



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

<b>Project reference</b>	<b>27-007</b>
<b>Project title</b>	<b>Increasing the resilience of biodiversity and livelihoods in Colombo's wetlands</b>
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Sri Lanka
<b>Lead organisation</b>	<b>International Water Management Institute (IWMI)</b>
<b>Partner(s)</b>	<p>Cobra Collective CIC (CC)</p> <p>Wetland Management Division, Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation (SLLDC), Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development</p> <p>Central Environment Authority (CEA), Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment</p> <p>Urban Development Authority (UDA), Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development</p> <p>Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka (FOGSL), Department of Zoology, University of Colombo</p> <p>Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)</p>
<b>Project leader</b>	<b><i>Dr. Matthew Simpson</i></b>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	28th October 2020 HYR1
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<p><a href="https://cobracollective.org/portfolio/increasing-the-resilience-of-biodiversity-and-livelihoods-in-colombos-wetlands/">https://cobracollective.org/portfolio/increasing-the-resilience-of-biodiversity-and-livelihoods-in-colombos-wetlands/</a></p> <p><a href="https://twitter.com/project_cobra/status/1316718438505680896">https://twitter.com/project_cobra/status/1316718438505680896</a></p>

**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).**

Project period: 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

The project started on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. We have spent the first month setting up the project, holding meetings with partners (5 x one-to-one meetings to discuss partner Terms of References) and planning for start-up meetings with partners and stakeholders in the next quarter. Since the parliamentary elections, a few changes in the ministries were observed, however, the partner institutions and the key staff remained the same. Despite the covid-19 related issues the meetings were held either face to face (with less than 10) or via zoom.

We have held at least weekly meetings between IWMI and CC and developed a project visual plan and project brochure, as attached, to communicate the project.

We have initiated the process of ethical review of the project activities and project staff of both IWMI and CIC have undertaken an online UNICEF training course on “Ethics in Evidence Generation”

We have also held meetings with the British High Commission in Sri Lanka to coordinate activities and to develop a project brief and key communication milestones for the project, see attached.

**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.**

There have not been any notable impacts during the first month of the project.

Due to the national elections, and subsequent changes in ministries and partner affiliations, the exact designations of the project partners have now changed to the following:

- Cobra Collective, UK
- Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation, Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, Sri Lanka
- Department of Wildlife Conservation, Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation, Sri Lanka
- Central Environment Authority, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka
- Urban Development Authority, Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, Sri Lanka
- Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka, Department of Zoology, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

In addition to the original partners, the Biodiversity Secretariat, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka has also now been included.

**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.**

We submitted a change request form to move the start of the project to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 due to late notification of the award, upcoming National Elections in Sri Lanka and to COVID-19 travel restrictions, and to reschedule some face-to-face training activities into 2021.

The only notable problem in the first month of the project has been the inability of the UK staff to travel to Sri Lanka. We have overcome this by holding all meetings via Zoom so this has not impacted the early delivery of the project.

However, it is important, for the success of the project, that we hold face-to-face training and engagement activities with communities and government agencies which we now plan to carry out in 2021. If, in early 2021, COVID-19 travel and social distancing restrictions mean face-to-face meetings are still not possible, we are developing a comprehensive approach to engagement and training that can be delivered fully or partially online if required. It is possible that in 2021 some face-to-face meetings will be possible but that COVID 19 restrictions mean that UK partners will still not be able to travel to Sri Lanka. In this case we plan to move ahead with the meetings, holding multiple meetings to comply with social distancing requirements, but also delivering some of the content through online mechanisms.

**2c. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

**If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**

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

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](mailto: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**