

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2011)

Project Ref No	17-007
Project Title	Building natural resource monitoring capacity in Ethiopia's key Afro-montane ecosystems (CAMP- Community Afromontane Monitoring Project)
Country(ies)	Ethiopia
UK Organisation	The James Hutton Institute, formerly Macaulay Land Use Research Institute
Collaborator(s)	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
Project Leader	Justin Irvine
Report date	31 st October 2011
Report No.	HYR 3
Project website	www.macaulay.ac.uk/CAMP

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

The project activities have overall gone according to plan in that community monitoring activities continued in Guassa and are being replicated in Bale and Abune Yoseph. A project evaluation was conducted by independent consultant team who produced a report discussing the project achievements and future priority actions. It was recommended that sustainable CBNRM could be achieved but more time was needed in some of our case study areas, particularly Abune Yoseph. In response to this we applied for and been granted a no-cost extension with a new end date of 31st March 2011. This will allow the planned activities to be completed so that the projects successes will be more sustainable in the long run. ("Change Request" approved 14th October 2011).

The community monitoring activities in Guassa Community Conservation Area (GCCA) have become a centre of learning for partner government staff, project staff and communities in Bale and Abune Yoseph. For example, the community monitoring data collected in GCCA was analysed and fed back to the community and this approach, as well as other advances and lessons from Guassa, are being used to develop the community monitoring of natural resource use at the other sites. Substantial progress in recruiting and training community representatives, government personnel and project staff in order to implement resource monitoring has been made in Abune Yoseph and Bale mountains. In addition the project has provided field monitoring equipment for local monitors, a desktop computer for database management in Abune Yoseph and database management skills training for project staff (with the help of a South African colleagues. Data are currently being collected and stored in a database within the collaborating government office in Guassa and Abune Yoseph. The project officer, together with project staff and project partners regularly reviews and plans activities using a quarterly reporting and planning tool. Specific references to progress against the main project activities are listed below.

1. Understanding of the ecosystem and limits of sustainable natural resource use enhanced

1.1. Liaise with partner organisations and CBNRM projects to obtain information on natural resource use and resource users.

- Quarterly plans have been implemented in Guassa, Bale and Abune Yoseph with the support of partner organization (FZS and Woreda staff). Regular meetings were held with Woreda partner organization in Mehal Meda (Guassa) to clarify the role and responsibility of partner staff in implementing the quarterly plan.
- Agreement and terms of reference has been under development between Forum for Environment and FZS to collaboratively produce documentary film about Guassa Community Conservation Area and CBNRM. This was the subject of a "Change Request" which was approved on 9th September 2011
- Recruitment: The Amhara Environmental Protection office in Guassa recruited and assigned four natural resource and land management development agents in four of the peasant associations neighbouring the GCCA. These people have initially focussed on interpreting the monitoring data for the communities thereby reducing the reliance on the need for a Woreda level meeting before the community feedback can occur. This is on-going work and is not yet fully taken up at Kebele (peasant association) level. Completion of this training is an important part of project exit strategy that will leave a legacy where local government officers can process the monitoring data and

regularly present it to the local community to support local management decision making in the future.

1.2 Conduct participatory rapid assessment status of natural resource use for key resources in each target area.

- PRA: Four new peasant associations were selected in Bale for new PFM activity with strong support and involvement of the government staff in the area. Participatory rural appraisal studies have now been conducted in three out of the four of these new areas in order to understand the human-resource relationship and to assess feasibility of PFM in the localities.
- Participatory resource assessment: Communal forest resource baseline inventory completed in two new PFM sites in Bale: an essential data compilation step for management plan preparation.
- Participatory Rural Mapping: In Bale the boundary of community forest area agreed with community in three of the four peasant associations and more than 10,000 ha forest now falls under an agreement controlling forest land use and encroachment. In Abune Yoseph the boundary agreement has been completed in two of the four peasant associations in and discussion is on-going to finalized in the remaining two peasant associations.
- In the three newly started PFM sites in Bale a planning committee comprising representatives from different social groups has been elected by the community in order to facilitate community-government negotiation on the boundary of the communal forest, management plan preparation. The committee members (45 people in total) have been trained to facilitate the process of building consensus about long-term objectives and processes for the community conservation area.

