



**Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2018)**

Project reference	24017
Project title	Access and Benefit Sharing in Practice: Community, Science and Policy
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	South Africa; Namibia; Cameroon; United Kingdom; United States
Lead organisation	The University of Cape Town
Partner(s)	People and Plants International (PPI); Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC); The Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG); Forests, Resources and People (FOREP); Leeds University.
Project leader	Associate Professor Rachel Wynberg
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR-2
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.voices4biojustice.org www.facebook.com/Voices4BioJust/

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

COORDINATION, THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

The Project Team met in London from 21 to 25 June 2018. The meeting was attended by Rachel Wynberg (UCT), Sarah Laird (PPI), Manuel Ruiz Muller (The Peruvian Society for Environmental Law), Karen Nott (IRDNC), Graham Duffield (Leeds University) and Jaci van Niekerk (UCT). Unfortunately, Abdon Awono (FOREP, Cameroon) had to withdraw from the meeting at the last moment. Discussions were held about the Resource Group, a potential conference at the Bellagio Centre (Italy), a special issue of the journal "Society and Natural Resources" focused on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and upcoming videos and webinars. The three themes earmarked for Year 1 were discussed in detail as they would guide the production of the video and webinar material.

The Project Team also met virtually on 13 April and 18 October 2018 via Skype.

The Voices for BioJustice website was completed and launched, see www.voices4biojustice.org

Videos

In South Africa, interviews with plant knowledge holders, small-scale rooibos farmers and members of the rooibos industry were filmed. These were translated and, where necessary, subtitles were added to the original footage. This was then shared with the production team in New York.

In Cameroon, filming of videos has begun, with teams built, questions and scripts drafted, and the first round of interviews underway.

In Namibia project staff participated in and gave support to the filming of activities in Zambezi.

A collection of ethics resources for filmmaking was begun, with project team members contributing materials to guide project activities, and serve as a broader resource globally.

UCT and EMG – SOUTH AFRICA

UCT hosted a 2-day meeting around a Community of Practice for ABS and Indigenous Plants in Clanwilliam on 17 and 18 April 2018. The meeting was attended by 40 people, including small-scale rooibos farmers, local government representatives, a representative from the South African Rooibos Council, members of the natural products industry, students and conservation officials. Noel Oetllé from EMG facilitated, and Sarah Ives, an anthropologist from the United States who has conducted extensive work on rooibos and identity, attended as a keynote speaker.

A policy brief on rooibos and ABS was completed in time for the April meeting where it was distributed.

The South African government has pledged that they wanted to work more closely with the Voices for BioJustice project in the near future.

Negotiations towards establishing a benefit sharing agreement between the industry, representatives of Khoi and San communities and small-scale rooibos communities took place throughout the year. Between April and June 2018, small-scale rooibos farmers from the Heiveld, Sedervlei and Wupperthal Fair Cooperatives sought advice from the project because of the exclusion of their representatives from access to a confidentiality agreement, the draft benefit-sharing agreement and the minutes of meetings. These issues were brought to the attention of the responsible Minister of Environmental Affairs, and subsequently full access was granted in the context of the consultative meetings and negotiations that later took place (7 and 8 August, 18 - 20 September and 16 - 18 October). Noel Oetllé from EMG has now been invited to participate in future rounds of negotiation. The Resource Group also helped comment on the draft benefit-sharing agreement and advised on negotiations. The project has played a catalytic role in this regard, bringing in voices that were hitherto excluded.

UCT student Michelle Nott continued to work on completing her Masters thesis on the resurrection plant. This will be submitted in early 2019. UCT student Sthembile Ndwandwe joined the team and began her PhD research on honeybush tea, exploring impacts of cultivation on marginalised communities. Both are supervised by Rachel Wynberg.

PPI and FOREP - CAMEROON

In Cameroon, PPI and FOREP have conducted two literature reviews, one on the case study species *Irvingia gabonensis*, and another on non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in Central Africa, including analyses of laws and policies.

A draft case study has been completed, with input from the four students on the project team, two project researchers, and the project coordinator. It is currently under review, and will be completed in late 2018.

A marketing study of NTFPs, including *Irvingia*, and the impact of laws and policies is underway, with elements feeding into the case study, and other pieces into the policy briefs and future articles.

Development of two policy briefs is underway, with a completion date of December 2018. They are: 1) *Irvingia* and ABS: An Illustrative Case Study, and 2) Laws and Policies Regulating Genetic and Biological Resources in Cameroon.

Partnerships with government policy makers were strengthened, building towards a March 2019 workshop, and upcoming webinars, as well as dissemination of the policy briefs. This has included a series of meetings with officials within relevant ministries.

IRDNC – NAMIBIA

Project staff and consultant John Hazam conducted five ABS awareness raising workshops with stakeholders in the Zambezi region. The purpose of the workshops was to explain and build understanding of the new ABS Act, thereby enabling stakeholders to know their rights and the protection the new act provides. The five workshops were attended by 75 (40 men and 35 women) participants, including traditional authority representatives, conservancy and community forest committee representatives, harvesters and buying point committee members of several conservancies and the Kyaramcan Association.

Following the Kunene workshops held during year 1, the information booklet on the recently promulgated Namibian legislation “Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge Bill” was revised and updated. The final production of the materials will be delayed until the regulations are promulgated and available.

An important step towards the establishment of the regulations for the Namibian ABS legislation was taken during the ABS Expert Stakeholders Workshop held from 11-14 June 2018. Two project consultants attended the workshop, and one of them, Dave Cole, gave a presentation on *Myrothamnus*. The proposed regulations were reviewed and discussed but several factors hindered the process and issues of concern (including a lack of clarity on key issues including difference between bio-trade and bio-prospecting and what constitutes “research” and permit-heavy processes for different actions) were noted. A key outcome of the workshop was that materials will be needed to give real clarity around processes and procedures.

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.

In South Africa, the rooibos case study has been complicated by the fact that sensitive negotiations around benefit sharing are underway. This has meant that government has been reluctant to engage fully in the project as there is a Code of Conduct governing negotiations. Some interviewees being filmed have also refused to comment on confidential aspects of the negotiations. However, this will not affect the project’s progress.

In Namibia, it was reflected after the ABS expert workshop that it is still unclear as to what the process or timeline is for the approval of the ABS regulations. This will hamper the finalisation of the materials that provide guidance and guidelines on the legislation and its implementation. This will cause a delay in the production of the materials, part of which can be planned and produced, but without content related to the regulations, they will not be comprehensive.

Within South West and North West Cameroon civil unrest has led to a slowing of project activities in that region, and a movement of others to the Centre and Littoral Provinces. The project has adjusted its activities towards safer regions.

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.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Not applicable.

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.

We were asked to address one comment, please find the response attached as Annex 1.

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**