



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

<b>Project reference</b>	24 025
<b>Project title</b>	Community reforestation for biodiversity, livelihood diversification and culture
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	East Timor
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Charles Sturt University
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Group Training Northern Territory and Carbon Offsets Timor Leste World Vision Timor-Leste RAEBIA Australian Landcare International
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Joanne Millar</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	<i>HYR3</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	<a href="https://communityreforestationtimorleste.wordpress.com/">https://communityreforestationtimorleste.wordpress.com/</a>

**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).**

**Output 1 Expansion of tree plantations and agroforestry development**

The last six months has been the dry season in Timor Leste so farmers have been watering and weeding their tree plantations, particularly the 48,000 new seedlings planted from January to March 2019. Currently, there are 151 project sites (including 46 new ones this year), covering an area of approximately 75 ha with 115 farmers involved and a high school. Australian Red Cedar is being trialled in four nurseries for planting in 2020.

Carbon Offset Timor Leste (COTI- the new local NGO formed to manage the Darwin project with GTNT) were successful in getting an EU grant of \$ to scale out tree plantations and capacity building to Manatuto Vila subdistrict over the next six months (Sept 2019 to March 2020). Two demonstration plots will be established to teach agroforestry best practices and carbon sequestration monitoring. The demonstration plots will consist of 2 hectares in a low dryland area and 1 hectare in the upland area. In addition, COTI will identify an area of 10 to 18 hectares in Manatuto Vila to plant around 20,000 trees. A tree nursery will be established in Manatuto Vila to supply seedlings (timber and fruit trees) to interested farmers. These trees will be included in future carbon offset bids. It is estimated that this will increase the number of households involved to 120, and the total plantation area to approx. 100ha by end of Year 4 as set in the logic framework.

Future additional tree plantings in areas that are part of the Darwin project (Laclubar and Soibada) are included in the table below. Implementation is taking place through recently created farmers' groups.

Species and area (ha)	Year									
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Swietenia sp.	9	9	9	9	13	13	14	14	18	17
Gmelina sp	2	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Casuarina sp	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Gliricidia sp.	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Area (ha)</b>	20	20	22	22	25	25	26	27	31	30
<b>Total (ha)</b>	247									

### Output 3. Forest carbon certification

The Project Design Document was submitted to Plan Vivo Foundation in June, and reviewed by a Technical Advisory Committee in July-August. Responses to the technical and non-technical components of the review have been sent to Plan Vivo. We are waiting for further review and approval before progressing to the third-party auditing phase. A copy of the revised PDD will be available after Plan Vivo approval.

Two conference papers were presented in June- July 2019. Alex Sarmento presented a paper titled "*Community forest carbon schemes in Timor Leste: 20 years on*" at the Timor Leste Studies Association conference in Dili from 27-28 June 2019. The paper will be published in the conference proceedings later in 2019.

Jorge Ramos presented a paper on "*Facilitating transition from degraded commons to reforested land and better livelihoods using voluntary carbon schemes: Lessons from Timor-Leste*" at the International Association for Study of the Commons conference in Peru. The attached paper will be published in the Digital Library of the Commons later in 2019.



Jorge Ramos presenting IASC paper in Lima

In June COTI participated in several events in Dili that demonstrates the project's involvement in the development of Timor Leste's climate change and environmental policies and networking. Alex Sarmento was part of the organizing committee of the National Climate Change Conference that took place in the Ministry of Finance and he presented at the conference. COTI was a participant in the Agriculture and Fisheries Development Partners Meeting. Alex Sarmento also participated in a 2-day working group meeting in Aileu for the preparation of the Sixth National Report on Biodiversity).

A team of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) accompanied COTI and GTNT to visit the project sites. The Secretary of State for the Environment also participated in the annual general meeting of farmers in June 2019.

