



Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No	19-016
Project Title	Leveraging markets to conserve mangrove biodiversity and alleviate poverty in Madagascar
Country(ies)	Madagascar
Lead Organisation	Blue Ventures Conservation
Collaborator(s)	
Project Leader	<i>Dr. Alasdair Harris</i>
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	<i>31 October 2014, HYR3</i>
Project website	http://www.blueventures.org/conservation/blue-forests.html

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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 to end September).

Activity 1.1 Consultation & project development with the communities so as to fulfil the conditions of gaining their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for the implementation of a forest carbon project

- International Mangrove Day (26 July 2014) was celebrated with community members of the Bay of Assassins (BOA) and Ambaro Ambanja Bay (AAB) project sites with regional stakeholders in Toliara, Andavadoaka, and Ambanja.
- FPIC campaigns to explain the full implications of carbon projects to local communities are underway at both sites: a first session is being completed in AAB in 22 villages of the VCS project area; 3 rounds of FPIC sessions were held in BOA in 10 villages of the Plan Vivo project area, where a first vote showed interest in project participation by communities.
- A guideline for FPIC has also been developed to share methodologies internally across sites and with local partners; training in these methods was conducted for WWF staff in May 2014.

Activity 1.2 Detailed analyses of land tenure and use rights of the potential mangrove areas with both the government cadastral services and the local communities; and resolution of conflicts

- In AAB the Plan Local d' Occupation du Foncier (PLOF) will be compared with project area boundary at the end of 2014. This activity couldn't be completed before due to delays in obtaining information necessary to delineate the future VCS project area. Conflict resolution with regional and national authorities will be addressed during the first quarter of 2015.
- For BOA, a notice requesting tenure claims in the Plan Vivo project area is currently being advertised at the Befandefa commune level, but no officially-registered private properties exist within the BOA project area. It is still planned to establish use rights and conflict resolution processes through the mechanisms which are already underway for the protected area.

Activity 1.3 Establishment of legal user and carbon rights for community members participating in the project

- In AAB the evaluation of the three expired management transfers by Regional Forest services (DREEF) occurred in May 2014 and yielded the extension of their contracts for another 3 years, under the condition that a management plan requiring a forest inventory was provided to the regional forestry services. A 10 year period wasn't granted by the DREEF due to the inefficiency of management transfers and lack of motivation of community members prior to the project start. This activity will be completed by the end of the project in the pilot site.
- We are planning to address the issue of legal ownership over carbon by communities (required by Plan Vivo projects, and not recognised in the protected areas convention or Malagasy law), through consultation with national and regional authorities. The Direction Générale des Forêts (DGF) has already been consulted, the Système d'Aires Protégées de Madagascar (SAPM) will be consulted

this year and an agreement established in early 2015.

Activity 2.1 Establishment of community management plans, zonings and sustainable harvest quotas

- In AAB our team has been working since June to officially validate the mangrove zoning established through Google Earth by physically marking zones with local forest services, and develop a forest inventory protocol, which will also allow for defining sustainable harvest quota. The inventory, which builds on data collected through the carbon stock assessment and involves data collection on an additional 92 plots, started in October and is expected to continue until the end of 2014. Quotas will be annexed to management contracts to ensure their legality.
- Participatory mapping data has been collated for the ten communities of the BOA, and two missions have been conducted to establish forest zoning areas, in collaboration with the Velondriake Committee.

Activity 2.3 Mangrove planting and maintenance of seedlings by female teams

- Our strategy in AAB has focused on transferring knowledge developed by the three women associations in Antetetzambato village to Ambalahonko commune. Two exchange trips were carried out between women associations of these localities in September 2014 on reforestation techniques for Rhizophoraceae species; a third one is planned in January 2014 in Antetetzambato for an *Avicennia marina* nursery. As a result, progress on reforestation has been limited since May 2014, with 0.23 ha of *Avicennia marina* planted in Antetetzambato using the community nursery seedlings, and 1.47 ha of Rhizophora and Ceriops reforested through direct transplantation in Ambalahonko. However, it is expected that our capacity development program will allow for the reforestation and monitoring of 9 ha of mangrove by the end of the project.
- A Rhizophoraceae plantation was established in the BOA with the Velondriake Committee, and first reforestation events as part of the Plan Vivo project will occur in November 2014. To ensure a sustainable approach, we are promoting a voluntary reforestation programme, which is led by youth clubs in communities with Plan Vivos.
- An exchange trip was conducted for community members of the BOA with the management and reforestation committees of Mamelon Honko with our partner organisation Honko Mangrove Conservation and Education in July 2014.

