

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	22-005
Project title	Conserving Madagascar's yams through cultivation for livelihoods and food security
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Madagascar
Lead organisation	RBG, Kew
Partner(s)	Kew Madagascar Conservation Centre (KMCC), Feedback Madagascar Ny Tanintsika (FBNT), Silo National des Graines Forestières (Madagascar, SNGF).
Project leader	Dr. Paul Wilkin
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR 2.5
Project website/blog/social media etc.	Twitter: @TeamKMCC . Blogs: https://teamkmcc.wordpress.com/category/darwin-initiative-yams/ . Website URL: www.teamkmcc.org/yams ; also https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/zavamaniry-gasy-plants-of-madagascar

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).

Y3 Q 1 & 2 activities on project implementation timetable:

1.3 IUCN Red List Assessments

31 Red List Assessments will be published on <http://www.iucnredlist.org/> in December following successive delays in the IUCN red listing system. We are about to start the final field season of capturing data points and images on iNaturalist/Zavamaniry Gasy to inform the final assessments at the end of Y3 when we will increase the current 227 (201 in Y2 report) records to 600-1000.

2.1 Project website and blog

Two blogs posted, 98 tweets with 48349 impressions.

2.2. Communication: radio, social media, leaflets and yam festivals *etc.*

Yam festivals took place in August/September. There were 4 festivals in COFAV (1 per commune) with more than 2000 people participating and 2 festivals in the north (Ambanja and Diego) with around 700 people participating. Both figures were a significant increase on Y2 (more than 700 people in total in Y2).

2.3 Preparation of Journal articles

Two journal articles in preparation by KMCC staff on a new species and the rediscovery and conservation assessment of a second, probably critically endangered species. This is the first time that KMCC scientists have lead on manuscript preparation

3.2 Training for community technicians FBM technician have been started the training about cooking yams with the 31 communities in COFAV. In the North of Madagascar we have now trained 2156 people

in yam propagation, cultivation, harvesting and wild population surveying (1387 at Y2 annual report). 47% of this total were female, 53% male. Cumulative training figures from the COFAV are awaited.

3.3. Development of a manual and other materials.

We have a final draft of the wild yams National Strategy ready to be workshopped on November 22 prior to signature and adoption by ministries. Manual material is present within the strategy and in training materials that have been distributed to communities.

3.4 Monitoring of production and food consumption in households

The annual yam harvest took place in August 2017. We achieved 4127 kg of wild yams from 7 species and 41855.8 kg of winged yam in the North. The COFAV saw yields of 114, 936 kg of winged yam. The communities decided to leave wild yams in the ground for another season in order to get a larger harvest of more sizeable tubers in 2018. In 2016, total Antsiranana province yield was 6, 818 kg of *D. alata* and just 15 kg of wild yams. In the COFAV 23, 598 kg of *D. alata* and 57 kg of wild yams were produced. The very significant increases in production are due to greater engagement in the project, the training provided, and the fact that we had a full growing season with yams planted on time in October. The success in cultivating wild yams in Antsiranana province was particularly important from a conservation standpoint.

The total number of households fully benefitting from the project is 2494; 1053 households in the COFAV are growing wild yams and winged yams and the remainder winged yams only as described in the Y2 annual report. The first phase of socioeconomic surveying is now complete and analysed. The second phase is under way in the North and completed in the COFAV.

4.4. Agreement of conservation management plans

We have 15 new contracts in the north and 10 in COFAV with communities about the conservation of species. In total we have 60 contracts. An addition, a management plan for local yam species was discussed with 30 communities and we have agreement drafts in propagation.

5.3 Germination tests by SNGF/MSB

Seed collection levels are as in the Y2 report. Seed accesss are being transferred to the MSB where routine germination tests are being undertaken.

5.4 Establishment of living gene banks

A regional living gene bank has been set up in Antsiranana with the local DREEF (Environment Ministry) Office: 3150 individual plants, 10 wild species and *D. alata* (winged yam). The living gene banks in Antananarivo are as per the Y2 report.

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.

No new problems or lessons.

We received news in May that we have secured matched funding from the April Trust to undertake livelihoods-based research on wild yams in Bongolava and Menabe (western and northwestern Madagascar) using the same methods as this project. The money raised will allow us to conserve additional species via cultivation and seed banking, including in particular *D. maciba* and *D. bako*, major edible species. The latter is threatened (EN). Working in extra regions and a different biome will also increase the scope of the project to be fully national within Madagascar, and enhance the national strategy.

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 (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?

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate 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**