2. Protected area management authorities and communities empowered to undertake natural resource monitoring

2.1. Establish structures for communities to monitor their own natural resources.

- In Guassa an additional 25 people have been selected and trained to collect monitoring data by the existing community monitoring team (CMT). These provide a resource to replace and back-up the current CMT thereby maintaining continuity. In the two peasant associations where PFM has been completed, community monitoring has been in place since April and the data are regularly used by the CBO leaders for management decisions such as deciding where to strengthen forest patrolling. The Biannual conservation council meeting was held in July and the data from monitoring were presented and used to underpin discussions and help develop a tangible action plan. The participants agreed on the areas they need to work on in order to strengthen the effectiveness of conservation management in the GCCA. A poster has been prepared in the local language which outlines the community based conservation activities and this has been distributed to government and village administration offices.
- In Abune Yoseph eight people were selected and trained for the CMT. Data collection is in progress since April. However due to the weak CBO structure and governance at the village level the data has not been used so far in the process of deciding management actions. Activities are in progress to strengthen the CBO formation and the project extension should ensure we have the time to facilitate this. The monitoring data booklet was published for Abune Yoseph and is now being used regularly.
- Progress in Bale was helped through a trip for 25 local community representatives to GCCA to learn about the successes and lessons from the development of the community monitoring work in the conservation area. Activities and data from community monitoring were presented at the district level in Bale in order to evaluate the progress and challenges of the two established PFMs. Participants agreed on an action plan to improve areas of weakness identified from the community monitoring data. Recently, CAMP has supported and facilitated the transfer of two community conservation forest areas (about 3000 ha) from government to community. This involved setting out the management rights, benefits, roles and responsibility of the community and the government. These agreements were signed by government representatives and community CBO leaders.

2. Provide training opportunities to project staff and partners.

- The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) developed for community protected area use has been presented at a national workshop and the template will be tested in all our project sites next year.
- Sixteen community scouts were trained in Abune Yoseph to strengthen the protection of the conservation area.
- One project staff member undertook a 7 day GIS training course and three project staff participated in 5 days Microsoft Access data-base management training
- Summer school opportunity was made available to two Woreda staff from Lasta and Menzgera Woredas and one CAMP Community Liaison Officer (CLO) in Bale. However the government staff did not manage to attend the summer school due to workload in their office.
- Forty-two community members in Bale undertook Participatory Forest Resource Assessment (PFRA) which involved two days training followed by one week carrying out participatory forest

assessment in their village areas.

3. Participatory resource monitoring developed under CBNRM for Guassa.

3.2. *Develop monitoring plan for community-based natural resource monitoring systems for target areas.*

- Community monitoring protocol has been updated based on feedback from users for both grassland and forests.

3.3. *Implement monitoring plan*

- Monthly field schedules for resource monitoring data collection were agreed and data collection in all the three sites.

4. Awareness of the (i) links between conservation of biodiversity and sustainable natural resource use and (ii) role of participatory natural resource monitoring under CBNRM raised nationally in Ethiopia and internationally.

- The project is under preparation to produce documentary film about Guassa Community Conservation Area and how the community monitoring supports CBNRM. A tender announcement was posted in a national newspaper and bidders submitted their proposal.

4.2 *Promote awareness of the project and its goals locally, nationally, and internationally.*

Website established and updated (<http://www.macaulay.ac.uk/CAMP>).

Project management

- Quarterly activity and financial reports have been prepared for project partners regularly.

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.

Unresolved Boundary conflicts in Bale. In one of the three Kebeles in Bale where community forest management is being set up, the process has been hindered due to boundary conflict between the kebeles in the neighbouring Woreda, as well as an unclear boundary for the adjacent controlled hunting area. Thus more effort was put in establishing four new PFM sites in Bale

In Abune Yoseph, the formation of a CBO is still slow in the initial area, although again recent progress has been made. There is overall consensus in Lasta woreda that a community managed area should be set up, but the exact area and associated regulations are still being discussed. Zonal level government input is being sought and support from the Amhara Region Bureau of Culture, Parks and Tourism. Encouragingly, a neighbouring woreda has requested that land that is contiguous with the montane area should be included in any CBNRM agreements, and although this might take a little longer to set up, given that 2 administrative areas are involved, we believe that the benefit of the whole area being under one management CBO is great and thus will seek this outcome.

Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? Yes, see below.

Discussed with LTS: no. in..... (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted:

Since the last report, two change requests have been applied for and approved.

1. A no-cost extension of the project end date to March 2013 in order to allow sufficient progress so that the project achievements are sustainable in the long run (approved 14th October 2011)
2. Forum for Environment and FZS to collaboratively produce documentary film about Guassa CCA. (Approved on 9th September 2011)

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes in Sept & Oct 2011

3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No

If yes, and you wish to request a carry forward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carryforward request: £0

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

None

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 LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.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: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**