

## Darwin Initiative Main Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note”:  
(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/information-notes-learning-notes-briefing-papers-and-reviews/> ).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)

**Submission Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	27-003
Project title	Creating a sustainable landscape for the Tau-Buid and the Tamaraw
Country/ies	Philippines
Lead partner	Re:wild
Project partner(s)	D’Aboville Foundation and Demo Farm Inc.
Darwin grant value	£299,753.00
Start/end dates of project	January 2021 – December 2023
Reporting period	April 2021- March 2022. Second Annual Report
Project Leader name	Mike Appleton
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="https://www.rewild.org/wild-about/mounts-iglit-baco-natural-park">https://www.rewild.org/wild-about/mounts-iglit-baco-natural-park</a>
Report author(s) and date	Mike Appleton (Project Leader) with Emmanuel Schutz (DAF Programme Director) and Ronet Santos (Project Manager) 30/04/2022

### ***Acronyms and Abbreviations used in the report***

ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan
BMB	Biodiversity Management Bureau (of DENR)
CADC	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CCP	Community Conservation Plan
DAF	D’Aboville Foundation (main project partners of Re:wild)
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENIPAS	Extended National Integrated Protected Area System
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
MIBNP	Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
PaSu	Protected Area Superintendent
PAMO	Protected Area Management Office (of MIBNP)
PAMB	Protected Area Management Board (of MIBNP)
PPA	Philippine Permaculture Association
TCP	Tamaraw Conservation Program (of DENR)

### ***Note on terminology***

The project title and proposal use the spelling ‘Tau-Buid’ for the Indigenous occupants of MIBNP, the most widespread spelling of many in use at the time. Since then it has been clarified with the tribe that the most appropriate spelling should be ‘Taobuid’; consequently we use the revised spelling throughout the report.

‘Mangyan’ is the umbrella term for the eight indigenous peoples of Mindoro: the Iraya, Alangan, Tadyawan, Taobuid, Buhid, Hanunuo, Ratagnon and Bangon.

‘Punong Tribu,’ refers to the tribal head of the Taobuid.

# 1. Project summary

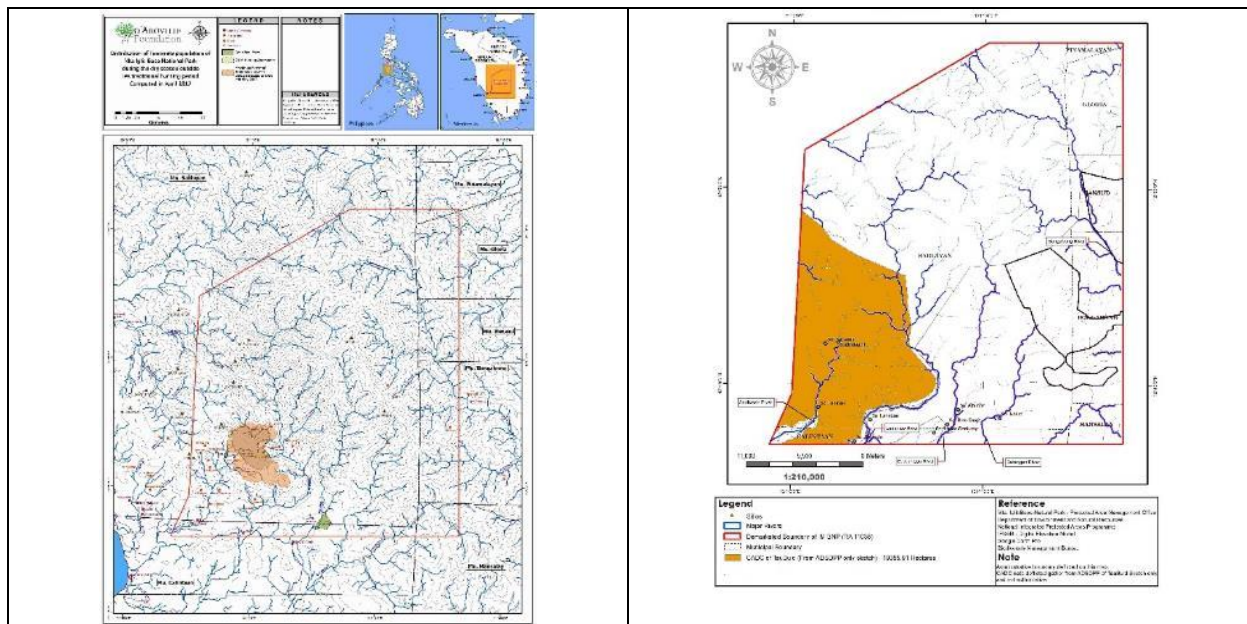
The Critically Endangered Tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*: Mindoro dwarf buffalo) is endemic to the Philippine island of Mindoro. Formerly abundant, hunting and habitat loss have reduced Tamaraw to four isolated populations totalling approximately 600 individuals. The only viable population (ca 450) survives in 2,500ha of the territory of the Indigenous Taobuid tribe in Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP: total area 106,655 ha. See Figure 1) This population is threatened by habitat loss and degradation, poaching and unsustainable traditional hunting, all of which are preventing population growth and extension of its range.

Around 400 Taobuid people (of a total of 15,000) live traditional lives alongside the Tamaraw and see their survival as intrinsically linked to that the species. Both have historically been pushed into the harsh, mountainous environment of MIBNP. The Taobuid people suffer from insecure tenure, land degradation, and marginalisation in decision-making. Their traditional land-use practices are becoming unsustainable, threatening their cultural identity and community coherence. As Tamaraw numbers have decreased, traditional hunting of the animals is becoming unsustainable.

The futures of the Taobuid and the Tamaraw (and other threatened species in the area) depend on building a new, co-managed, resilient and sustainable bio-cultural landscape. Taobuid leaders recognise this, but are wary of outsiders and frustrated by their inability to secure formal ancestral domain recognition.

The project builds on six years' research, consultation and planning, culminating in participatorily developed plans for managing MIBNP and conserving the Tamaraw. These plans prescribe a holistic approach, linking improved protection, science-based Tamaraw management, formal recognition of the ancestral domain of the Taobuid, and improved sustainability and resilience of their agriculture and resource use. This is intended to allow the Tamaraw population to expand under the stewardship of the Taobuid, who will be better empowered to control their future, sustain themselves and their territory, and maintain their cultural associations with the species.

Figure 1. Left hand map: Location of MIBNP and the main area occupied by Tamaraw. Right hand map: approximate extent of the Taobuid Ancestral Domain claim within MIBNP



## 2. Project stakeholders/ partners

The project is focused around the following main partnerships:

**The D’Aboville Foundation and Demo Farm Inc. (DAF)** is a Philippines-based NGO that has worked in Mindoro since 2004 and that started to address Tamaraw conservation in 2013. The partnership with Re:wild was established in 2016 aligned around a mutual interest in conserving the Tamaraw. Through this partnership Re:wild understood the imperative of integrating conservation of the species with the needs and rights of the Taobuid people.

