

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

Project Reference	22-010
Project title	Enhancing management and benefit flows in Vietnam's wild medicinal products
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Viet Nam
Lead Organisation	TRAFFIC International
Partner (s)	Bac Kan Provincial Forest Protection Department (FPD), Hanoi University of Pharmacy, DK Pharma/DK Natura, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
Project Leader	Madelon Willemsen
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	31 October 2017, HYR3
Project website//blog/social media	www.traffic.org ; http://facebook.com/trafficsea.gmp

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).

Under the Output 1, the project team and FPD worked closely with local collector cooperatives and groups to select potential MAPs products to register for Bac Kan's provincial "One Commune One product" program (**Activity 1.2**). Training workshops on improving product quality, marketing, and entrepreneurial skills (**Activity 1.3**) were held in September 2017, they are reported in more details under the **Activity 2.2** below. Further trainings are planned for the next project quarter. As an additional input to the **Activity 1.3**, a celebration event to further promote crucial role and contributions of female collectors toward sustainable harvesting and family economic development, and to encourage women's proactive representation and engagement in the project activities, is planned in October 2017. Preparatory works has been carried out during the current reporting period.

Continuous support is provided to collectors' organisations. One collector group – Khuoi Lung, in Ba Be district, started the process of upgrading into a formally registered cooperative on a provincial level in the reporting period (**Activity 1.4**). This upgrade will provide capacity for the Khuoi Lung collector group to take part in the value chain and developing commercial products with competitive price, and to reach out for more potential market opportunities.

As a follow-up of the baseline verification against the FairWild Standard and the EU's organic regulations and requirements regarding wild MAPs collection and equitable trade carried out in 2016, the project team kicked off a discussion to develop a workplan aimed at addressing critical shortcomings in the verification with DK Pharma and Xuan Lac cooperative (**Activity 1.5**). As a result, key priorities were shortlisted and DK Pharma agreed to support the improvement of these cooperatives and group between October and December 2017. Project staff will closely work with DK Pharma and monitor the implementation and progress of this activity.

National fairs were identified at which collectors' organisations can potentially introduce their products (**Activity 1.6**). The fairs include [Agritrade](#) in Hanoi, Trade Fair and [Cho xanh Tu te](#) in Ho Chi Minh city and Hanoi. Visits to those fairs will be organised for collectors' cooperatives and groups in the next reporting period. At the international level, the project outcomes could be presented at the BioFach trade fair 2018, where the FairWild Foundation have a stand. Also

relevant to **Activity 1.6** is development of product marketing (see Activity 2.3) and the progress made on the OCOP Program (see Activity 2.4).

Training courses on sustainable harvesting, trading, and MAPs management practices was delivered to 460 wild-collectors (expected number is 477) (280 of which are female) in four target districts in Bac Kan, namely Cho Don, Na Ri, Ngan Son, and Ba Be in September (**Activity 2.2**). The pocket guide for sustainable collection of Jiaogulan, Woolly fern, and other MAPs was used as training materials and the trained trainers from the training in year 2 were engaged to participate in the training as facilitators/training assistants. More female collectors participated in this year's training than the training in year 2. Project staff and the trainers' observations were that women were active and interested in the training topics. Over 600 pocket guides were handed out to trainees and villagers in project sites of Bac Kan province.

The draft of the species management plan was completed in April 2017 and a number of the activities in the draft plan were piloted during the reporting period to ensure its feasibility (**Activity 2.3**). Activities such as training FPD staff and heads of collectors' cooperatives and groups to be trainers on identification of species, geographical collection areas, harvesting quotas, development of harvesting and trading plans, species population monitoring, processing, storage, and product marketing, have been implemented. For example, to support better product marketing, the Xuan Lac cooperative received 19,600,000VND (equal to ~639GBP) in funding from Bac Kan Provincial Department of Industry and Trade to label the packaging of Jiaogulan tea product, demonstrating the commitment from the Bac Kan local authority to the project. Project staff regularly communicated with FPD staff in Bac Kan province and the consultant team at Hanoi University of Pharmacy to update them on the progress of the pilot implementation. A meeting between these stakeholders resulted into the incorporation of comments and feedback to finalise the management plan in the next reporting period.