Activity 3.1 Training of the community participants in sustainable harvesting and improved management; initial timber harvesting according to sustainable quotas and planned rotations

- In AAB all five CLBs have been trained to use the tax toolkit from May to June 2014. The forest inventory necessary to establish sustainable harvest quotas started in October 2014 and it is expected that this activity will be achieved by the end of the project.
- Timber use for building was assessed in BOA in early September 2014 through inventories of mangrove wood extraction at the village-level, and alternative timber plantation areas have been established through zoning exercises.

Activity 3.2 Alternative timber plantations to reduce mangrove extraction for timber and charcoal

- In AAB a study carried out in July-August 2014, assessed small-holders' preference for fuelwood and timber species in the project area and identified 17 species adapted to local conditions that could replace mangrove as a charcoal source while providing other co-benefits (fertilisation, soil conservation, fodder, beekeeping etc.). Following that step, five producers were identified in one village to set up a multi-functional plantation trial and a community nursery established in October 2014. Each producer will raise and plant 250 seedlings of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and 250 of *Acacia mangium*, as well as with 100 seedlings of indigenous and local timber species selected by them such as Fanaponga (*Albizia polyphylla*).
- In BOA, a review is currently underway by our project team, who plan to work with the NGO Ho Avy (with experience in reforestation in southwest Madagascar) and the local Direction des Ecologie, Environnement, et Forêt (DREEF) to identify appropriate species for alternative wood plantations in this arid region.

Activity 4.1 Development of a measurement & monitoring plan which meets the requirements of the selected approved methodology for the generation of carbon offsets

- We are currently collating all the methodologies used to establish carbon baselines in our project sites that will meet the VCS Project Standards v.3.0 and Plan Vivo Foundation Standards, 2013. A draft monitoring methodology comprising three levels (forest inventory, community carbon inventory and scientist carbon inventory) has been established.

Activity 4.2 Creation & training of female monitoring teams in the use of appropriate forest inventories, carbon stock measurements and monitoring protocols

- In AAB, carbon stock inventory trainings have been delayed to April-May 2015 due to time constraints, as our carbon inventory technicians are occupied with the forest inventory this year. In place of carbon monitoring, at least 8 women will be trained to carry out forest inventories by the end of the year.
- In BOA, a second round of community carbon monitoring training will take place in November 2014 and include at least ten more women from other target villages (20 total), using co-trainers from previous carbon monitoring sessions conducted in the BOA.

Activity 4.2 Piloting collection of community forest monitoring data using smartphones

- Forms have been developed in ODK format, and will be used during community monitoring in BOA in November 2014.

Activity 4.3 Stock measurements, continuous monitoring and analysis of the data; integration into management plans; and continued technical support & quality control by BV scientists

- AAB carbon stocks data are in the process of being re-analyzed by a student from Imperial College London. The carbon stock monitoring campaign was postponed to April-May 2015, at the same time as the female monitoring team trainings, due to the allocation of carbon technicians on the mangrove forest inventory.
- A community carbon database for 2013 has been established and analysed for BOA, although soil collected is still undergoing analysis. Once soil is analysed we will have our first estimates of carbon and be able to present this to community members.
- Further analysis will be conducted on community carbon data collected in November 2014 in the BOA. These will be included in the first monitoring report for Plan Vivo which is expected for release in early-2015.

Activity 5.1. Consultation with the government & Designated National Authority (DNA) in the project development; gaining of DNA support for the project

- In BOA, consultations at the national level include a meeting with the DGF and regional consultation was held in July 2013. A follow-up regional consultation was held in September 2014 with the regional DREEF regarding the Plan Vivo project.

Activity 5.2. Production of a Project Idea Note (PIN) and business plan based on actual monitoring; submission to investors / funders

- In AAB, the release of the draft PIN is expected in late-October 2014.
- A draft PIN has been completed for the BOA project and has been submitted to the Plan Vivo Foundation. We plan to update this PIN with the results of the latest community forest zoning exercises, and the PIN will be evaluated by the Plan Vivo Foundation in late-2014.

Activity 5.3 Production of monitoring reports and a draft project design document

- Planning has been established to prepare a draft PDD for AAB by May 2015
 - The final PIN released in January 2015 will be used to raise funding so as to implement the leakage management activities, project carbon monitoring, and support completion of the PDD.
 - Monitoring activities taking place between October and December 2014 will be synthesized and presented in the first Plan Vivo monitoring report in early-2015, pending registration of the BOA project by the Plan Vivo Foundation.
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2a. 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.

A revised Gantt chart has been submitted as supplementary material in the response to feedback given on the Annual Report Review.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

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 can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**