This extensive collaboration provided a strong foundation for the project. The two organisations know each other well and the main personnel worked together extensively on project design, management and implementation. This has helped ensure that the partnership has remained strong throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, during which the relationship has been entirely online.

The **Protected Area Management Office (PAMO)** of Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park, under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is the official body responsible for management. The PAMO was engaged at all stages of project design and is ultimately responsible for sustaining most of the project’s outcomes.

We are currently working with the fourth Protected Area Superintendent (PaSu) of MIBNP since the project was conceived, a challenge for project continuity. The Covid-19 pandemic has also restricted direct meetings with the PaSu and has for long periods limited the movement and activities of government personnel, significantly slowing official process and responses and preventing day to day engagement with the newest PaSu. However, our strong working relations with the other long-term middle management and junior staff of MIBNP have enabled us to continue integrating the aims of the project with the overall management of MIBNP. The foundation for this has been the management plan for MIBNP (developed with Re:wild support before the Darwin Project started). Our project team was asked by PAMO staff to help develop the official annual plan of operation for MIBNP (based on the management plan), which has enabled ongoing integration of project activities with the official work programme of the Park. This in turn has led to an increase in central allocation of staff, budget and resources to the PAMO.

The Protected Area Management Board (**PAMB**) is the formal multistakeholder participatory management body for MIBNP that reviews and approves major plans and decisions. Project team members are regularly invited to attend and make presentations to PAMB meetings (most of which have taken place online in the last year).

The **Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP)** is the official programme of the DENR for Tamaraw conservation across the island of Mindoro and works closely with PAMO for the monitoring and management of the Tamaraw population inside MIBNP. The head of the TCP was on sick leave for much of the year which has limited collaboration. However he is now recovered and we are working together to integrate our work.

The other main partners for the project are the **Taobuid people**. The main goals of the project reflect the wishes expressed by Taobuid leaders during development of the management plan for MIBNP and their desire to have their Ancestral Domain formally recognised. Central to this project is a reliable and trusting relationship with the Taobuid who have had previous negative experiences with standalone short-term projects and who are also disconcerted by the frequent changes of leadership in the PAMO. Our approach to working with the Taobuid is based on the following

- We have good relations with the Punong Tribu (tribal leader) of the Taobuid and are careful to consult with him and follow his guidance, emphasising that the goals of the project reflect the wishes of the Taobuid.

- The tribe has a complex and heterogeneous composition and inhabitants of more remote areas are reluctant to share sensitive information and to allow outsiders into their settlements. We work continuously to improve our understanding of the Taobuid community, its composition, culture and complex dynamics through both formal and informal research and dialogue.
- We are careful not to force the pace of the relationship or to present project plans as *faits accomplis*. The approach is to listen, explain, present options and allow time for community members to absorb, adapt and opt into decisions and activities at their own pace. As a result the team is being allowed increasing access to the tribe, is being directly requested for formal and informal support.

In the past year the project team has built excellent relations with **the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)** with respect to issues of Free Prior and Informed Consent and the development of the Ancestral Domain claim of the Taobuid. This led to the signing of a Tripartite agreement between the NCIP, DAF and the Taobuid to pursue the Ancestral Domain Claim and to issuing of a work order by the NCIP to officially start work on the claim (see Activity 3.4)

We also working with the national and regional offices of the **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)** and within the DENR the **Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB)** on issues related to protected area planning and policy.

The project was invited by the **British Embassy in Manila** to contribute to the UK-PH Climate Change and Environment Work Plan for 2022 and beyond. We provided an update on the Darwin project and suggested inputs to future plans, as well as photographs for inclusion in the 2nd UK-Philippines Climate Change and Environment Dialogue event on 10 February 2022.

### 3. Project progress

#### 3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

**Output 1. A sound understanding of the structure, culture and needs of Taobuid communities in and around the Tamaraw habitat and of the options and needs for sustainable land use and landscape rehabilitation.**

***Activity 1.1 Commission a study of Taobuid agriculture and resource use and food security from a national specialist.***

Two major studies have been completed.

- The project team worked with national anthropologist Professor Leah Abayao from the University of the Philippines, Baguio to research and prepare a report '*Initial Documentation of Indigenous Political Structure, Land Use, Hunting and other Resource Use Practices of the Taobuid in MIBNP*'.
- A French-Philippine anthropologist Dr Julia Tichit Navarro, was contracted to collate a 'state of knowledge' report entitled '*Mangyan Taobuid land-use and trade system in Mindoro and Mts Iglit Baco Natural Park: State of knowledge February 2022*'. This is currently under review.

Both reports (see Annex 4.1.1) are now informing our work with the Taobuid and we are working to design more specific studies based on their recommendations. The intention in the next year is to work with all authors to submit these reports for publication in a suitable journal.

In March 2022 we held a workshop on how to examine the social organization and inheritance laws of the Taobuid. Our resource person/facilitator was Dr Elizabeth Luquin, a French social anthropologist from INALCO (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Cultures), CASE (Southeast Asia Center), and IRASEC (Research Institute for Contemporary Southeast Asia). This will inform further studies to improve our understanding of the Taobuid and how best to work with them.

Our project manager is compiling an extensive lexicon of the Taobuid language.

### **1.2 Conduct socio economic and ethnographic studies of one Taobuid village in order to understand how new practices in agriculture and land use can best be assimilated.**

The anticipated single village study has not been possible due to reluctance of the more remote Tau Buid communities to allow outsiders to visit their settlements (they are open to meeting outside the settlements), and because Covid-19 related travel regulations made it impossible for an ethnographer to visit Mindoro.

To address this, the project team devised an innovative and effective alternative approach. We worked with Professor Leah Abayao from the College of Social Sciences at the University of the Philippines, Baguio, to develop an online training course in basic social science research techniques for three members of the project team and for three 'para-anthropologists' from the local community. The aim is to enable the team to conduct more thorough documentation of upland communities sharing their living space with the tamaraw and to obtain information (with their permission) about communities unwilling to accept outside researchers.

Following preliminary computer training, three interactive blended learning modules were delivered on Indigenous-focused and sensitive research design, formulation of objectives and research questions, data collection methods, analysis, writing and uses of the final product. Participants then chose research topics including the history and importance of rice among the Taobuid, the different fishing methods used by the communities, activities related to the planting of rice, what the Taobuid in highly assimilated settlements still consider as sacred, the evolution of the alternative educational system in highly assimilated settlements, and initial assessment of production and consumption of rice and other food sources in more remote settlements. Information gathered has been incorporated into the reports listed under Activity 1.1. More modules are planned for the next year. See Annex 4.1.2.

### **1.3 Conduct exchanges, training events and study visits from the Taobuid to other Indigenous initiatives in the Philippines.**

On March 23-24, 2022, DAF team members including two Taobuid members from MIBNP visited and held discussion with a group of Taobuid communities in Oriental Mindoro (outside MIBNP). The Taobuid there are being assisted by the local Hiraya Foundation to apply permaculture design principles in the area, such as mulching, composting, and the planting herbs to repel pests.

