

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	19-017
<b>Project Title</b>	Building capacity for participatory, ecosystem-based marine conservation in Central America
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	CoopeSoliDar R.L., FUNDENIC, RECOTURH, FFLA
<b>Project Leader</b>	Robert Bensted-Smith
<b>Report date and number (eg HYR3)</b>	31 October 2013; HYR2
<b>Project website</b>	N/A

## **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).**

### Output 1:

Following the change of project site in Costa Rica to Cabo Blanco Strict Nature Reserve good progress has been made on building a participatory process for marine management and governance. A joint work plan and code of ethics have been produced with community stakeholders, who have increasing government support for their proposal for a community protected area. Project interventions have also increased the involvement of local government in marine governance and supported an inventory of fishing boats and licenses in the area.

In Honduras, despite the agreement for expanding the Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge (CSWR) being held up in the final stage of approval by the National Congress, the project has carried out activities to raise local awareness of the proposed expansion and prepare for it, while forming a Stakeholder Working Group to liaise with the MPA co-manager, FUCSA. The project has supported strengthening of the fishing cooperative, APROCUS, identification and licensing of fishermen and local fishermen's participation in surveillance and reporting, as planned.

In Nicaragua, FUNDENIC has engaged with the National Assembly over the past six months to move the process of MPA designation forward, while the project introduces locally the idea of a collaborative governance structure for La Anciana and the wider "Coral Corridor" area.

### Output 2:

Training was carried out on livelihoods activities as well as activities to strengthen the social resilience and network of communities around Cabo Blanco, Costa Rica. In Honduras RECOTURH is working with communities to implement their strategic development plan, beginning with 16 small project plans. In Nicaragua the project supported a large workshop for the fishing and tourism sectors on livelihood strategies and have continued in their delivery of training for responsible tourism in the region.

### Output 3:

In Costa Rica, participatory mapping of the territorial sea was carried out with communities, who have thus defined a proposed 'Marine Area for Community Benefit'. In Honduras, the demarcation of the reserve has begun, in anticipation of the official expansion, and maps have been produced to aid zoning and other management decisions. A Biological Monitoring Working Group was set up to coordinate monitoring and research across the Honduran Caribbean. To address external threats to the MPA, RECOTURH has fostered a close collaboration with CURLA-UNAH around a regional project on climate resilience and food security, in which one of the target areas is a community bordering the Cuero y Salado.

**Output 4:**

In Costa Rica the project has provided support to the national protected areas system (SINAC) and local government bodies in participatory marine governance, is strengthening the network of Responsible Fishing Areas and took fishers from the project site (Cabuya) to a functioning Responsible Fishing Area at Tárcoles. In Honduras the project provided training to APROCUS members, to improve their organisational capacity, operational management and financial sustainability. In Nicaragua, in response to use of destructive fishing techniques, the project carried out training events to build understanding of around 160 fishers about sustainable fishing.

**Output 5:**

CoopeSoliDar R.L. held a planning workshop for their national communications on participatory marine governance, and has started implementing the resulting strategy. Activities to promote awareness about artisanal fishers, craftspeople and the work of CoopeSoliDar R.L. were organized during National Parks Day. In Honduras, communication activities showcased the project and associated activities of RECOTURH and disseminated information on climate change, ecosystem services and the new Fisheries law. The FAO voluntary guidelines on sustainable small-scale fishing were translated from Spanish to Garifuna. FUNDENIC has carried out outreach using a variety of media sources, including a campaign about the perils of dynamite fishing and benefits of responsible seafood consumption. Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano prepared a presentation on the project for the IMPAC conference in Oct 2013.

**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.**

In Nicaragua, collaboration with local mayors to register fishermen has moved more slowly than anticipated, so the project is working to understand and overcome the barriers to action. We are also tracking the discussion in Nicaragua of a proposal to construct an inter-oceanic canal, which, in the unlikely event that it proceeds, would have major social and environmental implications for the southern Pacific coast. In Honduras, where the proposal for MPA expansion moved unexpectedly quickly then got held up in the final stage of approval (see previous annual report), the continuing delay influences the specific activities of the project but is not yet a hindrance to our work with the local communities. An unexpected development has been the formation of a new regional structure, which will replace the existing inter-institutional committee for the conservation of marine and coastal resources in the Honduran Caribbean. Notwithstanding the government's intention, there is a risk that this change will hinder coordination of national marine and coastal management. In Costa Rica, the change of project site has proved very positive, although even here there are elements of conflict around issues of economic development and cultural values. The project is accelerating its activities in order to consolidate the community-led proposal before the environment for trying novel approaches is affected by elections scheduled for 2014. Overall, we do not currently anticipate that any of these issues will affect the project timetable or budget.

**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:	No (except in annual report)
Formal change request submitted:	No (one personnel change request coming)
Received confirmation of change acceptance	No

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

Yes  No

**3b. If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible through the formal Change Request process.** However, it would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication now of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carry-forward 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?**

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 through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report 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**