

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2008)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	15-021
<b>Project Title</b>	Strengthening the National Biodiversity Strategy in Congo Brazzaville
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Congo (Brazzaville)
<b>UK Organisation</b>	University of Reading, CAER
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, Natural History Museum London, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Ministère de l'Economie Forestière et de l'Environnement (MEFE), Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur la Diversité Biologique (GERDIB) WWF (Democratic Republic of Congo)
<b>Project Leader</b>	Simon G. Potts
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2008
<b>Report No.</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.rdg.ac.uk/caer/project_congo.html">http://www.rdg.ac.uk/caer/project_congo.html</a>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).**

## RESEARCH

- Identification of bees and butterflies by international experts near completion.
- Identification of plant material progressing well.
- GIS layers for Congo (Brazzaville) and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) obtained.
- Fieldwork in Congo Brazzaville finished.
- Research programme for DRC finalised; local partners and WWF engaged; field team and equipment assembled.

## DISSEMINATION

- Popular science talk delivered at Café Scientifique, Reading.
- Application made for exhibition stand at Chelsea Flower Show 2009.
- Planning started for exhibition at Kew.
- Agreement with University of Reading Press Office to make short film of project.

## TRAINING

- No training activities in this period (see below).

## MANAGEMENT

- Safe extraction of personnel and virtually all of data from Congo Brazzaville after security difficulties.
- Establishment of new partnerships in DRC.

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

As documented in the previous Annual Report, the security situation in Congo Brazzaville prohibits further activities in country. A recent assessment of the situation indicates conditions remain unsuitable.

In discussion with the Darwin secretariat and ETCF, we have shifted our final period of field research to DRC. The study area, the Mayombe Mountains, straddles the border between Congo and DRC, and we are therefore surveying the same biogeographic region.

The approach and methods will remain unchanged but the geographic location will switch to DRC. The overall analysis and related outputs will be unaffected. No additional budget is requested.

Training and dissemination activities in Congo Brazzaville have had to be curtailed. However, we aim to seek opportunities in DRC to deliver findings to the government and NGOs.

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

Yes. The workplan and Logframe will be updated accordingly, but the original agreement stands.

<b>Discussed with the DI Secretariat:</b>	yes, in September 2008
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<b>Changes to the project schedule/workplan:</b>	yes, in October 2008
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**3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

No.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.**

Please send your **completed form email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at [Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk) . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**