
DIR27S2\1017

From National Contest to National Network: Friends of Felids

New socio-economic pressures threaten Costa Rican biodiversity. It is urgent to show that with ideas and support, it is possible to conserve nature and also receive benefits. We will challenge communities in "felid conflict hotspots" to come together to compete for a great opportunity: to access an ecolabel for incubation and acceleration of products and experiences with promotion and management of possible sales channels. Communities will earn a redefined relationship with wildlife by improving their stewardship of jaguars and pumas.

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Dr
Name	Ronit
Surname	Amit
Organisation	University of Costa Rica
Website	http://biologia.ucr.ac.cr/
Tel (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]

CONTACT DETAILS

Title	Mrs
Name	Isabel
Surname	Martinez-Fonseca
Organisation	University of Costa Rica
Website	www.fundacionucr.ac.cr
Tel (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]

GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	University of Costa Rica
Phone (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]

Section 2 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

Q3. Project title:

From National Contest to National Network: Friends of Felids

What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. DIR27S1\100123

DIR27S1\1532

Q4. Country(ies)

Which eligible host country(ies) will your project be working in? Where there are more than 4 countries that your project will be working in, please add more boxes using the selection option below.

Country 1	Costa Rica	Country 2	No Response
Country 3	No Response	Country 4	No Response

Do you require more fields?

No

Q5. Project dates

Start date:

01 October 2021

End date:

30 September 2023

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):

2 years

Q6. Budget summary

Year:	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total request
-------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------------

Amount:	£47,690.00	£121,200.00	£75,440.00	£0.00	£
					244,330.00

Q6a. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

University of Costa Rica, as administrator, can provide support on institutional infrastructure, laboratories and equipment, as well as academic services (student-assistantships, fuel, utilities, libraries, communication, technologies, and more). Partners can also contribute in a modest counterpart, most relevant is the contribution of volunteer labor.

Q6b. Proposed (confirmed and unconfirmed) matched funding as % of total project cost (total cost is the Darwin request plus other funding required to run the project).



Section 3 - Project Summary

Q7. Summary of project

Please provide a brief summary of your project, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking. Please note that if you are successful, this wording may be used by Defra in communications e.g. as a short description of the project on GOV.UK.

Please write this summary for a non-technical audience.

New socio-economic pressures threaten Costa Rican biodiversity. It is urgent to show that with ideas and support, it is possible to conserve nature and also receive benefits. We will challenge communities in "felid conflict hotspots" to come together to compete for a great opportunity: to access an ecolabel for incubation and acceleration of products and experiences with promotion and management of possible sales channels. Communities will earn a redefined relationship with wildlife by improving their stewardship of jaguars and pumas.

Section 4 - Darwin Objectives and Conventions

Q8. Objectives for the Darwin Initiative

Please indicate which of the fund objectives (listed on p.8 of the guidance) you will be addressing.

- To understand and tackle impacts of agriculture practices on biodiversity, livelihoods and climate
- To promote the responsible stewardship of natural assets
- To promote the sharing of the benefits arising from the use of biodiversity
- Contributing towards reversing the increase in threats of extinction to the world's flora and fauna

Q9. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q9a. Your project must support the commitments of one or more of the agreements listed below.

Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported and describe which objectives your project will address.

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q9b. Biodiversity Conventions

Please detail how your project will contribute to the aims of the agreement(s) your project is targeting. You should refer to Articles or Programmes of Work here.

By facilitating science-based incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity that empowers civil society to manage wildlife, we frame our project as an opportunity for Costa Rica to comply with international global change and biodiversity commitments. Our interdisciplinary team and partners have actively contributed to national forums and advisory committees since 2009 on wildlife and biodiversity management. One recent example is as part of the National Commission for Wildlife in Costa Rica. We also work directly under the National Biodiversity Strategy and the National Biodiversity Policy, complying with the Organic Law of the Environment No. 7554, and amendments to the Wildlife Conservation Law No. 7317. All aimed at satisfying commitments to the Convention of Biological Diversity. As conservation professionals, we have adapted from investments in ecological investigations of felids, and evolved our thinking towards a more integrative paradigm relying on incentives to facilitate autonomy, and account for diverse, multiple views of many stakeholders. This project contributes further to the country's task of promoting the participation of citizens in decision-making and action, to protect and improve the environment. Our plan is adaptable to a diversity of contexts; it represents a strategy that is both sensitive to local realities, and supported by ecological and social science theory. By integrating local governance, our project addresses Aichi Targets to "mainstream biodiversity" as a source of development, removes penalties or obstacles, promotes responsible practices in agricultural development, and enhances capacity-building in a participatory decision-making framework.

Jaguars are now a priority for the political agenda of the region, articulating processes such as Jaguar 2030 to maintain corridors, reduce negative human-felid interactions, fight corruption and illegal wildlife trafficking, and as a face for climate change in tropical forests. Relative to other top predators in Africa and Asia, there is greater cause for optimism regarding jaguars and pumas; they persist in greater relative numbers across the Americas, adapting peacefully to the presence of human communities where they are not hunted. The reverence historically and currently afforded to jaguars and pumas by ancestral cultures, together with improved scientific evidence for the protection of biodiversity, points the way toward greater opportunities to improve territorial "land use" policies, and the sustainable sharing and use of natural resources. By practically integrating and implementing these principles on the ground, our actions are in accordance with the CBD, a revised CMS, and directly related to several of the UN's Sustainability goals, but principally UNSDG #15.

Finally, our prior experience around the country studying human-felid interactions has informed us of the challenges that government authorities must overcome to simply meet basic responsibilities in assisting citizens and enforcing environmental laws. That challenge extends also to the protection of jaguars themselves. By incentivizing the protection of jaguars and pumas among rural communities directly, our

contest and activities emphasize the role of local governance and participation in valuing “live” jaguars. We expect this approach has enormous potential in precluding the illegal hunting of jaguars for illegal wildlife markets, which CITES has identified as a critical priority.

Q9c. Is any liaison proposed with the CBS / ABS / ITPGRFA / CITES / CMS / Ramsar / UNFCCC focal point in the host country?

Yes

If yes, please give details.

We will maintain contact with the focal point for the CBD represented by Vice-minister Franklin Paniagua at the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE, support letter included). Also we are in contact with Angela González Grau director at the National Commission for Biodiversity Management (CONAGEBIO), who is the focal point for the Nagoya Protocol. Finally, we have direct contact with Carlos Mario Orrego and Shirley Ramírez (who kindly reviewed this proposal), CITES representatives for Costa Rica.

Q9d. Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Please detail how your project will contribute to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Our approach is mostly rooted in SDG Goal #15, “Life on Land”, as we aim for protection, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. Our contribution will be to integrate tangible solutions for the protection of biodiversity, with plans to alleviate, mobilize financial resources for wildlife and forest management, and combat threats to biodiversity, by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities. Benefit-sharing is also one of the axes of our initiative. We will accomplish this by focusing our efforts at key sites previously excluded (“wildlife conflict hotspots”) in accordance with the fair and equitable distribution of benefits called for by Nagoya Protocol. For Costa Rica, the Biodiversity Strategy aims to the Plan for Implementation of the ODS.

