



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

Project reference:	24-028: Darwin Half Year Report
Project title	Future-proofing Cambodian Wildlife-Friendly farming: securing conservation and livelihoods
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Cambodia
Lead organisation	Sansom Mlup Prey
Partner(s)	CIRAD
Project leader	Nicholas Spencer
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	April 1 st to September 30 th 2018. Half-year report.
Project website/blog/social media etc.	http://ibisrice.com/ https://www.facebook.com/lbisRice/

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).

From April 1st to September 30th significant progress has been made across activities described in the workplan. In June 2018, 24 additional VMN's received training in organic internal control monitoring bringing the total number trained to 36 VMN's. (Activity 1.2)

The testing and adaptation of drought-resilient agricultural practices, complementary soil conversions techniques and levelling and water efficiency trials have seen the most significant progress. The VMN's have continued to have an integral role in the adoption of these new test and techniques. The activities that have been promoted and established by VMN's include:

- In August, SMP and CIRAD co-lead a workshop in Kampong Cham on the benefits of climate resilient seed strains and cover crops to improve soil fertility. Three VMN's from Preah Vihear attended this workshop.
- In July and August, five farmers, three in Tmat Boey and two in Dungplet, commenced trail plots by growing three separate varieties of rice in order to establish the most climate resilient variety. These types are; fragrant rice, sticky rice and white rice. These have been applied to different soil types in order to ascertain the most effective and sustainable combination for farming climate resilient rice. In Tmat Boey, these plots have additionally been established in different locations with one in the village and two in the forest.
- These trials will continue into the next quarter with an additional eight to nine farmers committing to cover crop trials in November 2018. (Activity 2.4)

The effect of the involvement by VMN's to promote climate resistant techniques is demonstrated in the increased growth of organic drought-resilient rice from 877 Ha in 2017 to 1323 Ha (with 1196 Ha in Preah Vihear), an increase of 446 Ha in the past 6 months (Activity 2.3). This rice has been produced from 623 families (440 from Preah Vihear) out of possible 1813 families. This is an increase of 133 from Year 1 and continues to be above the 20% target established at the inception of the project.

It is clear to conclude that, with the steady growth of farmers willing to adopt SMP practices and protocols in conjunction with the testing and adaptation of drought-resilient agricultural

practices. Organic paddy production is expected to be between 1000 MT and 1500MT, a significant increase from 494.91MT in Year 1 (Activity 4.3) and above the target established at inception.

Activities associated with Output 3 are well established in the Northern Plains and are a central component of protected area management in the area, providing the ongoing monitoring of efforts to avoid habitat and species loss. The indicators selected for measuring deforestation (3.1) and the number of critically endangered nests protected are appropriate for monitoring the achievement of Output 3.2. The deforestation analysis was completed showing that during year 1 the rate of forest loss across the wider landscape was 1.13% (against the baseline of 3.53%) and around target villages was 0.35% (against a baseline of 0.93%). The results for year 2 will be produced in April 2019. The year 1 deforestation results demonstrate that in combination with other conservation strategies, the project is delivering on the underlying premise of the Ibis Rice program, that a conditional price premium on rice can incentivise participating farmers to refrain from land clearance. Until the completion of the bird nest protection year (a full seasonal cycle), it is too early to draw conclusions based on a comparison of year 2 results with the baseline.

Between April 2018 and September 2018, more than 89 local people from 17 villages in the Northern Plains were directly employed and trained to protect nests of threatened birds. 204 globally threatened nests, including 31 critically endangered giant ibis nests, were protected, fledging 105 chicks (including 53 giant ibis). Throughout the end of the dry season and throughout the rainy season (May - December) community wildlife rangers conducted awareness raising and biodiversity SMART patrols in important breeding habitat areas for globally threatened water-birds in the Northern Plains landscape.

The progress on the impacts of the IBIS Rice program on threatened bird populations, habitat trends and human livelihoods is on schedule. Data on household poverty status have been collected and analysed. An interim report has been completed for the data from a subsection of the sample. The full report will be available by August 2019 (Activity 5.1).

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 year 1 the number of critically endangered birds' nests protected decline by 21% to 23 since the baseline of 2014/15. This can likely be attributed to high mortality events late in the 2015 season, potentially due to hunting, poisoning and low food availability due to drought. Long term trend data have shown a stabilisation of threatened bird populations in and around protected areas, however, so this confirms the importance of long term monitoring.

WCS monitors forest loss and land use change across the Northern Plains landscapes where the Ibis Rice project works on a monthly basis using Landsat/Sentinel imagery and creates annual forest cover maps based on a standardised, qualitative forest monitoring system. Areas of suspected land use change are pinpointed on a map and provided to the protected area manager to plan a response. WCS community rangers and Ministry of Environment patrol team staff triangulate these data during regular patrols and log any land clearance in the Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool (SMART). This forms the basis of community-level verification of this land clearing through the compliance monitoring system to identify the offenders who are then logged as non-compliant. Regarding ranger law enforcement activities, a key lesson learned over the first 6 months of year 2, was that MoE law enforcement teams required additional technical support on patrol work planning and training in the use of standard operating procedures. In response to this, WCS has been engaging at national and landscape levels to build government support for the introduction of updated procedures and linking of detailed work plans with patrol spatial targets.

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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?
From the inception of the Darwin project in April 2017 to September 2018, we have found no issues concerning 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 R24 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**