Covid-19 restrictions prevented any further possible cross visits. However, we have identified some possible exchange partners, and Taobuid community members have shown interest in such exchanges in the future.

### **1.4 Establish an area inside MIBNP for trials and demonstrations of agriculture and agroforestry techniques.**

This has been a major area of activity. The project has contracted the Philippine Permaculture Association (PPA) to work the project team, the PAMO, the rangers and the Taobuid to establish a demonstration area in the vicinity of one of the ranger stations in MIBNP.

The first joint field visit took place from 6-15 June 2021, and included training on permaculture approaches and an initial proposed design for a 2-hectare model garden area and a 6-hectare area divided into two sections: a) an experimental restoration site, and b) a food forest.

Establishing this area had four main aims

#### Model Garden

1. To demonstrate sustainable horticultural and agricultural crops and techniques with potential for adoption by Taobuid communities.
2. To provide a sustainable and affordable supply of fresh food for the rangers, who had hitherto had to provide their own rations.
3. To develop a system of exchange based on local crops and natural resources (and not cash transactions).

#### 'Landing area' restoration zone

3. To demonstrate and test agroforestry techniques

4. To establish and research managed forest restoration and recovery, as a precursor to potential wider rewilding programmes in the Park.

The initial design plus the implementation framework were approved by the Protected Area Management Office and a Memorandum of Agreement for delivery of the project endorsed for signing by the DENR regional office. Further consultations were necessary with Taobuid community members to clarify the purpose and intentions of the project.

Work by the project team and park rangers started in last quarter 2021 and three further technical visits were provided by PPA in December 2021, January and March 2022. Major progress has now been made in establishment of the kitchen garden area and larger 6 ha area. Major progress has now been made in establishment of the kitchen garden area and larger 6ha area.

A key discovery during these visits is the existence of more than 400 pioneer trees (more than 20 species) already growing the 6 ha area. The area around these trees were cleared to allow them to get a head start in growing against the dominant grasses. These trees will be complemented with tree seedlings and wildlings during the rainy season.

Team members have also been supported to visit permaculture development sites and organic agriculture sites in Oriental Mindoro.

See Annex 4.1.4 for diagrams and photographs.

### **1.5 Provide training/exchange opportunities for project staff**

Training and exchange opportunities have been limited during the pandemic. Never-the-less the following several events have been possible

- Delivery of three blended learning modules for 'para-anthropologists'. Took place during 2021 as described under Activity 1.2. Seven participants (3 men, 4 women).
- Basic Permaculture Design Course (PDC), November 3-10, 2021. 17 participants (11 male, 6 female)
- First training on double observer point-counts for Tamaraw. January 25-29, 2022. 11 participants, all male rangers.
- Second training on double observer point counts for Tamaraw. February 22-26, 2022. 11 participants, all male rangers.
- Study visit to Hiraya Farm and Resort in Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, a permaculture development site, and a learning centre for agriculture accredited by the Agricultural Training Institute. March 23-24, 2022. Eight participants (5 female, 3 male. 6 DAF personnel, 2 MIBNP PAMO personnel. 2 Tao-Buid tribe members).
- Training workshop on the social organization and inheritance laws of the Taobuid in Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park. Led by Dr. Elizabeth Luquin, a French social anthropologist from INALCO (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Cultures), CASE (Southeast Asia Center), and IRASEC (Research Institute for Contemporary Southeast Asia). March 24 to 26, 2022. Eight participants (5 female, 3 male; 6 DAF personnel, 2 MIBNP PAMO personnel; 2 Tao-Buid tribe members).

**Output 2 At least two Taobuid communities (approximately 200 men, women and children) are engaged in implementing agreed plans of activities to improve sustainability of resource and land use and rehabilitate damaged landscapes in and around Tamaraw habitat.**

#### **2.1 Hold participatory resource management planning events with the Taobuid.**

For much the year the Covid-19 pandemic restricted the possibility to meet with the Taobuid, online interaction with them was not possible and telephone discussions were not practical. The project was able to meet with the Punong Tribu (tribal head) from time to time outside the Taobuid territory and when regulations allowed.

One major event under this activity was possible. Upon request of the Punong Tribu, the project hosted an orientation meeting on 21 July 2021 on the Extended National Integrated Protected Area System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018, the Wildlife Act, and the Indigenous People's Rights Act. This meeting was attended by fifty-four persons (17% female, 83% male; 17% non-Taobuid and 83% Taobuid; 38% of the Taobuid reside outside the park, 64% reside within the park). See Annex 4.2.1

## **2.2 Support participatory identification of location and boundaries of Community Conservation Plan (CCP) areas inside MIBNP.**

The project team worked with community members to successfully relocate and geo-reference old boundary markers from a previous attempt to define the Ancestral Domain of the Taobuid, for use in the new Ancestral Domain claim (see map in Annex 4.2.2). This information will be used for mapping the revised claim and will save considerable time and expense in surveying fees.

## **2.3 Support participatory development of management and action plans for the Community Conservation Plan.**

This activity is at an early stage and dependent on completion of activity 2.1. During initial discussions with the Punong Tribu, he suggested that major component of the CCP could be the concept of "*fagfatungkudan mangilafang*" (wildlife reproduction area), expanding the existing no hunting agreement in a way that could meet conservation needs, PAMO objectives and Taobuid customary laws; We need now to conceptualise it in a way that can be accepted by all stakeholders.

## **2.4 Work with at least one selected village to enable and encourage uptake agricultural extension advice**

Given the reticence of Taobuid communities in areas of MIBNP within the Tamaraw range to allow outsiders to visit, we have adopted an alternative strategy for this activity. Following previous negative experiences, the Taobuid are suspicious of externally prepared 'rural development' projects attempting to impose new crops and techniques on them. They have told us that their approach is not to take the promises of outsiders at face value, but rather to adopt an approach that '*to see is to believe*'.

Consequently, rather than reaching out into their settlements, we are encouraging Taobuid from those settlements to visit and observe the work on the demonstration areas described under Activity 1.4. Some village leaders initially forbade their members to visit, but following explanatory meetings, they have now lifted that restriction. Community members are now starting to visit the demonstration area, observing and asking questions. Some started voluntarily to collect tree seedlings for the restoration area and bring vegetables (green papaya, banana blossoms, squash, etc.) in exchange for rice and other essentials and to ask for advice. Over the next year our expectation is that they will gradually adopt and where necessary adapt the techniques and crops being demonstrated in their own settlements.

## **2.5 Identify and mobilise potential sources of additional extension support for implementing CCPs.**

Activity not in the work plan for 2021/22.

## **2.6 Develop and implement strategies and joint actions for fire management, erosion control and invasive species control.**

The demonstration area described under Activity 1.4 is piloting approaches for restoration of degraded land that can be later extended to a wider forest recovery programme. Our initial finding is that in the absence of burning, natural regeneration of trees is quite rapid and widespread. Monitoring of these areas is continuing.

