birds for protein by residents of eSizamaleni. Threats are expected to increase over time as the impoverished township population grows and exerts increasing pressure on local natural resources.

Finally, the Xhosa community of Chata is approximately an hour and a half north of East London in the Eastern Cape. Indigenous forest in this area provides habitat for the Cape Parrot, one of the most threatened birds in South Africa. There are only approximately 1,300 individuals of this species remaining in the wild. The Cape Parrot depends on yellowwood trees of the *Podocarpus* genus for nesting sites and as a source of food. Diminishing *Podocarpus* forests due to illegal commercial harvesting, and indiscriminate harvesting by impoverished local people for timber and firewood, threaten the Cape Parrot with certain extinction. Cape

Parrots are also targeted by the illegal bird trade in South Africa. The Chata community is exploring opportunities to develop an avitourism industry that enhances their livelihoods, while enabling them to conserve their local indigenous forest and the Cape Parrots that depend upon it.

## 2. Project Partnerships

The relationship between the RSPB and BLSA has been extremely positive. Our partnership is built upon over a decade of collaboration. When this collaboration was first conceived in 1995, BLSA was a scientific birding club primarily focused on servicing its membership. Today, it is a growing conservation organisation implementing a diverse range of relevant and highly effective programmes.

The early years of the RSPB's collaboration with BLSA focused on environmental education. The launch of the groundbreaking *Learning for Sustainable Living* publication, which was distributed to every secondary school in the country, marked a new era in which BLSA evolved to become relevant to a much broader constituency in South Africa, and connected conservation with people's lives and well being. Since then, the RSPB's core support for BLSA has complemented an array of dynamic joint initiatives including, for example, studies of threatened species such as the Southern Bald Ibis in the Eastern Cape and the Free State, and the Rudd's Lark in Wakkerstroom. Together, BLSA and the RSPB are part of the international campaign to save albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds threatened by destructive fishing practices. Our collaboration added a new dimension to BLSA's work in 2006 with the introduction of this Darwin Initiative project. Finally, a new RSPB-funded policy and advocacy programme promises to enhance BLSA's influence in promoting policies at the national, regional and international levels that benefit birds and biodiversity.

As the project leader, Paul Buckley has a supervisory role in the Darwin Initiative project. Daniel Marnewick handles day-to-day project management. Site coordinators in Wakkerstroom and Soweto are responsible for on-the-ground implementation, and report regularly to Daniel. (A site coordinator in Chata will be selected in year 2.) Daniel reports developments to Paul Buckley and Andrea Lockwood via e-mail on a regular basis. Andrea has been heavily involved in the management of the project since its inception as part of her one-year secondment with the RSPB. Her involvement in the project has helped to build her capacity related to the development of partner-support programmes in Latin America similar in nature to those of the RSPB.

Some other elements of the BLSA/RSPB partnership in year 1 of the project include the following:

- Gerhard Verdoorn, BLSA's Executive Director, attended BirdLife International's annual meeting of African partner organisations last June. This provided an opportunity for Paul and Andrea to liaise with him in planning the project;
- As indicated above, the RSPB provided BLSA with funding for a new policy and advocacy position;
- During a visit to the RSPB in October of 2006, Daniel delivered a presentation to RSPB staff about the project;
- Andrea collaborated with Daniel in project planning and budgetary decisions. Paul provided advice, and participated in conference calls with Daniel related to the project budget, site visits, his training in the UK and other matters;
- Daniel sent regular project reports to the RSPB;
- He submitted budget figures to the RSPB as requested and on time; and
- Neil Smith, Manager of BLSA's Conservation Division, visited the RSPB in March, 2007 for three days of meetings with key RSPB staff. (These meetings were not specifically related to the project.) During his visit, Neil delivered a presentation to RSPB staff, which included information about the project.

In partnering with BLSA, the RSPB benefits from the collective expertise of Daniel and the two site coordinators with respect to the project sites and working with local communities in South Africa. The RSPB also has access to BLSA's extensive network of contacts. In return, BLSA benefits from the RSPB's expertise in areas such as project implementation, environmental education, the development of management plans, biological monitoring and socio-economic assessment.

Our priorities in year 1 involved finalising the location of the third project site in the Eastern Cape, and identifying and meeting with key stakeholders, and laying the foundations for community-based fora, at each of the three sites. We believe that this essential baseline work is critical for the project's success. We found that it took a long time and that, as a result, there was a delay in the implementation of our activities. As such, RSPB experts did not visit South Africa in year 1 to undertake training and evaluation activities as planned. They did, however, provide advice and support to Daniel during his three-week visit to the RSPB in October. These experts will make their contribution to the project in year 2.

