

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

Project Ref No	20-025
Project Title	Scaling Up biodiversity Conservation and Ecological Connectivity in Caribbean Guatemala
Country(ies)	Guatemala
Organisation	Fundacion para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservacion –FUNDAECO-
Collaborator(s)	-----
Project Leader	<i>Byron Villeda</i>
Report date	<i>December 2013</i>
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR 1</i>
Project website	<i>FUNDAECO website www.fundaeco.org.gt</i>

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).

Output 1: Through GIS technology, field monitoring and data analysis, high priority forest fragments for biodiversity conservation, ecological connectivity and environmental services provision have been identified across Caribbean Guatemala, and are informing protected area management and habitat protection decisions.

The identification of high priority forest fragments for biodiversity conservation, ecological connectivity and environmental services provision is based on a combined analysis that includes several criteria. During this period we have progress in the preparation analysis of three analysis that will be crossed when completed: forest cover, biodiversity using birds and amphibians as indicators, and threats and anthropic influence.

- Forest cover ; see annex 1.
- Threats to the forest and possible actions for conservation; see annex 2
- Initial baseline of amphibians as indicator taxa. See annex 3

Output 2: The Regional Network of Protected Areas of Caribbean Guatemala has been completed and strengthened- through the establishment and Management Planning of two additional Nature Reserves; the analysis of Financial Gaps and the proposal of “Payment of Environmental Services” mechanisms for the entire Regional System; the Production of a Conservation and Sustainable Management Plan for the Regional Network of Eight Protected Areas; and the strengthening of participatory Governance Mechanisms

Participatory Governance Mechanisms:

Though this project FUNDAECO is fostering the creation of participatory governance mechanisms that allow the community to get involved in the management and conservation decisions of two new protected areas; Sierra Caral and Sierra Santa Cruz. This mechanism includes: conservation agreements and consortiums between FUNDAECO and local community associations representing communities that live inside Sierra Caral and Sierra Santa Cruz. Through these consortiums the communities will participate in decision making for the protected areas. The representation of the communities in this consortium is effective through the election of a “board of directors”, who are local people elected by the association assembly.

During this period FUNDAECO had several meetings with the board of directors for each consortium in order to discuss the co-management model for the protected area, we present in this report the model as agreed with local associations. See annex 4

We also advanced in the establishment of four conservation agreements with the communities Las Tortugas, Nuevo Samaritano, Rubel Cacao y Sepac. See annex 5

Output 3: Selected high priority forests fragments are being protected and restored by communities and small forest owners through the provision of direct incentives in at least 5,000 additional hectares across the biological corridor of Caribbean Guatemala; these incentives will provide significant income to local communities at least over a five year period.

For this outputs we have advance in:

- the initial selection of high priority forest fragments conservation actors (landowners). See annex 6, full information is registered in FUNDAECO GIS database.
- The preparation of forestry incentive files for the protection of 1851 ha and the reforestation of 204 ha. These files will be presented to INAB at the end of 2013.
- At this date, we have plant 65 hectares of forest and agroforestry systems.

Output 4: A sustainable funding facility for small scale productive projects - The “Caribbean Protected Areas Sustainable Community Development Fund”- has been established, replenished through corporate donations and other sources, and is funding 5-7 projects over the duration of the project.

We have advance in the preparation of the “small project forms” to be fulfilled by interested communities. See Annex 7.

The funds will be allocated after the selection process in the first semester of 2014.

Output 5: In collaboration with the Althelia Fund, a REDD “Project Design Document” (PDD) has been produced for the Caribbean Region of Guatemala and an “Emissions Reductions Purchase Agreement” (ERPA) has been drafted and negotiated, with the endorsement from local participating communities, through an adequately documented “Free, Previous and Informed Consent” process;

In September 2013, we received from a REDD investor the Letter of Intent for investment on rural development, productive activities, conservation and emission reduction under a REDD+ scheme in the Biological Corridor of Guatemalan Caribbean. We will prepare an investment proposal and present it the first week of December 2013.

Output 6: In conjunction with the CONAP, Natural History Museum of the National University, and local newspapers and radio stations, the high value of Biodiversity and protected in Caribbean Guatemala will have been communicated and disseminated at the regional and national level.

We have launched a campaign to increase awareness on the high value of Biodiversity and protected in Caribbean Guatemala.

The campaign includes a TV program in a local cable channel, newspaper publications, and muppies. This period we started with 3 TV videos and 1 newspaper publication. We are using *Canal Antigua* which is a local cable channel and *El Periodico* Newspaper that has a print run of 40,000 units.

Each video has been transmitted 24 times in one month, and was also promoted trough our social media network.

- Newspaper publication at:

<http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20130713/pais/231015>

➤ Videos at:

Cerro San Gil and Montanas del Mico

<http://vimeo.com/74889349>

Eco-tourism

<https://vimeo.com/76071209>

Marine and Coast areas

<http://vimeo.com/72376295>

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 negotiation for the REDD project is taking more time than planned, though outcomes and indicator related to the REDD project, might take 1 year more, but still in the duration of this project.
- During this period the project team evaluated and decided to use more effective communication tools related to output 6, though instead of brochures (indicator 2, output 6) 3 videos were produced and transmitted in a local TV channel. Another 2 videos will be transmitted in the next semester. This change has a positive impact, since videos are more vivid tools, and can be used with illiterate population. FUNDAECO have the rights to reproduce these videos in education and outreach activities.

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

No, FUNDAECO will consider if a change is necessary depending on the progress during the first semester of 2014.

Discussed with LTS: **no**

Formal change request submitted: **no**

Received confirmation of change acceptance **not applicable**

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.