Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	15/031
Project Title	Novel and practical conservation strategies following mining in Sierra Leone
Country(ies)	Sierra Leone
UK Organisation	Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
Collaborator(s)	Mind the Gap
	Environmental Foundation Africa (EFA) Njala University (NU)
	Fourah Bay College (FBC)
	Conservation International (CI)
Project Leader	Dr Jan Dick
Report date	Oct 2008
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 2
Project website	

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).

The primary activity in this 6 month reporting period was the establishment of additional experimental plots by SRL. This has been achieved although at a lower rate than initially proposed. The original proposal aimed to encourage additional compost and seedling production from the villagers in the second year of the project – this has not happened because there was over supply in the first year. The in country partners have continued to monitor the plots and write up the results in report format.

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.

A planting plan was agreed with SRL management in Nov 2007 which was in line with the proposal. This plan was not implemented. There are three primary reasons (i) the expense of the first years experiment was much higher than initially estimated at \$150,000 (\$37500/ha) (it had the additional benefit of testing a compost spread which was deemed too expensive during the planning phase in Nov 2006), (ii) change of personnel (both the head of Health, Safety and Environment and the General Manager of the company were replace) and (iii) the sinking of the second dredge on 25th July resulted in a major upheaval within the company. A total of only 4 plots (4*0.25 ha) were planted rather than the proposed 16. While this is disappointing I do not think it is a fatal blow to the project. The 2007 demonstration plots are proving to have been very successful in demonstrating the value of additional soil organic matter and we are in negotiations with the company regarding the final years planting plan. We are proposing to use the money budgeted for monitoring the 2008 plots to collect additional data from

the 2007 plots for a good quality peer reviewed paper in an international journal.

This project is recognised as innovative and such it is probably not surprising that we have not exactly followed the initial project plan. We are however, very much following the sprit of the initial proposal i.e. bringing together private and civil society sectors and government agencies in order to sustainably manage the restoration of the rutile mining area.

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

The issue of over supply and expense associated with the production of compost in the first year and the likely consequences was discussed with Pat Hardcastle during the project mid-term review in November 2007. The reduced planting plan for 2008 was discussed with Eilidh Young.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat:	yes, inNov 2008 (month/yr)
Changes to the project schedule/workplan:	no/yes, in(month/yr)

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

I would like to formally apologise for the mix up in the claiming of expenses from the Darwin Initiative fund. This project commenced at a time of major reorganisation in CEH and consequently there has been some lapse in procedures. I understand that these have all been settled now.

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 <u>planned</u> modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should <u>not</u> 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 <u>Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</u>. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. <u>Please state your</u> project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half <u>Year Report</u>