More specifically, our project recognizes that “traditional conservation”, still widely practiced, imposes costs and barriers to real conservation impact by separating people from nature, limiting access to resources, and subjecting communities to obsolete, ineffective top-down governance. For example, although protected areas are biological treasures, they are often not enjoyed by neighbors adjacent to them. This can lead to a long history of human-wildlife conflict, disempowerment and resentment, and a perception of “traditional conservation” as unfair. We address SDG 15 effectively therefore by redefining biodiversity conservation as a responsibility and right of local communities, thereby facilitating improved livelihoods. Our project also provides pride, fun, and an increase in income, when socially-responsible customers value the conservation effort and impact products will have on felids, their habitats, and biodiversity in general.

Section 5 - Lead Organisation Summary

Q10. Lead organisation summary

Has your organisation been awarded a Darwin Initiative or IWT Challenge Fund award before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

No

If no, please provide the below information on the lead organisation.

What year was your organisation established/ incorporated/ registered? 01 January 1940

What is the legal status of your organisation? University

How is your organisation currently funded? The University of Costa Rica is a public institution. Our budget is granted by law of the Republic of Costa Rica upon the national budget to carry out the three fundamental actions of research, teaching and social outreach. Our financial system incorporates external audited statements, supervised by the Comptroller General of the Republic which guarantees a healthy management of public and external funds. Based on previous experiences supporting international research and technology transfer, UCR has a foundation denominated Fundación UCR designated to manage some programs and projects. It is authorized to enter into any necessary agreement to provide logistic support.

Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. Large organisations please note that this should describe your unit or department.

Aims The purpose of the University of Costa Rica is to promote the transformations required by society to achieve universal welfare, social justice, comprehensive development, equality and equity. The University of Costa Rica hosts more than 40.585 students and its presence across the entire country is made possible through regional campuses.

Activities UCR performs joint activities with faculty and researchers from many universities around the world; agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and international cooperation institutions such as the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) and the Wellcome Trust, by means of approximately 414 active academic agreements.

Achievements Regularly, we conduct 1.267 research projects, developed by 1.403 researchers (male and female), and 724 social programs. We have the Graduate School, the system of libraries, and the publishing house. 80% of all national research is done at UCR, accounting for 50% of all publications by Central American universities.

Provide details of 3 contracts/projects held by the lead organisation that demonstrate your credibility as an organisation and provide track record relevant to the project proposed.

These contracts/awards should have been held in the last 5 years and be of a similar size to the grant requested in your Darwin application.

Contract/Project 1 Title	Management and immunization of horses with snake venom for the production of antivenoms, with emphasis in sub-Saharan Africa, exploring novel ways to raise immune response against venoms.
Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)	[REDACTED]
Duration (e.g. 2 years 3 months)	48 months
Role of organisation in project	Project leaders and direct beneficiary. Clodomiro Picado Institute at UCR is a world leader on chemical ecology.
Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project	Understanding the factor that determines the quality and productivity of hyperimmune plasma, to comprehensively improve the industrial practice of ophidian antivenom production.
Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)	At UCR: Dr. Guillermo León-Montero [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Contract/Project 2 Title	A network for studying psychological resilience in low and middle-income countries - NESP
Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)	[REDACTED]
Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)	2 years
Role of organisation in project	Researcher and direct beneficiary in a collaboration

Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project

To conform an interdisciplinary network between Scotland, Costa Rica, Malawi and Nepal that will be dedicated in the future to study developmental and environmental risk factors associated with mental disorders and resilience. With the aim of providing a comprehensive view of an individual's genetics, development and environment. The project will combine the expertise with world-leading informatics capacity to create and world leading/state of the art network for the study of psychological resilience across diverse environments and economies.

Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)

At UCR M.Sc. Henritte Raventós-Vorst

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Contract/Project 3 Title

Establishment of the ex situ supporting program for vanished frog species that reappeared in Costa Rica: taking as model *Lithobates vibicarius* from Juan Castro Blanco National Park

Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)

£ [REDACTED]

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)

3 years

Role of organisation in project

The School of Biology provided the necessary physical space, as well as electricity, water, connectivity and security services. Also support with the payment of a professional and scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students.

Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project

This project's mission was to develop infrastructure and human resources logistics to settle a backup colony of *Lithobates vibicarius*, establish a physical facilities and training staff to give support in case of an emergency when any reappeared species in Costa Rica are endangered. We are focusing on developing methods that help reduce the impact of potential pathogenic agents; once this species is established in a controlled and healthy captivity environment, we will proceed to propose a reintroduction program to the natural sites. Animal facilities for endangered frogs are currently in operation under new laboratory in Biology's School.

Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)


Gilbert Alvarado Barboza


[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]


Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts? If you select "yes" you will be able to upload these. Note that this is not required from Government Agencies.

Yes

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.

 Signed audited accounts UCR 2018 and 2019 compressed

 09/02/2021

 00:14:12

 pdf 3.3 MB

Section 6 - Project Partners

Q11. Project partners

Please list all the partners involved (including the Lead Organisation) and explain their roles and responsibilities in the project. Describe the extent of their involvement at all stages, including project development.

This section should illustrate the capacity of partners to be involved in the project. Please provide Letters of Support for the Lead Organisation and each partner or explain why this has not been included.

N.B: There is a file upload button at the bottom of this page for the upload of a cover letter (if applicable) and all letters of support.

Lead Organisation name: School of Biology at the University of Costa Rica (UCR)

Website address: <http://biologia.ucr.ac.cr/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project): As the top national university, UCR has high-class academic resources. The School of Biology has 60 years of trajectory with recognized scientific production. Nowadays we promote interdisciplinary integration to attend complex environmental problems and welcome innovations for Costa Rica to try and export models that link biodiversity conservation with sustainable development.

Extent of involvement accounts for all project stages. For this proposal, we will coordinate all involved parties under the new Center for Biodiversity and Tropical Ecology (CIBET-UCR). Planning, administration, safeguarding, and research will be the main responsibilities. We will oversee students recruited for the project, use our Office of Information and Outreach, and provide academic services and infrastructure. Personnel will include directly the Project leader and one or two graduate students, and indirectly an administrative team.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

Have you provided a cover letter to address your Stage 1 feedback? Yes

Do you have partners involved in the Project?

Yes

1. Partner Name: Program Gente y Fauna at the Association Confraternidad Guanacasteca (GYF)

Website address: <http://genteyfauna.org>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project): Confraternidad is a Costa Rican non-profit, civil society, organization that deals with social and environmental justice in the province of Guanacaste since 2002. Besides an advocacy role on social justice and rural communities development, Gente y Fauna was born in 2012 to assist reports of human-felid conflicts and became a pioneer interdisciplinary outreach and research program with human-wildlife coexistence as goal. Their team provides the scientific base, intellectual property, field and project evaluation expertise, and inter-institutional contacts. Since 2018, affiliation of Dr. Amit is shared with the UCR, therefore she serves as a liaison. Their current project sets the base for the AMIGOS DE FELINOS (Friends of Felids) intervention, to be concluded in July 2021.

