

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2016)

Project Ref No	21-020
Project Title	Eels – a flagship species for freshwater conservation in the Philippines
Country(ies)/Territory(ies)	Philippines
Lead Organisation	The Zoological Society of London
Partner(s)	TRAFFIC, BFAR, DENR and BMB
Project Leader	Matthew Gollock
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR3
Project website/ Twitter/ Blog/ Instagram etc	https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/asia/freshwater-eel-conservation-in-the-philippines https://twitter.com/ZSLMarine
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).

In Q1Y3 a change of government in the Philippines occurred; this meant engagement with government partners was put on hold for a period of time but we are confident that this did not have a significant impact on the implementation of the project.

- **Output 1**

ZSL remain a key go-to organisation for science and conservation relating to eels in the Philippines. We have engaged in a number of workshops that will help to shape policy and management of eels beyond the life of the project (activities **1.2/1.3**). Most notably in May, ZSL and TRAFFIC staff participated and presented at a workshop on traceability of trade relating to management and conservation sponsored by our partner BFAR. This brought together a range of government and industry stakeholders to discuss issues such as permits for movement of eels, and registration of the numerous eel farms that have been established in the past five years. Both ZSL and TRAFFIC were both hopeful that this workshop would encompass enforcement issues to a greater extent, in line with **Indicator 2**, however, we continue to liaise with BFAR with regards to carrying out an enforcement workshop before the end of Y3. More broadly, BFAR and ZSL, in collaboration with other stakeholders, are working to strengthen Fisheries Administrative Ordinance 242 which bans the exportation of eels <12cm through amendments relating to traceability, effective enforcement and alignment with CITES requirements, all of which follow recommendations contained in the report produced as part of **1.1**. The newly elected government has been clear that cracking down on both illegal trade and corruption will generally be a focus of their activities.

Both TRAFFIC and ZSL project leads attended the CITES CoP 17 in Johannesburg and carried out a joint intervention in support of the EU document encouraging parties to collect data relating to anguillid eel trade, threats and population status - https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/Com_I/E-CoP17-Com-I-10.pdf. Both organisations are engaging in the process to fulfil the proposed activities before CoP18.

- **Output 2**

Following the completion of the socio-economic, fisheries and habitat surveys, data from these was used to guide discussions around the development of a national eel management plan (EMP) (2.1/2.2) through the project's Technical Working Group (TWG) and stakeholder consultation meetings. ZSL participated in the plenary BFAR EMP workshop in July and there has been widespread support of the EMP development amongst all stakeholders. BFAR are presently carrying out public hearings relating to adoption of the EMP and we expect to see a draft by the end of 2016.

Twelve fisheries independent monitoring sites have been identified and fish traps were built and distributed across them (2.3). Training of the twelve associated Community Monitoring Groups (CMG) in independent data collection were carried out and IEC materials created and distributed. Action plans for each CMG were developed as an output of capacity building training and participatory workshops facilitated by ZSL staff.

- **Output 3**

The socioeconomic survey report is presently being finalised and we are hopeful to have the final draft by the end of 2016 (3.1/3.2). There have been on-going meetings with the seven focal sites that were identified during the socio-economic survey with feedback of results (3.3). Materials for fisheries management training and IEC have been developed – partly in concert with activity 4.4 to ensure a standardised approach – and this programme of work will begin in Y3Q4.

The ZSL community organisers continue training of, and data collection from, the three COMSCAs that were established in Y2Q4 (3.5 / 3.6) and there has been considerable interest in their establishment amongst many of the communities we engage with. Further, analysis of the socio-economic data indicates that some of the communities further inland, those less reliant on fisheries, have greater financial insecurity, and these are the focus of the follow-up project that has been submitted for Round 23. The fisheries dependent data collected as part of the survey ZSL staff carried out has been submitted to BFAR, and has also informed the development of the eel management plan (3.7/3.8) – in line with training carried out under activity 3.4, fisheries dependent data will be submitted to BFAR via the key FFAs.

- **Output 4**

The habitat survey report is presently being finalised and we are hopeful to have the final draft by the end of 2016 (4.1). The freshwater sanctuaries (FS) continue to be established and we now have twelve with associated Barangay Ordinances which ZSL have facilitated the formulating and drafting of (4.2 / 4.3). Community FS management bodies (MBs) have been created and Local Management Plans developed by LGUs for adoption and implementation by FSMBs. Additionally, signage has been installed at all sites, as have markers for both the strict protection and buffer zones. IEC programmes have been implemented in each of the communities hosting a FS – both to adults and school children - relating to the theory behind protected area establishment and sustainable aquatic resource use. Enforcement training has been carried out with all 12 CMG (four members each) and River Warden accreditation is presently being processed by BFAR Region 2 (4.4).

A suite of biodiversity indicator species has been developed from a BMB freshwater manual in collaboration with DENR Region 2 and identification material produced; monitoring occurs at the twelve sites every 15th and 30th of the month (4.5)

- **Output 5**

It was agreed in Y2 that the farming study would be wrapped up early, and as such the feasibility study is presently being drafted and will be completed by the end of Y3 (5.4)

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.

Through on-going monitoring and evaluation, we have adapted the logframe both with regard to outputs and activities, and the associated timelines, and submitted a comprehensive change

request in May 2016.
 The impacts of Brexit have yet to be fully understood, however we are already feeling the effects of the pound's weak position in the global economy and may have to make adjustments to activities due to poor exchange rates, though this has still to be determined.
 At the time of writing Super Typhoon Haima had just made landfall in Cagayan. This was a significant weather system which brought heavy rains, winds of up to 225km/h and extremely high waters in coastal areas. We have yet to have reports of the damage to ZSL infrastructure and the communities we work with, however we know that they will have been affected to some degree. We will monitor this situation and update Darwin as soon as we understand the impact of the storm on the region.

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
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., 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. 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 please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

N/A

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: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**