Relative to the CBD commitments, this partnership has built BLSA's capacity in the following areas: i) community-focused monitoring programmes (Article 7). Daniel's understanding of site-based ecological and socio-economic monitoring improved through his discussions with experts at the RSPB in October, and through his participation in an SSG workshop in Kenya in November; ii) *in situ* conservation (Article 8). Through his meetings with RSPB staff and his visits to SSGs in Kenya last year, Daniel has an enhanced understanding of the role that local people can play in the conservation of wetland and indigenous forest habitats; and iii) sustainable use of the components of biodiversity (Article 10). Daniel's experiences in the UK and Kenya have also improved his understanding of the potential for local people to benefit from the sustainable use of natural resources at the three project sites.

The project has not yet made an explicit link with South Africa's CBD focal point at the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). There is about to be a new individual assuming the role of CBD focal point in South Africa. BLSA is negotiating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). SANBI is the body responsible for issues relating to biodiversity. The BLSA/SANBI MOU will provide BLSA with an open channel of communication with the new CBD focal point.

The project developed additional partnerships with the following in its first year:

- The Mayibuye Wetlands Programme. The Mayibuye Wetlands Programme is a non-profit organisation in Soweto established by local people concerned with the threats to the wetland detailed above. The project has built on an existing three-year partnership between BLSA and Mayibuye. Mayibuye has supported the project's environmental education objectives through the delivery of environmental education at schools near the wetland;
- The Wakkerstroom Tourism Association (WTA). BLSA joined the WTA in year 1 as part of its effort to ensure that the project was integrated into existing community processes;
- Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Authority (MPTA). The MPTA is the provincial authority responsible for protected areas and tourism in Mpumalanga. BLSA entered into a wetland co-management agreement with the MPTA in year 1 of the project;
- Border Rural Committee (BRC). BRC is a non-profit organisation that strives to eradicate poverty from rural areas in the Eastern Cape through rights-based development. BRC staff introduced this project to the Chata community, provided Daniel with advice about working in the community and helped him make contact with key individuals. They provided Daniel with transport to and from Chata. They contributed substantial co-funding (18%) for a resource-use assessment in Chata, which will be conducted by a researcher at Rhodes University;
- Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Rhodes University. BLSA and BRC hired a researcher at the ISER to undertake a resource-use assessment in Chata. The data collected through this assessment will inform a subsequent socio-economic assessment, identification of potential IGAs and development of a business plan;

- The UNEP/GEF Wings over Wetlands Programme. Linked to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), the Wings over Wetlands Programme is working to enhance the conservation of critical sites for migratory waterbirds along the African-Eurasian flyways. The programme has selected the wetland in Wakkerstroom as a demonstration project site, and has provided BLSA with funding in the amount of US\$248,000 for work at this site. This funding serves as co-funding for the Darwin Initiative's funding. The project objectives that BLSA has developed with Wings over Wetlands complement and enhance the objectives of this project;
- Vogelbescherming Nederland (VBN). VBN is the Dutch BirdLife International partner. In year 1, VBN provided BLSA with £11,818 to develop a sustainable indigenous tree-planting project. BLSA will use these funds in year 2 to plant pecan nut trees in Chata, thereby providing community members and Cape Parrots living in the area with a sustainable source of food. Again, the objectives of the BLSA/VBN project complement the BLSA/RSPB objectives in the Eastern Cape;
- National conservation fora. In year 1, Daniel became a member of the IUCN's Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG) and WWF-South Africa's community-based natural resource management forum. Attendance at the annual general meetings and other events hosted by these fora will provide him with the opportunity to network with organisations in South Africa implementing community-based conservation projects; and
- Other BirdLife International partners. Daniel's experiences in Kenya laid the foundation for expanded linkages between BLSA and the BirdLife partner organisations in Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda. While in Kenya, he worked with representatives of these organisations to develop a proposal seeking funding for a series of exchange visits to SSGs. These exchanges would enable staff from the partners in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda to visit SSGs in one another's countries, and learn about their experiences and lessons learned. They would provide participants with a critical opportunity to learn from initiatives funded by the Darwin Initiative in Kenya and Nigeria.

For the most part, these partnerships have added value to the project. The collaboration with BRC has been particularly strong. BRC's objectives complement those of the project, while its strong presence in Chata facilitated Daniel's entry into and acceptance by the local people. Unfortunately, BLSA's partnership with the Mayibuye Wetlands Programme in year 1 has been less effective. While the project's objectives and those of Mayibuye are aligned, synergy has been hampered by some problems within that organisation. As a result, the importance of the partnership has diminished. BLSA is negotiating an arrangement whereby it will take over implementation of Mayibuye's environmental education activities.

When this project was conceived, the RSPB and BLSA anticipated the formation of a national advisory group comprising representatives of government and NGO stakeholders in South Africa. The expectation was that the expert members of this advisory group would assist in guiding the project's implementation. A decision was made in year 1 to delay the formation of this advisory group. It is not clear at this time that such a group would be the most valuable mechanism for accessing expertise. Instead, Daniel will begin by drawing on the expertise inherent in the IUCN and WWF specialist groups highlighted above, and in other national-level bodies with which he interacts. Once we have identified entities that can play a key role in terms of providing their expertise to the project, and proven the project's credibility, we will be in a position to reconsider the establishment of a project advisory group.