Extent of their involvement accounts for all project stages. For this proposal as a follow-up project, Gente y Fauna teams with the UCR, agreeing to yield administration capacities and focusing on the technical supervision of the fieldwork. They will provide instruments and protocols for data collection on human-wildlife interactions, stakeholder training, and empowering rural communities. All of them developed in the pilot implementation of the AMIGOS DE FELINOS intervention. Personnel will include the experienced Evaluation and Monitoring officer, field operative, and their team of volunteers.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

2. Partner Name: Michelle Soto

Website address: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michelle-soto-mendez>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

Michelle Soto Méndez is a science and environmental journalist with more than 15 years of professional experience. She has experience in research, writing and editing journalistic articles. She has also coordinated national and cross-border specials and covered international events. She has experience in storytelling, building pro-sustainability narratives for various formats such as books, printed materials, social media campaigns, etc.

As a social communicator, she has experience in designing communication strategies for both organizations and specific projects. She has also given workshops and talks in order to make communication visible as a necessary tool to promote attitudes in favor of conservation.

Her professional mission is to make technical knowledge accessible to the diversity of people, so that they have the necessary information to make decisions based on evidence and, thus, contribute to the strengthening of democracy.

Extent of involvement is related to communication direction and storytelling. Her experience as a scientific journalist and social communicator allows her to design the strategy addressed to communities in the contest. She will coordinate with the Office of Information and Outreach at UCR, Pura Inspiration Agency, and allies related to different media channels. She will lead messaging for the motivational process of the contest.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

3. Partner Name:

Pura Inspiration

Website address:

<https://www.purainspiration.com/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

Pura inspiration is a creative group that promotes culture and development based on nature. They specialize in solving challenges through communication strategies, which are led by ideas. They achieve to educate, inspire and promote "virtuous circles" between nature and people through these ideas.

Their role in the program will be to collaborate in the creative strategy based on the objectives and management.

Creation of the campaigns and pieces that compose it, only at the level of sketches. (does not include final executions, nor production costs)

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

4. Partner Name:

Directorate of Community Development (DINADECO)

Website address: <http://www.dinadeco.go.cr/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The National Directorate for Community Development, known by its acronym as Dinadeco, is a body of the Executive Power, attached to the Ministry of the Interior and Police. It acts as a basic instrument of development, in order to promote, guide, coordinate and evaluate the organization of the country's communities, to achieve their active and conscious participation in the realization of the objectives of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development. One of their objectives is the coordination of international technical and economic assistance of any kind given to the country, to promote community development. Extent of involvement is on the support for direct communication with the national network of associations for community development. The institution updates contacts of members in the boards and uses varied channels of communication, with WhatsApp and Facebook as mainstream, and emails and phone numbers as backup.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

5. Partner Name: Communities' Board for the constitution of the Association Amigos de Felinos.

Website address: In progress: AmigosdeFelinos.com

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

This board has seven community leaders, who potentially will be elected as the directive board. It is expected that the Association will be officially constituted before July 2021. Since October 2020, as part of the project "Welfare for Coexistence: communities with jaguars and pumas", neighbors of three pilot communities established this board under the supervision of lawyer Yasmín Granados to submit to DINADECO all requirements for the constitution of Amigos de Felinos as a Specific Development Association. They collected more than 80 signatures from local participants and sent the application, which is currently under review. The extent of involvement is for project implementation, monitoring and sustainability. Local representatives will assist participants with their applications to the contest, will replicate the training they received, and facilitate winner communities' inclusion as new members of the Association. Personnel will include a local entrepreneurship coordinator and a local monitoring coordinator.

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

6. Partner Name: S.P.E.C.I.E.S. - The Society for the Preservation of Endangered Carnivores and their International Ecological Study

Website address: <https://carnivores.org>





Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project): S.P.E.C.I.E.S. is an NGO based in the US that is committed to the protection of endangered carnivore populations around the world. Approximately 13 years ago, they pioneered the successful formula of integrating science, entrepreneurship, incentive-based solutions, and conservation innovation, as an effective vehicle to achieve protection, restoration, and connectivity of carnivore populations and their habitats, while facilitating coexistence with and improved livelihoods for local actors. This has resulted in sustainable conservation and business strategies unique to local socio-ecological contexts around the world, including jaguars and communities in three countries. S.P.E.C.I.E.S. will be partnering with Gente y Fauna with the long-term goal of supporting the program, helping them scale-up and add to their ideas, enhancing the effectiveness of their impact, and developing a strategy for the implementation of financially sustainable models that benefits communities, wildlife populations, and ecosystems. We will help develop regional markets for "Amigos de Felinos", identify, explore, and test potential global markets of socially-conscious consumers on a feasible scale, develop loyal business partners, host and promote a functioning e-commerce website, and work with them to develop new products to meet demand and interest of green consumers.





Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

No Response

Please provide a cover letter responding to feedback received at Stage 1 if applicable and a combined PDF of all letters of support.

 [DIR27S11532 Amit cover letter to Darwin](#)
 09/02/2021
 18:09:04
 pdf 245.58 KB

 [Support letters of partners and allies](#)
 08/02/2021
 22:15:04
 pdf 3.21 MB

Section 7 - Project Staff

Q12. Project staff

Please identify the core staff on this project, their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project. Further information on who should be classified as core staff can be found in the guidance.

Please provide 1 page CVs for these staff, or a 1 page job description or Terms of Reference for roles yet to be filled. These should match the names and roles in the budget spreadsheet.

If your team is larger than 12 people please review if they are core staff, or whether you can merge roles (e.g. 'admin and finance support') below, but provide a full table based on this template in the pdf of CVs you provide.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Ronit Amit	Project Leader	50	Checked
Natalia Valverde-Zúñiga	Evaluation and Monitoring officer	33	Checked
Lizeth Corella-Esquivel	Field operative	50	Checked
Michelle Soto	Communication consultant	50	Checked


Do you require more fields?

Yes


Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Manuel Travisany	Creative direction and marketing	25	Checked
Anthony J Giordano	Sustainability & Innovations Partner	20	Checked
To be defined	Graduate students, possible two students for one year each	50	Checked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked


Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.


Ensure the file is named clearly, consistent with the named individual and role above.

 One page CVs and job description of key perso

nnel

 08/02/2021

 22:20:28

 pdf 2.79 MB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

Yes

Section 8 - Problem statement

Q13. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in terms of biodiversity and its relationship with poverty. For example, what are the drivers of loss of biodiversity that the project will attempt to address? Why are they relevant, for whom? How did you identify these problems?

Please cite the evidence you are using to support your assessment of the problem (references can be listed in your additional attached PDF document which can be uploaded at the bottom of the next page).

Costa Rica's efforts to protect biodiversity in part through tourism are internationally recognized. Before the pandemic, Costa Rica was the highest ranking ecotourism destination in the western hemisphere; tourism-related activities represented as much as 8.2% of the annual Gross Domestic Product (BCCR & ICT 2018). The health crisis however has had dire impacts on ecotourism operations, and biodiversity protection is under threat from increasing socioeconomic pressures. Protected areas are also on high alert, as logging, poaching, and mining have returned. Incentive-driven, community-based wildlife tourism initiatives have historically played a major role in biodiversity protection. More than ever, there is now a need for local empowerment connecting sustainable rural communities with measurable conservation impact.

