

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	17-017
Project Title	Innovative Governance Models for Marine Protected Area Management in Ecuador
Country(ies)	Ecuador
UK Organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Collaborator(s)	Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano
Project Leader	Robert Bensted-Smith
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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).

Activities 0 and M, workplan and monitoring system: The first year workplan was prepared and monitoring system set up, although it has taken more time than originally envisaged to do the detailed description of methodologies for measuring indicators and measurement of baseline values.

Activities 1.1-1.6, participatory governance models: The project has facilitated a series of meetings at Machalilla National Park (MNP) and Galera San Francisco Marine Reserve (GSFMR) of the protected area management committees and their various sub-groups. In MNP the management committee's workplan was approved somewhat ahead of schedule and they achieved one of their priorities, completing signature by relevant ministries of an inter-institutional cooperation agreement and defining a strategy for its implementation (Activity 1.2). In GSFMR local discussions are focused on management plan preparation and the decree defining the role of the management committee. They are a little behind schedule in producing the draft decree and chapter on governance in the management plan. The governance training course (Activity 1.5) is being designed and will be implemented in Nov/Dec.

Activities 2.1-2.7, resource management strategies: These activities are scheduled to start in the third quarter. There have already been preliminary discussions, in which local fishers identified Spondylus as one of the priority resources for protection and management.

Activities 3.1-3.2, national MPA Sub-system (MPAS) framework: FFLA/FFI participated in two local meetings gathering inputs for design of the MPAS, and two smaller meetings with consultants advising the Ministry of Environment (MoE), financed by CAF, the Andean development bank. FFLA subsequently provided written recommendations on governance to the consultants, almost all of which was incorporated into their final report. The project has also been liaising with a parallel consultancy for MoE, financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The poor coordination within the government on this topic is a disadvantage but the project is contributing ideas on participatory governance at all opportunities. Participation by FFLA in a technical meeting of the South Pacific Permanent Commission (CPPS, the inter-governmental Regional Seas body spanning Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Panama) led to agreement on (i) the meaning of governance in the context of MPA's, (ii) the need to highlight governance issues in official documents about MPA's and (iii) the integration of indicators of governance into MPA effectiveness evaluations. Specific indicators were worked on in a subsequent technical workshop, but are not complete.

Activities 4.1-4.5, national and international dissemination: The CPPS meetings provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about the initial work and plans of the DI project in the region. After considering the major themes and audiences expected at the International Marine Conservation Congress held in Washington DC in May 2009, FFI and FFLA decided not to invest in participation there but instead to use seek more targeted dissemination opportunities through conferences later in the project.

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.

Institutional context: Early in 2009, shortly before the project started, the Ministry of Environment established a new Sub-secretariat for Marine and Coastal Management (SMCM), with responsibilities that include overseeing all MPA's and development of the MPA Sub-system. This is a favourable change for the project. The new Sub-Secretary has requested the support of FFLA/FFI across the programme, especially on issues of governance and strengthening stakeholder groups.

Activity 1.1: The management planning at GSFMR is progressing but lacks the official Ministry of Environment approval of the required "terms of reference" for this task. This is impeding completion and approval of the products under this activity and hence holding back associated capacity building. We are helping the local stakeholders to press the Ministry on this issue, as well as seeking the intervention of the new Sub-secretariat, and expect that it will be solved before the end of 2009.

Activities 1.3, 1.5: - Routine processes, such as the operation of the MNP management committee, were disrupted during the campaigning for the June 2009 national and local elections. The elections designated new local authorities (county, parish and provincial government), who took office in August. Since these authorities are important participants in the multisectoral platform for MPA's, the MNP management committee itself conducted new internal elections at the end of August, which produced new leadership. While all this is normal practice, it has delayed some activities of the MNP management committee.

The third site: The elections also produced changes in the Guayaquil Municipality, with the consequence that the Municipality is no longer a driving force behind the establishment of El Morro MPA. The role of the Municipality had been a distinctive feature of El Morro and was one of the main reasons for choosing it as the third pilot site of the DI project, where we would start working in the second semester. Without that feature, the El Morro MPA governance model will not differ much from that of GSFMR. In a parallel development, the SMCM has requested FFLA and FFI to support the development of new governance approaches, based on the experiences of authorising local communities to manage and use areas of mangrove. Having assessed the options, from the point of view of the value and success of the DI project, we will be writing to the DI Secretariat to propose a change of site from El Morro to a community-managed mangrove area.

International dissemination: As mentioned above, we decided to invest our DI resources for international dissemination through conferences in alternative fora during 2010/11, rather than in the congress in May 2009. We will be writing to the DI Secretariat about the change and the proposed alternatives.

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

No. The two issues needing discussion are the third site and the international dissemination fora. We are currently working out our specific proposals regarding these, and will be writing to the Secretariat in November about them.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: Not yet (expected November 2009)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: Not yet

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. 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**