



DARWIN INITIATIVE



Pre-Project Funding Report

This report should be completed and submitted with a Stage 1 Darwin Application

Project Title	Bornean Clouded Leopard Project
Country(ies)	Malaysia
Project Ref No. (if known)	EIDPR45 – Bornean Clouded Leopard Project – App1/690
UK Organisation	Global Canopy Programme
Names / Titles of those who travelled to the host country	Andrew Hearn and Joanna Ross – Principal investigators
Grant Value	£2,280.00
Start and Finishing Dates	10/8/05 – 19/8/05
Report Date	23/09/05

1. Please provide a concise overview of the activities undertaken during the pre-project development visit. (Please also include relevant activities before and after, as appropriate). Please highlight those that were not planned.

Activities pre-visit:

9/6/05 - Meeting with Dr. Henry Tiandun, researcher at Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ITBC). Discussed project and collaboration.

21/6/05 - Meeting with Glen Reynolds, Royal Society's South East Asian Rainforest Research Programme SEARRP. Discussed suitability of Danum Valley Field Centre (DVFC) as field site.

Activities during visit (planned):

11/8/05 - Meeting with Prof. Maryati, Director ITBC, Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Discussed project feasibility, how project will fit in with ITBC goals/ interests, and roles/responsibilities of partners.

12/8/05 - Meeting with Jumrafa Abd. Shukor, Senior Officer with the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD). Discussed project feasibility and suitability, made arrangements for Tabin Wildlife Reserve (TWR) visit. Meeting with Rita Stuel Galid, Senior Manager of the Research & Development Division, Yayasan Sabah. Discussed suitability of DVFC as field site, made arrangements for visit

-Meeting with Glen Reynolds, Senior Scientist (SEARRP). Discussed site visit, merits and suitability of DVFC.

13-15/8/05 - Visit to DVFC; Meeting with Jadda Suhaimi, Manager of Danum Valley Conservation Area (DVCA). Discussed project feasibility, site logistics, frequency of cat sightings, and site suitability.

16-18/8/05 - Visit to Tabin Wildlife Reserve (TWR). Meeting with David Antonios, Senior Officer for the Sabah Wildlife Department at TWR. Discussed site logistics and suitability, and frequency of cat sightings.

Activities arranged during visit:

14/8/05 - Meeting with Norhaidah Maral, Conservation & Research Officer at DVCA. Discussed environmental education needs in Sabah and agreed to collaborate on wild cat environmental education project. –Discussed frequency and location of cat sightings with Research Assistants at the DVFC and the Senior tourist guide at the Borneo Rainforest Lodge. 16/8/05 –Discussions regarding cat sightings and environmental education activities with tourist guides and Manager of the resort in the Tabin Wildlife Reserve.

Activities following pre-project development visit:

5-19/9/05 – Follow-up e-mail discussions with Prof Maryati and Dr. Henry Bernard from ITBC, Sabah Wildlife Department staff, and Norhaidah Maral.

2. Were any difficulties or setbacks encountered? If so, how did they impact on the intended achievements for the visit, and on the intended Darwin project proposal.

No setbacks were encountered.

3. Briefly explain how the pre-project funding has helped to confirm or change the planned project intervention – what difference did getting the grant make?

The pre-project funding has enabled us to confirm that this project is feasible but has also highlighted potential problems and challenges. Discussions between relevant parties before the visit had highlighted the TWR as a potential field site. As a result of this visit we have decided to extend our project to include this reserve and surrounding oil palm plantations, as wild cat sightings were found to be relatively common at the forest/plantation interface, thus offering an excellent opportunity to investigate the effects of, and wild cat use of, oil-palm habitat. We discovered that hunting is not a threat to wild cats in DV, whereas hunting may pose a significant threat in the TWR area. Consequently, we have decided to conduct the hunting surveys at TWR as opposed to DVCA.

Our visit has confirmed our concerns regarding the challenge of studying the clouded leopard, given its elusive nature and rarity, and discussions with our host country partners have stressed the need for research regarding the other 3 threatened wild cat species. Therefore, we now believe that a 'Bornean wild cat' approach is preferable over a 'single species' approach, although the clouded leopard will still be used as the flagship species to draw attention to the project.

In the absence of face-to-face meetings, local custom and communication difficulties in Sabah can often hinder the development of new projects. The pre-project funding has facilitated the development of this project by helping to forge stronger partnerships between the relevant parties.

4. Briefly describe the outcomes and conclusions arising from discussions with the host institution(s). What is the value of the project to the host institution(s) and what will their intended contributions be. Have any other partnerships evolved as a result of the pre-project grant?

ITBC: We have received a formal agreement from Prof. Maryati Mohamed to act as collaborator and local co-ordinator. ITBC will identify individuals for participation in our training workshops and for employment as research assistants. Yayasan Sabah will provide in country support, arrange accommodation and logistics at Danum Valley and will host our training and educational activities at their education centre within the DVFC. Our project will give a greater understanding of the ecology of the Bornean wild cats, will investigate their responses to habitat alterations and will leave a legacy through environmental education and research training of Malaysians. Thus, our project will assist ITBC in their implementation of the CBD and Malaysia's National Policy on Biological Diversity, and will assist Yayasan Sabah in their management of Danum Valley's biodiversity. A useful development was the creation of a new partnership between this project and the Conservation & Research Officer at DVCA, Norhaidah Maral, who is keen to collaborate to produce educational materials regarding the Bornean wild cats for use in their education programme at the DVCA.

5. Conclusion and lessons learned from the Pre-Project Grant

Briefly highlight the main conclusions (positive and negative) gained from the pre-project grant. Please also include any suggestions you may have for improving the impact of this funding scheme.

- Forged stronger collaborations with existing counterparts (ITBC, SWD & SEARRP) and established a new counterpart for environmental education activities.
- DV confirmed as ideal site for wild cat study, with recent confirmed sighting of all five species.
- DV confirmed as world class site to investigate effects of selective logging on wild cats.
- TWR confirmed as excellent site for investigation into effects of/ wild cat use of oil palm habitat.
- Hunting survey to be undertaken at TWR as opposed to DV.

The impact of this pre-project funding scheme could potentially be greater if a longer time period was available, especially for travel within countries where transport networks are not so developed.

Signed: No electronic signature available

Date: 23rd September 2005

Name / Title: Andrew Hearn and Joanna Ross, GCP Research Associates

Please restrict this report to no more than two pages in length and send the completed form to ECTF with your Stage 1 Application Form either via email to darwin-applications@ectf-ed.org.uk or by post to ECTF, Pentlands Science Park, Bush Loan, Edinburgh EH26 0PH.