



Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No	21012
Project Title	Enhancing rural livelihoods and biodiversity conservation through responsible tourism, Myanmar
Country(ies)	Myanmar
Lead Organisation	Harrison Institute
Collaborator(s)	Myanmar Bird and Nature Society, Grow Back for Posterity, and University of Mandalay
Project Leader	Dr Paul Bates
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	8 October, 2014 - HYR1
Project website	http://www.harrison-institute.org/research/CRM_R3_Darwin_enhancing_rural_livelihoods.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).

The project commenced in April, 2014. Two field study visits (May and July/August) were made by Paul Bates and Beatrix Lanzinger (Harrison Institute staff) to the project area in central Myanmar. In country, project activities were initiated and developed by project colleagues from two NGOs (Myanmar Bird and Nature Society and Grow Back for Posterity) and the University of Mandalay. The project has already featured in a series of English/Myanmar language newspaper articles and TV broadcasts in Myanmar, including <http://www.myanmarinternationaltv.com/news/bird-watching-potential-field-eco-tourism>. Two articles on the project have been published in the June and August 2014 issues of the Darwin Newsletter.

As per schedule, the following activities have been started and/or completed.

Output 1: Preliminary risk assessments.

Output 1.1a: Consultation for developing protocols for environmental safeguards for the Ayeyarwady River Corridor was commenced.

Output 1.2a: Consultations with local community leaders for developing protocols for environmental safeguards for the villages of Myit Kan Gyi*, Myayzun*, and Tawyagyi-Sheinmaga were commenced.

Output 1.3a: Discussions were held with Myanmar Bird and Nature Society staff for the development of monitoring and data-logging systems initially linked to their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/myanmarnature/>.

Output 2.1.a: TAPs (Tourist Assessment Processes) were commenced at Myit Kan Gyi*, Myayzun*, and Tawyagyi-Sheinmaga.

Output 2.3.a: In addition to the Harrison Institute website http://www.harrison-institute.org/research/CRM_R3_Darwin_enhancing_rural_livelihoods.html, ideas for a

dedicated project website were discussed with Myanmar colleagues. Meanwhile, a simple English website for the Myanmar Bird and Nature Society <http://www.myanmarbirdnaturesociety.com/> was designed and uploaded (to complement their existing Facebook page) and a similar one for Grow Back for Posterity is currently being designed.

Output 3.1.a: Extra finance from CEPF (Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund) and the Htoo Foundation allowed the project to train 30 students (August-October) as Ecotourist guides. The baseline was for only 6 students.

Yet to be completed Outputs for this half year period include:

Output 2.2.: Study visits to ASEAN examples of community development/biodiversity conservation. This has been postponed as it was not possible to fit it into the schedule. However, we have invited Richard Dagun of <http://www.dt-myanmartravels.com/> to join our team and share his experiences of community development through tourism, following his participation in the Cambodian conference - <http://www.pata.org/events/international-conference-on-community-development-through-tourism>. He will also contribute to our forthcoming international conference (28 October, 2014) in Mandalay.

The M&E workshop for our project has been postponed to 27 October when all project team members will assemble for our international conference.

* owing to natural changes to the course of the Ayeyarwady River, the villages Myit Kan Gyi and Myayzun were substituted for Hinthu Gone, which because of silting is no longer accessible to river boats.

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.

As mentioned above, owing to on-going, natural changes to the course of the Ayeyarwady River, the villages Myit Kan Gyi and Myayzun have been substituted for our initial target community, Hinthu Gone. This is because of silting of the river at Hinthu Gone means that it is no longer accessible to river boats. Although unfortunate for Hinthu Gone, this will have no material impact on the project.

The very poor quality of internet access in Mandalay threatens our Year 2 activity of on-line training of two students in Sustainable Tourist Management. We will continue to monitor this situation.

The ability of Myanmar partners FREDA to contribute meaningfully to the project remains uncertain. In contrast, the contributions of the Myanmar Bird and Nature Society, University of Mandalay and Grow Back for Posterity have greatly exceeded our expectations.

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

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Estimated underspend: £
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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