Darwin Initiative Main and Post Project Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Writing a Darwin Report" guidance: (http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/reporting-forms). It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)

Submission Deadline: 30th April 2020

Darwin Project Information

Project reference	26-022
Project title	Uprating community forest management in Nepal: Enhancing biodiversity and livelihoods
Country/ies	Nepal
Lead organisation	ForestAction Nepal
Partner institution(s)	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL) Federation of Community Forestry Users (FECOFUN) Jhapa Division Forest Office (DFO) Jhapa
Darwin grant value	**298,439 GBP**
Start/end dates of project	01 June 2019 / 31 May 2022
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2019 – Mar 2020) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	June 2019-March 2020, Annual report Year 1
Project Leader name	Naya Sharma Paudel, PhD
Project website/blog/social media	Jalthal Biodiversity @BiodiversityNep; Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/184289092@N07/
Report author(s) and date	Naya Sharma Paudel, Lila Nath Sharma, Bhaskar Adhikari, Sanjaya Raj Tamang, Ambika P. Gautam

1. Project summary

Nepal's Community Forestry (CF) programme, pioneered in the 1980s, has been largely successful in increasing forest cover, restoring degraded hill slopes and bringing substantial social benefits to rural people. Currently over 20,000 Community Forests User Groups (CFUGs), manage about 2 million ha. of forest[1]. Despite these achievements, regulatory instruments, management plans, and institutional practices focus narrowly on a few timber species[2]. Consequently, CF management is heavily skewed towards extractive use, and non-

[1] Community forestry division, Ministry of forests and soil conservation 2019.

[2] Acharya KP 2004. Does Community Forests Management Supports Biodiversity Conservation? Evidences from Two Community Forests from the Mid Hills of Nepal. Journal of Forest and Livelihood 4(1): 44-54

monetary values- including biodiversity and ecosystem services are largely ignored[3]. There is a lack of concrete effort to mainstream biodiversity within CF management as recognized by Nepal's NBSAP (2014-2020)[4].

This project is taking Jalthal forest (Figure 1) as a model forest system to develop strategies to promote biodiversity and livelihood while addressing site specific threats to biodiversity, based on participatory action research. Jalthal is a 6000 ha remnant moist tropical forest with diverse ecosystems (mixed broadleaved forest, swamps, lakes, rivers, hillocks). It is an Important Plant Area (IPA) with several threatened flora (*Cycas pectinata, Magnolia champaca, Rauvolfia serpentina, Dioscorea deltoidea*)[5] and fauna (*Manis crassicaudata*, *Elephas maximus*, *Leptoptilos javanicus*), and has unique assemblage of tropical and subtropical plant species. The forest is managed by 22 CFUGs and is an important livelihood source for over 80,000 local people including some indigenous groups-*Meche, Dhimal and Rajbanshi*.

The biodiversity rich forest having high social and livelihood significance is being subjected to multiple threats. These include invasive species, human-wildlife conflict (particularly human-elephant), poaching, illegal timber extraction and timber focused management. Invasion of *Mikania micrantha* has become the most critical one. Timber focused management coupled with *Mikania* invasion has hampered biodiversity which in turn has negatively impacted forest dependent local people.

The project aims to mainstream biodiversity conservation in Nepal's community forests through demonstration of model strategies at site level and capacity building coupled with national level policy dialogues. Following are the specific objectives of the project:

1. To improve forest condition and conserve forest biodiversity through sustainable forest management and capacity enhancement of community forests user group (CFUGs).
2. To demonstrate models of forest restoration by managing and controlling the invasion of invasive alien plant species (IAPS), particularly *Mikania micrantha*.
3. To mainstream biodiversity in community forestry programme and policies.
4. To develop practical models of integrating biodiversity and forest-based enterprises for livelihood benefits of forest dependent poor and marginalised people.

This project is being implemented in Jalthal forest in Jhapa district. Jhapa district is located in eastern lowland of Nepal and boarders with India in the east and south (Figure 1). Jalthal forest is located in the lowest elevation point i. e. 60 meter above sea level (m.a.s.l.) in Nepal.

[3] Shrestha UB et al. 2010. Biodiversity conservation in community forests of Nepal: Rhetoric and reality. International Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation Vol. 2 (5): 98-104.

[4] Nepal Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020). Government of Nepal.

[5] Bhattarai KR 2017. Enumeration of Flowering plants of Terai Sal forest of Jalthal, Eastern Nepal. J. Plant Res. 15(1): 14-20

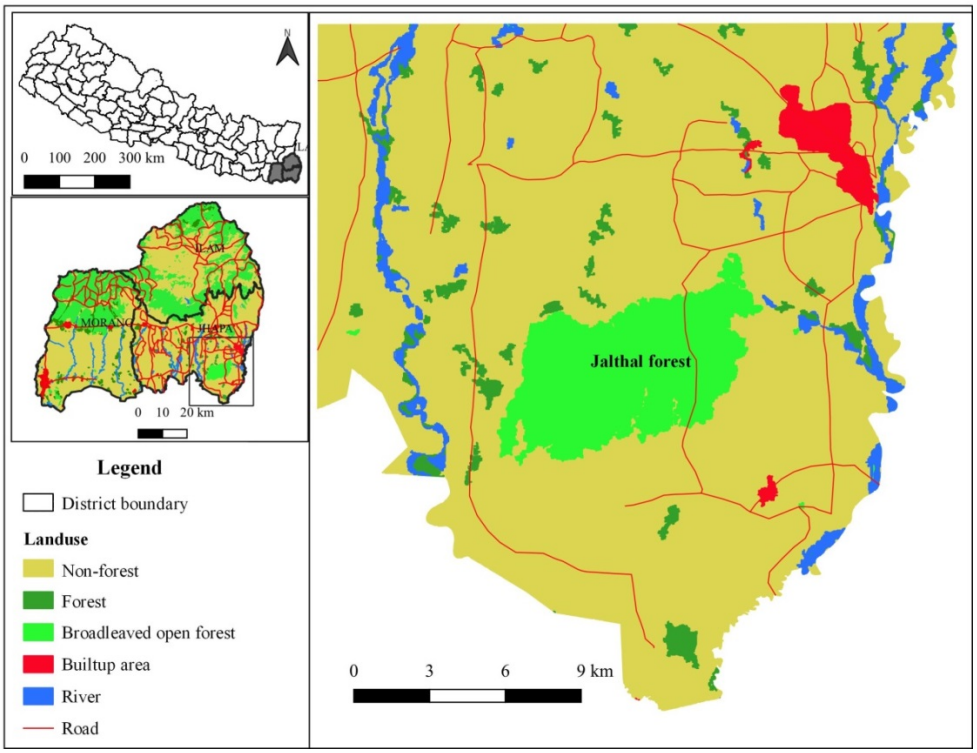

Figure 1: Map of project site 'Jalthal forest' (Detail maps are in Doc-20)

2. Project partnerships

This project is led by ForestAction Nepal, and the collaborating partners are: Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) UK, Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL), Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN) and Division Forest Office Jhapa. ForestAction Nepal as the lead organisation is coordinating with all project partners. All partner institutions are undertaking their activities in coordination with the project lead organisation, and as agreed in the bilateral contract. Separate sub-contracts have been made with KAFCOL and FECOFUN for smooth execution of the project activities. FECOFUN is coordinating with 22 CFUGs in the field. KAFCOL is working with capacity building, *Mikania* cover mapping and analysis, and site level assessments of potential enterprises. RBGE researcher Dr Bhaskar Adhikari is working closely with ForestAction's project manager Dr Lila Nath Sharma, and has attended the project inception meeting on 9th June 2019 (Doc-1). Dr Mark Watson project CoPI led RBGE visit to the project site in October 2019 (Doc-2).

In-country partners meet at least every month to discuss about project activities. A regular contact is maintained with UK partner (RBGE) through emails and Skype meetings. A project management committee has been formed under the leadership of the Project Leader. Project Manager has organised six separate meetings with district level partners, including FECOFUN and DFO during the last 10 months.

Beside partner institutions, the project has developed several new relationships with other expert individuals and institutions. Prof. Bharat Babu Shrestha of Tribhuvan University, Nepal is supporting our activities as an invasive species expert. Yam Rawat, a Herpetologist at Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation helped us in assessing herpetofaunal diversity. Mr. Chiranjibi Khanal a conservationist helped us in assessing bird diversity. Mr Deben Kharel, a well-established local photographer joined us in bird photo and videography. Similarly, Dhan Raj Kandel, a pteridologist at Department of Plant Resources helped with fern exploration and education in the field. To raise awareness and to reach wider audiences we have also engaged local journalists in our field activities (Doc-2). Engagement of individuals from diverse institutions have not only broadened our project activities and identity but also benefited the project team from mutual leanings from these experts.

3. Project progress

This project started in June 2019, and made an excellent progress at the last 10 months. During this period, project site office established; staffs recruited; permission for project implementation obtained from federal government; activities under this project shared with local stakeholders; rapport and working relationship established with the 22 CFUGs; document on project concept and activities produced and printed copies disseminated, awareness material on invasive species *Mikania micrantha* prepared and hard copies disseminated; capacity building trainings organized for CFUG leaders and government officers, plantation initiated, restoration of degraded wetland started. Several surveys conducted to document biological and ecological wealth of Jalthal forest; awareness program organized for CFUG leaders; campaigns of invasive species removal organized, debate on conservation of forest biodiversity initiated, local level policies and programs were influenced through interaction with CFUG leaders.

