



Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No	19-021
Project Title	Values and Valuation: New Approaches to Conservation in Mongolia
Country(ies)	Mongolia
Lead Organisation	University of Leicester (UOL)
Collaborator(s)	UK: Plan Vivo/ Bioclimate; (plus International Wildlife Consultants (IWC) - not receiving Darwin funds). Mongolia: Mongolian Society for Rangeland Management (MSRM); Mongolian State University of Agriculture; Centre for Ecosystem Studies, Mongolian Academy of Agricultural Sciences; Mongolian Nature Protection Civil Movement Coalition, Zoological Society of London (ZSL); (Mongolian Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism –now Ministry of Nature, Environment and Green Development – not receiving Darwin funds).
Project Leader	Dr Caroline Upton
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	30 October 2014 (HYR3)
Project website	http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/geography/research/projects/darwin/values-and-valuation

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).

Since the second Annual Report in March 2014, the following Activities have been completed in accordance with the timetable (Section 18 of Project Document):

(Activities 1.1-1.4 completed previously). **Activity 1.5:** SOLVES analysis completed. Data also fed into IDRISI model as part of analysis and ground truthing of datasets. Results of analysis are now being used to inform presentations and articles in preparation (see Activities 3.7 & 4.5, below).

(Activities 2.1 & 2.2 completed previously).

Activity 2.3: Technical specification refined and developed further since last report, in line with the new Plan Vivo (PV) standard. Although issued in 2012, this new standard has only been declared final by PV in late 2013. Ours is the first project to go through the new standard. PV are still working out some details internally, which has delayed completion of our work slightly. Nonetheless, the technical specification is expected to be approved through the Project Design Document (PDD) and Validation Report (Activity 2.5), as originally proposed.

Activity 2.4: to follow on final approval of Activity 2.3.

Activity 2.5: PDD drafted and awaiting approval. As highlighted above, some slight delays have been encountered as PV have worked out how to put the new standard into practice and in relation to our novel tripartite approach (biodiversity, carbon, livelihoods/ well-being). All parties have been very active in resolving these issues through face to face & skype meetings & discussions. A validation reviewer has been appointed and is ready to evaluate activities in the field. **Activity 2.6** will follow directly. Work is ongoing now to promote and market forthcoming certificates.

Activity 2.7: ongoing between now and end of project, as per timetable.

Activity 2.8: ongoing between now and end of project, as per timetable.

(Activities 3.1 -3.4 completed previously).

Activities 3.5 & 3.6: to be completed between now and end of project, as per timetable.

Activity 3.7: ongoing between now and end of project, as per timetable (see Activity 4.5 also).

Activity 4.1: Initial training completed, as previously reported. Training ongoing in Year 3, as per original timetable.

Activity 4.2: Ongoing throughout project. In the last 6 months, Darwin project work has been presented to an invited audience including government officials in Ulaanbaatar, and is also feeding into a policy briefing (see Activity 4.5). Preparations are in hand for a) a training event and b) end of project workshop.

Activity 4.3: ongoing between now and end of project, as per timetable

Activity 4.4: Materials developed for undergraduate and Master's students at the Mongolian State University of Agriculture (see letter attached). We are also discussing links with the National University of Mongolia, in relation to work being undertaken there around ES and mining-related impacts.

Activity 4.5: ongoing between now and end of project, as per timetable. Specifically, since March 2014, the PI has presented the Darwin work at the conference *'Science and Policy Futures in the Gobi Rangelands'* (Ulaanbaatar, September 2014), to an invited audience of academics and policy makers. The PI was also interviewed for local TV on the basis of this presentation. A policy brief for government, NGOs and donors has just been finalised on the basis of this conference. An invited keynote presentation was also given at the Centre for Landscape and Climate Research, University of Leicester annual conference (October 2014). MSRM staff presented the work at the 5th Japan-Korea-China Grassland conference, Changchun China 22-24 August 2014.

An article is forthcoming in the journal *Inner Asia: 'Communities, Culture and Commodification: Mongolia's New Resource Politics'*. An invited book chapter has been submitted for publication in early 2015: *'Contesting development: Pastoralism, mining and environmental politics in Mongolia'*, as part of an edited book on grassroots environmental governance and development, drawing on case studies from around the world and commissioned by the leading political ecologist, Professor Michael Watts. Further publications are currently in preparation. A paper has been submitted for presentation as part of a panel on cultural ecosystem services at the European Society for Ecological Economics in Leeds in June 2015 (*'Trials, tribulations and transformations: cultural ecosystem services and pastoral futures in Mongolia'*). A training event/ workshop for local and national government officials and policy makers and PES ambassador herders is being planned in Ulaanbaatar for January 2015, as well as the end of project workshop in March 2015.

In addition to the above scheduled project activities, the PI and team are exploring options for further embedding the Plan Vivo approach into longer term government conservation planning and funding through linking to evolving consultations and funding streams for the expansion of the Local Protected Areas (LPAs) network in Mongolia. These will help to address concerns over sustainability of income from C certificates under PV, raised in the response to AR2. These discussions are proceeding through ZSL and also the informal advisor for our Darwin project, Dr Andrew Laurie, who is involved in this consultation process. We are seeking to determine whether any of the four Plan Vivo sites may be eligible for and benefit from such a designation, and where feasible to advance such an agenda within the remaining duration of the project, thus linking directly to Mongolia's national conservation agenda and priorities, including under CBD.

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.

The following issues have arisen over the last 6 months:

i) The UK environmental economist Dr Roy Bradshaw, has unfortunately had a reoccurrence of the serious illness, which affected his work early in the project. He has continued to undertake some remote working with the Mongolian economist, Professor Nyamaa Nyamsuren, but has been unable to work at full capacity. As the remaining environmental economics work was primarily related to the Conjoint Analysis and its integration with other aspects of the ES modelling and valuation under Activity 1.5, Professor Nyamaa Nyamsuren has successfully taken the lead on this. This has not necessitated any changes to the overall project, but given the reallocation of workload, as PI I will be submitting a change request for £2500 of Roy Bradshaw's budget for Year 3 to go to Nyamaa Nyamsuren – with the full agreement of both parties.

ii) As the new Plan Vivo standard has only recently been finalised, PV are still undergoing some internal consultations as to how to apply aspects of this. As ours is the first project to go through under the new standard, and specifically in relation to putting into practice a tripartite approach (carbon, biodiversity and livelihoods), we have experienced some delays while PV discuss and resolve issues arising internally. This has been outside our control. As a result, the completion of Activities 2.3-2.6 has been held back slightly. We are expecting to have the PDD finalised and approved shortly, which will trigger monitoring under Activity 2.4, validation and issuing of carbon certificates (Activities 2.5, 2.6). These should still be completed within the overall project timeframe.

iii) Since April 2014 Professor Undarmaa Jamsran has experienced a reoccurrence of the personal circumstances and illness which temporarily hindered her full engagement with the project in late 2013 (as reported in AR2). In conjunction with Plan Vivo issues, this has also hindered completion of the technical specification (Activity 2.3). In order to progress this as quickly as possible, particularly in relation to the technical carbon modelling, the PI has been in discussions with Dr Andreas Wilkes, who has previously worked with MSRM and on carbon modelling in the region. He is ready to validate and run C models adjusted for local parameters as the final step in the technical specification. Again, this will not necessitate any changes to the overall project, but some reallocation of budgets within the overall project budget, as set out below.

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 - being submitted now.
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. (short ZSL report attached as requested)
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**