Through this project, the RSPB has enhanced its capacity to be an effective project partner. This is a highly innovative project. In implementing it, the RSPB has built upon its experience in managing other community-based conservation projects in Kenya and throughout Africa, some of which have benefited from the Darwin Initiative's support. The project has provided the RSPB with the opportunity to involve experts from elsewhere within the organisation. For example, an RSPB economist has contributed his expertise with respect to our socio-economic assessment activities at each of the project sites. In the process, he has enhanced his own experience and is now in a position to apply what he has learned through the project to his work with other RSPB projects in Europe, Africa, Asia and the UK Overseas Territories. The

project has therefore expanded the expertise available within the RSPB for current and future projects.

Finally, the project has enabled the RSPB to contribute to the development of partner-support programmes in the Latin American BirdLife International network. As indicated above and in our half-year report, Andrea Lockwood has been heavily involved in the management of this project. Her intention upon completing her secondment with the RSPB in June of 2007 is to return to Nature Canada, a BirdLife International supporting partner organisation, where she intends to apply the skills she has acquired through management of the Darwin Initiative project in South Africa. Her goal is help develop Nature Canada’s capacity to implement comparable projects with Latin American BirdLife partners.

### 3. Project progress

#### 3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Activities in year 1 were carried out in the manner planned. Certain activities planned for year 1 were delayed for three main reasons:

- i) The start-up period at each project site (i.e., the period of time during which BLSA established its presence in each community) was lengthened so that there was adequate time to engage the three communities appropriately. Daniel spent considerable time in Wakkerstroom and Soweto identifying and liaising with key stakeholders. In Wakkerstroom, he worked to integrate the project into existing community processes. The success of project activities at all three sites will largely depend on the formation of strong community representative fora. Daniel has therefore taken great care in selecting the correct people for these fora;
- ii) Selection of the third project site required considerable time. The decision about its location was based on the conservation needs of the Cape Parrot and its indigenous forest habitat, and on the livelihood needs of the local communities. Our objective was to maximise benefits both in terms of conservation and development. We initially considered the potential of a site in the southern part of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It was our impression that community members in this area would be less hostile towards outsiders than those in the Eastern Cape, and that it therefore might be easier to pilot the project there. Subsequent investigation revealed that there was potential to work in the Eastern Cape’s Amathole Forest Complex. This area of indigenous forest is one of the last great strongholds of the Cape Parrot. The majority of the remaining wild parrots live there. Its conservation is therefore critical to the continued survival of the species. A visit to Chata, a community near the forest, and discussions with BRC confirmed that this site was a better choice than the southern KwaZulu-Natal site. We selected the Chata site in January. Daniel spent the remainder of year 1 identifying and liaising with key stakeholders in the community; and
- iii) The search for skilled local people who possess the necessary qualifications for the site coordinator positions took longer than originally anticipated. The Soweto site coordinator was in post as of 8 January, 2007. BLSA selected the Wakkerstroom coordinator in February. This individual was in post on 12 March. As the Chata site was only selected in January, it will take time to identify an appropriate person to fill the position of site coordinator. BLSA expects to select this individual early in year 2. In the meantime, it will liaise with Chata through BRC.

Our progress in implementing the planned activities in year 1 is detailed in the following table. Additional detail is provided in Annex 1:

Output	Activity	Progress
Local site support groups/fora in	Set in place project management	Completed.

place at each site establish a firm basis for project sustainability.	structures.	
	Hold start-up meeting.	Not completed.
Training and capacity-building programme for national and local stakeholders implemented.	Project manager recruited.	Completed.
	Initial training for project manager in the UK.	Completed.
Participatory plans for conservation monitoring and action in place and under implementation at each site.	Plan framework and process agreed.	Not completed.
	First workshops held at each site.	Not completed.
Marketing focused initiatives at each site are generating economic benefits for local people and assisting sustainability.	Undertake socio-economic analysis.	Not completed.
National networking and experience sharing has stimulated action at additional high priority biodiversity sites.	No activities planned in year 1.	
Awareness of conservation needs and values enhanced.	Develop schools materials.	Not completed.
	Establish programmes at ten schools in four sites.	Not completed.
	Train site groups in awareness-raising techniques.	Not completed.

### 3.2 Progress towards Project Outputs

This project's activity targets in year 1 were overly ambitious. As indicated above, it was critical for us to spend time confirming the three project sites, identifying and liaising with key stakeholders at each site, recruiting the site coordinators and integrating ourselves into existing processes in Wakkerstroom. Solid work in these areas has laid the foundation for strong achievements in years 2 and 3. In this way, overall progress toward the project outputs has been strong and the likelihood of achieving these outputs by the end of year 3 is high.