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Project activities were started in time (June 2019) and we have successfully achieved almost all activities planned for year 1 under output **1**, **2** and **3**. However, we are slightly lagged behind in some of the activities under output **4** (Some activities planned for month of March were postponed due to nationwide lockdown in response to COVID-19 pandemics). Progresses against each activity have been listed in **Annex 1** of this report. Project staffing, site office establishment, briefing of projects to relevant authorities, permission from federal government were project preliminary works (Doc-2) accomplished in the beginning. We have published project introduction in Nepali language highlighting the theories and concept behind the project, expected outputs, major activities and approaches of project implementation (Doc- 002).

Output 1: Forests are sustainably managed with greater diversity, enhanced structural complexity and improved productivity, and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation enhanced

Activities undertaken in Year 1 (Activity number in **bold**): All the activities under this output planned for year 1 are completed satisfactorily. Project inception cum interaction programme was organised on 09 June 2019 at project site which was attended by project partners, stakeholders and representatives of CFUG leaders (Activity **1.1**, Doc-1). Five field education programmes including forest walk with experts and local people were organised to share knowledge between local people and experts (**1.2**, **1.3**, Doc-2). More than a dozen of informal meetings were organised with CFUG leaders to highlight Jalthal forest's ecological significance (**1.4**, Doc-2). Plantation was conducted in Durgavitta and Pathibhara Kalika CF (**1.5**, Doc-15). An interaction programme in January 14 and two trainings in March 2020 were successfully completed (**1.6**, Doc-2, 3, 4). The trainings were targeted to CFUG leaders and focussed on integrating biodiversity in community forest management plans. We organised six meetings with CFUG leaders and DFO staffs to renew the CFOPs, so far five CFOPs have been revised with biodiversity chapter in them (**1.6**, Doc 2, 5). Survey to explore, identify and document biodiversity of Jalthal forest has been started. So far birds (Doc-6), Herpetofauna (Doc-9), Flowering plants (Doc-7), Ferns (Doc-8) and palms (Doc-24) have been surveyed (**1.6, 1.**7). Forest Survey [vegetation, Diversity and disturbances] (Doc-2) have also been conducted that will form the basis for species prioritisation and conservation planning and Jalthal biodiversity register. Two 'species prioritisation workshops' were conducted (March18, 22, 2020 (**1.8**, Doc-10,). Background data have been collected for activities **1.9** and **1.10** (Doc-2, 6, 7, 8). An interaction and field demonstration programme were organised on awareness raising on forest fire (**1.11**, Doc-2).

Output 2. ***Mikania*** **invasion including satellite populations substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through 'integrated site management'**

Activities planned for year 1 under this output are completed. *Mikania* and other invasive species cover has been assessed by using remote sensing data and ground verification and report was prepared (**2.1**, Doc-20, 2). Invasive species management workshops were organised for CFUG leaders on 21st Oct 2019 (**2.2**, Doc-12). Similarly, a *Mikania* removal campaign was organised, which was initiated through a workshop on 13 Nov 2019 (**2.3**, Doc-2). Before the workshop, a meeting was organised with local coordinators of FECOFUN on 6 Nov

2019 (**2.3**, Doc-2). 22 CFUGs were supported technically and financially to remove *Mikania* from their respective forest (**2.3**, Doc-13). As a part of *Mikania* biomass management activity, compost production training using invasive species was organised on 9 Dec 2019 (**2.4**, Doc-2). A degraded but ecologically important wetland restoration has been started in Abhimukteswor CF (**2.5**, **2.7**, Doc-14). Invasive species cleared areas have now been planted with native species (**2.6**, Doc-15). Awareness material on importance of Jalthal biodiversity and invasive species has been published and printed copies distributed in project sites and beyond (**2.8**, Doc-002, 11, 24)

Output 3 Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication materials highlighting biodiversity conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders

Most of the activities under this output for year 1 have been completed in time. 30 CF Operational plans (CFOPs) have been reviewed to identify biodiversity gaps in CF management (**3.1**, Doc-17). A workshop (January 14) and two trainings (March 3, 4) were organised for CFUG leaders on biodiversity integration in CFOPs (**3.2**, Doc-3, 4). Similarly, three days training was organised for CFOP practitioner (Government officers) on concepts and practices of biodiversity conservation in CF and integration of biodiversity in community forest plans and practices. The training, which was organized in close coordination with the Provincial Forest Directorate, was participated by 16 forest officers from different districts in Province 1 who are directly engaged in facilitating CFUGs in community forest management planning (**3.2**, Doc-16). 30 CF Operational plans (CFOPs) have been reviewed (Doc-17) to identify biodiversity gaps in CF management that forms basis for peer reviewed article in year 2 (**3.5**, Doc-17). A popular article has been published (**3.6**, Doc-27). Some preliminary work has been done to produce documentary in year 2 (**3.7**, Doc-28).

Output 4 Forest based micro enterprises including ecotourism facilities established and operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods

Progress for this output is relatively slow as compared to other outputs; however, we can meet them in year 2. Livelihood support activities have to navigate through complex social and political dynamics which made us very cautious in choosing livelihood interventions. Study on potential forest-based microenterprises, NTFPs and agroforestry have been conducted (**4.1**, Doc-2, 18). Similarly, socio economic status of the people in project area including identification of potential target group has been conducted (Doc-19). Building on Doc 18 and 19 and interaction with target groups, business plans are being prepared (**4.2**). Existing NTFP cultivation in some forests were assessed (Doc-2). A women group has been formed to start fishery for income generation of poor women members (**4.3**, Doc-21). An exposure visit was organised for local people to aware them on ecotourism activities (**4.4**, **4.8**, Doc-25). Some local youths are engaged in birding activities with aim of developing them as nature guides (**4.4**, Doc-2). Local women group formed will get seed funds to establish fisheries (**4.7**, Doc-21). Some activities for output 4.6 and 4.7 were postponed in March due to travel restriction for COVID-19.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

As mentioned in section **3.1** and later in **Annex 1**, most of activities which are planned for year 1 have been completed, and some are on-going and will be completed in year 2 (mainly the livelihoods related activities in output 4). All indicators still remain appropriate. We are in good track towards the outputs.

Output 1: The project has been successful in raising awareness and sensitising stakeholders across scales about the importance of Jalthal forest and it's biodiversity. For example, in the past, there was plantation with exotic species in several places in the forest which has now been stopped by CFUG leaders. Instead, they have prioritised natural regeneration (Doc 22). This is an important step towards sustainable management of the forest. Through training and discussions (Doc, 3, 4, 12, 16), the project has been able influence public debate towards biodiversity conservation in Jalthal forest which ensures sustainable management of the forest. The project is also bringing scientific knowledge (Doc-6, 7, 8, 9, 10) which helps people in understanding biodiversity. *Mikania* removal (Doc-13) and plantation (Doc-15) coupled with natural regeneration help increasing structural and species diversity of the forest. Biodiversity

conservation has been included in forest management plans (Doc-5). Baseline data on forest status, regeneration, species diversity and disturbances have been collected (Doc-2, 6, 7, 8) and will be analysed in year 2, which will support in evidence based management of forest for multiple services including multifaceted biodiversity.

Output 2. *Mikania* invasion including satellite populations substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through 'integrated site management'

Through our awareness programme, CFUGs now well understood the threat posed by the invasive *Mikania*. People started *Mikania* focussed activities (Doc-13) and *Mikania* removal activities have been included in their annual programmes of forest management (Doc-5). 7000 seedlings have been planted (Doc-15) and a restoration of a severely degraded but ecologically important wetland has been initiated (Doc-14). *Mikania* removal has now been considered as part of long-term forest restoration.

Output 3. Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication/awareness raising materials highlighting biodiversity conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders

Biodiversity conservation and invasive species control has been included in CF operational plans (Doc-5) and this needs to be continued and up-scaled in year 2 and 3. Scientific data have been collected on biodiversity of Jalthal (Doc-6, 7, 8, 9, 24) which forms basis for communication materials (Doc-24). The production of documentary, species profile and Jalthal biodiversity profile have been initiated.

Output 4: Forest based enterprises including fishery and ecotourism facilities established and operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods

Assessment for potential enterprises have been conducted (Doc-18) and women group have been formed to support in fishery (Doc-21). The compost making training has been provided to 28 people (Doc-2). These activities will be continued in year 2 and 3 which will help connecting forest with poor people to raise their income. An exposure visit to ecotourism area was organised for local people to stimulate ideas on nature-based tourism (Doc-25).

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Outcome statement: **Jalthal biodiversity and ecosystems are restored with significant livelihood benefits and biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed in National CF policies and plans.**

Progress on project activities and outputs indicate that the outcome is achievable by end of the project. Project indicators are appropriate.