At the provincial level in Bac Kan, the follow - up for the MAPs product development plan was identified (**Activity 2.4**). Bac Kan province has been in the process of developing a "One commune One product" (OCOP) program, which links in tightly with the project objectives. Project staff and the consultant will work together to ensure MAPs product development plan is integrated in the provincial OCOP program for ongoing sustainability of the project objectives.

Under the Output 3, plans to present the project experience at different events were initiated (**Activity 3.1**). TRAFFIC and Helvetas are communicating opportunities and exploring possibilities to attend and participate in relevant workshops or forums. The MAPs policy review findings on non-timber forest product (NTFP) legality and FairWild frameworks will be disseminated at a workshop co-organised by ATM, MOH and TRAFFIC scheduled for November 2017 for a stakeholder discussions around the proposed policies' gaps and the steps to address those.

Initial discussion on additional training for entrepreneurs/pharmaceutical companies on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and FairWild principles took place with the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). The training event is planned to take place in November 2017. Development of training materials and logistic arrangements were ongoing in this reporting period (**Activity 3.2**). This activity will contribute to identifying steps to increase the sectoral-level awareness and action around the sustainability of wild plant ingredients sourcing and trade.

Project staff participated in a launch workshop of the Regional BioTrade project and provided technical input to the discussion panel (**Activity 3.3**). A meeting between project team and Helvetas resulted in the strengthening of relationships and opened opportunities to collaborate and provide technical input to the BioTrade project.

Based on the FairWild-GACP plan from Y2 ATM proposed that MOH integrates the FairWild principles to the Circular 14/2009 on GACP implementation and findings of FairWild- Access and Benefits Sharing (ABS) study will be disseminated and implantation ideas discussed in a workshop co-organised by TRAFFIC and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA) – MONRE planned for November 2017 (**Activity 3.4**).

The report "The applicability of traceability systems for CITES medicinal plants with a focus on the Greater Mekong countries" was launched and promoted during the CITES Plants Committee in July 2017, which includes reference to the Darwin Initiative project experiences (**Activity 3.5**). Work is ongoing to integrate the outcomes of the project for the presentation at a side-event at

the next CITES Plants Committee, and to integrate it as appropriate in the CBD processes. With relevance to the Nagoya Protocol implementation, the Decree 59/2017 of Viet Nam came into effect in July 2017. Implementation of the Decree coupled with TRAFFIC's strong partnership with BCA will enable the support and promotion of ABS in Viet Nam. TRAFFIC's project activities will support BCA's direction of the Decree by illustrating how ABS works on the ground.

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.

Xuan Lac Cooperative has become a leading example for other collectors' cooperatives and groups to become more committed to harvesting and trading MAPs, resulting in an increased and sustainable income through professionalising the collector practices. The project team also supported the engagement of additional buyers and private traditional medicine practitioners to increase the trading revenue in MAPs of collector groups during the reporting period. Support to upgrading several key collector groups to cooperatives has been ongoing, allowing collector organisations better negotiation position with buyers and to extend their market opportunities.

This year, the project site experienced unusually heavy precipitation. It was a challenge for the collectors' organization because it resulted in a lower harvesting quantity. Collectors struggled with meeting the purchase volumes committed since they had to wait for dry weather to collect MAPs. However, the project team worked closely with collectors' organisations on plans for harvesting and processing to assist the cooperatives and groups meet purchase orders.

Project team staff change occurred during the reporting period. A new program officer, Khuong Nguyen, was recruited in August 2017 to replace Cuong Ba Nguyen who left in July 2017.

Budget spending in this reporting period has been slightly slow, but plans for intensified expenditures and delivery are in place for the next reporting period. Several minor changes to the budget lines are proposed, to be followed up by the formal change request. See financial report for additional comments.

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 (staff change request)
Formal change request submitted:	In progress
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A

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. The project does not expect significant underspend in Y3 budget.

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**