The cessation of burning as a prerequisite for the annual Tamaraw census will enable us to monitor post burning ecosystem changes at a larger scale.



### **Output 3 The Tamaraw population is well protected, stable or increasing and occupying an increased protected zone of at least 2,500ha.**

#### **3.1 Support and development of and implement refined census techniques for Tamaraw.**

Two census approaches were developed by the project team to be conducted and tested in parallel with the 2021 census.

- A multi-vantage point count combined with a double observer protocol in replication of the existing census method to test its accuracy.
- Distance sampling for dung (using transects) combined with the double observer protocol.

See Annex 4.3.1 for details of the methods used.

A talk and presentation on these methods was included in the annual Tamaraw Month events in October 2021.

#### **3.2 Conduct and analyse annual Tamaraw census.**

No count took place in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The official 2021 Tamaraw census (a total count from multiple observer points) was organised by the Tamaraw Conservation Program between April 11 and 16 2021, and reported a total of 427 Tamaraw. This is a decrease from the figure of 480 in 2019, but involved fewer surveyors and survey points and so cannot be directly compared.

The project team's analysis of the method and data processing used in the total counts suggests a number of possible inaccuracies. The purpose of developing other methods (as described under Activity 3.1) is to be able to check and if necessary calibrate the method currently used in order to make it more accurate and to avoid the need to burn the grassland area to allow direct observation counts.

The third iteration of data collection using distance sampling for dung was conducted from June 8-15, 2021 (previous iterations were in February and December 2020). The double-observer point count of the Tamaraw was conducted from May 4-9, 2021. The data have been analysed and a preliminary report prepared with recommendations. These counts will be conducted again in parallel to the official census in 2022 and recommendations will be made for updating the current annual census method.

See Annex 4.3.2 for photos and diagrams of the field work.

#### **3.3 Agree an enlarged no hunting area with the Taobuid (linked to 2.2)**

Discussions on the enlarged no hunting area are being held alongside the formulation of the Community Conservation plan as discussed under Output 2. We are exploring with the Punong Tribu the traditional concept of "*fagfatungkudan mangilafang*" (wildlife reproduction area) as the basis for area expansion.

#### **3.4 Train, equip and support rangers to improve protection and monitor and plan activities using SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) software.**

The SMART database managed by the Tamaraw Conservation Program TCP was upgraded by the project to version 6.3 from 6.1. Use of SMART during the year has however been limited, due to equipment malfunctions, which have now been addressed through donation of a further four data recording devices by the UNDP Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN).

There is however a need to discuss with higher authorities means to integrate SMART with the (SMART derived) national LAWIN data management system which is used by the MIBNP Protected Area Management Office to ensure full compatibility of recording methods and data.

#### **3.5 Collate statistics and publish an annual law enforcement and wildlife crime prevention report**

Patrol and law enforcement activity in MIBNP has reduced in the past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, equipment problems, and ongoing issues with the status and contracts of rangers and staff sickness. In addition, the Re:wild Wildlife Crime Prevention Officer has not been able

to visit the project. As a consequence law enforcement data was not reliably collected by the PAMO of MIBNP or by the TCP, during the past year. All these issues are being addressed

- New SMART data recording devices have been procured.
- New staffing arrangements have been finalised, including an increase in ranger numbers officially assigned to the PAMO. Ranger pay has been increased.
- The Tamaraw Conservation Program, the UNDP BIOFIN programme and the project made representations to the DENR about employment conditions of contractual rangers. As a consequence these rangers have now for the first time received adequate personal insurance (see Annex 4.3.5). This change will help considerably to improve ranger morale.
- Visits by international personnel to the Philippines to support capacity development for crime prevention are now possible and will take place during 2022.

All these changes should allow an improvement in crime prevention and law enforcement in the next year.

### **3.6 Conduct an awareness campaign on the management of MIBNP need for tamaraw conservation. Focal groups - Park edge communities - Local government units and official agencies with an interest in MIBNP.**

Covid-19 restrictions have prevented the intended community and public awareness events. Instead we have focused on meetings with key stakeholders explaining the project in the context of wider initiatives for managing MIBNP and the Tamaraw. For wider dissemination we have made use of online materials.

- We commissioned a first video of the permaculture system building project in the Park, available on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jklprbHlxU>
- DAF provides project related news and stories on its website. <https://www.dabovillefoundation.org/mangyan-tamaraw-driven-landscape-pr>
- DAF also produces and circulates a newsletter including news from the project. <https://www.dabovillefoundation.org/post/daf-newsletter-2021>
- DAF has established an active Facebook presence with regular updates on its work in MIBNP. <https://www.facebook.com/dabovillefoundation>
- An article on the project was included in the March 2022 Darwin Initiative Newsletter. <https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/assets/uploads/Darwin-Newsletter-March-2022-Charismatic-Conservation-FINAL.pdf>

## **Output 4 A claim for the rights of the Taobuid in their Ancestral Domain is prepared and submitted by the end of the project.**

### **4.1 Conduct a review of the current status of the Taobuid claim and the reasons for the rejection of the previous claim.**

Completed in 2020/21 as in internal review by the project team.

### **4.2 Clarify the processes required to obtain a CADT and complete the ADSDPP inside MIBNP.**

The detailed 25-step process for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain (CADT) application was obtained from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in 2020/2021.

### **4.3 Formalise agreement with the Taobuid and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) for provision of support.**

Completed. On 10 February 2022, a tripartite Memorandum of Agreement was signed between DAF, NCIP Occidental Mindoro, and the Tao-Buid leaders confirming the agreement that DAF and the Taobuid will provide resources for NCIP Occidental Mindoro to implement a work and financial plan (WFP) for processing the ancestral domain claim (see Annex 4.4.3).

Following this agreement, on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the NCIP issued a formal work order to proceed with the work on the Certificate of Ancestral Domain (CADT) application (see Annex 4.4.3).

These two documents are a major achievement and are the culmination of a year of painstaking and patient work and negotiation by the project team despite the restrictions imposed by the Pandemic. They indicate the level to which the project has secured the trust of the NCIP and of the Tau Buid leadership.

#### **4.4 Provide resources to support the CADT and ADSDPP process, based on the requests of the Taobuid and the NCIP.**

The project contributed extensive staff time to the establishment of the agreement detailed under 4.3 and contributed ██████ towards the expenses of required consultations and travel by the NCIP team. Local government units and more than five Taobuid indigenous people's mandatory representatives also pledged a total of ██████ as a match for this, ensuring that entire costs were covered. (See Annex 4.4.3)

#### **4.5 Complete documentation of all requirements for CADT and ADSDPP inside MIBNP**

The official responsibility for documentation lies with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. The issuance of the work order (as described under 4.3) ensures that all formal procedures and documentation requirements will be followed by NCIP in collaboration with Taobuid leaders.