There have been substantial changes in CFUG leaders' understanding about forest biodiversity and restoration. For example, people have started to talk about natural regeneration and native plantation and discouraged the commonly practiced exotic plantation (Doc-22). Biodiversity conservation has been included in local scale planning i. e. forest operational plans (Doc-5). Invasive species management/control has been connected with long term forest management objectives (Doc-13). Restoration of wetlands already initiated (Doc-14). Management of Jalthal forest based on scientific evidences (Doc-6, 7, 8, 9, 24) will help long term and sustainable management of forest. Improved and well managed wetlands and forest will have benefit to both nature and people. Up scaling of site level learning will be done in year 2 and 3.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Assumption 1: CFUGs and stakeholders acknowledge *Mikania* invasion as a major problem. **Comments**: Yes. CFUGs and stakeholders agree it as a serious problem (Doc-13, Doc-5).

Assumption 2: There will be broader political support in Jalthal forest management and restoration programmes. **Comment**: Yes, there is consensus among stakeholders (Doc-2).

Assumption 3: Local governments also develop plans for tourism development and livelihood support in Jalthal area. **Comment**: Local government have policies and programmes but these are yet to make pragmatic for ground level implementation.

Assumption 4: *Mikania* propagation and spread can be controlled through site management and new entry will be early detected and controlled. **Comment**: This holds true but intensive site management seems very costly with voluminous labour requirement.
Assumption 5: Policy/decision makers in the Ministry of Forest in federal and provincial government cooperate. **Comment**: Federal forest policy has been passed and it is supportive. We have got support from provincial government. A team led by provincial forest secretary has visited the project site.
Assumption 6: Human wildlife (particularly Elephant) conflict minimised: **Comment**: Yes! After solar fencing construction by Ministry of Forest and Environment, the conflict has been slightly reduced in the project site.

Assumption 7: CFUGs participate in bush cleaning for dual purpose 1) bush cleaning as part of their regular job and 2) Incentives for bush cleaning to CFUGs. **Comment**: Yes. This holds true. There is good cooperation from local people and CFUGs where CFUG themselves have led the campaign.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

Project's anticipated impacts include long term restoration of Jalthal forest, conservation of Jalthal biodiversity, integration of biodiversity in community forestry related polices and plans, and control of invasive species particularly, *Mikania*. Although, it is too early to observe project impacts, our Year 1 activities have laid a solid foundation during the last 10 months which will have visible impacts in longer run. During the last 10 months of project implementation, we have been successful in presenting Jalthal forest as a unique and important biodiversity area (Doc-002, 06, 07, 08, 09). Local people have realized the forest as an important natural heritage which will have long term support in conservation. Currently, in more than 20 different localities, exotic tree plantation prevails inside the forest. Through formal and informal discussions with CFUGs and government forest officials, we have demonstrated tremendous natural regeneration potential of Jalthal forest. Acknowledging this potential, they have agreed not to plant the exotics like *Eucalyptus spps.* and *Tectona grandis* further. The DFO, made public announcement on this in a programme (Doc-3). CFUG leaders have started talking about natural regeneration for forest health and biodiversity (Doc-22). Now, *Mikania* management has been initiated with long term objective of forest restoration by supressing *Mikania* and fostering natural regeneration (Doc-13). Previously *Mikania* removal was very occasional and not a specifically planned and directed event. We believe this will have substantial and long term contribution in biodiversity conservation.

We have yet to conduct activities mainly related for livelihood and poverty reduction. During the last 10 months we have spent time in understanding potential livelihood activities and done some preparatory works (Doc-2). We started supporting a group of women in fishery for income generation (Doc-21). *Mikania* removal involved more than 12000 person-days of work. CFUGs now have included *Mikania* removal in forest conservation activities which serves dual purpose, forest improvement and income generation to local people through wage labouring. It's too early to judge poverty impacts of our activities. However, we believe that our activities in year 2 and 3 we will make progress towards our original impacts.

4. Contribution to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Projects actions related to forest management and biodiversity conservation directly contribute towards achievement of many of the UN SDGs.

The project has initiated sustainable and evidence-based forest management with aim of ensuring conservation of overall biodiversity of the forest. Project has already started restoration of degraded forest and wetlands (Doc-13, 14). Project is supporting natural regeneration and plantation of native species (Doc-22). These activities contribute towards target 15.1 and 15.2 of the SDGs.

Similarly, the project identified and working to reduce existing and potential threats to biodiversity conservation. Such threats include unsustainable harvest, forest fire, poaching of wildlife and *Mikania* invasion. These activities will contribute towards Target 15.5 of the SDGs.

Project has initiated controlling Invasive alien plant species (IAPS) with long term objectives of forest restoration by engaging local people (Doc-13). This activity is aligned with target 15.8.

Similarly, we started integrating biodiversity values in the community forestry planning process (Doc-5, 3, 16) which will help towards meeting the targets of government policies on biodiversity conservation and will contribute towards target 15.9 of the SDGs. Improved forest conservation will also contribute to climate change mitigation (SDG 13).

5. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

Project activities during year 1 support multiple articles of CDB (primarily article 7 and 8), Aichi Biodiversity targets and objectives of Ramsar convention.

Article 7. **Identification of component of biodiversity and their monitoring**. Jalthal forest is rich in biodiversity but the overall facet of biodiversity has not been well explored and documented. The project has worked to identify, appreciate and document the biodiversity and associated ecosystem services through participatory approaches (Doc-6, 7, 8, 9). The project has also identified threats to biodiversity.

Article 8 (c, d, e). The project has started integrating biodiversity conservation in community forestry policy and planning process including ecosystem restoration and invasive species control. This will help to enhancing biodiversity across the CF and beyond protected areas (Doc-5). Project will prioritise species for conservation which will help maintaining population of rare, threatened and locally overexploited species (Doc-10). Conservation activities outside protected areas will indeed help in providing connectivity and steeping stone and alternative habitats.

Article 8 (f) Rehabilitate and restore…strategies. The project has conducted activities that leads towards **restoration of degraded forest. Activities** like plantation, weed control and site management. These activities will support this article of CBD (Doc-13, Doc-14).

Article 8(h) One of the serious threats to Jalthal forest is **invasive alien species** particularly *Mikania micrantha*. Activities have been carried out to control invasive species through site management (Doc-13).

The project activities are aligned with multiple targets of **CBD** strategic targets, mainly **Aichi Biodiversity Targets (ABT)**. Awareness raising and capacity building for biodiversity and conservation through local actions in Jalthal serves to the **Target 1** (Doc-11); mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in Nepal's CF process is aligned with **Target 2** (Doc-5); sustainable management of forests is directly related to **Target 7**. Similarly project will work to control and eradicate invasive species - *Mikania* and other species from the site (Target 9, Doc-13) and ecosystem restoration (Target 14, Doc-13, 15).

This project activity directly addresses the objectives of **Ramsar Convention,** as one of the major areas of our site-specific action will involve improved management and wise use of degraded wetlands within Jalthal forest (Doc-14). The wetlands in this area are habitats for breeding for migratory birds. Project activities to restore wetlands directly serve to achieve strategic goals particularly Goal 3 target 12 and 13 of the fourth Ramsar strategic plans of 2016-2024[6] (Doc-14).

[6] Ramsar Convention Secretariat, 2016. The Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016–2024. Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands, 5th edition, vol. 2. Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland

6. Project support to poverty alleviation

Local people including poor and marginalised people are project beneficiaries. They will get both direct and indirect benefit from the project activities. Project has some livelihood support activities for poor, disadvantaged and marginalised people. Priority will be given to include women from disadvantaged and marginalised groups. We have yet to conduct activities mainly related for livelihood and poverty reduction in full fledge. During the last 10 months, we have spent time in understanding potential livelihood activities and done some preparatory works (Doc-2). We started supporting a group of women in fishery for income generation (Doc-21). *Mikania* removal involved more than 12,000 man days of work. CFUGs now have included *Mikania* removal in forest conservation activities which serves dual purpose, forest improvement and income generation to local people through wage labouring. Similarly, *Mikaina* biomass management will start soon which will help farmers' investment in chemical fertiliser as they start using compost manure (Doc-2). It's too early to judge poverty impacts of our activities. However, we believe that our activities in year 2 and 3 we will make progress towards our original impacts.

Reduction in *Mikania* cover (Doc-13) will help improving forest condition which will ensure sustained ecosystem benefits to local people. Wetland restoration (Doc-14) will provide ecosystem benefit by increasing water availability and tourism will benefit local people.

7. Consideration of gender equality issues

ForestAction Nepal and partner organisations have gender equality as a core value, and we actively encourage women to be involved in the project. While organising programme we consider women responsibilities/commitments at home, we consider this in our planning. Many women participants requested us not to extend our programme after 15.30, we therefore end our activities at 15.30 to the extent possible. Following points were considered for gender equality in year 1 activity

- While hiring local facilitator, we sought application only from female candidates. Ms Debika Adhikari got appointed.
- To maintain gender balance in our workforce, we have hired Mrs Jamuna Paudel in all our Nepali document editing jobs.
- Among the two students selected by KAFCOL for thesis support, one is female (Doc-23).
- We tried to maintain at least 40% women participation in our capacity enhancement activities (Doc-001). However, this could not be maintained in a training of government officers (Doc-16) this was due to structural problem, as there are only few women staff in the government forest administration.
- Considering women's weak control over financial resources we are supporting women led enterprise development. So far one group formed and provided with a seed fund to start fishery (Doc-21).

