

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

Project reference	Main project 26-024
Project title	<i>Improving indigenous Bolivian Chiquitano people's livelihoods through sustainable forest management</i>
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Bolivia and Brazil
Lead organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, United Kingdom
Partner(s)	NGO Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza, Santa Cruz, Bolivia Museo de Historia Natural Noel Kempff Mercado, Universidad autónoma, Gabriel Rene Moreno, Santa Cruz, Bolivia
Project leader	<i>Bente B. Klitgård</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	<i>HY2. From April 1st to 30th September 2020</i>
Project website/blog/social media	<i>See project comms report in the supplementary material.</i>

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).

Here we report against the logframe agreed in change request of December 20th 2019 (Q23logframe_26-024_Klitgaard_20191220)

Output 1. Five indigenous smallholder communities in the Chiquitano dry forest ecoregion apply best practices to build climate resilience and sustainable forest management.

Activity 1.3. Equipment has been made to process chiquitana almonds (lever-operated shell-breaking equipment) according to a proven model. It has been agreed with the communities that they will provide wooden handles and rustic tables for installing the crackers as counterpart in-kind contribution (Figure 1).

Activity 1.4. Training continued in the communities in good practices for harvesting the chiquitano almonds, so far 32 smallholders are being trained (50% women). Progress in training includes identification of specific areas for harvesting, a census of productive trees and the opening of paths to improve access for the next harvesting season.

Activity 1.5. Training in good processing practices for the processing of the chiquitana almond has begun, with demonstrations of the use of the equipment obtained in activity 1.3. 26 smallholders are participating (50% women) (Figure 2).

Activity 1.6. Monitoring of the implementation of training in the identification of specific harvesting areas, census of productive trees and opening of trails to improve access for the next harvesting season.

Activity 1.7. We have produced three draft manuals for good practice collection and processing procedures for the three targeted NTFP species: chiquitano almond, pesoé, and copaibo. Validating the manuals with the communities is still in process due to the COVID19 limitations of holding meetings.

Output 2. Indigenous smallholder communities of the Chiquitano dry forest ecoregion are organised in a community forest enterprise and sign mutually beneficial agreements with three companies and take measures to share benefits in a fair and equitable way to develop sustainable value chains based on biodiversity products.

Activity 2.2.a. Communities have been made aware of the importance of producers organising themselves into an association. Progress in organising a community forest enterprise has been limited by the pandemic (details in section 2.b.). *Activity 2.2.b.* The development of the bio-business plan has been limited, as it depends on the progress of activity 2.2.a, which is delayed by the COVID19 pandemic (Details in section 2.b.).

Activity 2.2.c. Technical assistance in business management has been limited as it depends on the progress of activities 2.2.a and 2.2.b, which are delayed by the pandemic (Details in section 2.b.).

Activity 2.3. No exchanges of experience have taken place to-date, as they will include trips to Brazil. Considering that options for travel continue to be limited due to the ongoing pandemic, it is planned to adapt this activity for the virtual exchange of experience visits during Q3 of year 3 (and Q1 of year 4, provided that the change requested is accepted).

Activity 2.4. Progress has been made in the development of the value chain strategy, based on the market study and the mapping of actors carried out in year 1. Validation with local actors is pending, due to the limitations of organising large group meetings.

Activity 2.5. Activities have continued to facilitate partnerships between communities and companies interested in NTFPs. These activities have mainly happened through virtual and telephone conversations.

Output 3. Priority species, habitats, and sites for plant conservation in the Chiquitano dry forest ecoregion identified, documented and published; plant dataset shared with Bolivian partners and biodiversity centres; and national capacity to assess plant conservation priorities built through training of scientists and pre- and post-graduate students.

Activity 3.1b. We have submitted 183 global IUCN assessments for publication on the IUCN portal following independent review. The remaining 17 assessments are still being reviewed external reviewers and will be submitted for publication by January 31st in time for the IUCN's next refresh of the species portal.

Activity 3.3. We have identified 15 Important Plant Areas, completed the documentation and mapping of 10 of these; and we have uploaded the associated data for nine of these sites to the TIPAs platform hosted, managed and populated by the RBGKew (*Figure 3*). The remaining five sites are in progress and will be completed by end of year 2.

