

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

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| Project Ref No | 18-009 |
| Project Title | Saving the Madagascar Pochard: the world's most endangered duck |
| Country(ies) | Madagascar |
| UK Organisation | Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust |
| Collaborator(s) | Durrell – Madagascar, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, The Peregrine Fund, Asity Madagascar and Le Ministère de L'Environnement et Forêts (Government of Madagascar). |
| Project Leader | H Glyn Young |
| Report date | 31 st October 2013 |
| Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4) | HYR4 |
| Project website | In preparation |

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 original project end date was 31st March 2013. However, because of an underspend of £39,264 from Y1, Darwin Initiative permitted the project an extension into Y4. The underspend was originally intended for extraction of further Madagascar pochard eggs but this was not possible during the life of this project for local reasons. The Project requested a change of use for the underspend on 29th August 2013 and this was granted. Transferred funds were requested for:

- 1) A Species Action Planning workshop to be held in Antananarivo. This will be a 3-day workshop with UK experts attending, together with experts based in Madagascar and local partners, government and community stakeholders. The estimated cost of the workshop is £20,559;
- 2) A second aviary incorporating a public display containing non-breeding pochards to be based at the regional government headquarters, close to the pochard breeding centre in Antsohihy. The estimated cost of the aviary is £18,650.

The workshop will be held under IUCN guidelines 3-6 December 2013 in Antananarivo with David Mallon (IUCN) as lead facilitator. A training session in species action planning will run alongside the workshop (on 2nd December) with the separate goal of building capacity within Madagascar to run planning processes.

There has been little activity during the period of this report at the Antsohihy captive-breeding facility as, following a successful breeding season (January-March), the birds have been separated into single-sex groups to prevent, temporarily, any further breeding. All 20 birds bred in 2013 (13 males and 7 females) fledged; however, one died in October. All (18) 2011-2012 bred birds continue to thrive. Two new blocks for rearing young birds (12 enclosures in two blocks 17 x 6m, each with a concrete pond 2.35 x 2.20 x 0.60m) were completed on 31st July.

Andy Bamford, Felix Razafindrajaon and their team have continued to closely monitor the wild population at Bemanevika. Lake Sofia, has been chosen for reintroduction trials from 2014. Lake Sofia is a large site with a well-established human population at this wetland and will need extensive restoration. The Species Action Planning Workshop in December will bring together stakeholders at Lake Sofia in order to establish restoration needs at the lake and begin to establish co-operation between the Project and stakeholders. Funding for establishing the sustainable management of Lake Sofia is being actively sought.

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.

Genetic analysis of the founder birds in the captive population has still not yet been possible. However, a further set of samples collected in 2013 was exported to UK successfully in September.

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

Application for transfer of funds (£39,264) from Y3 to a Y4 submitted on 31st October 2012. A change of use for these funds was submitted on 29th August and granted. Changes are outlined in Box 1.

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

Formal change request submitted: Yes, in August 2013

Received confirmation of change acceptance: Yes in September 2013

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 carryforward 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:

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

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**