

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

Project Ref. No.	15034
Project Title	Red List Plants of Cameroon
Country(ies)	Cameroon
UK Organisation	Royal Botanic Garden, Kew
Collaborator(s)	National Herbarium, Cameroon, ERUDEF, ANCO, CRES, CWAF, MINEF-MINEP
Report date	8 Dec 2007
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	2
Project website	n/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).

The Project Implementation timetable gives one key milestone for this reporting period: 5,000 species assessed for Red data status. This has now been achieved thanks to the work of major project partner Dr Jean Michel Onana who has completed revising his ms of the threatened and endemic, near endemic and rare species of Cameroon, giving each an IUCN style conservation assessment. This ms is our basis for selecting taxa for georeferencing and databasing towards producing a Red data book. It has been found that the national checklist produced by Jean Paul Ghogue omits many if not most of the rarer and endemic species, being based almost entirely on regional floras and the Flore du cameroun, and so for this reason, has not proved as useful for providing Red Data taxa as envisaged when planning this project.

Bate Oben, Darwin project intern, in addition to his training, continued databasing and georeferencing specimens of taxa identified through the Onana ms, at times supported by help from summer Nuffield students Heather Dixon and Jasmine Hayes and volunteer Harry De Voil (map outputting). He is making steady progress with this aspect of the project. Aline Horwath, employed on a part-time basis on this aspect, terminated her contract in August to take up a PhD grant at the University of Cambridge. After reviewing project finances, we will look at replacing her, funds permitting.

George Gosline developed an automated method using Diva software for outputting species distributions direct from our species/specimen database as dot maps which can be used in our Red data book for the species accounts.

The second field visit, originally planned for Oct. 2007, was brought forward to May/June 2007 so as to keep the project ahead of the schedule. See section 2 below.

Dr Barthelemy Tchiengue, researcher of the National Herbarium of Cameroon was funded by Kew(Bentham-Moxon grant) to spend 1-26 July 07 at the Herbarium, RBG, Kew, organising and identifying specimens from the Fossimondi-Bechati area towards producing one of the three planned conservation checklists, and working on papers describing new and threatened species discovered in the course of our survey work.

Dr Jean Michel Onana, head of the National Herbarium of Cameroon, funded by the Darwin

grant, spent 19 Sept-28 Oct. 2007 at RBG, Kew. Having obtained the necessary export permits, he brought with him specimens from previous project surveys dating back to Feb. 06, thus enabling work to go ahead on the three conservation checklists planned for the project, and also allowing work to go ahead describing some of the new species from the Ebo forest.

Dr Onana also brought with him electronic records of the specimens databased and georeferenced at HNC as part of this project, so that they could be checked and merged with the data at Kew. On the whole, as expected, comparatively few reliably identified specimen records are available from HNC that are already not at K. Much of the work of the technician funded at HNC is concerned with improving the curation of the specimens, such as organising, mounting and incorporating specimens.

During his visit, Dr Onana revised his papers on the taxonomy and conservation of African, particularly Cameroonian species, of *Dacryodes* and *Cuviera*. He also updated his work on the endemic and threatened species of Cameroon using data gathered by the Darwin project at Kew (Bate Oben), and using new publications not available in Cameroon. He also identified specimens of several families from the Dom area towards producing one of the three planned project conservation checklists. During his visit both the MOU between HNC and Kew and the financial arrangements for the project were reviewed with the project leader.

Dr Onana and the project leader visited Sara Oldridge and Douglas Gibbs at BGCI in September in order to discuss the way forward with the IUCN proposed, BGCI co-ordinated 6-country red listing and Important plant areas project (this is referred to in the original Darwin project proposal). Dr Tchouto had been tasked by IUCN Cameroon co-ordinator Dr Bihini for this project and had been provided with data by Dr Onana, enabling him to produce a model report, according to Douglas Gibbs. Sadly GEF are no longer to fund this project, but Jane Smart of IUCN, the originator, has decided to lead fund raising instead. The project leader emphasised that, should funds be raised, a portion be made available to HNC, since it is already providing most of the data for the Cameroon part of the project.

Five papers on threatened and/or new species from Cameroon completed as part of the project were submitted for publication in Kew Bulletin during the period:

1. Submontane species of *Psychotria* with bacterial nodules (4 taxa)
2. *Leptonychia* (3 taxa)
3. *Vepris* (1 taxon)
4. *Deinbollia* (1 taxon)
5. *Allophyllus* (2 taxa)

On 23 June 2007, a symposium on the Cross-Sanaga Interval (SE Nigeria and western Cameroon) was promoted by members of the project and hosted at RBG, Kew under the aegis of the Nigerian Field Society. Four papers relating to aspects of the projects work in Cameroon were presented by Kew staff (Harvey, van der Burgt, Gosline and Cheek). Three of these papers have been submitted for publication in the proceedings.

Next steps:

1. resume contacts with NGO partners, declined in the absence of the project leader on sick leave.
2. draft sample species treatments for the Red data book and complete a formal book

proposal for RBG, Kew publishing dept.

3. review again, in Dec. 07 georeferencing and db progress against July 08 deadline target.
4. produce plan to complete preparedness for the three conserv. Checklists against Oct. 2008 target.

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.

Unexpected developments:

Six hours after arriving in Cameroon to begin the second survey with the National Herbarium of Cameroon in late May 07, the project leader was hospitalised and after a few days repatriated, having been shot through the knee in the course of being robbed of the survey funds. This delayed and reduced the time available for the survey, which was then led by George Gosline and Jean Michel Onana. Convalescence took several months, reducing project progress.

The survey was accompanied, and partly supported, by a film crew from French connexions Ltd, aiming to produce a documentary promoting the importance for conservation of the Bakossi mts of Cameroon. However, supporting the filming needs of this crew reduced survey outputs in terms of area covered and specimens produced. Overall however, a positive impact is expected since the documentary will educate both Cameroonians and Europeans on the importance of conservation.

These changes will not effect the budget. Since the project was moving ahead of the timetable in terms of milestones, it has not fallen behind the original timetable too far, and it is planned to catch up in the next

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

These changes have been discussed with the Darwin secretariat, the second on a more or less monthly basis until the decision was agreed.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no/yes, in .(month/yr)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no/yes, in...n/a.....(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? 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 by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**