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Project monitoring and evaluation against the set targets is the responsibility of the lead organisation i.e. ForestAction. Project monitoring and evaluation will be a continuous process throughout the project life. Project M&E is an adaptive process, project indicators will be closely monitored, and strategies will be prepared for maximum possible achievement. Monitoring will be done by the Project Leader, CoPI from KAFCOL Dr Ambika P. Gautam and RBGE researcher Dr Bhaskar Adhikari. Project Manager will report to PI and CoPI and he will be responsible to implement the day-to-day activities.

Baseline data on *Mikania* cover, species diversity and tree regeneration has been collected (Doc-20) and it will be assessed again at the end of the project.

To monitor the field activities ForestAction Nepal has formed a project management committee, which regularly monitors project activities. In every six month project team needs to update the project progress at internal meetings of FA. We also need to update progress to Social Welfare Council (SWC) and local government. For ForestAction, accounting administrative purpose, we need to present brief report about achievement after each fieldwork. We conduct activities according to our project time line. In the beginning of year 2 a reflection on year 1 will be done and planning for year 2 will be done by involving all project partners and stakeholders at local level. These arrangements help us monitoring project activities and outputs.

9. Lessons learnt

Followings are important lessons learnt during the Year 1 of project implementation

- While doing activities inside forest we need to be aware about the administrative and legal requirement, which are often time and resource demanding. For example, to produce compost out of the invasive species, we need to make several technical and administrative preparations within group (CFUG) and outside group. The activity at first needs to be passed through the general assembly of CFUG and that needs to be approved by DFO. Being aware about these processes beforehand would greatly help on managing resources and time.
- Despite conservation measures, illegal wildlife hunting is still a problem in Jalthal. Dealing with the illegal hunters is not an easy task. This is a multi-stakeholder and multi-scale issue which demands for broader collaboration among government authorities, politicians, security agencies, and intelligence services. Community education and solving underlying cause (poverty) is equally important.

10. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

NA

11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

We believe that we must be accountable and are investing more energy to coordinate local level stakeholders. We also invested time to get the project approval through Social Welfare Council, Nepal. Nevertheless, it did not delay the project activities but our administrative staff spent time to get the approval through.

After the state restructuring, working situation in the field has been changed. We also need to get the project approval through provincial and local governments which demands a lot of coordination. These processes were completed in year 1.

We are participating in CFUG meetings and events. Many of these were informal which are not covered in this report. We have facilitated CFUGs in their forest management plan preparation. We are also working in wildlife rescue.

Our preliminary surveys indicate that three species of trees could be potentially new species to Nepal flora. RBGE experts are working to confirm this. This has also not been part of this document.

12. Sustainability and legacy

This is a project led and implemented by a small action research oriented NGO. Contrary to the mainstream conservation projects- which usually focus on charismatic animals and protected area, this project works at a site outside formal protection but is rich in biodiversity which is seriously threatened. This project aims at improving forest management through rigorous scientific information and action verified workable models in linking conservation with

livelihoods. We feel we are well received in the project site, local development expectation is high though. Our clear communication, coordination with stakeholders and production of communication materials has been appreciated by local stakeholders. Our approaches on *Mikania* control and long-term restoration of forest is well appreciated by CFUG leaders and stakeholders. People expect forest profile to be prepared in Nepali language. By now we have established good rapport and working relationship with local stakeholders primarily the CFUGs. Our field officer has been a good help to CFUGs in several technical issues of forest management (Doc-2).

We are seriously concerned about sustainability of projects activities and want to leave some distinct legacies. We believe that project sustainability and legacy depend not only on scientific merits but also on local necessity, social acceptability and economic feasibility. Our working approach involving strong collaboration with key local stakeholders (i.e. CFUGs and DFO) will be the main basis for a continuation of the initiated activities. These institutions will be there and actively carrying forward project's good initiations. We are enriching local stakeholders' capacity to monitor biodiversity and its threat which will also help extending projects impacts for longer run. Some of the initiatives which we started need long term input, and CFUGs and DFO are convinced towards the long term planning and actions for those initiatives. For example, *Mikania* control needs actions beyond project life. Management of *Mikania* and conservation of rare and threatened species will be embedded in forest management plans (Doc-5), which will help sustaining our interventions and results. We try to link forest management, *Mikania* control to income generation to sustain the forest and *Mikania* management. The manuals and policy brief, we will publish through wider stakeholder engagement during project period will also have long lasting impacts of the project.

Our another tangible legacy will be the comprehensive assessment of the Jalthal biodiversity which can be a good reference for future management and research. Our capacity building and awareness raising efforts are expected to have long-term impact on community forestry planning and management. Similarly, we have started to incorporate biodiversity issues and actions in operation plans which are main basis for forest management in CFUGs, these documents are generally prepared for period of 5 years, often up to 10 years. *Mikania* management and forest restoration will also be legacy of the project.

13. Darwin identity

1. This is a standalone project funded by Darwin initiative UK and the project has clear aim and objectives. This information has been maintained this in all our activities. Researchers especially botanists, ecologists and wildlife biologist, stakeholders related to forest and invasive species, CFUG leaders and local governments are aware of the project and its source of funding. Local journalists are also aware of the project and DI.
2. We have used Darwin initiative logos in all the public documents and awareness raising materials (Doc-11, 24).
3. We have mentioned DI in all formal communications for example invitation letter to the participants, guests etc.
4. We have informed authorities (federal government and local governments) about the funding source i. e. Darwin initiative. In a presentation in Kathmandu, we had opportunity to explain DI's funding areas while responding a government officers questions about nature of funding of DI.
5. In all the presentations made by project staffs DI logo has been used in the cover (front) page of presentation. We have presented about various aspects of the project with federal, provincial and local governments.
6. We have recently submitted a journal article which acknowledges the Darwin funded project, and same will be done in future publications.

7. We have prepared detail account of the project in Nepali language to inform local people about the project. We have clearly mentioned that this project is funded by DI, UK. This document is circulated in project area and to relevant stakeholders in different parts of the country (Doc-002).
8. Projects twitter account now has been linked with Darwin Initiatives twitter handle. We mention DI in each tweet.

14. Safeguarding

ForestAction has written policy to administer project staffs which has no tolerance to any form of discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity and race. Sexual harassment is not acceptable. We are committed that no person will be employed without paying. All people engaged in our work will be paid according to national laws. We respect to and comply with host and funding country's laws to implement the project.

We are committed to conduct work in safe environment**.** Work inside forest is usually done in group so that threat of wildlife is minimized. Other safety measures are ensured while working inside forest.

As the project's major engagements are with natural environment, we, therefore are committed towards not harming the natural environment. We have strategy of discouraging introduced species plantation in the forest. We will adopt actions to promote natural regeneration during bush cleaning and *Mikania* removal. We will not introduce any invasive species in the forest and outside; this is particularly relevant while selecting fodder and NTFP species for plantation. Our experiments inside forest will not have short term or long term negative impacts to forest wildlife and dependent rural population.

15. Project expenditure

Please expand and complete Table 1. If all receipts have not yet been received, please provide indicative figures and clearly mark them as Draft. The Actual claim form will be taken as the final accounting for funds.

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

Project spend (indicative) since last annual report	**2019/20 Grant (£)**	**2019/20 Total Darwin Costs (£)**	**Variance %**	**Comments (please explain significant variances)**
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				*Change reques made due to Coron pandemic
Capital items (see below)				
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL (Originally agreed)				
New total *				

*We could not conduct some activities in March 2020. Due to nationwide lockdown in response to COVID-19 global pandemics our activities were affected. We communicated with DI on 23rd March and change request letter was submitted on March 25. Our request was generously accepted 3rd April 2020. Therefore there was change in total budget. GBP 1741 is actual underspend amount which is 1.79% of total budget. We requested DI to conduct those activities (incomplete activities of year 1) in year 2.

In the above table, the variation in operating cost appears high. If we consider new budget the is certainly well below 10%.