### **3.2 Progress towards project Outputs**

#### **Output 1 A sound understanding of the structure, culture and needs of Taobuid communities in and around the Tamaraw habitat and of the options and needs for sustainable land use and landscape rehabilitation.**

- The two major reports prepared under Activity 1.1 provide an excellent foundation for our understanding of the ethnography, culture, livelihoods and needs of the Taobuid. This level of understanding of a little documented tribe, many of whose members prefer self-isolation, is essential if we are to be able to provide the support they need. The establishment of the 'para-anthropologist' training scheme has been a conspicuous success. We designed this out of necessity because expert anthropologists were unable to visit, but it has proved to be effective in gathering previously unobtainable information, building local capacity, and establishing a bridge of trustful collaboration between previously unreachable Taobuid communities and the project team. If time allows we would like to prepare journal publications on some of this work.
- The Philippines Permaculture Association has proved to be an excellent partner in the identification, design and management of the agricultural demonstration area and in training the team in the approaches and techniques required. The area has been established deliberately just outside the claimed ancestral domain of the Taobuid in order to avoid any unwelcome encroachment on their land, but is readily accessible from several settlements.

The work done so far in these areas includes the following

##### **Kitchen/community model garden area**

- Created a natural water filtering and supply system.
- Creating pathways.
- Creating and planting growing beds with a range of crops (some of which are now producing food).
- Constructing waste and composting bins.
- Establishing vegetable nurseries.

##### **Restoration Area**

- Creation of a fire break around the entire area.
- Establishment of around 100 banana trees.
- Repair of the water supply.
- Location and protection of more than 500 naturally seeded pioneer trees to ensure their survival in grassland areas.

- Establishment of mounds of organic material to promote tree island patches in degraded areas.
- Creation of an irrigation pond.
- Day-to-day work in the area is led by the project’s two female Permaculture Implementation Officers, who have benefitted from off site and on the job training and who are being successful in building trustful relations with local Taobuid community members and PAMO rangers. Their presence has helped encourage female Taobuid community members to start visiting the area.

**Output 2 At least two Tau-Buid communities (approximately 200 men, women and children) are engaged in implementing agreed plans of activities to improve sustainability of resource and land use and rehabilitate damaged landscapes in and around Tamaraw habitat.**

Progress towards this output is based around two formal planning processes.

- a. As part of their Certificate of Ancestral Domain application, the Tao-Buid are required to prepare and submit an Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP). Preparation of the ADSDPP is part of the agreed process being led by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (described in detail under Output 4) and covers the entire Ancestral Domain area (most of which is outside Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park.)
- b. Development of a Community Conservation Plan (CCP) for the area of the Ancestral Domain inside the Park (allowed under the Extended National Integrated Protected Area System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018) .

The starting point for this process has been the community orientation meeting on the ENIPAS Act of 2018, the Wildlife Act, and the Indigenous People’s Rights Act held on 21 July 2021 and attended by fifty-four persons (17% female, 83% male; 17% non-Taobuid and 83% Taobuid; 38% of the Taobuid reside outside the park, 64% reside within the park). The event had four objectives: a] to understand the salient features of the legislation b] to identify ambiguities in interpretation of the specific provisions of the law and determine how these could be handled/addressed, c] to identify Taobuid, NCIP, and PAMO staff who will form the planning team for the formulation of a Community Conservation Plan (CCP) for the area of the Taobuid ancestral domain inside the MIBNP., and d] make an initial action plan in the formulation of a Community Conservation Plan (CCP). The first two objectives were achieved. The last two objectives were not fully met because the more vocal participants came from outside the protected area. It was deemed better to postpone the identification of the people involved in the planning until the Punong Tribu has made clear that those residing within the protected area should lead the process.

The next stages in the development of the CCP will be to form the planning team and agree the scope and scale of the plans.

A main goal of the establishment of the demonstration area described under Output 1 is to show new, regenerative and appropriate ways to improve the sustainability of cropping and to restore degraded and previously burnt land. Measures that are acceptable to the Taobuid can then be incorporated into the Community Conservation Plans. Local Taobuid residents were initially suspicious of the development, and some were forbidden by their leaders to visit. After a meeting with the leaders to further explain the project, this restriction was lifted. Many are now visiting, are expressing interest in the work and are bringing plants to grow in the area to exchange for rice, salt, and sugar. They are also interested in the seeds of plants that they do not have yet. This supports the approach of not forcing these initiatives on the Taobuid, but rather encouraging them to observe and absorb at their own pace. It also increases interactions with Taobuid elders, leaders and community members, including women, who are more prepared to visit in the knowledge that the two project team members working there are also women.

**Output 3 The Tamaraw population is well protected, stable or increasing and occupying an increased protected zone of at least 2,500ha**

**Population monitoring**

The 2020 Tamaraw census was cancelled due to Covid-19. The 2021 census recorded 427 individuals, a decrease from the 480 recorded in 2019. However the numbers of observers were much lower in 2021 making the two figures difficult to compare. We are confident however that there is still a good population of Tamaraw in the areas. It is not possible yet to calibrate figures using alternative census techniques, as development of these has also been hampered by the pandemic. The two alternative techniques being developed are

- A multi-vantage point count combined with a double observer protocol in replication of the existing census method to test its accuracy.
- Distance sampling for dung (using transects) combined with the double observer protocol.

Rangers have been trained in both methods, which were tested in 2021. Further trials will take place in parallel with the main census in 2022.

### **Increased no hunting area**

Negotiation on increases in the no hunting area will need to be part of the development of the Community Conservation Plan. We have started to explore the Punong Tribu the traditional concept of “*fagfatungkudan mangilafang*” (wildlife reproduction area) as the basis for area expansion.

### **Protection**

This has been a challenging area of activity in the last year. Ranger, deployment, patrol effort and documentation using SMART have all declined in the last year due to budget cuts, equipment problems, leadership changes, Covid-19 restrictions and contractual issues with the rangers. Consequently we are not able to provide the level of evidence of improved protection that was foreseen. In the past three months a number of positive measures have been taken to improve the situation

- Covid-19 related movement restrictions have eased
- Equipment has been replaced and upgraded
- Ranger numbers have been increased, pay increased and insurance protection secured.
- Living conditions at the ranger stations have been improved and the new garden is starting to provide fresh food.
- The PaSu of MIBNP has asked the project for assistance with training

On this basis the project needs to focus in the next year on reviving the ranger work in MIBNP.

### **Awareness**

Foreseen community awareness events were not possible due to restrictions on gatherings. The annual Tamaraw month event organised by the Tamaraw Conservation Program has continued as a virtual event spreading messages about the protected status of the Tamaraw. DAF and Re:wild have increased their online profiles and circulated a range of news stories, awareness events and products.

### **Output 4 A claim for the rights of the Tau-Buid in their Ancestral Domain is prepared and submitted by the end of the project**

Substantial progress has been made towards this important output. After a lengthy period of discussions and negotiations (complicated by the pandemic), the project team was able to bring together the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the leadership of the Taobuid to sign a tripartite agreement with the D’Aboville Foundation committing to the process for the CADT application. The project pledged support for travel, meetings and consultations to a total of ██████. Local authorities and individual Taobuid members committed a further ██████ to cover other costs, evidence of local commitment to and ownership of the process.