#### **Output 4. Biodiversity research and education**

The following update addresses the reviewer comments from the annual report review. “*Report indicates that a more comprehensive biodiversity baseline survey will be carried out towards the end of Year 3, but this would have ideally been achieved much earlier in the project. The Report notes that a CSU ecologist is unable to travel to Timor-Leste, and it is unclear whether the project will have the staff to undertake the surveys later this year, and if not, whether a contingency plan has been put in place.*”

Dr Graeme Gillespie, a wildlife ecologist from Darwin, Australia, visited Laclubar and Soibada with Dr Joanne Millar from 18th to 23 September 2019 to assess the potential for a more robust scientific biodiversity assessment in 2020. Graeme is Director of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Northern Territory Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Australia. He has many years of experience conducting biodiversity research in Borneo, Sulawesi and Australia. We inspected the agroforestry plantations and four remnant native forest habitat types: dry woodland dominated by *Eucalyptus alba*; tall open forest dominated by *E. urophylla*; monsoon rainforest and montane cloud rainforest. Given the estimated low biodiversity value of the agroforestry sites, Dr Gillespie recommended taking a landscape approach to assess the distribution and composition of biodiversity by conducting repeat sampling across all five forest types for birds, reptiles, frogs and small mammals. The information will allow us to;

- Evaluate the role of agroforestry environments and remnant native habitats for supporting biodiversity, and the co-benefits from carbon schemes.
- Identify management options for maintaining or enhancing biodiversity values.
- Provide a baseline for future monitoring and evaluation of wildlife and habitat condition.
- Increase awareness about biodiversity and its importance in local communities.
- Provide training and capacity building for undertaking biodiversity research.
- Publish scientifically rigorous research in international journals.

One hectare plots will be established in six patches of each forest habitat type, and 6 -10 agroforestry sites. Plots will be chosen in larger patches where possible, subject to accessibility and landowner permission. Each plot will be surveyed for wildlife as follows:

- Two camera traps will be deployed for two weeks (targeting mammals and ground birds).
- Four pitfall traps with drift fences and funnels will be installed and operated for four days and nights. These will be checked every morning and afternoon (targeting reptiles, frogs and small mammals).
- Ten minute bird surveys will be conducted each morning and each evening for four days.
- Twenty minute reptile searches will be conducted during the day.
- Twenty minute spotlight surveys will be conducted on each of four nights (targeting nocturnal reptiles, mammals, owls and frogs).

It is highly likely that undescribed species of reptiles, frogs and possibly small mammals will be encountered. Where necessary tissue samples and museum specimens will be collected to aid species descriptions. Fieldwork will be undertaken by two ecologists from Australia, with assistance from GTNT field staff, local people villages, and local experts on birds and reptiles. The research will be carried out in April-May 2020 at the end of the wet season when wildlife is more active. Additional funding is being sought to supplement Darwin funding. See proposal attached. A Change request form has been submitted to reflect these changes to output 4.



Dr Gillespie in casuarina plantation with project field staff and landowner, Ernesto Martins.

A Laclubar school nature club will be formed in 2020 to involve secondary students in learning about wildlife species, the biodiversity research and conservation practices. A pictorial booklet will be produced and field activities organised.

### **Output 5. Livelihoods impacts determined**

Case studies were developed and posted on the website about 1) women currently involved in the agroforestry program 2) women not participating but interested, and 3) women unable to participate and reasons why. Go to <https://communityreforestationtimorleste.wordpress.com>

COTI has launched a new program to enable women from Laclubar and Soibada to start up new agro-food enterprises. Thirty five women from Laclubar and Soibada participated in 2 days training in August 2019 to learn how to make jams, saunces, and tamarind candies using locally available ingredients. The training was funded by GTNT and IntoWork Australia, and delivered by an expert from the Philippines. Ten women have been provided with a loan of \$400US each to set up their businesses. The funds are to be repaid with zero interest rate. The funds will be rotated to other women until it reaches as many women as possible in a revolving fund mechanism. A female project manager has been appointed.



Women with their products after the training course

### **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.**

A change request form and revised logic framework has been approved by LTS to reflect changes to the biodiversity research from a simple baseline survey in only agroforestry plantations to a more comprehensive landscape assessment using rigorous scientific design, methods and analysis. Annual household surveys have been altered to one baseline survey and one final survey due to the slow nature of livelihood change from reforestation and carbon certification yet to be achieved. In depth, qualitative interviews were conducted to develop case studies about womens views on reforestation, future aspirations and livelihoods.

**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 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](mailto: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**