Specific areas of progress towards project outputs include the following:

- We identified and worked with key stakeholders in Soweto. These include, for example, Mayibuye Wetlands Programme, Soweto Kliptown Youth (SKY), Johannesburg City Parks, and the City of Johannesburg's Environmental Health Service and Local Economic Development (LED) office. There was thorough liaison with these and other stakeholders aimed at building awareness about and support for the project;
- We identified and worked with key stakeholders in Wakkerstroom. These include, for example, the Pixley ka Seme municipality, the Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association, the Wakkerstroom Youth Organisation, the Wakkerstroom Tourism Association and the Uthaga Tourism and Development Association (an initiative promoting economic empowerment of the black population in Wakkerstroom). There was thorough liaison with these and other stakeholders aimed at building awareness about and support for the project. Daniel spent the first half of October introducing the project to the Pixley ka Seme municipality. This resulted in the project being listed as one of the initiatives in the municipality's LED plan. Daniel also integrated BLSA into Wakkerstroom's wetland management committee;

- Daniel visited the Amathole Forest Complex in the Eastern Cape on 26 January and selected the Chata community as the third project site. He developed a relationship with BRC. The manager of BLSA's Conservation Division spent several days evaluating Cape Parrot populations in the Amathole Forest Complex, and the condition of their habitat;
- We provisionally identified a site in southern KwaZulu-Natal as the fourth project site. There is excellent potential to replicate the work in Chata at this site;
- Daniel selected Raymond Rampolokeng to be the site coordinator in Soweto. Raymond is from Soweto. He brings experience as a bird guide in an urban conservation area to the project. In January, February and March, he met with key stakeholders;
- Daniel selected Hansco Banda to be the site coordinator in Wakkerstroom. Hansco is from the eSizamaleni township, and is aware of community dynamics and development issues. He brings more than ten years of work experience to the project. He is a qualified teacher and environmental educator; and
- Paul Buckley and Andrea Lockwood met with BLSA staff in Johannesburg in September, 2006. Following the meeting, visits were made to the Soweto and Wakkerstroom sites. There was also a visit to the potential third site in southern KwaZulu-Natal. Andrea participated in a three-day BLSA staff retreat during this trip.

Certain of the output indicators listed in our original proposal can be measured at each of the sites individually (e.g., training cascaded down at the sites and all key stakeholders contributing to effective management of local site support groups). Daniel will require the site coordinators to measure these indicators, while he measures the project-level output indicators (e.g., new registered bird guides and school programs in place). As project leader, Paul Buckley will track all measurable indicators.

The project's output-level assumptions still hold true.

### 3.3 Standard Output Measures

**Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures**

Code No.	Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	TOTAL
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		<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>6A</b>	1 project manager trained. RSPB training covered the following areas: project management; training of trainers; socio-economic assessment; participatory rural appraisal (PRA); ecological monitoring; environmental education; management plans; engaging with local people near conservation areas; design and construction of bird hides; setting up community-based fora; and managing a Darwin Initiative budget. Training in Kenya is detailed in Annex 1 below.	<b>1</b>				
<b>6B</b>	4.5 weeks. 3 weeks at the RSPB and 1.5 weeks in Kenya.	<b>4.5</b>				
<b>8</b>	Andrea Lockwood spent two weeks in South Africa in September. She visited the Soweto and Wakkerstroom sites with Daniel, and accompanied him to southern KwaZulu-Natal to identify a potential third project site. Paul Buckley spent two days at the BLSA office in Johannesburg in September meeting with key staff.	<b>2.3</b>				
<b>15A</b>	1 article (Annex 4).	<b>1</b>				
<b>15B</b>	3 articles (two included as Annex 5 and Annex 6).	<b>3</b>				
<b>16A</b>	1 article in the BLSA newsletter.	<b>1</b>				
<b>16B</b>	Approximate circulation of BLSA newsletter in South	<b>17,000</b>				

	Africa: 17,000.					
<b>16C</b>	Approximate circulation of BLSA newsletter in the UK: 500.	<b>500</b>				
<b>19A</b>	1 national radio interview.	<b>1</b>				
<b>20</b>	9 pairs of binoculars.	<b>9</b>				
<b>23</b>	Amount leveraged from other funding sources by the RSPB and BLSA.	<b>RSPB: approx. £18,858</b>  <b>BLSA: approx. £25,915</b>				

**Table 2 Publications**

<b>Type *</b> <b>(eg journals, manual, CDs)</b>	<b>Detail</b> <b>(title, author, year)</b>	<b>Publishers</b> <b>(name, city)</b>	<b>Available from</b> <b>(eg contact address, website)</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
Magazine article* (Annex 4)	"Linking livelihoods to conservation," Daniel Marnewick, <i>Africa Birds and Birding</i> , Volume 12, Number 2, pages 72 and 73.	Africa Geographic (Pty) Ltd., Cape Town, South Africa	1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Devonshire Court, 20 Devonshire Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa	2.16
Newspaper article* (Annex 5)	"Vleiland gaan deur diep waters," <i>Die Burger</i> , 9 December, 2006	Unknown	www.dieburger.com	Unknown
Newspaper article	<i>City Vision</i> , 1 February, 2007	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Online article* (Annex 6)	"Communities urged to sustain environment," Mpumalanga Province		<a href="http://www.mpumalanga.gov.za/Wetlands07.htm">www.mpumalanga.gov.za/Wetlands07.htm</a>	N/A
Newspaper article	An agricultural newspaper in Mpumalanga (name unknown), 2 February, 2007	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