This breakthrough was followed on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March by the issuance of a work order by the NCIP to proceed with the work on the claim. Work was due to start in April 2022.

In addition to project team worked with Taobuid community members during 2021 to relocate and geo-reference old boundary markers from the previous Ancestral Domain claim, which will accelerate the demarcation process under the new work agreement and work order.

### 3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

***Project Outcome: A viable Tamaraw population thrives in a restored, sustainable biocultural landscape in Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park, where the Taobuid tribe maintain their cultural identity and lifestyle in their recognised Ancestral Domain.***

Progress has been very good with respect to the recognition of the Ancestral Domain, following issuance of a work order by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and pledges of financial support for the process by the Darwin Project, local government units and individuals. We cannot completely guarantee that the process will be completed by the end of the project; it is now out our hands in terms of leadership, but we are well placed and trusted to support and provide technical and resource inputs to the process and will confidently continue to work towards this outcome. While this is happening the project needs to shift attention to the development of the Community Conservation plan for the Taobuid territory inside the Park.

The work on landscape restoration has also made very good progress, with the successful establishment of the demonstration garden and restoration area. This will continue and expand in the next year providing more direct evidence of the efficacy of the new approaches being demonstrated. We will continue to encourage increased interest and engagement from the Taobuid in the next year.

The security and viability of the Tamaraw population is still not certain. Numbers appear to be more or less stable, although recent counts are unreliable due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We will continue our work to devise and test more accurate methods to census the population in 2022/23 in order to ensure that a viable alternative is in place. We will need to focus then on formal adoption of these new methods. Protection effort has declined in the past year, but we have no evidence of increases in poaching of Tamaraw. The future security of the population will depend on revival of good levels of surveillance and protection; on the basis of recent improvements it is likely that the situation will improve.

### 3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

#### **OUTCOME LEVEL ASSUMPTIONS**

***Recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in Mindoro continues as anticipated.***

The pandemic has not subsided in the way we had hoped a year ago; the waves of Covid-19 infections have continued throughout the year, with varying levels of restrictions applied at various times. Overall Mindoro and the project team and partners have not been badly affected and the team continued to follow directives and to adopt a precautional approach with our Taobuid partners.

It is difficult to predict the further trajectory of the pandemic in the Philippines and Mindoro, but the team has adapted well to the ongoing restrictions and uncertainties; learning new ways of working, adopting a flexible approach, seeking local solutions when travel was not possible and continuing to work online and by telephone.

***Illegal hunting and accidental trapping of Tamaraw can be significantly reduced.***

The Covid-19 pandemic and other factors detailed in the report have led to a reduced ranger presence in the field, making it difficult to ascertain what if any poaching is going on. We have no evidence of increased poaching.

***Continued good relations and positive collaboration between the PA Management Office and the Taobuid.***

This assumption has held well. Collaboration with the PAMO remains overall positive, although the turnover of Protected Area Superintendents has affected the continuity of relationships.

Relations with the Taobuid have deepened over the past year, culminating in the signing of the tripartite agreement on pursuing the CADT.

### ***No insurmountable objections from third parties to CADT issuance.***

This assumption continues to hold: no objections have been encountered so far and the support of the NCIP for the CADT indicates a commitment to seeing it through. The project has however less influence over the claimed area outside MIBNP.

#### **OUTPUT LEVEL ASSUMPTIONS**

**Output 1:** *Willingness of the Taobuid to participate in research and other studies (previous studies have been approved following the agreed protocols for FPIC agreed with the Taobuid leaders)*

This assumption holds. The Taobuid are increasingly cooperative in sharing information, agreeing to studies and participating in activities, so long as they do not feel coerced into anything, are given time to build understanding and trust and their wishes are respected regarding not visiting their more remote settlements.

**Output 2:** *The Taobuid agree to the plans and programmes (based on Output 2).*

This assumption holds. To date the Taobuid and their leaders are engaging positively in the development of shared plans.

**Output 3.** *Population changes can be reliably detected within the project period. Population is being constrained by killings and not habitat factors. Local authorities and law enforcement agencies increase support for wildlife crime prevention.*

The pandemic has negatively affected all field activities in the Park. The 2021 Tamaraw census did take place, but the testing of alternative census approaches was not as comprehensive as wished. A further iteration of the counts will be conducted in 2022, followed analysis and production of technical reports and recommendations.

Increases in the PAMO budget and staff numbers, as well as improvements in ranger employment conditions bode well for reinvigorating patrol and protection work in the Park.

**Output 4.** *No official objections to Certificate of Ancestral Domain issuance.*

This assumption holds. We have encountered no objections to date.

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

Integration of poverty alleviation, Indigenous rights and biodiversity conservation is central to the aims of the project.

The project is demonstrating an innovative rights-based approach to conserving a Critically Endangered species and the biocultural landscape in which it survives, alongside more conventional measures for species and habitat protection and management. This type of approach is likely to become more widespread globally as acknowledgement of the positive role of Indigenous peoples in conservation increases and as the rights of these peoples are more widely recognised.

Our poverty alleviation approach is not about providing material aid or on imposing externally developed solutions on local beneficiaries. It more concerned with participatory restoration of a landscape capable of supporting the Taobuid and the Tamaraw. This is intended to provide more durable and locally owned benefits than the typical rural development projects that have previously been attempted in the area. We hope that this will influence others to adopt similar approaches.

The project was invited by the British Embassy in Manila. to contribute to the UK-PH Climate Change and Environment Work Plan for 2022 and beyond, indicating how its potential impact on future environmental policy in the Philippines and on UK-PH cooperation.

## **4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements**

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

With its focus on indigenous management of endangered species within a protected area, the project directly supports Article 8 (In Situ Conservation) and Article 10 (Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity) of the CBD.

With reference to the Aichi targets, the project contributes directly towards:

- Target 11 (Protected Areas). In particular effective and equitable management and governance of a protected area that is also a Key Biodiversity Area.
- Target 12 (Conservation of Species). A main focus of the project is to contribute significantly to preventing the extinction of the Tamaraw and of a range of other endemic species that share its habitat.
- Target 18 (Traditional knowledge and customary and sustainable use of biodiversity). Respect for and empowerment of traditional knowledge, rights and practices are at the heart of the project, which aims to integrate sustainable use of a biocultural landscape with conservation of rare and endangered species.

With reference to the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, the project is most relevant to:

- Goal 1.1: To establish and strengthen national and regional systems of protected areas integrated into a global network as a contribution to globally agreed goals (in particular Action 1.1.7: Encourage the establishment of protected areas that benefit indigenous and local communities, including by respecting, preserving, and maintaining their traditional knowledge...)
- Goal 1.4: To substantially improve site-based protected area planning and management.

### **Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing**

The work of the project in the territory of the Taobuid people is governed by the requirements for Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The Taobuid, guided by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples are aware of their rights and require explicit permission for research activities, surveys of indigenous knowledge and removal of any plant or animal material or specimens. The project is working closely with the NCIP and the Taobuid to ensure full compliance with FPIC requirements; the tripartite agreement described under 4.2 provides evidence of FPIC for the work on the Ancestral Domain claim.