Emerging issues in the quest for human-wildlife coexistence include the application of marketing incentives and social innovations to account for the imbalance between conservation and development (Hazzah et al. 2019). Incentives as tools need to be designed carefully so as to avoid potential distortions and account for socio-psychological factors as well as the economic factors (Dickman et al. 2011). That is why Gente y Fauna (GYF) specializes in the social aspects of wildlife conservation: the study of how conservation influences human behavior, and vice versa (Decker et al. 2012).

Our priority targets are rural communities that are still "wildlife conflict hotspots," disaffected by livestock depredation, wildlife poaching, and a history of negative relationships with prior environmental initiatives, including NGO's. Many communities are located adjacent to sites with high tourism value, but have rarely benefitted. Apart from their inherent value to ecosystem functioning, proximity to predators imposes costs to local people; there is thus an imbalance of cost-benefits in contrast to production and tourism sectors, which often precludes lasting conservation impact. GYF have found a correlation between the distribution of negative human-felid interactions, with poverty indexes in Costa Rica, highlighting the link between conservation and "unsustainable" development. Elsewhere our partner SPECIES has found similar relationships.

The incentive-based approaches developed by GYF and SPECIES are motivational, linking well-being to conservation outcomes (e.g., wildlife monitoring) and development outcomes (e.g., income from wildlife and social well-being). Whereas the pandemic is forcing more people to return to illegal wildlife killings, our model can actually help these communities emerge from the crisis. This contest will challenge the most affected communities to organize a national network of "AMIGOS DE FELINOS", which we believe will use

sustainable development to empower them.

Finally, our eco-label has been tested since 2017. GYF has shown that a higher social acceptance of felids is related to the perception of higher benefits, positive emotions toward the species, lower risk perception, and fewer negative emotions (unpublished results based on Wildlife Acceptance Capacity model; Decker & Purdy 1988, Bruskotter et al. 2015). Our biological sampling even shows significant overlap in the daily activity among jaguar, puma, and livestock, at camera-traps as close as 500m to our communities. This year, our program is officially launching the eco-label on July 4 in celebration of National Wild Felids Day in Costa Rica.

Section 9 - Method, Change Expected, Gender & Exit Strategy

Q14. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and Impact. Provide information on:

- How you have analysed historical and existing initiatives and are building on or taking work already done into account in project design. Please cite evidence where appropriate.
- The rationale for carrying out this work and a justification of your proposed methodology.
- How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).
- How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, etc.).

Beginning in 2017, Dr. Amit and Gente y Fauna (GYF) took steps toward community-based wildlife governance by developing incentives in a participatory process (Amit & Jacobson 2018). AMIGOS DE FELINOS is a market-based incentive program evolving from a pilot stage to the general implementation stage. We started by linking community entrepreneurship and wildlife monitoring results, using photos from remote cameras, as products for sale among tourism services; this pilot not only demonstrated a local commitment, but effective marketing as well. This initial effort, although successful, was limited with respect to national scalability as challenge (Baldwin et al. 2018).

Our proposal builds on community-based marketing tools for promoting sustainable behavior (McKenzie-Mohr & Schultz 2014). This framework suggests, when barriers are high and benefits are low, implementation of contests can effectively change behavior (Schultz 2014). Instead of our previous approach of exploring pre-selected towns, identifying local leaders, meeting and recruiting locals to work in teams, and regular hands-on capacity building sessions, we will use this national contest as a vehicle to encourage communities to conduct to assess their prospects, and develop a plan to improve coexistence with felids. Beneficiaries will be Associations for Community Development (ADIs in Spanish) throughout Costa Rica (approximately 3000 registered). Winners will join the network AMIGOS DE FELINOS as models of positive interactions with wildlife, further attracting responsible tourism, and entering a market not tied solely to the number of visitors, but rather to maintaining biodiversity.

Our project will focus on two annual contests. Inclusion will be based on two predetermined criteria: (A) communities relatively advanced in the implementation of entrepreneurial efforts, and (B) communities with high potential for entrepreneurship, but not yet organized. We will start by allocating our communication strategy into two parts: (1) recruiting communities to participate in the process of the contest, and (2) targeting a green market for supporting the eco-label. To communicate effectively with participants, we will solicit more physical-format materials, conduct in-person dissemination, and enlist communities with whom we are working already; we will also pursue a commercial strategy using mainstream media to promote our contests.

We will then launch contest guidelines for ADIs in collaboration with DINADECO; messaging will highlight how jaguars and pumas are key species for maintaining healthy ecosystems, and how successful coexistence leads to improved national well-being. Communities receiving the contest invitation will be open to the potential of the "Friend of Felids" program, and local benefits it can deliver. During the

application period, we will address inquiries via a call-center, receive and review documentation, and rank applications. By the closing date, we will set a threshold score that will determine which ADIs go on to the finalist list. We will respond to all applicants with feedback on wildlife management practices, and a certificate of participation promoting local pride for their willingness to be part of AMIGOS DE FELINOS. Finalists will be subjected to on-site inspections by our experts to verify wildlife interactions, existent and potential products and services, and recommend management improvements (eg, monitoring, improved husbandry practices) prior to subsequent review. Re-applications will then be solicited and reviewed with regard to changes made, and judged/scored by an honorable panel of guests (including from our partners) until two winners are selected (one per category, each iteration). Winners will enter the capacity-building process to formally establish the AMIGOS DE FELINOS scheme. This includes recruitment of local teams to implement: (1) operational wildlife surveillance, (2) entrepreneurial investments linked to the eco-label, and (3) networking with other participant communities. All activities will be based on existing protocols adapted from GYF pilot test. As each team will require different investment in time, we will use experiential learning via capacity-building modules to advance activities. Module 1: will describe the aim of the eco-label and assign responsibilities; Module 2: establishes training in camera-trapping monitoring using citizen-science techniques; Module 3: applies the eco-label to existing or potential products and services with guidance on branding; finally, Module 4: establishes a network of inter-community cooperation. Lastly, we will motivate communities to take advantage of a social marketing campaign promoting the eco-label to a national green market, especially as the country's ecotourism volume recovers only slowly post-pandemic. Visual graphics, storytelling, and real-time contest updates, will all be components of the campaign. We will work with SPECIES to build alliances that create sale points, distribute materials efficiently, build online sales, and promote visitation to the communities. As a standard for comparison, we will use "Essential Costa Rica", a national brand and highly successful marketing initiative.

Q15. Raising awareness of the potential worth of biodiversity

If your project contains an element of communications, knowledge sharing and/or dissemination please provide a description of your intended audience, how you intend to engage them, what the expected products/materials will be and what you expect to achieve as a result.

For example, are you expecting to directly influence policy in your host country or is your project a community advocacy project to support better management of biodiversity?

Behavior change, experiential learning, social marketing, participation, etc. will all be our mechanisms to reinforce pro-felid behaviours. Acknowledgment of external audiences will legitimize and contribute to local empowerment. Altogether, we expect this will significantly raise awareness of the worth of biodiversity. We base our social communication tactics on previous research regarding the heterogeneity of local participants, and the conclusion: there is no "one size fits all" approach. It is essential to address different audiences.

