

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

Project reference	24-024
Project title	Integrating Biodiversity & Elephants into Peace & Development
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Burma
Lead organisation	Elephant Family (EF)
Partner(s)	Compass Films (CF) Grow Back for Posterity – Myanmar (GBP) WCS Myanmar (WCS)
Project leader	Ms. Monica Wrobel
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	31 st October 2017 - HYR1
Project website/blog/social media etc.	http://elephant-family.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/myanmar-burma/biodiversity-and-elephants

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).

0.1 Partner's inception meeting

Postponed – Due to the initial delay in receiving project funds and seasonal restrictions on field visits, the partner's meeting and field review were re-scheduled to January 2018. Partner agreements and project activities have begun, and the conversations necessary for the project have been conducted via email and skype. WCS, CF and GBP were able to hold in-country meetings and kept EF updated.

Output 1: Families across Tanintharyi area (5,400) are empowered & knowledgeable about bottom-up land use management processes that incorporate ecosystem functionality & local land use needs under current development, & under future effects of resettled migrants

1.1 Review existing land-use plans

Ongoing – WCS has consolidated and completed a desk-review of the raw data for 48 existing land-use plans. They set priorities for field-work for communities to be involved in the participatory review of these plans in the coming dry season.

1.2 .Complete participatory land-use planning in at least an additional 21 villages

Ongoing – WCS has engaged with relevant local CSOs, including Takapaw, Wahplaw, and Tripnet – the key local groups that will deliver the land-use plans in high biodiversity areas. WCS also engaged closely with the Tanintharyi Nature Reserve Project (TNRP), a Myanmar government project that manages the only Protected Area in the Tanintharyi region.

1.3 Feed learning from local level into regional and national land-use policy reform

Ongoing - WCS are engaged with key policy platforms, both with government and civil society groups. Most significantly, this includes the newly formed Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) team now collecting data for a region-wide Tanintharyi Development Plan.

1.4 Monitoring of livelihoods and wellbeing, completed in a representative sample of target villages.

Future Activity - Scheduled for Q4

Output 2: Spatial plans completed & adopted in villages in Tanintharyi area based upon existing knowledge of important wildlife corridors & economically productive zones and available as examples and learning tools for other regions in Myanmar & other Asian countries.

2.1 Through combining all 40 village plans into a broader landscape plan, incorporate this into district and regional development planning

Ongoing – WCS has consolidated the data from 48 existing land-use plans, as well as other land-zonation categories (Protected Areas, Reserve Forests, Community Forests, etc.), and identified key gaps for completion of data collection in the coming dry season. WCS has shared all these data with the government, the OneMap Myanmar project, and the JICA team now developing the region-wide

Development Plan. Other data collection about the locations of existing and proposed forest cover change, mining, oil palm and rubber plantations is also ongoing.

2.2 *Present plans to regional government for acceptance and recognition*

Future Activity - Scheduled for Year 2-3

2.3 *Develop and distribute reports on the benefits of the approach for community land tenure and livelihoods*

Ongoing – WCS has engaged with the USAID Land Tenure project to contribute information to the materials being developed on customary land tenure and participatory mapping.

2.4 *Attend and support Land Core Group workshops to mainstream this approach with other local communities in Myanmar.*

Ongoing – WCS has already presented the initial approach at a regional meeting in Lao, which also included representatives from the French and Lao governments. The engagement with the JICA team has strong potential for the approach to be replicated throughout Tanintharyi, and disseminated more broadly.

Output 3: Important areas of connected habitat for elephants & for biodiversity intactness are identified in relevant villages in Tanintharyi area such that HEC can be mitigated.

3.1 *Local communities actively engaged with Elephant movement/presence surveys and mapping.*

3.2 *Hotspots of likely HEC under current and future scenarios identified*

(3.1 & 3.2) Ongoing - We have started planning with a local expert civil-society group, Wahplaw, which specialises in biodiversity, to plan surveys of elephant activity, and potential hotspots of HEC. This team has extensive knowledge of the region, and can actively survey in areas under KNU control, not easily accessible to the rest of the project team. We have also compiled existing data on elephant presence from previous surveys, to populate predictive models of elephant movement patterns.