### 3.4 Progress towards the project purpose and outcomes

Progress toward the project purpose and outcomes was generally good, even though it is early days. Specific areas of progress include the following:

- Daniel created partnerships and liaised effectively with a range of entities in South Africa. These partnerships are detailed in section 2 above;
- Daniel participated in three weeks of project-related training at the RSPB in October of 2006. He then spent one and a half weeks in Kenya visiting community-based conservation projects implemented by Nature Kenya, an RSPB country partner and Darwin Initiative beneficiary;
- Daniel and Raymond (the site coordinator in Soweto) received further training at a three-day conference on natural resource management for community development in March;
- The project was incorporated into UNEP/GEF's Wings over Wetlands Programme activities in Wakkerstroom;
- Co-funding in the amount of more than £136,000 was secured for the project; and
- The project raised local and national awareness about the biodiversity importance of the Soweto and Wakkerstroom wetlands. Early in the year, the Reuters Foundation brought 13 reporters from different African countries to Soweto. As a result of this visit, an Afrikaans newspaper called *Die Burger* wrote an article about the project (Annex 5). On 1 February, a Soweto community newspaper called *City Vision* published an article about the 2007 World Wetlands Day celebration in Kliptown organized by the Mayibuye Wetlands Programme. Daniel conducted a radio interview with South Africa's national broadcasting company (SABC) about the project activities in Wakkerstroom and the importance of wetlands. The interview was aired on World Wetlands Day (2 February, 2007). An article on the Mpumalanga Province's web site about World Wetlands Day (Annex 6) profiled project activities in Wakkerstroom. Daniel was interviewed by an Mpumalanga newspaper devoted to agricultural issues about project implementation in Wakkerstroom and the importance of wetlands. The resulting article was published on this year's World Wetlands Day. Finally, the project was profiled in an article in the magazine *Africa Birds & Birding* (Annex 4).

### **3.5 Progress towards impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits**

It is too early to report any progress with respect to impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or the equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits. However, the project's accomplishments in year 1 have certainly laid the foundation for impact in these three areas. We have identified key stakeholders at each site, built their knowledge about the project, engaged them as project partners, and raised local and national awareness about the biodiversity values associated with the sites in Soweto and Wakkerstroom. It is on this foundation that we will train community members in biological monitoring and conservation measures, identify income-generating activities, and develop site-based management plans and linked business plans.

## **4. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons**

In April of 2007, Paul Buckley, Daniel Marnewick and Andrea Lockwood developed the project's year 2 workplan. Daniel is now in the process of creating detailed workplans for each project site on the basis of this workplan. Once these workplans are completed, the team will work together to identify specific site-level indicators, determine their means of verification and consider any related assumptions. The identification of these indicators will be informed in part by the socio-economic and resource-use data being gathered by the project in year 2.

As indicated in section 3.2 above, the project leader, project manager and site coordinators will undertake ongoing measurement of the project indicators. Monitoring and evaluation will be based on measurement of the indicators listed in the project's original logical framework and those identified in the individual site-level workplans.

As part of her secondment, Andrea Lockwood is developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the RSPB's International Division. It is anticipated that the country programme officers will apply this framework in the monitoring and evaluation of their country programmes

in Africa, Asia, Europe and the UK Overseas Territories. This project will test the framework during year 2.

Two key lessons learned in year 1 relate to stakeholder engagement. In Soweto, we found it difficult to gain access to local government representatives. The interest of these representatives in project activities was minimal. It was only when Johannesburg's mayor announced his plan to create a birding route in Soweto for the 2010 World Cup that local government developed an interest in working with BLSA.

The second lesson relates to the black and white communities in Wakkerstroom, which are highly divided. A key challenge for the project will be to create links between these communities that will allow them to work together effectively. Daniel discovered a number of strong personalities in both the black and white communities during year 1. He learned that a neutral mediator is required to bridge the gap between the two sides.

Stakeholder engagement is central to this project. As such, it will be critical that we integrate lessons learned in this area during year 1 into our work with stakeholders at each site in years 2 and 3.