For local communities, the ultimate target, the communication must convey how their daily lives will change. Our strategy therefore is to build a narrative that inspires and motivates communities on a national scale through examples set by their peers - the three communities with which "Amigos de los Felinos" has already worked. For the commercial network, which includes potential clients, retail stores, wholestores, travel retail, or product intermediaries, communication must build value for their participation and contribution to the communities beyond their profitability. This audience must come through direct Business-to-Business (B2B) communications for recognition of their impact due to participation. For potential end customers, the open market of buyers, we have to ensure a clear understanding of the integral value of the product and project. This profile represents the broadest and most ambitious challenge, oriented to the development and recognition of the ecolabel, empowering the client to generate a positive impact on the purchase decision, with public relations support and visual brand identity. Finally, combined our team has decades of experience working with policy-makers on environmental

conservation campaigns. As a consequence of scaling up our actions, we believe our work has the potential to be recognized by policy-makers regionally and nationally. It is our hope such a program opens the door to further discussion of policies that incentivize human-wildlife coexistence.

Q16. Capacity building

If your project will support capacity building at institutional or individual levels, please provide details of what form this will take and how this capacity will be secured for the future.

Empowerment in governance, and the devolving of rights and responsibilities for wildlife management, requires earnest investments in capacity. We are applying an experiential learning and participatory approach in the didactics for our 4 modules as prizes of the contest; each module will consist of several hours of training sessions and include practice and evaluations. We expect that community members will be performance-driven during activities, so they learn to value the overall process of becoming a "Friend of the Felids".

The protocols previously developed by GYF as training sessions, including applied problem-solving and gamifying complex topics, are designed to be a community experience, and foster an individual identity and pride based on an affinity for the ecolabel. Sessions are implemented with specific outcomes in mind; therefore, evaluations include indicators on how well that learning is applied and outcomes achieved. Training for wildlife monitoring also includes real time data collection, whereas entrepreneurial training includes direct skill-building, as well as components administration and marketing. Participants from pilot communities will assist in teaching by example to build a framework for contest winners, one that will officially integrate into the official association Amigos de Felinos.

Our experiences have led us to expect a high initial involvement, with numerous early participants in capacity-building exercises, followed by a gradual decline in recruits moving forward. For those interested parties arriving late, we will have ample support in materials and staff to facilitate getting them caught up as quickly as possible. The network we create will continue beyond this project through capacity building of future communities, as well as through our continued support of veteran communities as technical advisors.

Q17. Gender equality

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Explain how your project will collect sex disaggregated data and what impact your project will have in promoting gender equality.

There has been an organic grouping among community participants for the working local teams that are part of the eco-label intervention: the entrepreneurs tend to be women, and the wildlife monitors tend to be men. To date, most pre-existing community leaders tend to be men; conversely, women in these rural communities are more shy and reserved. Our participatory model however provides for a safe and comfortable environment, giving voice to all and facilitating free discussion and decision-making. We also always register special contexts, unique needs or biases of participants, thus adapting activities as needed (e.g., daycare and transportation helpful for women, and impaired individuals).

Because GYF is also led by women, some locals perceive the project as mainly "for women". Part of our "impact" already has been to inspire many women to strap on boots and machetes to inspect ranches, and make recommendations as to how to protect both livestock and wildlife. We have many anecdotes of our impact on gender, spanning everything from insults, to young girls asking us what they should study as they grow up!

For the contest, we will request general information on gender and special needs from participants in a confidential section. During field inspections, we will assess the social and demographic context of the finalists. One rule for working with all Associations is that gender parity be present in the directive board.

We will also add further points for gender considerations and how they relate to improvements on coexisting with jaguars and pumas. Pursuant to establishing a working relationship with contest winner communities, local people will decide on team composition; we will subsequently manage a confidential database about participant involvement, including cases of gender discrimination or harassment in violation of The University of Costa Rica's strong gender equality and inclusion policies.

Q18. Change expected

Detail the expected changes this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).

Please describe the changes for biodiversity and for people in developing countries, and how they are linked. When talking about people, please remember to give details of who will benefit and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail – number of households should be the largest unit used. If possible, indicate the number of women who will be impacted.

The inclusion of communities in the Amigos de Felinos label acts as an incentive actively linking the conservation of felids, to desired actions minus “distorted incentives” (Nelson 2009), through the receipt of tangible benefits. Our design generates both financial and social benefits, and transforms felids as “pest species” to those that are directly and indirectly beneficial. Ultimately, we expect the organized prevention of livestock depredations to become the norm. The broad changes we expect to see include the implementation and widespread adoption of more sustainable agricultural and livestock management practices; the regular monitoring of the health of felid and other wildlife populations, including prey species; an openness to new ideas, including embracing sustainable ecological and social tourism; and knowledge transfer that expands skillsets and thus, community potential.

Short-term indicators include increased wildlife acceptance (eg, positive attitude about felids among community members) and commitment to wildlife maintenance (eg, surveys of wildlife and potential threats). Other results include reduced risk perception, increased benefit perception, and an understanding of how those benefits connect to conservation practices. Finally, we are seeking community self-governance and self-reliance as the ultimate change achieved.

Our estimates of direct beneficiaries are based on the current 20-25 per community we are working with now in a ratio of 1:3 (male: female) ranging ages 17-75; most are farmers and stay-at-home mothers. In our experience, at least 10-15 participants per community benefit indirectly as supporters, though don't participate regularly in activities. We expect pattern participation levels to be similar or higher for the contest. Therefore if we reasonably estimate 20 finalist Community Development Associations (ADIs), we can easily achieve 600 direct and indirect beneficiaries in each of the first and second years of the contest. In the long-term, our network of communities will act as an incubator/accelerator of products and tourism experiences to reduce conflict with wildlife. With our label comes capacity-building and support. For our communities then, pride, cooperation, inclusion, fun, responsibility, and enhanced well-being, are socio-psychological concepts that have proven important in affecting pro-environmental behaviour change. Using community-based social marketing to influence the adoption of improved practices and other opportunities, we base our approach therefore on tried and tested social science approaches.

That Society assumes the responsibility for the costs incurred by damages caused by carnivores, is perhaps the larger social change we're aiming for. Current models which condemn those who are killing felids to mitigate negative economic impacts, yet offer no equitable solution (Jackson 2012), have thus far failed us all. By purchasing or enlisting the products and services of Amigos de Felinos, we can begin to address these inequities and seek reparations for those historically vilified with social recognition and financial benefits. Furthermore, because this is a replicable, cost-effective model for redefining social norms and the wider adoption of coexistence behavior (e.g., adaptive livestock management, non-lethal depredation prevention, reduction in wild meat consumption and wildlife traffic), we enhance value, spread and share

costs, and investment in truly sustainable development.

Q19. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, longer term, your expected Impact.

