



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	25-008
Project title	Integrating Natural Capital into Sustainable Development Decision-Making in Uganda
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Uganda
Lead organisation	UNEP-WCMC
Partner(s)	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), National Planning Authority, Uganda (NPA), National Environment Management Authority, Uganda (NEMA), Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBoS), Institute for Development of Environmental Economic Accounting (IDEEA Group)
Project leader	<i>Nadine Bowles-Newark</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	April 2020 – September 2020 <i>HYR3</i>
Project website/blog/social media	Webpage: https://www.unep-wcmc.org/featured-projects/nca-in-uganda Blog: https://www.iied.org/environment-or-economy-how-uganda-uses-natural-capital-accounts-policy-making

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Activity 1.4 National Team develop communication strategy with support from IIED and UNEP-WCMC.

The NEMA team has completed the workplan to accompany the communication strategy and has started to identify month-by-month opportunities for engagement with local stakeholders. The team has made a list of relevant international days and local events which will provide the hook to talk about the relevance of natural capital accounting and the work NEMA is doing.

Activity 1.5 Communication Materials developed and hosted via various on-line fora (e.g., IIED, UNEP-WCMC, NEMA, NPA, WAVES websites), international benchmarking for best practice presented at key meetings (e.g., CoP 13, World Data Forum, WAVES Policy Forum, CONNECT Meetings / National workshops) and the findings from the project widely shared via social media.

The NEMA team has held regular meetings with IIED communications staff and is writing content to raise awareness of the value of natural capital accounts. Content is being increasingly promoted via the NEMA Twitter account. Work is starting on a range of infographics to illustrate what accounts are showing in relation to natural resource policies – an accessible way to ‘translate’ the technical information for policymakers. The team is also thinking about producing simple two pagers about each natural capital account to provide background for the stakeholders they are meeting. An article has been produced on NCA and is live on the NEMA website here <https://www.nema.go.ug/projects/vicious-and-virtuous-cycles-ecosystem-services-and-valuation> .

Activity 2.2 National Team to develop meta-database and establish institutional responsibilities to support biodiversity related Natural Capital Accounting in the long term.

Completed using established structure of the UBOS official metadata dictionary.

Activity 2.3 UNEP-WCMC, IDEEA Group and National Team test method notes and compile biodiversity related Natural Capital Accounts.

Fisheries accounts are complete. Land degradation accounts being finalised following Quality Assurance process. Biodiversity and Tourism accounts drafted, gaps identified and being addressed through targeted stakeholder meetings. All accounts to be published by the end of year, following internal Quality Assurance and publications guidelines etc.

Activity 3.2 UNEP-WCMC, IDEEA Group and National Team run capacity building sessions in country and remotely for producer groups

Preliminary planning of capacity building sessions has begun, including exploring options for remote training and participation.

Activity 4.1 UNEP-WCMC, IIED and National Team select one sector to work with for detailed application of NCA in decision making context, on basis of policy cycles and user workshop outcomes.

Means of sector selection discussed, including options for prioritisation and sector engagement. Planning for selection / prioritisation meeting to be held in November 2020.

Activity 4.2 National Team develop Roadmap for detailed application of NCA for integrated sectoral development planning.

Roadmap outline drafted by IIED and discussed with UNEP-WCMC and NEMA.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The national consultants compiling the biodiversity-related Natural Capital Accounts for land degradation and biodiversity and tourism have been subject to competing work priorities. This has impacted their time commitment on the NCA work in particular, leading to longer timelines and delays in finalisation of accounts. Weekly project management meetings between UNEP-WCMC the National Team Project Manager (Mr. Tom Geme) have proven to be a useful tool to maintain regular communication of deadlines and ensure the consultants are responding to all review comments. The impact has been a delay in finalisation of NCA for Land Degradation and Biodiversity and Tourism. The consultant working on the Fisheries NCA has worked efficiently and these accounts are finalised. The project budget and timetable will remain unchanged as all accounts are anticipated to be finalised ahead of other activities.

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has severely affected the project in the following ways:

The initial lockdown period (March-July 2020) saw severe restrictions to movement and meetings of people in Uganda. This limited the engagement the project team could have with stakeholders and caused additional delays in finalisation of accounts. Face to face meetings in Uganda have now resumed, with restrictions limiting the number of people in attendance. The international partners can mostly attend these meetings remotely, however there have been some bandwidth issues in connections, leading to difficulties in communication at some points.

Office closures in England meant that the UNEP-WCMC project team was unable to meet face to face for a number of weeks. The UNEP-WCMC office was opened for a short period with restrictions on the number of people in attendance. The guidance from the UK government is to work from home where possible, therefore the UNEP-WCMC project team is once again communicating with each other remotely.

The Ugandan border was closed to international travellers from March until October. This has meant that face to face meetings with the national team and the NCA consultants have been impossible. If face to face direct support had been available, the NCA could potentially have been compiled more efficiently.

Although the Ugandan border has recently re-opened, it is envisaged that the face to face training scheduled for February 2021 (Activity 3.5 and 4.3) will be affected by further restrictions. Therefore we are exploring options to conduct the training and mission remotely. Extra time for planning these activities will be factored in to ensure the activities have the same (or greater) impact as originally planned.

Various key international meetings have been delayed due to Covid-19 (e.g. CoP 13). Other avenues for communicating project outputs and outcomes have been explored including through the WAVES work, Connect project and others. A remote presentation on the project was prepared and delivered in March and the materials can be updated and delivered at future remote opportunities.

Finally, there have been challenges due to staff sickness at UNEP-WCMC. The Project Manager at UNEP-WCMC contracted the 'slow Covid' variant of Covid-19, leading to a rapid restructure of the team at UNEP-WCMC. The Project Coordinator was able to dedicate more time to the project to ensure a smooth transition, and it is anticipated that the original Project Manager will return from Maternity leave and re-join the project in November 2020.

Impact on budget and timetable:

- 6-month no-cost project extension required (granted April 2020)
- Re-planning of budget and timetable required following delays in activities (completed and submitted April 2020)

2c. 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

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

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. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

None

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.

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: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**