3.3 *Delivery of HEC awareness/mitigation work in hotspots*

Future Activity - Scheduled for Q4

3.4 *Regular Forest cover monitoring via GIS and remote sensing.*

Ongoing - The team have used satellite imagery to set baselines, also working closely with government partners and OneMap staff to build local capacity for forest cover monitoring. WCS also supported TNRP to do compile forest cover monitoring into their new Management Planning, which includes community support.

3.5 *Team members from KNU and civil society groups, trained in HEC awareness and PLM*

Ongoing - Some initial engagement and planning have begun.

Output 4: 40 village representatives are empowered in HEC mitigation in Tanintharyi & awareness about HEC is created across all 190 villages in five areas such that vulnerable groups are able to co-exist peacefully with elephants & have the facility to mitigate elephant encounters

4.1 *Production of educational kits for HEC awareness/mitigation*

Delayed – Education kits have been ordered and will be available for distribution for the start of outreach activities in November.

4.2 *Training workshop held for new GBP educational teams and WCS team*

4.3 *Introductory workshop for teacher/headmasters to introduce campaign material.*

4.4 *Hold school outreach conferences at 40 schools annually each year*

(4.2-4.4) Delayed until November 2017

4.5 *Conduct impact surveys to analyse effectiveness of the HEC awareness campaign*

4.6 *Monitor and evaluate campaign progress*

4.7 *Adapt content of educational kits to meet new and changing requirements and realities as needed.*

4.8 *Hold workshops for NGO and media representatives.*

(4.5-4.8) Delayed until Q4

All activities under Output 4 were delayed due to late release of funds for this grant. However, meetings were held in July 2017 in Myanmar between Compass Films (CF), Grow Back for Posterity (GBP) and WCS representatives in Yangon to coordinate a smooth collaboration.

Meetings were held in person as part of an elephant conservation delegation between CF, GBP and the Minister of Forestry of Myanmar in July 2017 to provide an update on the first year success of the H.EL.P. outreach campaign and to inform the government of the Darwin/Elephant Family sponsored extension for 3 years. Full cooperation was guaranteed by the highest authorities.

A personal meeting was held in October 2017 between GBP representatives and the Prime Minister of Yangon division. Yangon Division is one of the key Human Elephant Conflict regions in the country. Full access for our teams to field sites was confirmed and introductions to other Prime Ministers of HEC affected regions were initiated.

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.

There were no significant changes to the project or activities. Compass Films and Grow Back for Posterity had to delay field activities by two months due to the late release of funds from the Darwin Initiative, however the schedule will catch up by the start of Year 2.

WCS field activities have been able to commence with existing co-funding, and there have been no significant delays. The recent increased involvement of the Japanese Government, through JICA, in the development planning for the region has been a strong benefit for the project, and we expect this to lead to increased engagement with regional government. However, the anticipated highway construction project in the region has now commenced, and we are working with other partners to comment on the draft EIA for the highway project, which we expect may have a strong impact on the movement of large animals.

The outreach activities by CF and GBP with communities builds upon an exchange of knowledge and trust, demonstrated in April 2017 when villagers shared intelligence about a large-scale poaching incident of over 20 elephant carcasses found skinned in Ayerwady and Bago Divisions. The Darwin Initiative funding enables on-the-ground collaboration with the communities and the partners were able to respond with a TV awareness campaign to mobilise the Burmese population to reject elephant products and motivate the authorities to take urgent action against poachers. The highest government officials and civil society leaders rallied to the elephants' cause and participated on camera, expressing their support. The campaign will begin broadcasting in November 2017. In addition, we are designing specific anti-poaching educational material for integration in the educational kits funded by the Darwin project, supplementing the existing safety messages. Match support from US Fish and Wildlife Service and Shared Earth Foundation are supporting the TV awareness campaign.

The current refugee crises on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border has no impact on the project implementation, as the geographic areas affected are far apart from our areas of operation. No local political repercussions on the project are to be expected.

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**