## **5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

## **6. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere**

The design of the project was enhanced in year 1. Specifically, we decided to undertake a critical resource-use assessment in Chata. Our analysis of socio-economic opportunities and our development of income-generating activities at each site will depend upon the use of specific socio-economic data. Paul Morling, the RSPB's economist, visited the three project sites in April, 2007 and is in the process of identifying gaps in the data that we currently have. We have much less data for Chata than we do for Soweto and Wakkerstroom. After identifying Chata as the third project site in January, we decided to begin with a resource-use assessment. As indicated above, a researcher from Rhodes University will undertake this assessment in year 2. Her data about community members' use of local natural resources will inform the subsequent socio-economic assessment at this site.

Two difficulties encountered by the project in year 1 relate to its capital items. The BLSA office in Johannesburg experienced a break in during the weekend of 17 and 18 February, 2007. The project's data projector was stolen. It has since been replaced. On 25 March, the vehicle purchased with Darwin Initiative funds was involved in a serious car accident. Daniel was driving at the time. Passengers included the Soweto and Wakkerstroom site coordinators, and a project partner from Wakkerstroom. The occupants of the vehicle did not suffer any injuries, and there were no other vehicles involved in the collision. A mechanic has assessed the damage to the vehicle and decided that it can be repaired. It must now be towed to Johannesburg. Daniel has made use of another BLSA vehicle since the accident occurred. It is expected that BLSA's insurance will cover both the theft of the data projector and the repairs to the vehicle.

## **7. Sustainability**

The profile of the project within South Africa has grown during year 1 due to its considerable media exposure (detailed in table 2 above and section 8 below). Specific evidence of increased interest in biodiversity conservation as a result of the project is provided by BLSA's partnership with BRC. First and foremost a development organisation, BRC would have been unlikely to integrate Cape Parrot conservation into its activities in Chata prior to this partnership. Now, as a result of the BLSA/BRC collaboration, BRC has expressed a commitment to assist the project in conserving the Cape Parrot, and is helping us generate enthusiasm in Chata for the incorporation of avitourism into the community's broader tourism development plans.

As indicated above, the RSPB has worked with BirdLife South Africa since 1995. There is commitment on both sides to ensure a long-term relationship that will continue far beyond the life of this project. As such, the RSPB does not anticipate the need for an exit strategy. Rather, we will continue to provide inputs where necessary and possible to ensure that the project outputs, outcomes and impacts at each of the three sites are sustained, and that the successes at these sites are replicated at other sites in South Africa facing urgent conservation threats.

BLSA will maintain a long-term presence in the three project communities in order to ensure that the impact of the project is sustained. This will involve finding funds (likely from corporate sources) to keep the project manager and site coordinators in post. As indicated above, co-finance has already been obtained for two of the three sites. This augurs well for the future of these programmes.

A key aim of this project is the development of income-generating activities at each site. Revenue generated through these activities will benefit community members, while at the same time ensuring that the costs of maintaining project activities are covered in the long term (i.e., after the three years of Darwin Initiative funding). BLSA's experience with other projects, particularly its birding routes throughout the country, indicates that locally generated revenue can be secured.

## 8. Dissemination

Dissemination activities in year 1 are highlighted in Table 2 above. The target audiences for each dissemination vehicle are as follows:

- SABC radio: The radio programme is national and has no particular target audience;
- *Die Burger*: The target audience is the Afrikaans community in Cape Town;
- *Africa Birds and Birding*: This is a national publication that appeals primarily to birders;
- *City Vision*: This is a Soweto community newspaper that appeals primarily to a black audience;
- Mpumalanga Province web site: The target audience is residents of Mpumalanga; and
- An agricultural newspaper: As indicated in Table 2 above, we do not currently have the name of this newspaper. It is, however, a publication read by the agricultural sector in Mpumalanga.

BLSA is a renowned and respected conservation organisation in South Africa. It is frequently represented at national and international workshops and conferences. This project is the organisation's flagship community-based conservation initiative and, as such, will be discussed at these events in the long term.

BLSA also enjoys regular media exposure. There will consequently be many opportunities to disseminate information about the project, its successes and lessons learned via local and national radio, television and newspapers.

Dissemination activities will be an integral part of BLSA's attendance at workshops and conferences, and its use of the media. Separate funding for these activities will not therefore be required.

## 9. .

## 10. **OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

In 2006, BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) launched an innovative project at three key biodiversity sites in South Africa. This project aims to develop links between the conservation of critical wetland and forest habitat for birds, and the livelihoods of local people. Some key activities include site-based training in conservation and monitoring, and the creation of small local enterprises and other income-generating activities.

The project developed crucial partnerships in its first year with government and NGO stakeholders. For example, as a result of meetings with local government, project activities at the Wakkerstroom wetland in the Province of Mpumalanga are now included in the municipality's local economic development plan. Our partnership with a rights-based development NGO in the Eastern Cape has added an entirely new dimension to their work. Conservation had not previously been part of their mandate. As a result of our partnership, this NGO is now committed to helping us conserve the Cape Parrot, a bird that occurs in the indigenous forests of the Eastern Cape. There are only about 1,300 Cape Parrots remaining in the wild. Our collaboration will link the creation of income-generating activities with local efforts to conserve this endangered bird. In Soweto, we are partnering with an organisation that provides services to disadvantaged children, the aged and those infected with HIV/AIDS. This innovative collaboration represents an exciting opportunity to link poverty alleviation in Kliptown's informal settlements with the conservation of an urban wetland that provides habitat for over 130 bird species.

## Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2006/07

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2006 - March 2007	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Goal:</b> <i>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>		<p>It is too early to report progress. See section 3.5 above.</p>	<p><i>(do not fill not applicable)</i></p>
<p>Purpose: Community-focused programmes are significantly enhancing the status of important biodiversity sites and the capacity to manage them for the future.</p>	<p>Programmes in the four project sites are effectively managed by local stakeholders by end of project.</p> <p>Threat status and pressures on each area show improvement from beginning to end of project.</p> <p>Three other projects at important biodiversity sites being established with leveraged funds by the project end.</p>	<p>Identified the third project site.</p> <p>Identified and liaised with key stakeholders at the three sites.</p> <p>Provisionally identified a fourth project site.</p> <p>Hired site coordinators in Soweto and Wakkerstroom.</p> <p>Created several partnerships with government bodies and NGOs working at each site.</p> <p>Provided intensive training to the project manager.</p> <p>Secured substantial co-funding.</p>	<p>Complete local training in group operations and project management at three sites.</p> <p>Agree management planning protocols and format.</p> <p>Plan and implement awareness programme at two sites.</p> <p>Continue local stakeholder meetings and awareness raising activities.</p> <p>Complete socio-economic assessments at three sites.</p> <p>Produce education materials and establish school programmes.</p>

		<p>Conducted RSPB site visit.</p> <p>Raised local and national awareness about the Soweto and Wakkerstroom sites.</p>	<p>Complete training in awareness raising.</p> <p>Hold first consultative workshops to develop management plans.</p>
			<p>Hold first national network meeting.</p> <p>Confirm selection of fourth site and implement socio-economic assessments.</p> <p>Complete training in conservation monitoring and training of trainers.</p> <p>Ensure community-based fora are in place and functioning with regular programme of activities at three sites.</p> <p>Deliver training in fundraising and business planning to project coordinators and key partners.</p> <p>Complete bird guide training programme for 10 persons, and initiate craft and other income-generating programmes.</p>
<p><b>Output 1.</b> Local site support groups/fora in place at each site establish a firm basis for project sustainability.</p>	<p>Funding for further work at each site achieved by end of June, 2009.</p> <p>All key stakeholders contribute to</p>	<p>Good progress. Indicators are appropriate.</p>	



	effective group management.	
Activity 1.1. Set in place project management structures.		The project manager has an office at BLSA, a laptop, a data projector, a vehicle, business cards and support from BLSA's finance officer. On 2 March, 2007, BLSA created a new division specifically for this and other community-based conservation projects. The project manager heads this division.
Activity 1.2. Hold start-up meeting.		We opted not to have one start-up meeting for the whole project. This is because the nature of our engagement differs from site to site. Rather, the project is being introduced with individual meetings at each site. We did, in April of 2007, get key stakeholders from each site together for initial training in socio-economic assessment and project management.
<b>Output 2.</b> Training and capacity-building programme for national and local stakeholders implemented.	Recommendations for ongoing support from training courses implemented.  Training cascaded down at all four sites.	Good progress. Indicators are appropriate.
Activity 2.1. Project manager recruited.		Daniel Marnewick started in the position on 1 August, 2006.
Activity 2.2. Initial training for project manager in the UK.		Daniel visited the RSPB for three weeks of project-related training (16 October to 4 November, 2006). He met with key RSPB staff (including staff members involved in this Darwin Initiative project) to, inter alia: i) brainstorm ideas about the project; ii) learn about the RSPB's experiences with other international projects (including some supported by the Darwin Initiative); iii) enhance his skills in project management and the training of trainers; and iv) plan training workshops to be held at each project site (for example, training related to socio-economic assessment, project management and ecological monitoring). Daniel also visited three RSPB reserves and spent a day at BirdLife International in Cambridge meeting

		<p>key staff.</p> <p>Prior to returning to South Africa, Daniel took part in one and a half weeks of project-related training through Nature Kenya. This training comprised visits with several existing SSGs established by Nature Kenya. Some of the projects implemented by these SSGs have been supported through funding from the Darwin Initiative. The visits allowed Daniel to learn from the experiences of these groups in identifying and implementing income-generating activities. Daniel also attended the annual SSG workshop in Kenya in order to learn about the experiences of community-based projects at IBAs throughout the country. Finally, he met with key staff at Nature Kenya and the BirdLife Africa Secretariat in Nairobi.</p>
<p><b>Output 3.</b> Participatory plans for conservation monitoring and action in place and under implementation at each site.</p>	<p>Three plans adopted by key stakeholders by June, 2008. The fourth adopted by June, 2009.</p> <p>80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.</p> <p>Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Implementation was delayed until year 2. Indicators are appropriate.</p>
<p>Activity 3.1. Plan framework and process agreed.</p>		<p>As indicated above, year 1 was devoted to selecting the third project site, and identifying and liaising with key stakeholders at each site. We therefore did not engage with community members in activities related to conservation monitoring and action. This activity is delayed until year 2.</p>
<p>Activity 3.2. First workshops held at each site.</p>		<p>See above.</p>

