

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

Project reference:	24-012
Project title:	Incentivising community-led marine biodiversity conservation on Atauro Island
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	East Timor
Lead organisation	Blue Ventures Conservation
Partner(s)	
Project leader	Alasdair Harris
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.blueventures.org

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).

1.1 Community consultations on ecotourism homestay workplan and activities at 2-3 villages.

Community consultations have been completed for Beloi, and are in progress in Uaro-ana, with meetings held on 21st March, 2nd and 23rd August with five community members.

1.2 Community, NGO and wider stakeholder consultations for natural resource management at 2-3 villages.

Community consultations were held in Beloi on the 19th May and were followed up by informal discussions, facilitated by the regular meetings held with the homestays families in the village. Consultations consistently suggested the community is not yet ready to engage BV on marine management.

Consultations started in Ilik-namu on the 29th May with a women's representative and the local seaweed farming cooperative. These highlighted the potential for marine management in the village, and were followed by meetings on 14th June with the head of the cooperative, and on the 27th July with village leaders and fishermen, the women's representative, and local priest and discussed the option of establishing marine management measures in the village. The community mentioned the need to discuss marine management privately (without BV present), which happened on the 6th August. Blue Ventures followed up on the results with a meeting on 15th September, when marine management measures and monitoring were discussed with community representatives. The community approved a two-year closure on one of their reefs, followed by a three-month regulated open season.

Consultations were also carried out in Uaro-ana on the 2nd August, and suggested that the village is for the moment more interested in alternative livelihoods than marine management.

1.3 Train (minimum) 10 community members in habitat monitoring.

Training sessions on seagrass mapping and monitoring were held with community members on 17th, 18th, and 29th May, which resulted in eight operators being fully certified (See CBM Seagrass quiz in local language). Field sessions had to be cancelled in June and July due to a

dengue outbreak among Blue Ventures staff and adverse weather, but resumed on 17th August, when two additional operators were certified.

1.4 Conduct participatory habitat assessments across southeast and northeast areas of Atauro.

Seagrass mapping sessions were held with community members on 17th, 18th and 29th May, and continued after a forced break (see 1.3) on 17th August.

1.5 Train (minimum) 10 community members in fisheries monitoring, simple analysis and presenting information back to communities.

Training started with one operator in Beloi on 13th July. Monitoring was discussed in Ilik-namu on 29th July and 15th September and it was agreed that training will start with local operators in November as a requirement to establish marine management measures.

1.7 Disseminate results of participatory monitoring to community leaders on Atauro.

To date not enough participatory fisheries data have been collected to identify trends and make sharing worthwhile. However, the community expressed interest in having access to the reef monitoring data collected by BV staff and ecotourists; preliminary data on the reefs around Ilik-namu was shared with the community on 29th July. The community was very eager to see the data and showed concern over the lack of larger fish and megafauna suggested by it.

2.1 Village level workshops to discuss fisheries management options based on participatory monitoring data, and discussions on key fisheries and threats.

Following preliminary outreach and consultations in Ilik-Namu, options were discussed on 29th July and agreed upon on 15th September, when the key reef (-8.203644, 125.630603), key measures (two-year full no-take zone, followed by a regulated three-month open season), and key fisheries (tuna, lobster, fusilier, and grouper) to focus on, were identified by the community. Further consultations are required to define regulations for the open season, as well as the seagrass habitats associated to the reef. (See photos Taru Bandu Iliknamu 1 and 2).

2.2 Key fishery selected for trial management measure through further consultations, with minimum 1 village.

See 2.1

3.1 First round of homestay participants selected.

Eight families in Beloi have been identified and are now running homestays (since January 2017) (see Exp 12_Homestay Payments as example of income recorded). Five families in Uaro-ana have been selected and are going through development and training, such as food preparation, business management and tour guiding..

3.2 Homestay Association set up with legal paperwork completed.

The Beloi association has been informally set up. The need for official legal status was discussed on 1st April and 1st May, but the registration process was disrupted by two separate elections. Legal paperwork cannot be completed due to delays in the establishment of a new government (elections took place in July but progress is slow and disruption is ongoing).

3.3 Business plans developed and standards for homestays agreed upon.

Standards to accommodate western tourists (e.g. providing mosquito nets, minimum furniture, and hygiene standards) were discussed and have been agreed upon and met by eight Beloi families in January 2017.

3.4 Participate in exchange trip to Raja Ampat, Indonesia, to meet and learn from a successful homestay group.

Six people from Beloi and Uaro-ana took part in a week-long exchange trip to Raja Ampat at the end of January 2017. This took place earlier than anticipated due to a further funding

opportunity to support this trip. A video of the exchange of the trip can be seen [here](#). We are now exploring the possibility of a return exchange trip from Raja Ampat to East Timor.

3.5 Training given on key areas such as health and safety, budget management, tourist expectations, ecoguiding etc.

Ten community members from Beloi and Uaro-ana homestays attended a 10-day training on how to provide guided tours, organised by the Ministry of Tourism on 10th July. Peer-training on food preparation was delivered in Beloi for the five families of Uaro-ana on 2nd August (see Nutrition guidelines for Homestays). A three-day business management training was delivered by Empreza Di'ak on 20th-22nd September for 12 people from Beloi and Uaro-ana. A short nutrition workshop was delivered by Blue Ventures on 15th September.

3.6 Ongoing support to Homestay Association through monthly meetings and facilitate induction of first guests.

Ongoing since January 2017, with 40+ guests hosted in homestays. Bi-weekly meetings are supported by ad-hoc informal discussions and weekly phone calls.

4.1 Workshops with community (from activities 2.2 to 2.5) and women's groups to discuss potential benefits of developing an LMMA and locally relevant mechanisms for management (eg. Tara Bandu).

Although specific workshops to discuss this have not been organised during this period, LMMAs were often discussed during marine management workshops on 14th June, 27th July, and 15th September. Mechanisms and benefits of management were broadly discussed with the community, and very basic training provided (see 4.2). Additionally, the process of establishing marine management measures is the first step towards the establishment of an LMMA - with selected measures broadly identifying the foundation of it (zoning and rules).

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.

Although the development of the homestays has been moving very fast, at the moment further development is hindered by elections and delays in forming a new government. Therefore we have been unable to register the homestay association officially. The government has reformed at present so we are trying to move quickly, but there is also forecast reelections in early 2018.

Difficult field conditions (i.e. a dengue outbreak, strong currents that prevented work in the water, rough seas that prevented reaching Atauro), which are likely to repeat themselves yearly, have been slowing down progress during Austral winter (e.g. fewer habitat mapping sessions than expected, consultations have been rescheduled).

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?

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**