



**Darwin Initiative/D+ Project
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2019)**

Project reference	24-017
Project title	Access and Benefit Sharing in Practice: Community, Science and Policy
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	South Africa; Namibia; Cameroon; United Kingdom; and the United States
Lead organisation	The University of Cape Town (UCT)
Partner(s)	The Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG); Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC); Forests, Resources and People (FOREP); Leeds University; and People and Plants International (PPI)
Project leader	Professor Rachel Wynberg
Report date and number	HYR-3
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.

RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF AR-2

Our response to the reviewer's comment on our second Annual Report is in **Annex 1**.

COORDINATION, THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Two virtual team meetings and seven meetings with resource group members were held during the reporting period. The Voices for BioJustice website was updated and new posts regularly added to the Voices for BioJustice Facebook Page. Cross-cutting papers are in development focused on benefit-sharing; scope; and digital sequence information. These draw on material at a global level and also from each of the three countries.

VIDEO WORK

Videos undertaken in South Africa, Namibia, and Cameroon, as well as the additional partner countries of Mexico, The Philippines, and Peru, were edited into synthesis videos on key policy topics, as well as stand-alone interviews that address particular topics. These will be loaded onto the project website, and planned media platform, in late 2019 and early 2020. Videos addressing particular webinar topics will be developed to set the stage for subsequent webinar presentations and discussions in February 2020.

Video work around the rooibos case in South Africa will continue at the Community of Practice meeting on 30 October 2019.

The Voices for BioJustice team have completed an Ethics in Filmmaking document, to share will collaborators, and serve as a crowd-sourced resource. Once layout is completed it will be made available on the Voices for BioJustice website.

UCT and EMG – SOUTH AFRICA

Much of the focus in this period has been on organising the second Community of Practice Meeting on Access and Benefit Sharing in the Cederberg region. The meeting will take place on 30 October 2019, and as with the first meeting, will involve a wide range of actors in the indigenous products sphere. The National Department of Environmental Affairs will open the event and will give a presentation on the national biodiversity strategy, ABS legal frameworks and ongoing indigenous biodiversity-related projects. The meeting will focus on lessons learned from engaging with benefit sharing and the intersection of ABS and conservation. In preparation for the meeting, printed materials such as the ABS Booklet (in Afrikaans) and the Rooibos Policy Brief were updated.

A second ABS training event was scheduled to take place in July 2019 but had to be cancelled due to ongoing delays with the rooibos benefit-sharing agreement (see Section 2a below). The training event, with rooibos farmers and knowledge holders from the Heiveld Cooperative, has been rescheduled to February 2020.

Research on honeybush is progressing well, undertaken by PhD student Sthembile Ndwandwe. This research complements well that on rooibos given that the issues linked to benefit sharing are very similar.

A paper is current in preparation by Michelle Nott, comparing ABS implementation in theory and in practice in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. She is also exploring the question of cross-border regulatory frameworks.

IRDNC - NAMIBIA

Activities during this period have largely focused on supporting the ABS agreement between the Kunene Conservancies Indigenous Natural Products Trust (KCINPT) and the Esse Trust.

Myro (the *Myrothamnus flabellifolia* extract produced by Esse) was listed in the publication 'UL Prospector' in order to access markets in the EU and US. It is essential to acquire distributors within these markets to make the export of the ingredient logistically feasible. Greenline Botanicals as well as Avon are interested in the distribution of Myro. Myro is already being used in several Esse products and the first ABS payment from Esse is expected shortly.

The IRDNC INP Technical Advisor provided ongoing support to the KCINPT and the Opuwo Processing Facility. The Technical Advisor met with the Conservancy Management Committee of Ojtiu West Conservancy and Community Forest in July 2019; reviewing the Myro quality requirements and visiting potential harvesting sites. Although the extreme drought conditions resulted in very little new growth and domestic stock have grazed the plants, there was enough suitable material to supply Esse. The harvest took place in July 2019.

IRDNC project staff attended the bi-annual conservancy planning event, giving updates on the Myro ABS contract and explaining that ABS cannot be implemented until the regulations have been passed. The regulations were expected to be finalised by June 2019, but to date have not been promulgated.

The ABS training materials produced in Year 2 have been updated. The materials will be submitted to the Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment for their review before printing. The booklets will be distributed at the bi-annual planning meetings for conservancies and community forests in January and February 2020.

PPI and FOREP – USA and CAMEROON

In Cameroon, work continued on a draft journal article on ABS and *Irvingia*, building upon the earlier completed literature reviews, the case study on *Irvingia gabonensis*, and policy briefs (on *Irvingia* and ABS, and Laws and Policies regulating Genetic and Biological Resources in Cameroon). Students continue to be important collaborators in all aspects of the project.

A marketing and policy study of trends in biotrade, and bio-innovation, and the impact of ABS and other policies, over the last thirty years was expanded in July 2019, in order to provide a stronger foundation for exploration of contemporary policies and their impacts. This project component will complement the others and will be completed in March 2020.

Team members contributed to the design of webinars that will take place in early 2020, on the topics of (1) The Scope of ABS, (2) Traditional Knowledge and ABS, and (3) Biotrade/NTFP Law and Policy.

In June – August 2019, videos were filmed in villages on Mt Cameroon, as well as in local towns, reviewing key issues with local groups. Editing of videos is underway, and these are integrated into larger videos addressing key policy concerns and issues, as well as stand-alone interviews, and will be launched on the project website in early 2020.

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, continued delays in the finalisation of the rooibos benefit-sharing agreement (now planned for 1 November 2019) and associated sensitivities have resulted in a reluctance of the signatories to be drawn into project activities. Although this has caused delays and has led to some frustrations, this has not affected the project's progress as we have rescheduled activities.

Implementation of ABS in Namibia cannot become a reality until the regulations are available. The finalisation of the ABS training booklet was delayed in the hope that the regulations would be implemented so that any implications or requirements from these could be included in the booklet. However, given the timeframe of this project, the IRDNC team have proceeded with finalisation of the content without information about the regulations.

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?

No other issues at this time.

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 R25 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 DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**