Activity 3.4a. Eleven of the 50 global IUCN species assessments are published on the IUCN portal; 15 are submitted to IUCN for publication; 15 are under review with external reviewers; and four species assessments are in progress with the aim to complete the task by December 2020.

Activity 3.4c. In the August 2019 workshop we revised the classification of habitats connected with the Chiquitano area and identified the threats to these. Working through the descriptions of TIPAs sites, we keep building up the data set working towards submitting a manuscript on the Chiquitano ecoregion priority habitat list and TIPA sites to the peer-reviewed journal *Kempffiana* by year 2.

One manuscript has been submitted for publication in *Kew Bulletin* describing a species new to science and discovered during the project (*Figure 4*).

Please see the project communications supplement for other activities under this activity: FAN, MHNNKM, IUCN, PlantLife International, and Kew, and disseminate the information generated in the project on social media: booklets, manual, Facebook, Twitter, blog posts, radio, and video.

Activity 3.5. Several factors (e.g. COVID19, late semester start at Bolivian universities, project field work) we decided to offer this course as an online course in January 2021. Considering lessons learnt from teaching the course in-person in March 2020, we estimate an additional two months to translate the lessons for the virtual classroom. This will in turn allow us to accept more than 14 students onto the course.

Activity 3.6. Through a call distributed on social media, university websites and a with a dedicated bursary webinar, eight students from four universities in the department of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba applied for one of four bursaries. Through a competitive selection process four female students were chosen. They will be supported part-time through year 2 and 3, allowing for COVID19 related slow-down in field work and research activities.

Activity 3.7. Progress continues to be made on all project databases, which are shared with partners through Windows Teams sharepoint.

1. The database of useful 5,500 plant names of the Chiquitania has been cleaned by Kew project staff nomenclaturally and shared with project partners.
2. A database in Brahm's software of 5,500 plant occurrences and of threat-to-species data has been compiled by Kew and MHNNKM project staff of the 200 endemic species plus the 50 useful species selected for full IUCN extinction risk assessment.
3. The 103 IUCN extinction risk assessments submitted in IUCN SIS system accessible via IUCN portal.
4. Nine full TIPAs site descriptions and accompanying map layers shared with MHNNKM and FAN and available on Kew's TIPAs portal.
5. Database of image data from field work sites, habitat photos, plant collections, project events, and capacity building events.

Output 4. TIPAs sites of the Chiquitano dry forest Ecoregion incorporated into subnational action plans on conservation and sustainable development. Local authorities, officials and rangers equipped with strategic knowledge, tools and capabilities for the effective management IPAs and protected areas.

Activity 4.2. Through FAN the project provided recommendations, data and maps feeding into FAN's consultancy project with the regional Santa Cruz governments (GADSC). The material is being digested by GADSC and we expect the results of this consultation imminently.

Activity 4.3. The workshop with the new local government authorities is pending, as the elections have been postponed (Details in section 2.a.).

Activity 4.6. Most planned international meetings have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID19. However, we plan to take part in those when they eventually happen.

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.

Initially, local government elections were expected to be held in March 2020. Due to problems with the 2019 presidential elections and the pandemic, the elections were postponed until March 2021. This mainly affects activity 4.3, which has had to be postponed for Q1 of year 3.

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.

Looking at the 2020-21 (yr2) financial year, March-Sept. 2020 saw the outbreak of the Covid19 virus. A lockdown was enforced in Bolivia since mid-March to end of August of 2020, which again has prevented project staff from undertaking field work and from working with the communities. Because we missed the fruiting season for one of our three non-timber forest products (Chiquitana almond), due to COVID19 travel and meeting restrictions, the livelihood components of this project will need a third season to complete our objectives (especially the goal of increasing trade in forest products, and therefore the income of communities). The project is currently due to complete in March 2022. We predict that the re-phased planning require a six-month extension to the project reaching into a fourth financial year 2022-23, given the seasonal nature of our project – relying on flowering and fruiting times, and the absence of severe forest fires.

Therefore, for the project to be able to reach its targets and meet its objectives, we are planning to submit a request for a six-month extension to the project to the DI – with associated changes to the logframe, implementation timetable and budget. Our plan is to submit a change request in November 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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: ca. £

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?

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

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**