Our contest is itself the pathway for change. Once contestants are part of a network proven to coexist with felids, we can achieve change in the form of increased acceptance of wildlife, improved local governance, and coexistence with predators and other wildlife. This will happen through the devolving of more rights and responsibilities to local people, and societal rewards through fair and green marketing. Contests as pathways to change build on social norms, cultural identity, recognition by peers, and agency trust. We frame this "game" as an opportunity based in biodiversity conservation at a time of crisis. Costa Rica, rightfully proud of their natural resources, yet heavily impacted by paralyzed tourism, needs further eco-innovation. Like our partner SPECIES, we believe that market incentives supported by rigorous science can avoid green-washing and distinguish accountability, by directing efforts where they are needed, and utilizing direct measures of wildlife interactions. As facilitators, we continue to maintain and improve ethical and transparency standards for sustainable impact. Moreover, wildlife acceptance capacity is a social-psychological model that balances risk and benefit perception. This contest will scale up our current goals and be a pathway to change after our pilot test with three communities concludes in 2021.

Q20. Exit Strategy





State how the project will reach a stable and sustainable end point, and explain how the outcomes will be sustained, either through a continuation of activities, funding and support from other sources or because the activities will be mainstreamed in to "business as usual".

Where individuals receive advanced training, for example, what will happen should that individual leave?

By the conclusion of this project, we expect community associations will conform to a separate entity. For this project, we anticipate an exit strategy of 6 months will be needed to achieve independence, i.e., the transfer to communities of program responsibilities related to wildlife monitoring and entrepreneurship. Our expectation is that sales of products and services under the label will initially provide at least 10% of local revenues for sustainable local conservation.

SPECIES will work with GYF and UCR to further help increase the autonomy of existing communities beyond the life and scope of this grant in the months and years ahead. SPECIES expertise is in integrating innovative conservation strategies with entrepreneurial approaches to scale positive impacts on carnivore populations and ecosystems. SPECIES will also help develop a strategy for program self-reliance, sustainability beyond the life of this grant, and to scale impact by including more communities. Collectively we will achieve through the investment of more contests to reach more communities, the development of new partnerships opening the door to prospective international opportunities around socially-responsible purchasing, and the exploration of new ideas for products, services, and possibilities that will benefit communities.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

 [Supporting documentation References and m
aps](#)
 08/02/2021
 22:22:04
 pdf 589.68 KB

Section 10 - Budget and Funding

Q21. Budget





Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet. Note that there are different templates for projects requesting over and under £100,000 from the Darwin budget.

- [Budget form for projects under £100,000](#)
- [Budget form for projects over £100,000](#)

Please refer to the Finance for Darwin/IWT Guidance for more information.

N.B.: Please state all costs by financial year (1 April to 31 March) and in GBP. The Darwin Initiative cannot agree any increase in grants once awarded.

Please upload your completed Darwin Budget Form Excel spreadsheet using the field below.

 [Budget over 100K May 2020 FINAL DIR27S11
532 Amit](#)
 08/02/2021
 22:24:48
 xlsx 69.15 KB

Q22. Funding

Q22a. Is this a new initiative or a development of existing work (funded through any source)?

New Initiative

Please provide details:

For UCR, this is a new initiative. For GYF however, this represents an expansion of their investments in human-wildlife coexistence and is a significant change to build on previous investments from international and national donors, and broaden our partnerships. The contest as a method for scaling-up a program of incentives for coexistence, is the key innovation of this proposal and will build on lessons learned by SPECIES in their coordination of contests and similar change vehicles.

Led by Dr. Amit and MSc. Valverde, the project "Welfare for Coexistence: communities with jaguars and pumas" was the pilot for the eco-label in northwest Costa Rica (started in 2019 and concluding in July 2021). Funding was previously provided by a Debt-for-Nature Swap USA-CR with the aim of generating co-benefits

to promote coexistence with felids. Amigos de Felinos was first created in 2017 to test incentives to coexist with jaguars, and a program for technical assistance of ranches (unpublished data). This was funded by the USFWS, which coincidentally funded Dr. Amit's (GYF) doctoral research on the development of participatory incentives (Amit and Jacobson 2018, Amit and Jacobson 2017a, 2017b), as well as that of Dr. Giordano's work on jaguars in the Gran Chaco (SPECIES).

Q22b. Are you aware of any other individuals/organisations/projects carrying out or applying for funding for similar work?

Yes

Please give details explaining similarities and differences. Explain how your work will be additional to this work and what attempts have been/will be made to co-operate with and learn lessons from such work for mutual benefits.

UCR is not aware of any similar contest for promoting human-wildlife coexistence. However, we hope to benefit from the experience of SPECIES in designing and implementing similar contests and innovations, as we know they've managed photo competitions, contests among stakeholders, events, social marketing, and branding activities, to affect behavior change at national and regional levels. They also have experience with international markets, which we hope they will help us develop.

We also note the existence of other green compensation programs or incentive-based schemes aimed at encouraging more sustainable environmental practices. Among these are "Bandera Azul Ecológica" (Blue Flag of Ecology), and a national carbon-neutral certification for Costa Rica. There is also a small international "wildlife-friendly" program based in the US. However, they appear to have missed a big opportunity to address scalability and global financial compensation for stakeholders, something we know SPECIES is developing. We also note the work of the Snow Leopard Trust in Asia as an inspiration for GYF; particularly their community-based "Snow Leopard Enterprises" in Mongolia and elsewhere. We note however that otherwise, mechanisms such as what we are proposing here are not commonplace, and large don't exist in most places.

Q23. Co-financing

Are you proposing co-financing?

Yes

Q23a. Secured

Provide details of all funding successfully levered (and identified in the Budget) towards the costs of the project, including any income from other public bodies, private sponsorship, donations, trusts, fees or trading activity, as well as any your own organisation(s) will be committing.

Donor Organisation	Amount	Currency code	Comments
--------------------	--------	---------------	----------

University of Costa Rica	██████	GBP	Partial project leader salary, graduate assistantship, office, utilities, office equipment and material, national travel, workshop materials, media access (social networks, radio, tv and newspaper).
Gente y Fauna, Association Confraternidad Guanacasteca	██████	GBP	Volunteer labor, national travel, lodging, fieldwork equipment, and office equipment (mostly in-kind).
S.P.E.C.I.E.S.	███	GBP	Open Access publication.
<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Q23b. Unsecured

Provide details of any co-financing where an application has been submitted, or that you intend applying for during the course of the project. This could include co-financing from the private sector, charitable organisations or other public sector schemes. This should also include any additional funds required where a donor has not yet been identified.

Date applied for	Donor Organisation	Amount	Currency Code	Comments
01 November 2021	Associations for community development (ADIs)	██████	GBP	Lodging and room and board, in kind (very likely to obtain).
01 July 2021	Idea Wild	██████	USD	This is a recurrent equipment donor.
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Do you require more fields?

No

Section 11 - Open Access and Financial Risk Management

Q24. Outputs of the project and Open Access

Please describe the project's open access plan and detail any specific funds you are seeking from Darwin to fund this.

The University of Costa Rica (UCR) will make a memorandum of understanding with Gente y Fauna (Confraternidad Guanacasteca Association) about intellectual property rights. Both organizations agree on the public value of the information produced by this project and do not wish to lucrate from intellectual products. Technical reports will be produced for dissemination of results and made accessible at the open access repositories of the UCR (<http://www.kerwa.ucr.ac.cr/page/sobrekerwa>), and more globally known academic repositories such as <https://www.academia.edu/> and <https://www.researchgate.net/>. Publication of scientific papers in recognized international journals will be preferred if they offer free open access, one example of this is *Frontiers in Conservation Science*. We do not request funds from Darwin as publications are expected beyond the timeline of the project.