### **FOCAL POINTS**

The Director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the focal point for the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol. The project team is in regular contact with the BMB and formally reports its progress quarterly to the PAMO, who shares them with the DENR provincial office, which passes them to the BMB.

## **5. Project support to poverty reduction**

The main human beneficiaries of the project are members of the Taobuid tribe, whose more remote communities within Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park suffer from lack of tenure and rights and from increasing food security problems caused by land degradation and from personal debt due to the requirement to take out loans to cover the 'hungry season'. The project recognises that addressing these issues is central to the recovery of the Tamaraw and the extension of its range and is addressing this challenge in several specific ways.

- Establishment of Ancestral Domain rights. This improves the capability of the Taobuid for self-determination and maintaining their cultural identity. As well as providing more security, acquiring these rights should enable the Taobuid to enter more confidently into negotiations and agreements that affect them and their long-term security.
- Ecosystem restoration. Rehabilitating degraded landscapes and adopting more sustainable and regenerative land use practices should help the Taobuid secure the long-term viability of their traditions, while adapting and changing at their own pace.



- Improved food supply. By demonstrating (but not imposing) new crops and cropping techniques, it is hoped that the Taobuid will have access to a healthier, year-round diet and will escape the debt cycles caused by the need to borrow during the 'hungry period'.
- Capacity building. Our work to train Taobuid members in biodiversity monitoring, ranger skills, socio economic survey techniques, extension work and other skills improves their opportunities to secure paid, skilled employment if they choose.

## 6. Consideration of gender equality issues

The project is working to address gender equality issues in a range of ways, taking into consideration the strong traditions of the Taobuid and their reluctance to host visits to their villages.

**Project personnel.** Our Community Outreach Officer and the two staff appointed as Permaculture Program Implementation Officers are women. The regular presence of this team at meetings and in the Park has encouraged some female Tao-buid members to engage with them and discuss their work. We have asked our permaculture implementation officers to document these encounters and include them in their reports.

**Research work, meetings and consultations.** Obtaining gender differentiated data is challenging in a culture that favours self-isolation and whose formal representatives are mainly male. In our research studies (see Activities 1.1 and 1.2), we describe where possible the roles of both males and females in agricultural production and other livelihood activities. Where possible we interview both men and women. Our work to understand kinship structures within Taobuid communities is beginning to yield information on both men and women; this is the best we can do at present in terms of sex-disaggregation of population data.

We consistently encourage women to join meetings, but this is only possible in settlements with regular contact with outsiders. For settlements preferring partial self-isolation, we respect their wishes only to meet with their (male) leaders, but we encourage wives to join their husbands in the meetings. For example, the wife of the Punong Tribu (tribal head) usually joins meetings. Where wives do attend, we have observed that they enter into frequent discussions with their husbands over the proceedings.

For more remote villages preferring total self-isolation, we are slowly accumulating gender focused information gathered by our para-anthropologists.

## 7. Monitoring and evaluation

The project team has set up a comprehensive Google Drive filing system for collecting and filing project information, structured according to the logical framework of the project. In this way we are able to continually monitor activities against outputs and outcomes.

Our partners, DAF are required to report quarterly on progress to the Protected Area Management Office. They use the Darwin project log frame and indicators as the basis for these reports, enabling integration of Darwin reporting with national reporting, allowing full transparency on activities with national authorities, and providing a quarterly progress check for the entire team.

Financial monitoring and record keeping at the national level is conducted by the administrative team of our partners the D'Aboville Foundation on a regularly updated spreadsheet based on the project budget. This information is then collated by the Re:wild financial team into the overall project accounts.

Outputs in the form of reports and studies are reviewed by the project team, finalised and filed on the central system. We plan to adapt some of these as journal publications in the next year.

The main evidence to be collected relevant to the community-focused parts of the project takes the form of official agreements and signed and endorsed plans. As part of FPIC, the Taobuid require that all project activities in their territory secure their approval and that major initiatives are subject to signed agreements. These are the end points of processes documented through detailed activity reports by project personnel.

Evidence of field activities related to ranger-based patrolling in MIBNP, documenting illegal activities and recording wildlife observations is scheduled to be collected through the SMART system, which can produce reports and maps based on a wide range of queries. During 2021 however patrolling and use of SMART declined for reasons set out under the report on Activity 3.5.

Evidence of the state of the Tamaraw population is collected through the official annual census led by the Tamaraw Conservation Program. Updated, more accurate and census methods with less environmental impact are currently being developed and tested by the project team.

## **8. Lessons learnt**

Our interactions with the Taobuid have continued to reinforce our understanding of the need for patience, diplomacy and consistency. Taking this approach, and not forcing the pace of interactions or imposing project-driven imperatives, is already resulting in growing evidence of trust and collaboration. As this trust improves however, we need to be increasingly careful to avoid any activities or decisions that might undermine it.

The regular turnover of senior personnel at MIBNP and at other major agencies is challenging. This can be addressed by ensuring good relations with middle management personnel in these organisations (who are less likely to move jobs) and helping to develop plans and processes that provide continuity in organisational directions and priorities across leadership changes.

The problems caused by fragmented and misplaced documentation from previous projects and Ancestral Domain claims emphasise the need to maintain good documentation, to keep it safe and to submit it to reliable depositories.

Finally, we have learned the value of establishing good working relations and a deep partnership with our project partners in advance of starting the project. Without this established relationship and personal friendships and respect between the Re:wild and DAF teams, the project would likely not have achieved anything like what it has done in the past year.

## **9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

The feedback from our last annual report asked about measures to assist with the Covid-19 recovery. These are detailed under Section 13 below.

## **10. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere**

We would like to highlight the remarkable commitment, ingenuity, dedication and perseverance of our project partners from the D’Aboville Foundation in the last year. Their work has been extremely challenging, and at times frustrating and stressful through the pandemic. Despite this, they have made progress on almost all aspects of the project, continuously solving problems and devising new approaches and solutions.

Some of the Taobuid are experiencing food shortages (linked to some extent to limitations on movement of labour and goods imposed by Covid-19 as well as to debt problems) and have been asking project team members to lend them rice. In response the team has voluntarily (and with their own resources) established and ‘capitalised’ a rice bank and storage building (a ‘dongdong’) at Ranger Station 2). Community members are already banking rice and borrowing it at no cost and ‘repay’ it at harvest time, helping ensure their food security and just as importantly keeping them out of financial debt.

## **11. Sustainability and legacy**

We are currently working on a plan to engage new partners in follow up activities in MIBNP and to secure funding for continuation of the work of the project. We are also working to integrate the project’s achievements into national projects initiated since this project began. We are cooperating closely with the UNDP BIOFIN project, have assisted in developing ToR for their consultants and are sharing information and activities wherever possible.

We do not have any anticipated changes to the exit strategy at this stage.