<p><b>Output 4.</b> Marketing-focused initiatives at each site are generating economic benefits for local people and assisting sustainability.</p>	<p>Analysis of socio-economic options completed at each site by end of April, 2008.</p> <p>Five new registered guides in two sites by June, 2009.</p>	<p>Implementation was delayed until year 2. Indicators are appropriate.</p>
<p>Activity 4.1. Undertake socio-economic analysis.</p>		<p>Due to the delay in year 1, this activity will be implemented in year 2.</p>
<p><b>Output 5.</b> National networking and experience sharing has stimulated action at additional high priority biodiversity sites.</p>	<p>Networking meeting for groups and other site protection agencies held during year 2.</p> <p>Expressions of interest from three other sites by end of June, 2009.</p>	<p>No activities were planned for year 1.</p>
<p><b>Output 6.</b> Awareness of conservation needs and values enhanced.</p>	<p>Attitude surveys show more favourable attitudes to conservation at all sites.</p> <p>School programmes in place at all sites by June, 2008.</p>	<p>Implementation was delayed until year 2. Indicators are appropriate.</p>
<p>Activity 6.1. Develop schools materials.</p>		<p>Due to the delay in year 1, this activity will be implemented in year 2.</p>
<p>Activity 6.2. Establish programmes at ten schools in four sites.</p>		<p>Due to the delay in year 1, this activity will be implemented in year 2.</p>
<p>Activity 6.3. Train site groups in awareness-raising techniques.</p>		<p>Due to the delay in year 1, this activity will be implemented in year 2.</p>

## Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

Changes made to the logframe in year 1 are highlighted in blue:

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Goal:</p> <p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conservation of biological diversity,</li> <li>• the sustainable use of its components, and</li> <li>• the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Purpose</b></p>			
<p>Community-focused programmes are significantly enhancing the status of important biodiversity sites and the capacity to manage them for the future.</p>	<p>Programmes in the four project sites are effectively managed by local stakeholders by the end of the project.</p> <p>Threat status and pressures on each area show improvement from beginning to end of project.</p> <p>Three other projects at important biodiversity sites being established with leveraged funds by the project end.</p>	<p>Project reports, future workplans</p> <p>Biological status reports from each site</p> <p>Project proposals/workplans</p>	<p>No additional unrecognised threats emerge during project period.</p> <p>Benefits accruing to communities are adequate to counter any damaging alternative economic proposals.</p>

<b>Outputs</b>			
Local site support groups/fora in place at each site establish a firm basis for project sustainability.	Funding for further work at each site achieved by end of June, 2009.  All key stakeholders contribute to effective group management.	Funding agreements, project reports  Minutes of meetings  Constitutions/MoUs	Community-focused programmes show short-term benefits through improved threat status/key species populations/job creation.
Training and capacity-building programme for national and local stakeholders implemented.	Recommendations for ongoing support from training courses implemented.  Training cascaded down at all four sites.	Training reports  Project reports	Staff and volunteers remain in post after training.
Participatory plans for conservation monitoring and action in place and under implementation at each site.	Three plans adopted by key stakeholders by June, 2008. The fourth adopted by June, 2009.  80% of priority actions underway by June, 2009.  Greater formal protection at one site by June, 2009.	Adopted management plans and business plans  Workplan and monitoring reports	Current strong community links and stability at chosen sites are maintained.
Marketing-focused initiatives at each site are generating economic benefits for local people and assisting sustainability.	Analysis of socio-economic options completed at each site by end of April, 2008.  Five new registered guides in two sites by June, 2009.	Socio-economic reports  Guide training reports	Current favourable climate for local and international tourism is maintained.
National networking and experience sharing has stimulated action at additional high priority biodiversity sites.	Networking meeting for groups and other site protection agencies held during year 2.  Expressions of interest from three other sites by end of June, 2009.	Reports of network meeting  Written expressions of interest from groups at other sites	
Awareness of conservation needs and values enhanced.	Attitude surveys show more favourable attitudes to conservation at all sites.	Repeat surveys at start and end of project	

	School programmes in place at all sites by June, 2008.	Education reports	
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## **Annex 3 onwards – supplementary material (optional)**

Please see Annexes 3, 4, 5 and 6 below.

### ***Checklist for submission***

	Check
<b>Is the report less than 5MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk">Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	√
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<b>Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table?	√
Do not include claim forms or communications for Defra with this report.	√