

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

Project reference 22-018

Project title Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into community forestry in Nepal

Country(ies)/territory(ies) Nepal

Lead organisation BirdLife International

Partner(s) Bird Conservation Nepal, Department of Forests, Nepal, Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal

Project leader Dr Nonie Coulthard

Report date and number (e.g., HYR3) 31st October 2017 (HYR3)

Project website/blog/social media etc.

<http://www.birdlifeneal.org/projects/mainstreaming-biodiversity-and-ecosystem-services-into-community-forestry-in-nepal>

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 the first six months of year 3 we have undertaken activities according to the agreed timetable. Particularly good progress has been made against our activities under Output 2 (training courses for community forestry professionals) as well as continued progress under Output 3 (producing revised operational plans for 14 community forests).

1. Information and knowledge review

Activities under this output 1 have largely completed. The paper submitted for peer review to the Nepal National Journal of Science and Technology under output 1 is still under review after revisions were submitted earlier in the year, however we expect that this will be accepted over the coming months.

2. Training courses for CF professionals

We have made good progress towards delivering output 2 over the last six months. Following the pilot training course delivered in year two, we have refined our materials, and have begun training in earnest. A training of Trainers course was delivered on 18th-21st May 2017 to 23 participants from District Forest Offices and Regional Training Centres to empower them to deliver training to Forest Officers to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services into operational planning for Community Forest User Groups.

Alongside the training of trainers, we have continued development of the training manual and now have an advanced draft that can be used by trainers. To respond to a query in ARR2, this manual will be finalised and translated into Nepali in the second half of year 3. Trained trainers, with backstopping and support from Bird Conservation Nepal and the Department of Forests have delivered the training course to 22 Forest officers in Pokhara, central Nepal and 24 Forest officers in Surket in the west of the country. We have also worked with the Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) to provide training to 27 FECOFUN members from across the country at Butwal in the Terai. So far, we have delivered training to 117 forestry professionals in total.

3. Operational plans for 14 community forests

Work to develop revised operational plans for CFUGs has continued during this period, with the drafting of seven more plans to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem service considerations at five sites in this project period as well as the approval of two plans that were developed in year two by the relevant district forest office. Drafting of plans has been conducted in line with the process that we have developed in the biodiversity supplement.

Plans have been drafted for:

- Kafalgaira and Maranga CFUGs, Gulmi
- Ratamata and Jhyari CFUGs, Rara National Park
- Godawari Kund CFUG, Lalitpur
- Radha Krishna Buffer Zone Community Forest, Bara
- Bara Namuna Buffer Zone Community Forest, Nawalparasi

Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of these Community Forests.



Figure 1 - Seven operational plans have been drafted in this reporting period, from five Important Bird Areas across Nepal

These seven draft operational plans bring our total to 12 plans out of 14 expected by end of project.

4. National biodiversity supplement to the CF guidelines

The biodiversity supplement to the National CF guidelines has been finalised and official translation into Nepali by a government-approved translation service is underway. This is an important step that is being led by the Department of Forests, and will enable them to elevate the supplement through the necessary formal channels for ratification by the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC).

5. Dissemination and wider awareness

In order to share lessons from the project with other BirdLife Partners in Asia the project team made significant input to the organisation of a five-day workshop entitled 'Strengthening Civil Society Capacity to Advocate for Mainstreaming Biodiversity' which took place in October. The Darwin project provided funding for a day of this workshop that focused on mainstreaming biodiversity into forestry, which allowed Bird Conservation Nepal to share their experiences of mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into a national forestry programme with other NGOs from across Asia, including from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Bhutan, India, Thailand, Myanmar, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

BCN have also been leading national awareness raising events, including organising a debate on mainstreaming biodiversity into sectors in Nepal (including the community forestry sector) that was broadcast on national television across the country. Panellists included the CBD focal

point from the MoFSC, a representative from the National Planning Commission, the former Chairperson of the Federation of Nepal Chambers of Commerce and a leading social scientist from forest conservation NGO ForestAction.

6. Project management

Based on recommendations from LTSI's Mid-Term Review (the final report of which was received in March 2017), we have revised our project logframe indicators at the outcome and output level. These changes have been approved by Darwin through a formal change request.

We have also begun to develop a post-project proposal that we hope to submit to Darwin in January 2018 to continue to scale up our work to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem service considerations into Nepal's community forestry sector.

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.

N/A

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

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**