Participant communities will hold a copy of their photo-trapping data and access to all technical reports. Dissemination of results and outputs within the communities will include distribution of online and print informative bulletins, showcases, and social media publications. More engaged and interested participants could opt for co-authorship on technical reports, informative bulletins, and scientific papers, according to each case contribution assessment.

Q25. Financial Risk Management

This question considers the financial risks to the project. Explain how you have considered the risks and threats that may be relevant to the successful financial delivery of this project. This includes risks such as fraud or bribery, but may also include the risk of fluctuating foreign exchange and internal financial processes such as storage of financial data.

The financial risk of the administration of the resources would be concerned to the Fundación UCR. The Foundation of the University of Costa Rica was created as a mechanism for the promotion and management of research projects. The University of Costa Rica administers the totality of the funds, and partners will be accountable to the Fundación UCR.

The Foundation will pay in correspondence with the budget approved. It is crucial to be aware of the exchange rate implications in advance, particularly for the moment in which the Foundation would have to prepare financial reports. Amounts estimated in the budget try to include reasonably small changes. Bank charges are also accounted for in the budget, or we will have to reassign funds to cover these expenses. Requirements for Conflict of Interest policies (10.2) and insurance of Funding Agreement (19.1) need attention for compliance, as we need some guidance.

Uncertain times made us consider delay in activities and the possibility to fall short for implementation of the second iteration of the contest. GYF adapted fieldwork with success to quarantine protocols, however activities slow down if authorities implement new restrictions. Our plan sets strong foundations in case of postponing any fieldwork components.

Q26. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

In general, collaboration agreements between organizations establish that all capital items purchased or generated in the project will temporarily belong to the applicant organization, in this case, UCR. Once the project is completed, UCR will decide the final destination of these goods in coordination with Darwin Initiative, in the way that is most convenient for both to be used. UCR will propose the use for the acquired assets, taking into consideration the impact that the project generated and its continuity. It can be donated to the Integral Development Associations of the communities. The administration requests these considerations should be explicit in the agreement.

Specifically, for the nature of the present project, and based on the agreement with Darwin Initiative, research equipment will be donated to the respective winners Community Development Associations as part of the prizes of the contest to improve their wildlife management.

Q27. Value for Money

Please describe why you consider your application to be good value for money including justification of why the measures you will adopt will secure value for money.

Greater inclusion of and direct investments in the livelihoods and well-being of people and communities, particularly those that have traditionally had less access to services and fewer resources, is the principal reason this project provides superior value for money. Equally valuable from an ecological perspective, we believe that our focus on jaguars and pumas, in these ecosystems the very top of the ecological cascade, addresses a need to adequately protect the ecological functionality and integrity of these tropical forests ecosystems.

Other factors compound this value and add to the project's longer-term impact. For example, GYF's proposed approach - a cost-effective but wide-reaching contest designed to include as many communities as possible - adds tremendous value for money. We also expect to take advantage of intensive mainstream media attention, and government, social media, and institutional channels. This all has great potential to scale activities up more quickly, adding tremendous value relative to alternative approaches. This is similarly true of the potential consequences of the social messaging surrounding our contest with respect to long-term behavior change beyond the life of the project.

Finally, our human resources alone add incredible value for money. We are integrating a highly experienced, interdisciplinary team of experts, including a veteran team of local ecologists and conservation professionals, the scientist-entrepreneur model pioneered by SPECIES, numerous committed volunteers, and a leading academic institution in Central America. Furthermore, once Amigos de Felinos gains structure as a self-reliant network, the beneficiaries themselves will become generators of benefits for wildlife and society.

Section 12 - Ethics and Safeguarding

Q28. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting Darwin's key principles for ethics as outlined in the guidance note. Additionally, are there any human rights and/or international humanitarian law risks in relation to your project? If there are, have you carried out an assessment of the impact of those risks, and of measures that may be taken in order to mitigate them?

As a democracy, Costa Rica has many advantages, including a culture of respect for human rights. This does not preclude social injustice however, nor challenges for some gaining basic access to services, particularly in communities experiencing negative interactions with wildlife. Our fieldwork may also cause us to encounter illegal activities, including illegal wildlife trafficking and other environmental transgressions; as such, we conduct risk assessments to understand potential threats (local and external) to all project

participants.

Our approach is also rooted in Compassionate Conservation and the Conservation Optimism movement. Our experiences have fostered empathy, and we listen and learn from traditional knowledge. We recognize the effort of participants, and value their contributions to the production of knowledge. With respect to interactions with indigenous communities who would apply to our contest, we expect to adhere to University and national policy as communicated from advisors within the University of Costa Rica (UCR). Protocols for 'Prior Informed Consents' have been part of GYF projects since 2013, and include reminders regarding confidentiality clauses, the voluntary nature of participation, and an opt-out option without negative consequences. UCR and the Department of Biology will also review our ethical and scientific standards of quality. Although we require a research permit from the Ministry of Environment and approval from the Commission of Biodiversity, we have obtained these previously and expect no issues to obtain one. In accordance with Costa Rican legislation and UCR requirements, all project staff, consultants and volunteers will be covered by liability insurance.

Q29. Corruption

This question specifically considers corruption. Explain how you have considered any risk of corruption that may affect the success of this project, and how you plan to manage this. This may include financial corruption, but may also deal with gifts or inducements, or other types of dishonesty or deceit.

Administrative controls established by the University of Costa Rica reduce the risk of corruption in the handling of funds. Every project, financed with external or internal funds, is registered and supervised by the Vice-Rector of Research. Each project has to present technical and financial reports annually, and these are reviewed and approved by the Scientific Council of the responsible research unit. For this particular case, the Scientific Council of the Center for Biodiversity (CIBET) will be in charge of this task. Also, both the University and its Fundación UCR must comply with Costa Rica Law 8422, entitled "Law against corruption and Illicit Enrichment in the Public Function".

We will also guard against "incentive distortions", whereby benefits to communities are distributed, but threats to wildlife persist. For example, one social phenomenon that GYF has encountered when working with rural communities is known as "elite capture", i.e., inequities in how benefits are distributed in a community. Individual self-interests are also not uncommon, despite our consistent goal of facilitating collective benefits. Our proposed monitoring and evaluation activities will help identify and minimize these risks through the collection of data on participation, individual perceptions, and changes in threats to coexistence, among others.

Q30. Safeguarding

Projects funded through the Darwin Initiative must fully protect vulnerable people all of the time, wherever they work. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place. Please confirm the lead organisation has the following policies in place and that these can be available on request:





We have a safeguarding policy, which includes a statement of our commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse	Checked
We have attached a copy of our safeguarding policy to this application (file upload below)	Checked

We keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and how they were dealt with	Checked
We have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures to use when allegations and complaints are made, and have clear processes in place for when a disclosure is made	Checked
We share our safeguarding policy with downstream partners	Checked
We have a whistle-blowing policy which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised	Checked
We have a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours - inside and outside the work place - and make clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards	Checked

Please outline how you will implement your policies in practice and ensure that downstream partners apply the same standards as the lead organisation.

