

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

Project reference	23-005
Project title	Promoting the use of plant resources in research and development
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ethiopia
Lead organisation	Botanic Gardens Conservation International
Partner(s)	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
Project leader	Suzanne Sharrock
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media etc.	http://www.bgci.org/policy/darwin_project/

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 project has continued to run according to the project plan over the last six months.

Stakeholder consultations:

In the first year of the project, the consultations were focused on *ex situ* collection holders. In the second year we have focused on researchers, with two significant consultation sessions held involving nearly 50 researchers from Universities and research institutes across Ethiopia. With the help of an expert facilitator from Kenya, these consultations have addressed a range of issues related to Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and how ABS implementation affects the work of plant researchers in Ethiopia. Key issues have emerged, such as lack of awareness of the Ethiopian ABS framework amongst young researchers (MSc and PhD students), concern about plant materials that are taken out of Ethiopia for research purposes and a lack of understanding of when the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should apply instead of the Nagoya Protocol. Amongst the recommendations coming from these consultations for the project to consider taking forwards are the following:

- developing materials for training the trainers in Universities – to help MSc and PhD students understand ABS issues
- Looking at ways to facilitate input by researchers into the updating of ABS legislation in Ethiopia
- Building capacity of researchers to become intermediaries in raising awareness of ABS issues at the local community level.

These recommendations will be taken into account as we develop capacity building materials within the framework of the project. In this respect, we have held in-depth discussions with the staff of the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute's ABS Directorate on the development of relevant capacity development materials to support these staff.

Consultations have also been held with staff involved in the 'UNDP/GEF Global ABS project 'Strengthening human resources, legal frameworks and institutional capacities to implement the Nagoya Protocol' and the Regional Coordinator for Africa is now part of the project's

International Steering Committee. Similarly, discussions have been held with the genebank manager and staff of the International Livestock Research Institute which is located in Addis Ababa to understand the relationship between the international centre and the Ethiopian government.

Compile examples and case studies of best practice on simplified measures for access from around the world

The project consultant has made a wide-ranging study of existing practices and has identified a number of relevant case studies. These are in the process of being written up and will be available on the project website shortly. It is notable that such case studies are relatively rare and this activity has proved more time consuming than originally anticipated.

Promoting the project

The project was presented in two sessions held at the 6th Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Geneva in June 2017. The first was a session focused on Darwin Initiative projects, where a presentation was made on the project itself.

The second event was a symposium on ABS where the initial results of the project were presented, together with presentations on ABS from other countries around the world.

Both were well attended events and served to raise awareness of the project activities. The ABS symposium also allowed the Ethiopian project partners to interact with others involved in implementing ABS in other countries. Of particular interest was a presentation from Mexico introducing the new Code of Conduct that has been developed for *ex situ* collection holders, providing guidelines on how to interact with local communities when collecting plant material.

Web pages for the project have been developed on the BGCI website and will continue to be updated as more information becomes available through the project (see http://www.bgci.org/policy/darwin_project/).

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 significant issues encountered in project implementation.

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?

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**