## 12. Darwin identity

We have been recognising the Darwin Initiative and its support for our work, both in the Philippines and more widely. Project outputs and presentations locally include appropriate acknowledgements and we have produced a range of wider dissemination materials including:

*On YouTube:*

An informative video about our work in Mindoro focusing on the demonstration area in the Natural Park <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jklprbHlxU>

*On our website:*

<https://www.rewild.org/press/prestigious-u-k-darwin-initiative-grant-is-supporting-conservation-efforts>

<https://www.rewild.org/wild-about/tamaraw>

<https://www.rewild.org/wild-about/mounts-iglit-baco-natural-park>

*In social media:*

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/p/Cc04z\\_UFu30/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cc04z_UFu30/)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Rewild/photos/a.10150189522469305/10161249134119305/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/rewild/status/1519046740846026753>

We also contributed an article, *Creating a Sustainable Landscape for the Taobuid and the Tamaraw*, to the March 2022 "["Charismatic Conservation" edition](#)" of the Darwin Initiative Newsletter.

We work to maintain a balance between portraying the Darwin Initiative work as a distinct project and ensuring that it is understood as part of a longer term set of activities. Our partners in the Philippines have emphasised the need to avoid giving the impression that this is an investment-focused short-term intervention. This impression can give rise to expectations and attitudes that are not helpful and can reinforce the negative experience of our Indigenous partners of previous short-term projects. We are therefore being explicit that the Darwin Initiative is supporting a crucial set of activities that are distinct and have specific goals, but that are part of longer overall processes and that are embedded in existing nationally and locally owned plans.

## 13. Impact of Covid-19 on project delivery

Overall, implementation has been made considerably more difficult by Covid-19, but has been possible and we are not excessively delayed so far. Although the situation has often been stressful and demanding, our team have been outstanding in how they have adapted to the challenges. The main impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and our responses have been as follows

### 1. The project manager from Re:wild has not been able to visit the project since it started.

To address this, Re:wild and DAF hold weekly (up to 2 hour) project zoom meetings, a monthly wider meeting on Tamaraw conservation as well as *ad hoc* meetings and e-mail exchanges. Although not ideal, we have been able to plan and manage activities quite effectively in this way, but a personal visit is required. We are currently planning one for May 2022, but will continue with the weekly calls.

Mike Appleton, the project manager and Emmanuel Schutz from the D'Aboville Foundation were able to meet at the World Conservation Congress in Marseille France in September.

### 2. Travel within Mindoro and within the Philippines has been difficult and unpredictable as Covid-19 restrictions have frequently changed.

This hampered and delayed movements, meetings, field trips, travel (especially of officials) and prevented large gatherings such as workshops and training courses. Where possible online alternatives were organised. Additional expenses were incurred for testing, quarantine,

increased ticket costs and local transportation, for which costs tripled. The financial impact has however been offset by the reduced frequency of travel. We purchased a small car for the project in order to enable continued travel during times when all public transportation was suspended.

Installing accommodation at the project office has enabled more flexibility (and reduced expense) for personnel based on and visiting Mindoro. Hiring staff locally on Mindoro and training local para-anthropologists has reduced the need for inter-island travel by researchers and technical staff. We will persist with these approaches. Project team members have been personally very flexible and patient about working times, compliance with restrictions on travel and quarantine requirements.

**3. Ensuring the safety of project staff and partners.** The team has followed official guidance and observing restrictions and safety protocols. Our Indigenous partners have been imposing their own restrictions and rules, at times not allowing access to their territory and only holding meetings outside.

**4. Processes for consultation and decision making have been slow and there has a squeeze on public spending.**

Flexibility, patience, and online interaction have reduced the impacts. The project timetable was designed in the knowledge that it is not possible to 'force the pace' when working with Indigenous peoples and in challenging economic conditions. Furthermore community-based consultations are not feasible online. The delays have been frustrating, but not excessively problematic to date.

**5. Challenges in recruiting and deploying specialist staff**

It has been problematic securing the services of specialist consultants or project technical staff. We have offset this by working remotely with experts and by recruiting and training local 'para' specialist staff and by providing online specialist coaching for them by specialists. Project staff have also covered the shortfall by working extra time to meet the needs.

**6. More creative thinking**

There has been a noticeable positive outcome of the more remote relationship over the last year necessitated by the pandemic. The role of the project manager has shifted from more direct project management to one of support, coaching and mentoring. This has allowed the DAF team to become increasingly resourceful and innovative in solution-finding and devising workarounds for the continuous stream of challenges imposed by the pandemic.

**7. Financial aspects**

The project needed to make some adjustments to budget allocations to address the issues above and to reduce the stress on the local project team. We submitted a budget change request to address these issues, which was approved in November 2021. This aimed to:

1. Shift budget from short term consultants to increasing the proportion of time spent by DAF staff on the project.
2. Split planned consultancies where one person is not available with all the required skills
3. Reallocate budget from participatory events to hiring more individuals (short and medium term) to visit relevant stakeholders and hold smaller meetings and lead iterative interactions and write up results over longer periods (instead of one-off workshops).
4. Purchase a small vehicle to enable transportation within Mindoro in the absence of public transport.
5. Increase the overhead allocated to DAF to reflect the major increases in general costs and additional expenses imposed by administrative demands

**14. Safeguarding**

Please tick this box if any safeguarding or human rights violations have occurred during this financial year.

No safeguarding issues or human rights violations have occurred this year.

## 15. Project expenditure

The figures below are based on the revised budget as per the approved change request approved on 10 November 2021. The exchange rate used is £1.00 = PHP 64.8, the rate received by our partners upon acceptance of the funds.

**Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022)**

Project spend (indicative since last Annual Report)	2021/22 Grant (£)	2021/22 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
<b>Staff costs (see below)</b>	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED]. approved on 10/11/21
Emmanuel Schutz (DAF Programme Director)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Increase in time allocation to cover part time staff.
Juanita Saet (Community Outreach Officer)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Post holder only available part time
Panio Novelozo (Taobuid Liaison Officer)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Post holder only available part time
Ronet Santos (Project Manager)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Increase in time allocation to cover part time staff.
Jonard Salazar (Book Keeper, Manila)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Increase in time allocation.
<b>Consultancy costs</b>	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED]. approved on 10/11/21
<b>Overhead Costs</b>	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21
<b>Travel and subsistence</b>	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21
<b>Operating Costs</b>	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21
<b>Capital items (see below)</b>	■ [REDACTED]	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21
<i>Agricultural equipment</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21
<i>Vehicle purchase</i>	■	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Est. budget of [REDACTED] approved on 10/11/21. Best price for suitable vehicle.
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>				M & E included in costs
<b>Others (see below)</b>	■ [REDACTED]	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Change to estimated expenditure of [REDACTED] Approved on 10/11/21
Awareness products	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
Translation	[REDACTED]	■ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Most translation done in house
<b>TOTAL</b>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	

**OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

The project is still a 'work in progress' with several extremely promising initiatives underway. We anticipate reporting on the these as outstanding achievements next year.

## Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk">Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk">Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> 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.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	