

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2011)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	18-013
<b>Project Title</b>	Building capacity for wild felid conservation in China
<b>Country(ies)</b>	China
<b>UK Organisation</b>	WildCRU, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Beijing Forestry University
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Dr Philip Riordan</i>
<b>Report date</b>	<i>31<sup>st</sup> October 2011</i>
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	<i>HYR2</i>
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.chinacats.org">www.chinacats.org</a> ; <a href="http://www.chinacats.org.cn">www.chinacats.org.cn</a> ; <a href="http://www.wildcru.org">www.wildcru.org</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).**

### **2.3 Initiate and renew contacts with individuals to be brought into the CC network**

Both Shi Kun and Philip Riordan are maintaining our existing excellent links with people and organisations in Pakistan, Mongolia, Russia, Bhutan and Nepal.

The Cat Specialist Group of China (CSGC) continues to grow, with approximately 300 members across China. We are pleased to report that the Zoological Society of China will absorb the CSGC into their organisation and will offer secretariat functions. The CSGC will continue to act as our primary CC Network, with Dr Shi Kun elected as Secretary to the group and Dr Philip Riordan being given special International Liaison status. We are currently formalising links to the IUCN Cat Specialist Group and will organise events to facilitate greater exchange of ideas into and out of China. Whilst the CSGC forms a largely academic and higher-level management role in disseminating information and facilitating idea transference, we have also established a QQ group within China for trainees to maintain contacts with members of their course and develop new contacts with trainees from other regional centres. QQ is a web-based social media tool within China that acts in a similar way to Facebook, which does not function in China.

Further international links have been developed strengthened by PR, including UN CBD, IUCN, CI, WCS, Panthera, Earthwatch. Further linkages are being made within the European Union, with PR being invited to present our work to forestry managers in Germany and at attend a Sino-German workshop aimed at developing sustainable forest management in China. The support of the Darwin Initiative has been highlighted on all occasions.

### **4.1 Training within RCs – classroom and field-based**

During the last six months we have carried out training sessions in four of our Regional Centres: Jiangxi (SE China); Guangxi (S China); Hubei (Central China) and Xinjiang (NW China). During this period, 233 people have received training through this project, which exceeds our expectations. Training sessions have included field and class based options, providing field workers with practical skills, such as camera trapping and basic survey design and setup. We have also provided class-based training sessions for provincial managers in Jiangxi and Hubei, teaching survey design and management skills and basic data management and presentation.

### **4.2 Develop monitoring plans within RC as part of training activities**

Forestry Administration departments in SE China (Jiangxi and Fujian), SW China (Yunnan and Guangxi) and NW China (Sichuan, Xinjiang and Gansu) are currently developing biodiversity monitoring plans following protocols developing out our training programme, with subsequent follow-up meetings with key officials. Our team continue to liaise closely with provincial staff developing monitoring programmes and offer assistance as needed.

We are also working closely with the State Forestry Administration's Protected Areas Management Department, headed by Mr Mung Sha. He has expressed a desire to improve PA management and ensure that skills are delivered to the priority areas. In this regard, we are discussing the development of a Protected Areas Skills Centre within the SFA. This unit would be based on and continue the work started by our Darwin project and would constitute a significant legacy for the project, in addition to our other developments such as the Cat Specialist Group.

### **4.3 Monitoring programmes implemented within each RC**

This work is at an early stage, but we are confident that it is continuing in accordance with our timetable.

### **4.4 Workshop assessments of monitoring progress and trouble-shooting**

The troubleshooting is on-going, as part of post-training follow up activities, including correspondence through our

QQ group. Workshops for assessment are to be timetabled during the latter half of this year and into next year.

#### 5.1 Analysis of wild felid populations from monitoring data

This work is at an early stage as monitoring programmes become established.

#### 5.4 Maintaining and updating online databases

Training is being given to high-level management staff in SFA for data management. SFA will hold primary databases for PAs and will update these from quarterly reporting from Provinces. Data are already being generated from SE and SW RCs, which are being used for training purposes at this stage.

### 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.

The enthusiasm shown for our training programmes in particular has presented unforeseen challenges. Most notably is often difficult stratification of attendees into suitable classes. Where basic field skills sessions have been held, we initially found a number of more senior managerial staff also wishing to attend along with field workers. We quickly identified a concern among some managers that their staff would learn skills that they themselves were unaware of, leading to some anxiety. We are therefore providing initial training in provinces to middle strata of management to give them sufficient understanding of the techniques being deployed in the field and allow them to more effectively manage their operations. Some managers wish to demonstrate their superiority and we understand the cultural significance of leadership roles in China. We anticipated making adjustments to the manner in which we deliver training in response to local conditions and species, and we also find ourselves ever more mindful of the local leaderships structures and the personalities of key people. We are retain sufficient flexibility within the project to allow us to develop close working relationships with local teams and we are very pleased with the support we have gain through our approach.

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

No.

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

Formal change request submitted:    no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

Received confirmation of change acceptance                      no/yes in.....(month/yr)

### 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?

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 LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto: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**