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year 2019-2020

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2019 - March 2020	Actions required/planned for next period
Impact **Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in CF policies and practices, biodiversity in CFs enhanced, forest and wetlands are restored and local people benefit through forest-based enterprise including ecotourism and fisheries**		CFUG leaders and stakeholders of forest management now agree on need of long-term restoration of forest for biodiversity and livelihood benefits. At local level, biodiversity and invasive species management have been integrated in community forest management plans. Invasive species management have now been connected with long term restoration plans. CFUGs started promoting natural regeneration against plantation of exotic tree species in natural forest.	[redacted]
Outcome Jalthal biodiversity and ecosystems are restored with significant livelihood benefits and biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed in National CF policies and plans	0.1 22 CFUGs (representing more than 80,000 people) and 5000 local people (CFUG members), of which 50% are women, directly engaged in sustainable forest management activities by end of Year 3. 0.2 22 Community Forest Operational Plans (CFOPs) revised with a separate biodiversity section by the end of Year 3. 0.3 At least 100 foresters and CFUG leaders (40% women) trained to mainstream overall biodiversity conservation in CFOP by end of year 2. 0.4 Jalthal biodiversity assessed and detailed photographic profiles of 40 (20 floral and 20 faunal) species prioritised for conservation prepared and communicated through printed booklets (1000 copies) and three field education programmes organised for awareness building and biodiversity identification by end of year 2. 0.5 *Mikania* cover in the Jalthal forest reduced by 80% (ca 1500 ha land cleared) which have direct positive effect on regeneration and conservation of native flora and associated faunal species on those sites by end of the project. Satellite population controlled/destroyed in adjoining areas by the end of project. 0.6 Tree regeneration density (seedling density and sapling) increased by 10 % by end of the of the	01. More than 5000 people from 22 CFUGs were engaged in *Mikania* removal, forest patrolling, plantation activities under leadership of CFUGs (DOC-001, Doc-13). 02. Five CFOPs have been renewed and they have now a separate section on biodiversity management (Doc- 5). 03. Over 100 (29+31+16+50) people including forest technicians and CFUG leaders got training on biodiversity integration in CF. Except one (specially targeted to Forest officers), rests have maintained at least 40% of women participation(Doc- 001, 3, 4,16). 04. We conducted preliminary surveys to record the biodiversity of the area. First round of survey of ferns with 25 species (Doc-8), flowering plants 250 species (Doc-7), birds 159 species (Doc-6), herpetofauna. 27 species (Doc-9) were completed. This forms the basis towards the production of species profile. 05. *Mikania* was cleared in 150 ha of	• *Mikania* removal and plantation will be continued in year 2 (2020/2021) • More CFOPs will be renewed or revised with biodiversity provision. • Preparation Jalthal Biodiversity register and Jalthal biodiversity profile continues • Butterfly survey will be conducted in year 2. • Plantation of fodder trees in forest and private land will be carried out with more than 10,000 seedlings to be planted in year 2. • Two women group engaging 40 poor and marginalised women will be formed • Women groups will be provided with skill development training and seed fund for small scale enterprise.

	project in response to land restoration and protection measures adopted. 0.7 Five native NTFPs species including bamboo and rattans selected and used to establish forest based enterprise by end of year 2. 0.8 Agroforestry including shade crops, NTFPs generates income for 100 poor households through women groups and contributes in *Mikania* control by end of year 3. 0.9 50 poor households from indigenous and *Dalit* community benefit from fisheries (with native fish species) in two restored wetlands by end of year 3. 0.10 Tourism facilities (information centre, nature guides, brochure) established and 30 local people including 15 women get trainings for tourism enterprise and 15 of them are supported for enterprise development by end of year 3. 0.11 Provisions for biodiversity conservation integrated in National CF Guidelines by end of the project.	degraded forest which has already shown the positive effect on natural regeneration of trees (Doc-13). 06. Natural regeneration is increasing in 150 ha *Mikania* cleared area (Doc-13). 07. Assessment of potential tree and NTFP species for Jalthal forest conducted and these will be finalised in year 2 (Doc-18). 08. These interventions will be started in year 2 and 3. 09. A women group is formed and provided with training and seed fund to establish fishery. 15 women are engaged (Doc-21) 010. Year 2 and 3 activities 011. Year 3 activity.	
Output 1. Forests are sustainably managed with greater diversity, enhanced structural complexity and improved productivity, and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation enhanced	1.1 Participatory biodiversity assessment conducted, 22 members from CFUG and local, national and international experts/ technicians (Forester, ecologist/ botanist and wildlife biologist) engaged in the assessment and forest biodiversity profile prepared by the end of year 2. 1.2 Two trainings on forest biodiversity management (including key attributes and habitat trees) organized in Year 1, 66 people trained from 22 CFUGSs 1.3 22 CFOP revised and implemented by end of year 3 to incorporate overall biodiversity conservation strategy, approaches and tools by CFs 1.4 5,000 bamboo culms planted in forest and private lands, rattan pocket areas identified, and managed by the end of year 2 1.5 At least 30,000 native fodder trees in CF and	1.1 Participatory biodiversity assessment was conducted in Jalthal forest. More than 10 national and 2 international experts (from RBGE) engaged in biodiversity assessment (Doc-2). More than 30 local people were engaged during the assessment. Project is promoting local people as citizen scientist. Flowering plant checklist, Fern report, Palms report, Herpetofauna checklists have been prepared (Doc-6,7,8,9, 24). 1.2 Three trainings were organised in January 14 in which 45 people participated (Doc-3), and in March 3 & 4 at project sites in which 63 people representing 21 CFUGs participated (Doc-4). 1.3 5 CFOPs were renewed in year 1. Renewed CFOPs now integrate biodiversity in the management plans (Doc-5). 1.4 Bamboo will be planted in year 2 and 3. 1.5 So far around 7000 seedlings were planted in year 1 (Doc-15). More will be planted in year 2 and 3. 1.6 20 Species were prioritised for conservation (Doc-10) and forest survey conducted to identify species status (Doc-2). 1.7 Species prioritisation was conducted and forest survey has been completed (Doc-2, 10) and profile will be published after data analysis.	

	private lands planted by the end of project 1.6 Rare, threatened, endangered and unique species and vulnerable ecosystems identified and protection measures are included in CFOP by end of year 3. 1.7 Species profiles for 40 species (20 floral and 20 faunal including birds) species prioritised for conservation prepared and disseminated in project sites by end of Year 2. 1.8 Jalthal Biodiversity register as envisioned by Nepal Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2014-2020) prepared and maintained by mid of year 2. 1.9 Checklist of all plant species in Jalthal forest prepared by end of year 2. 1.10 Tree regeneration density, seedling and sapling density increased by 10% and 5% respectively by end of the project.	1.8 Will be carried out in year 2. 1.9 Checklist of flowering plants (Doc-7) and pteridophythes (Doc-8) prepared which enlists 250 and 25 species respectively. 1.10 Forest survey was conducted (Doc-2) which will serve as baseline data.	
Activity 1.1 1.1 Organize planning workshops cum interaction programme with local stakeholders at project site; Inception workshop attended by project partners, CGUG members (3 from each CGUG) and representatives from local governments and other stakeholders		Inception cum interaction programme was organised on 9th June 2019, which was attended by project partners, representatives of local governments and CFUG members and other stakeholder, a total of 100 individuals attended (Doc-1, Doc-001).	Small meetings with stakeholders will be organised as required
1.2 Organize 'Field education programme' for local people to demonstrate and identify key species, habitat and traditional Ecological knowledge associated with bio resources, Rarity and conservation status and ecological features of species and ecosystem also discussed and informed		A total of five field education programmes were organised with National experts (Doc-2).	Five more field education programme to be conducted in year 2
1.3 Hold meetings with CFUGs to complement the field education programmes to identify key biodiversity, rare and threatened species and traditional ways of management		Will be conducted in year 2.	Will be conducted in year 2
1.4 Organize trainings to CFUG leaders to conceptualise them overall biodiversity, ecological uniqueness and significance of Jalthal, and bringing biodiversity to CF process		A training programme was organised on January 14 (Doc-3) and an interaction programme was organised on Feb 05, 2020 to highlight the significance of Jalthal forest and its biodiversity (Doc- 2) .	Field education and CFUG level meetings will be organised

