



Darwin Initiative Main Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2015)

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 (e.g., HYR3)	8 October, 2015 – HYR2
Project website/Twitter/Blog/Instagram etc	http://www.harrison-institute.org/research/CRM_R3_Darwin_enhancing_rural_livelihoods.html
Funder (DFID/Defra)	DFID

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 following progress has been achieved (April-September, 2015).

Outputs 1.1a and 1.1b:

Activity: Workshop (26-28 April, 2015), which took place at Mandalay, on the Ayeyarwady River, and Hsithe village.

Organised and led by: Aung Myo Chit of 'Grow Back for Posterity'.

Supported by: Darwin Initiative (financial support); Irrawaddy Princess River Cruises (support in kind – loan of boat); and the Department of Fisheries, the Myanmar Tourist Guide Association Mandalay Zone, Tour Guide Mandalay, and the local communities (logistic and participatory support).

Objective: Follow up to previous workshop of 9-11 December, 2014 (see Manual at http://media.wix.com/ugd/cec980_bcecdeddcb64c15b4623cff7557b093.pdf) in order to reinforce training of tour guides, tour operators and boat owners for operating within the Irrawaddy Dolphin Protected Area (KBA 85) on the Ayeyarwady River.

Outputs: (1) 60 trained tour guides, tour operators and boat owners. (2) Published manual for workshop and for operating on the river

http://media.wix.com/ugd/cec980_41eb36df189644319fc2196d42cc8821.pdf .

Follow-up: To ensure the protocols are implemented, there will be: (1) leafletting of boat operators, tourist police, Inland water authorities, UMTA (Union of Myanmar Tourism Association) and MTF (Myanmar Tourism Federation) members with a summary of guidelines; (2) informal policing through social media (to be launched in November, 2015).

Output 1.2a:

Activity: Workshop with village committees in Hsithe and Myitkangyi (7-14 May, 2015)

Organised and led by: Paul Bates/Beatrix Lanzinger, Harrison Institute, Dr Sai Sein Lin Oo of University of Mandalay and Aung Chan Phyo of Grow Back for Posterity.

Supported by: Darwin Initiative (financial) and Harrison Institute, University of Mandalay and Grow Back for Posterity (logistics and participatory support).

Objective: To develop environmental guidelines (especially relating to waste management, pollution and fishing practices) for new destinations for river boats on the Upper Ayeyarwady.

Outputs: Greater awareness amongst villagers of the importance of environmental management.

Follow-up: Simple guidelines for villagers formulated. These must have a realistic chance of being adopted and adhered to.

Output 2.1a

Activity: Field studies in May, 2015 (complementing those previously conducted in May, August, October-November 2014 and February, 2015) provided data for TAPs (Tourism Assessment Process)/master plan for 3 new destinations (the fishing villages of Hsithe and Myitkangyi and the Wildlife Sanctuary and associated communities of Tawyagyi-Sheinmaga). Draft TAPs have been prepared as discussion documents.

Organised and led by: Paul Bates/Beatrix Lanzinger, Harrison Institute in conjunction with Aung Myo Chit of Grow Back for Posterity and Dr Sai Sein Lin Oo of University of Mandalay.

Supported by: Darwin Initiative (financial) and village communities, Harrison Institute, Grow Back for Posterity, and University of Mandalay (logistics and participatory support).

Objective: To assess the viability of three destinations to host national and international tourist visits by way of river boats in order to promote poverty alleviation and the conservation of the critically endangered Irrawaddy River dolphin and the endangered Eld's deer

Outputs: Draft TAPs for the three destinations.

Follow-up: Launch of two (Hsithe and Myitkangyi) of the three destinations to tour agents, boat operators, tour guides, local authorities and the media in March, 2016; operation as destinations to commence with launch of high season (post monsoon, April-October) in November, 2016.

Output 2.2a

Activity: No study visit to other ASEAN examples of CBT (Community-based tourism) was undertaken. Rather, three of the project team (Paul Bates and Beatrix Lanzinger of Harrison Institute and Dr Thein Aung of Myanmar Bird and Nature Society) attended 'An International Conference on Ecotourism in Protected Areas: strengthening livelihoods, conservation and adaptation', which took place on 19-21 May, 2015 in Nay Pyi Daw, Myanmar -

<http://www.icimod.org/?q=18307> . This brought together delegates from throughout Southern and South-east Asia, together with other experts from Europe, the Americas and Australia.

Outputs: (1) Numerous examples of good and bad practice in Asia/worldwide of implementing CBT projects that endeavour to support poverty alleviation and wildlife conservation. (2) Networking with Ministers, senior government officials, protected area staff, conservation CSOs and NGOs, international experts, local experts, tour operators, and international donors.

Follow-up: Use information to ensure best practice in the destination development component of the current project.

Output 2.3a and b

Activity: Ideas for the website are currently evolving through on-going discussion with our CSO partners, tourist trade organisations and the conservation community. To date, we have developed two websites for our principal project partners: Grow Back for Posterity -

<http://www.growbackposterity.com/> and Myanmar Bird and Nature Society -

<http://www.myanmarbirdnaturesociety.com/> .

Background: The title, aim, objectives and information provided on the final project website have to still to be finalised. Initially it was envisaged as a local website highlighting the work of the project with some additional information about tourism on the Upper Ayeyarwady River. Currently (dependent on on-going discussions with the Myanmar Tourism Federation), we wish to broaden its scope to that of a national website to promote nature tourism/ecotourism to Myanmar, such as for Lao <http://www.ecotourism Laos.com/> . Our favoured format is that adopted by Zambia with their website <http://www.zambiatourism.com/> .

Follow-up: Finalise the website concept and publish by November 2015.

Output 3.1a

Activity: A training programme for ecotourist guides/bird watching guides took place between 14 September and 17 October, 2015. Twenty-eight individuals joined the course, of which 24 successfully completed it.

Organised and led by: Dr Thein Aung of the Myanmar Bird and Nature Society.

Supported by: Darwin Initiative, Htoo Foundation, Htoo Zoos and Gardens Business Unit, and individual subscription (financial) and Myanmar Bird and Nature Society and Wild Wings Photography Group, (logistics and participatory support).

Objective: To train a new generation of tour guides in the concepts of ecotourism, conservation and bird identification.

Follow-up: To publish details of trained guides who wish to be included on the new Myanmar ecotourism website.

Output 3.1b

Activity: Poor internet access has prevented the online training of two students in 'Sustainable Tourism Management'. On 22 October, 2015 discussions will be held with the Myanmar Tourism Federation to determine if resources should be channelled through them to train two students or whether the money should be invested in developing a website for Myanmar ecotourism (see discussion above).

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.

There was severe flooding in Myanmar (July – September, 2015), including in Sagaing Division https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015_Myanmar_floods . As such, two of our proposed destinations were reported by the Myanmar Darwin team as inundated. Currently, we do not know if this has on-going implications for the project but will assess the situation on 28 October when we visit these communities as part of our new season of field work.

On 8 November, 2015, Myanmar is having a general election. Depending on the processes and outcome, it is possible that this may have implications for the project. Currently, the government has banned all workshops in November involving university staff and students. They have also recently banned the signing of MoUs between NGOs and universities (indefinitely). This has affected our ability to sponsor directly two students to undertake training in 'Sustainable Tourist Management'.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? No, since we do not know if either of the above will have an impact on the project.

Discussed with LTS:	Yes/No
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Formal change request submitted:	Yes/No
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Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No
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3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

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 e.g., Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**