1.5 Support CFUGs in plantation of bamboo culms and other fast growing native fodder species, organise interaction with locals to identify needs and consult experts for feasibility		Over 7000 seedlings were planted in Pathibhara Kalika and Durgabhitta CF (Doc-4).	Bamboo clums and more tree seedlings will be planted in year 2 and 3.
1.6 Work with CFUGs to revise and renew the forest operational plans considering key attributes of forest biodiversity (flora, fauna, birds, habitats, habitat trees, ecological complexity, ecological process, water points, wetlands, marshes, threatened and exploited taxa etc)		So far five CFOPs have been renewed in year 1. Several meetings and consultations were organised with CFUGs (Doc-2, 5).	
1.7 Conduct participatory biodiversity assessment of Jalthal forest bringing experts and local people together and maintain database, support KAFCOL master students in thesis on Jalthal biodiversity, management options and human nature interaction		Participatory assessment of forest biodiversity was conducted which included 25 local people. Other 10 local people were included in Bird and herpetofauna survey (Doc-2).	
1.8 Species are prioritised for conservation using local and expert knowledge coupled with biological data		Two workshops on species prioritisation were conducted in March 2020 (Doc-10).	Two more workshops will be organised in year 2.
1.9 Prepare and publish booklet containing profile of species prioritised for conservation		Data are being collected towards this (Doc-10, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)	
1.10 Prepare Jalthal biodiversity register and keep the register in relevant locations		Data are being collected for this and will be published in year 2.	Work will be done towards production of the register.
1.11 Organize programmes for forest fire, poaching control and conservation of threatened and rare species (in collaboration with DFO, FECOFUN and Local Governments)		An interaction programme was organised on forest fire. Officers from division forest officer provided orientation to CF leaders (Doc-2).	
Output 2. *Mikania* invasion including satellite populations substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through 'integrated site management'	2.1 Spatial extent and abundance of *Mikania* including its environmental correlates analysed for its control, management and monitoring by end of the 3rd quarter of year 1; Endline data by end of year 3. 2.2 Participatory *Mikania* management and control plan for Jalthal prepared by third quarter of year 1. 2.3 Bilingual (Nepali/local and English) colour booklet (1000 copies) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) of Jalthal forest prepared and distributed By end of year 2. 2.4 Mega campaign for *Mikania* control organized annually (ca 10,000 man-days workers involved altogether) to control *Mikania* in the forest; satellite populations around the forest are also destroyed by end of year 3. 2.5 *Mikania* cover in the Jalthal forest reduced by 80% (ca 1500 ha land cleared) by the end of year 3. 2.6 Existing and potential use of *Mikania* identified , promoted and communicated (roughly 5 metric tons of *Mikania* biomass turned into compost and bio-gas) by	*(*Report against the indicators on progress towards achieving the Output) 2.1. Baseline survey of *Mikania* conducted and spatial extent of the species analysed (Doc-20, 23). Msc student is also conducting his thesis on *Mikania* in ecology in Jalthal forest (Doc-2, 23) 2.2. Based on the outcome of *Mikania* management workshop, and previous lessons from Jalthal forest, a *Mikania* management plan preparation is underway. This will be completed in Q1 of year 2. 2.3 Awareness raising material on *Mikania micrantha*-the most problematic species of the site, has been prepared in Nepali language and printed copies disseminated (Doc-11). 2.4 More than 12000 man-days of work was carried out in 22 CFs as part of *Mikania* control campaign (Doc-13) 2.5 *Mikania* was removed from more than 150 ha forest in 22 CFs (Doc-13). 2.6. Compost production training conducted and arrangement has been made (Doc-2) 2.7. Restoration of one of the most degraded and ecologically important wetland	

	end of the project 2.7 Two of the largest wetlands in the Jalthal forest restored by removing *Mikania* and controlling siltation by end of year 3.	(Jhilka pokhari) started in Abhimukteswar CF (Doc-14)	
Activity 2.1 Carryout *Mikania* cover assessment using remote sensing and ground truthing tools (it serves as baseline data as well) and carryout end line data collection at the end		An assessment using both remote sensing and ground truth was done and report was prepared (Doc-20).	Task completed, endline survey conducted in year 3.
2.2 Organize workshop with local stakeholders to prepare strategies and plans for *Mikania* control (prepare plan for 'integrated site management')		Workshop was organised (Doc-12) and the plan preparation is in progress.	More focussed interactions will be organised in year 2 and3.
2.3 Organise campaign and conduct activities for *Mikania* clearance in forests in wider stakeholders participation including local government representative, provide incentives to CFUGs for users contribution		Campaign was conducted and *Mikania* removal activities were carried out in all 22 CFS (Doc-13).	This to be continued in year 2 and 3.
2.4 Identify and promote technologies to use *Mikania* biomass (Support local farmers to make compost and bio-gas out of *Mikania* weeds)		Trainings to farmers and CFUGs were organised to motivate them using invasive species in compost preparation (Doc-2).	Compost production will be facilitated.
2.5 Undertake programmes to restore wetlands in collaboration with local governments, indigenous people and CFUGs		Restoration of a degraded wetland (Jhilka Pokhari) has been started (Doc-14).	One more wetland will be identified and restoration will be initiated in year 2.
2.6 Integrate shade crops and fast growing fodder trees in *Mikania* cleared areas with *Mikania* control programme		Plantation of seedlings was done in *Mikania* cleared areas (Doc-15).	
2.7 Work with local farmers, CFUG members and municipalities to remove satellite population of *Mikania*		Discussed the issue with local government and prepared ground for next year's activity	Will be conducted this in year 2 and 3.
Output 3. **Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication materials highlighting biodiversity**	3.1 Develop a manual on integrating overall biodiversity conservation in CF planning and process, include national expert while preparing the manual 3.2 Provide training to CFOP practitioners on values of biodiversity and ways of integrating it into CFOPs 3.3 Organize three national dialogue with national level stakeholders on biodiversity mainstreaming in CF planning and process 3.4 Prepare, publish and disseminate a policy	3.1 We have reviewed the biodiversity gaps in CF process (Doc-17) and got insights from training programme which will be the basis for the strategy. It will be drafted within year 2 3.2 Three days training (March 5-7) was organised for CFOP practitioners on biodiversity integration in CFOP (Doc-16). 3.3. National dialogues are for year 2 and 3. 3.4 This is year 2 and 3 activity; however we are working on foundations for this. 3.5 Review report is ready (Doc-17) and will be shaped into a MS and submitted to peer reviewed journal in year 2. 3.6. We have already published one in English online (Doc-27) In year and 2 will be published. 3.7. A contract has been made with an expert Mr Chun B Gurung, he has started a	

conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders	brief on biodiversity conservation with respect to CF 3.5 Publish a peer reviewed article based on review of CFOPs to highlight gaps and opportunities of biodiversity conservation in CFs 3.6 Write and publish three popular articles on leading national dailies 3.7 A documentary on good practice linking biodiversity conservation and livelihood produced and disseminated by end of year 2.	shared a draft will be publishable in year 2 (Doc-28).	
Activity 3.1 3.1 Develop a manual on integrating overall biodiversity conservation in CF planning and process 3.7 Prepare, produce and disseminate a video (documentary) to conceptualise, highlight and operationalise overall biodiversity conservation in community forests		3.1 We have reviewed 30 CFOPs and gaps have been identified in forest management plans (Doc-17) and some insights have been obtained from trainings of CFOP practitioners. The manual will be finalised in Q2 of Y2.	Draft will be prepared and shared with partners and relevant national stakeholders for feedback.
3.2 Hold training to CFOP practiceners on values of biodiversity and ways of integrating it into CFOPs		17 Government officers participated in the training event organised on 5-7 March 2020 (Doc-16).	
3.3 Organize a national dialogue with national level stakeholders on biodiversity mainstreaming in CF planning and process		Year 2 and year 3 activities	Will be organised in year 2 and year 3.
3.4 Prepare, publish and disseminate a policy brief on biodiversity conservation with respect to CF		It will be published based on year 2 activities	Will be produced in year 3.
3.5 Publish a peer reviewed article based on review of CFOPs to highlight gaps and opportunities of biodiversity conservation in CFs		30 CFOPs have been reviewed (Doc-17)	More CFOPs will be reviewed in year 2.
3.6 Write and publish three popular articles on leading national dailies		One article was published in Y1 (Doc-27)	Three articles will be published in year 2
3.7 Prepare, produce and disseminate a video (documentary) to conceptualise, highlight and operationalize overall biodiversity conservation in community forests.		A contract has been made with videographer and preliminary works has been completed (Doc-28)	More work will be done in year 2 and finalised.
Output 4 Forest based enterprises including fishery and ecotourism facilities established and	4.1 A scoping report on potential forest based enterprise prepared by the end of Year 1. 4.2 A business schemes of selected enterprise	4.1 An assessment report has been prepared which identifies the potential enterprises (Doc-18) 4.2 Business scheme for fishery and compost are under preparation [comment: we were about to finalize those in March 2020 but due to Nationwide lockdown this	

operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods	(Tourism, fisheries, bamboos and rattans) prepared by the end of Year 1. 4.3 Women (n=100) from marginalized and disadvantaged groups trained on enterprise establishment and operation by end of year 3. 4.4 20% increase in household income from women-led enterprise (n=100 households) agroforestry, shade crops and NTFPs by the end of year 2. 4.5 Seedlings of fodder, NTFPs (five species) and bamboo planted (n=30,000) by end of year 3 (This activity is linked with forest management as well in output 1) 4.6 20% increase in household income of of indigenous people and *Dalit* (n=50)from fishery in restored wetlands by end of year 3. 4.7 At least 30 local youths (half are women) trained on ecotourism and at least 15 youths generate income through tourism related enterprise by end of year 3. 4.8 Biodiversity Demonstration Block (BDB) identified, promoted and characterised (Name, ecology, conservation status) for eco-tourism by second quarter of year 2.	document could not be produced]. 4.3 Women group has been formed to establish a small scale fishery enterprise in a wetland at Chaukibiran CF (Doc-21) 4.4 Women group for fishery (Doc- 21) has been formed and compost production mechanism (Doc-2) has been set up which is expected to produce output in year 2 and 3. 4.5. More than 7000 seedlings were planted in year 2 in *Mikania* cleared forest (Doc-15). 4.6. Fishery group formed (Doc-21) and business will be started in year 2. 4.7. 30 local people were provided opportunity for exposure visit in one of the famous ecotourism sites in Nepal (Doc -25) and five local youths are engaged with birding activity. 4.8. Forest biodiversity data collected already in year 1 (Doc-2) which forms basis for biodiversity demonstration block.	
4.1 Conduct a feasibility study on forest based microenterprise		Task completed (Doc-18)	Final assessment in year 3.
4.2 Prepare business plan for Bamboo/rattans, tourism and fisheries		Business plan preparation underway will be finalised after offices resume.	Plans to be produced in Q1 of year 2.
4.3 Identify disadvantaged women and support them in enterprise development including fisheries		A women group formed in Chaukibiran CF (Doc-21) and seed fund provided them in establishing fishery in local wetlands.	Two more women groups to be formed in year 2.
4.4 Designate biodiversity demonstration block, prepare and provide necessary information for visitors		Forest survey completed to identify biodiversity hotspots and demonstration block (Doc-2).	Year 2 activity

4.5 support to establish tourism facilities and prepare broachers highlighting ecological, cultural value of Jalthal forest to attract domestic tourists	Biodiversity data collected and the activities will be continuing in year 2 and 3.	Demonstration block will be established in year 2.
4.6 Provide skill development training to local people by including women and disadvantaged group of people	Compost preparation training was provided to 28 CF members including women group (Doc-2).	More training on NTFP will be provided
4.7 Support women groups by providing seed fund and technical support to start agroforestry in designated areas of CF and in private lands	Seed fund provided to a women group for fishery in wetlands (Doc-21)	Two more groups will be formed in year 2.
4.8 Organise exposure visits for women groups to see ecotourism programmes (35 Participants, 18 women)	An exposure visit was organised which was attended by 32 people representing 22 CFUGs (Doc-25).	One more exposure visit to demonstrate forest based micro enterprise and ecotourism
4.9 Organize a sharing and exit workshop with local stakeholders at the end of the project	Activity upon completion of the project	Year 4 activity

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in CF policies and practices, biodiversity in CFs enhanced, forest and wetlands are restored and local people benefit through forest-based enterprise including ecotourism and fisheries (Max 30 words)			
Outcome: (Max 30 words) Jalthal biodiversity and ecosystems are restored with significant livelihood benefits and biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed in National CF policies and plans	0.1 22 CFUGs (representing more than 80,000 people) and 5000 local people (CFUG members), of which 50% are women, directly engaged in sustainable forest management activities by end of Year 3. 0.2 22 Community Forest Operational Plans (CFOPs) revised with a separate biodiversity section by the end of Year 3. 0.3 At least 100 foresters and CFUG leaders (40% women) trained to mainstream overall biodiversity conservation in CFOP by end of year 2. 0.4 Jalthal biodiversity assessed and detailed photographic profiles of 40 (20 floral and 20 faunal) species prioritised for conservation prepared and communicated through printed booklets (1000 copies) and three field education programmes organised for awareness building and biodiversity identification by end of year 2. 0.5 *Mikania* cover in the Jalthal forest reduced by 80% (150 ha land cleared) which have direct positive effect on regeneration and conservation of native flora and associated faunal species on those sites by end of the project. Satellite population controlled/destroyed in adjoining areas by the end of project. 0.6 Tree regeneration density (seedling density and sapling) increased by 10 % by end of the of the project in response to land restoration and protection measures adopted. 0.7 Five native NTFPs species including bamboo and rattans selected and used to	0.1 Meeting minutes of CFUGs, project briefing notes 0.2 CFOP and general assembly decisions 0.3 Training participant register, training materials, training reports 0.4. Assessment report and species specific profiles and printed booklet 0.5. Baseline and endline data, interview with local resident, photographs, satellite images, assessment reports monitoring evaluation report, comparison of baseline and end line data 0.6. Baseline and endline data comparision 0.7 Plantation report, CFUG record books 0.8. Plantation report, registry of participant of *Mikania* cleaning 0.9 Beneficiary interviews, CFUG records 0.10 Biodiversity demonstration block in place, sign boards, information centre, published materials .11 Policy brief, changed forest operational plans, peer reviewed publication, biodiversity registers	0.1 CFUGs and stakeholders acknowledge *Mikania* invasion as a major problem 0.2 There will be broader political support in Jalthal forest management and restoration programmes 0.3 Local governments also develop plans for tourism development and livelihood support in Jalthal area. 0.4 *Mikania* propagation and spread can be controlled through site management and new entry will be early detected and controlled. 0.5 Policy/decision makers in the Ministry of forest in federal and Provincial government cooperate 0.6 Human wildlife (particularly Elephant) conflict minimised.

	establish forest based enterprise by end of year 2. 0.8 Agroforestry including shade crops, NTFPs generates income for 100 poor households through women groups and contributes in *Mikania* control by end of year 3. 0.9 50 poor households from indigenous and *Dalit* community benefit from fisheries (with native fish species) in two restored wetlands by end of year 3. 0.10 Tourism facilities (information centre, nature guides, brochure) established and 30 local people including 15 women get trainings for tourism enterprise and 15 of them are supported for enterprise development by end of year 3. 0.11 Provisions for biodiversity conservation integrated in National CF Guidelines by end of the project.		
Output 1. **Forests are sustainably managed with greater diversity, enhanced structural complexity and improved productivity, and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation enhanced** CFOP: Community Forest Operational Plans are approved documents guiding forest management, product harvest silviculture and forest conservation. Year 1, 2, 3 refer to project years (for example year 1 means April 1 2019-March 30 2020).	1.1 Participatory biodiversity assessment conducted, 22 members from CFUG and local, national and international experts/ technicians (Forester, ecologist/ botanist and wildlife biologist) engaged in the assessment and forest biodiversity profile prepared by the end of year 2. 1.2 Two trainings on forest biodiversity management (including key attributes and habitat trees) organized in Year 1, 66 people trained from 22 CFUGSs 1.3 22 CFOP revised and implemented by end of year 3 to incorporate overall biodiversity conservation strategy, approaches and tools by CFs 1.4 5,000 bamboo culms planted in forest	1.1. An assessment report, a baseline data, M Sc student thesis, Checklist of flora and fauna, assessment participant registry. 1.2 Training report, forest management plan, Participant interviews 1.3. copies CFOP/general assembly decision notes 1.4 Plantation reports, CFUG records 1.5 Plantation report, users books, baseline survey 1.6. copies CFOP 1.7. Booklet of profiles (1000 copies) 1.8. Biodiversity register available in appropriate office and open access data available ForestAction Website 1.9. Checklist hard and soft copy published open access 1.10 Forest survey data comparisons	1.1 New Federal Forest Law recognises Community Forestry and respect its objectives 1.2 Local government and CFUGs maintain a good collaboration and cooperation 1.3 Human wildlife conflict minimised and managed

	and private lands, rattan pocket areas identified, and managed by the end of year 2 1.5 At least 30,000 native fodder trees in CF and private lands planted by the end of project 1.6 Rare, threatened, endangered and unique species and vulnerable ecosystems identified and protection measures are included in CFOP by end of year 3. 1.7 Species profiles for 40 species (20 floral and 20 faunal including birds) species prioritised for conservation prepared and disseminated in project sites by end of Year 2. 1.8 Jalthal Biodiversity register as envisioned by Nepal Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2014-2020) prepared and maintained by mid of year 2. 1.9 Checklist of all plant species in Jalthal forest prepared by end of year 2. 1.10 Tree regeneration density, seedling and sapling density increased by 10% and 5% respectively by end of the project.	between baseline and end line data	
Output 2. ***Mikania*** **invasion including satellite populations substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through 'integrated site management'**	2.1 Spatial extent and abundance of *Mikania* including its environmental correlates analysed for its control, management and monitoring by end of the 3rd quarter of year 1; Endline data by end of year 3. 2.2 Participatory *Mikania* management and control plan for Jalthal prepared by third quarter of year 1. 2.3 Bilingual (Nepali/local and English)	2.1. Assessment report 2.2. Control plan and CFUG record book, photographs 2.3. Printed booklet and PDF documents 2.4 Field report, CFUG records, Remote sensing analysis 2.5 Users record book, field data and comparison of baseline and end line data	2.1 CFUGs participate in bush cleaning for dual purpose 1) bush cleaning as part of their regular job and 2) Incentives for bush cleaning to CFUGs 2.2 Local government, civil society and CFUGs acknowledge the threats posed by *Mikania*

	colour booklet (1000 copies) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) of Jalthal forest prepared and distributed By end of year 2. 2.4 Mega campaign for *Mikania* control organized annually (ca 10,000 man-days workers involved altogether) to control *Mikania* in the forest; satellite populations around the forest are also destroyed by end of year 3. 2.5 *Mikania* cover in the Jalthal forest reduced by 80% (ca 1500 ha land cleared) by the end of year 3. 2.6 Existing and potential use of *Mikania* identified , promoted and communicated (roughly 5 metric tons of *Mikania* biomass turned into compost and bio-gas) by end of the project 2.7 Two of the largest wetlands in the Jalthal forest restored by removing *Mikania* and controlling siltation by end of year 3.	2.6. Activity record, users survey, Amount of biomass converted into compost 2.7 baseline and end line data collection	
Output 3. Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication/awareness raising materials highlighting biodiversity conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders	3.1 Gaps and opportunities of biodiversity conservation in CF identified through detail review of selected 50 CFOPs in year 1. 3.2 A manual for integrating biodiversity in CFOP developed for facilitators/ practioners by end of year 1. 3.3 20 practitioners/facilitators (Government officers) are trained on biodiversity integration in CFOP in year 1. 3.4 National level stakeholders (n=60) sensitised and informed on biodiversity integration in CF policy and practice by end of the project 3.5 Challenges and opportunities for	3.1 Peer reviewed article published by the end of the project 3.2 Printed and e-Copy of the manual 3.3 Training report, Participant register 3.4 Workshop report, participant register, 3.5 printed copies and PDF of Policy brief 3.6 Newspaper cut /e copies 3.7 Video and YouTube viewers data	3.1 Federal, provincial and local government appreciate biodiversity conservation thereby supporting in CF policy and practices

	mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in CF highlighted though a policy brief (500 copies) in year 3. 3.6 Wider audience informed on importance of biodiversity and its conservation measures through at least three newspaper articles on national dailies (One each in Year 1, 2 and 3). 3.7 A documentary on good practice linking biodiversity conservation and livelihood produced and disseminated by end of year 2.		
4. Forest based enterprises including fishery and ecotourism facilities established and operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods	4.1 A scoping report on potential forest based enterprise prepared by the end of Year 1. 4.2 A business schemes of selected enterprise (Tourism, fisheries, bamboos and rattans) prepared by the end of Year 1. 4.3 Women (n=100) from marginalized and disadvantaged groups trained on enterprise establishment and operation by end of year 3. 4.4 20% increase in household income from women-led enterprise (n=100 households)agroforestry, shade crops and NTFPs by the end of year 2. 4.5 Seedlings of fodder, NTFPs (five species) and bamboo planted (n=30,000) by end of year 3 (This activity is linked with forest management as well in output 1) 4.6 20% increase in household income of of indigenous people and *Dalit*	4.1 copies of the assessment report 4.2 Copies of business schemes for specific enterprises 4.3 Participant register, training reports 4.4 Plantation report, CFUG record books, interview with local people, Survey results 4.5 Plantation reports, beneficiary survey, CFUG record book 4.6 Beneficiary interviews, CFUG reports, Survey report 4.7 Participant register, training manuals, documents of enterprise (for example registration, photos, news evidences) 4.8 BDB block in place	Municipalities appreciate and prioritise tourism development as part of their overall development planning New Forest Law allows such tourism related activities. The human-elephant conflict managed/minimised by the ongoing projects

	(n=50)from fishery in restored wetlands by end of year 3. 4.7 At least 30 local youths (half are women) trained on ecotourism and at least 15 youths generate income through tourism related enterprise by end of year 3. 4.8 Biodiversity Demonstration Block (BDB) identified, promoted and characterised (Name, ecology, conservation status) for eco-tourism by second quarter of year 2.		

Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

Output 1: Forests are sustainably managed with greater diversity, enhanced structural complexity and improved productivity, and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation enhanced

1.1 Organize planning workshops cum interaction programme with local stakeholders at project site; Inception workshop attended by project partners, CGUG members (3 from each CGUG) and representatives from local governments and other stakeholders

1.2 Organize 'Field education programme' for local people to demonstrate and identify key species, habitat and traditional Ecological knowledge associated with bio resources, Rarity and conservation status and ecological features of species and ecosystem also discussed and informed

1.3 Hold meetings with CFUGs to complement the field education programmes to identify key biodiversity, rare and threatened species and traditional ways of management

1.4 Organize trainings to CFUG leaders to conceptualise them overall biodiversity, ecological uniqueness and significance of Jalthal, and bringing biodiversity to CF process

1.5 Support CFUGs in plantation of bamboo culms and other fast growing native fodder species, organise interaction with locals to identify needs and consult experts for feasibility

1.6 Work with CFUGs to revise and renew the forest operational plans considering key attributes of forest biodiversity (flora, fauna, birds, habitats, habitat trees, ecological complexity, ecological process, water points, wetlands, marshes, threatened and exploited taxa etc)

1.7 Conduct participatory biodiversity assessment of Jalthal forest bringing experts and local people together and maintain database, support KAFCOL master students in thesis on Jalthal biodiversity, management options and human nature interaction

1.8 Species are prioritised for conservation using local and expert knowledge coupled with biological data

1.9 Prepare and publish booklet containing profile of species prioritised for conservation

1.10 Prepare Jalthal biodiversity register and keep the register in relevant locations

1.11 Organize programmes for forest fire, poaching control and conservation of threatened and rare species (in collaboration with DFO, FECOFUN and Local Governments)

Output 2: ***Mikania*** **invasion including satellite populations substantially reduced and controlled, degraded forest areas and wetlands reclaimed and converted into productive systems through 'integrated site management'**

2.1 Carryout *Mikania* cover assessment using remote sensing and ground truthing tools (it serves as baseline data as well) and carryout end line data collection at the end

2.2 Organize workshop with local stakeholders to prepare strategies and plans for *Mikania* control (prepare plan for 'integrated site management')

2.3 Organise campaign and conduct activities for *Mikania* clearance in forests in wider stakeholders participation including local government representative, provide incentives to CFUGs for users contribution

2.4 Identify and promote technologies to use *Mikania* biomass (Support local farmers to make compost and bio-gas out of *Mikania* weeds)

2.5 Undertake programmes to restore wetlands in collaboration with local governments, indigenous people and CFUGs

2.6 Integrate shade crops and fast growing fodder trees in *Mikania* cleared areas with *Mikania* control programme

2.7 Work with local farmers, CFUG members and municipalities to remove satellite population of *Mikania*

Output 3 Biodiversity conservation and values are appreciated and integrated into community forestry policy and planning process; communication materials highlighting biodiversity conservation prepared and disseminated for diverse stakeholders

3.1 Develop a manual on integrating overall biodiversity conservation in CF planning and process, include national expert while preparing the manual

3.2 Provide training to CFOP practitioners on values of biodiversity and ways of integrating it into CFOPs

3.3 Organize three national dialogue with national level stakeholders on biodiversity mainstreaming in CF planning and process

3.4 Prepare, publish and disseminate a policy brief on biodiversity conservation with respect to CF

3.5 Publish a peer reviewed article based on review of CFOPs to highlight gaps and opportunities of biodiversity conservation in CFs

3.6 Write and publish three popular articles on leading national dailies

3.7 Prepare, produce and disseminate a video (documentary) to conceptualise, highlight and operationalise overall biodiversity conservation in community forests.

Output 4 Forest based micro enterprises including ecotourism facilities established and operationalized for enhancement of local livelihoods

4.1 Conduct a feasibility study on forest based microenterprise in Jalthal area

4.2 Prepare business plan for Bamboo/rattans, tourism and fisheries

4.3 Identify disadvantaged women and support them in enterprise development in agroforestry, ecotourism including fisheries

4.4 Designate biodiversity demonstration block, prepare and provide necessary information for visitors

4.5 support to establish tourism facilities and prepare broachers highlighting ecological, cultural value of Jalthal forest to attract domestic tourists 4.6 Provide skill development training to local people by including women and disadvantaged group of people, promote traditional skills related to bamboo and rattans, support making crafts, utensils and souvenirs out of bamboo and rattans 4.7 Support women groups by providing seed fund and technical support to start agroforestry including prioritised non –timber forest products (NTFPs) in designated areas of CF and in private lands 4.8 Organise exposure visits for women groups to see ecotourism programmes (35 Participants, 18 women) 4.9 Organize a sharing and exit workshop with local stakeholders at the end of the project, organise interaction with local government for ownership of the activities and interventions

Annex 3: Standard Measures

Please expand and complete Table 1: new projects should complete the Y1 column and also indicate the number planned during the project lifetime. Continuing project should cut and past the information from previous years and add in data for the most recent reporting period. Quantify project standard measures over the last year using the coding and format from the Darwin Initiative Standard Measures (see website for details: http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/reporting-forms) and give a brief description. Please list and report on relevant Code No's only. The level of detail required is specified in the Standard Measures Guidance notes under 'definitions and reporting requirements' column. Please devise and add any measures that are not captured in the current list. Please note that these measures may not be a substitute for output level objectively verifiable indicators in the project logframe.

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Gender of people (if relevant)	Nationality of people (if relevant)	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
2	Thesis on biodiversity and forest management	3M, 2F	Nepali	3	2		3	5
11A	Research results			1	1	1		3
9	Species management plan				1	1		3
10	Identification manual for useful plants				5	5		10
7	Awareness leaflets			2	2	2		6
14 A	Workshops/trainings			7	6	3		15
14 B	Conference presentation	M	Nepali	0	1	1		2
22	Permanent plots				10			10
20	Computers, Cameras, Printers, GPS							

In Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Mark (*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
***Mimosa diplotricha* (Fabaceae): a new report of invasive weed from Eastern Tarai of Nepal**	Journal	Lila Nath Sharma, Bhaskar Adhikari, Mahesh Raj Bist and Bharat Babu	Male	Nepal	Department of Plant Resources, Kathmandu	Accepted for publication will be online soon

		Shrestha				

Annex 4 Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	Yes
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	Yes
Have you included means of verification? You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Yes
Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	No
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	