When participants are inducted, and subsequently at consistent intervals, we will remind them of objectives, confidentiality and respect for others, social norms, and other expectations for the duration of program activities, as well as potential risks and benefits. In addition, SPECIES already has similar policies with respect to community and stakeholder safeguarding (i.e., they augment and do not conflict with but ours). Local participants will also receive and sign Informed Consent Forms following the University of Costa Rica (UCR) guidelines, and volunteers will comply with the same requirements and terms of service. Committees assigned to research and social action at the School of Biology will oversee reports of advances, and we will document and record all instances of noncompliance. Aside from the policies of UCR, GYF also has substantial experience in ethical use and safeguarding of people. This was gained from previous projects meeting similar standards imposed by the University of Florida, which adapted to many emergent needs during early fieldwork and activities. Our policies also provide for corrective measures or alternative actions according to the context of potential violations of standards policies. All major problems will be referred for to respective university or governmental authorities for their involvement.

Please upload the lead organisation's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF

-  [Safeguarding policies Spanish UCR](#)
-  08/02/2021
-  22:26:56
-  pdf 2.63 MB

Section 13 - Logical Framework

Q31. Logical Framework





Darwin Initiative projects will be required to monitor (and report against) their progress towards their expected Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

- [Stage 2 Logframe Template](#)

Please complete your full logframe in the separate Word template and upload as a PDF using the file upload below. Copy your Impact,

Outcome and Output statements and your activities below - these should be the same as in your uploaded logframe.

Please upload your logframe as a PDF document.

-  [R27 Darwin St2 Logical Framework Template FI](#)
[NAL DIR27S11532 Amit](#)
-  08/02/2021
-  22:47:04
-  docx 31.63 KB

Impact:

Communities vulnerable to wildlife conflict receive benefits from surveillance of jaguar and puma interactions by competing for affiliation into a national network of Friends of Felids marketing wildlife friendly production.

Outcome:

Participation in a national contest motivates local development associations to assess and improve their initial wildlife governance status, particularly human-felid interactions in most vulnerable areas (buffer zones and biological corridors).

Project Outputs

Output 1:

Improved capacity for finalist communities to score their wildlife governance status with evidence about coexistence with wildlife, including interactions and uses, achieved through the process of the contest.

Output 2:

Operational wildlife surveillance based on citizen science at winner communities, two in 2022 and two in 2023, become models at the national level under the network Amigos de Felinos (Friends of Felids).

Output 3:

Consolidated network of communities that receive benefits as entrepreneurs that coexist with jaguars and pumas, with the four winners of this contest added to the pilot three existing at the beginning of 2021.

Output 4:

Monitoring and Evaluation: Evidence supports the thesis that the eco-label reached the desired communities, and generated sustainable benefits that resulted in community-based wildlife management, with the contest as a marketing tool for scalability.

Output 5:

No Response

Do you require more Output fields?

It is advised to have less than 6 Outputs since this level of detail can be provided at the Activity level.

No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

- 1.1 Design of communication strategy as a two-fold process, one targeting communities to apply and other targeting a green market for supporting the eco-label.
- 1.2 Elaboration and validation of guidelines, scoring form on wildlife governance and other data collection instruments (measurement validity and reliability).
- 1.3 Invitation dissemination, reception of applications with an assistance centre using different media to attend inquiries that are recorded for analysis, and selection of finalists.
- 1.4 Field inspections from our experts, with key informants, to assist communities at verification and potential improvements in human-felid coexistence that increases scores on wildlife governance.
- 1.5 Reception of improved applications, selection of winners by an honorary guest panel, and awarding ceremony.
- 2.1 Recruitment and induction of a local wildlife monitoring team during capacity building module 1 (workshops at communities).
- 2.2 Participatory camera-trapping monitoring establishment under learning-by-doing capacity building sessions (module 2), including camera stations set up, equipment and data handling, surveillance and reporting.
- 2.3 Showcase of photo-trapping results as part of the communication campaign for the contest, with marketing components of visual identity, storytelling, real-time updates.
- 3.1 Recruitment and induction of a local entrepreneurs' team during capacity building module 1, that uses Amigos de Felinos as added value.
- 3.2 Application of the eco-label to selected existing or potential products and services under learning-by-doing capacity building module 3 (development of identity, skill improvements, and reporting).
- 3.3 Showcase of advances in labelled products and services as part of the campaign for the contest, with marketing components of visual identity, storytelling, real-time updates.
- 3.4 Coordination of administrative tasks by winner community representatives meeting pre-existent Amigos de Felinos for capacity building related to commercialization and sustainability (module 4).
- 3.5 Marketing for customer acquisition and alliances at local and national scale as part of the campaign aimed at generating financial benefits for the eco-label scheme.
- 3.6 Exploration and test of regional and potential global markets with development of partners and approach to e-commerce, also supporting a convenient and sustainable supply chain.

M&E

- 4.1 Statistical analyses for monitoring of change in wildlife governance (including pro-coexistence behaviors) in relation with participation in the contest (from application and reapplication forms).
- 4.2 Survey with structured questionnaire on Wildlife Acceptance Capacity (WAC) model to a sample community members to assess relative change of individuals (pre- and post-test).
- 4.3 Evaluation of learning-by-doing processes (media platforms tests) for each module at participant communities, disaggregated by gender and inclusion criteria.
- 4.4 Analysis of changes from wildlife photo-trapping (descriptive and statistical): list of species, curves of accumulation, relative abundance, interspecific interactions, and other ecologically relevant data.
- 4.5 Performance analysis (using Mixed Methods) of the Amigos de Felinos scheme for winners to assist the fieldwork team if corrective actions are needed.

Section 14 - Implementation Timetable


Q32. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones


in project activities


Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the Excel spreadsheet template as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project.

[Implementation Timetable Template](#)

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and fill/shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

 [R27 Darwin St2 Implementation Timetable Template FINAL DIR27S11532 Amit](#)

 08/02/2021

 22:48:12

 xlsx 41.98 KB

Section 15 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q33. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe, referring to the Indicators above, how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E (see [Finance Guidance for Darwin/IWT](#)).

To assess impact, we will monitor and evaluate (M&E) changes in pilot and winner communities related to wildlife governance, acceptability, risk and benefit perceptions, and innovation adoption. Measures of all these indicators will be performed as pre- and post-surveys in each community. With respect to wildlife governance (including pro-coexistence behaviors), analysis of changes will highlight finalist communities, and yield information and feedback of evaluation measures for winning communities (middle/ end of project). Similarly, the post-implementation survey for first year winners will allow us to identify improvements benefitting second year implementation.

Given they are essential, development of application scoring forms and guidelines for the contest will undergo a measurement validation process (Adcock & Collier 2002). Prioritization criteria for awarding points to wildlife governance will relate to the intensity of human-felid interactions, practices adopted to facilitate coexistence, the impact of the pandemic on wildlife-related tourism, and location of key conservation sites, including surrounding protected areas and biological corridors. The scoring form will permit monitoring of aforementioned indicator changes from a reference point set by applicants themselves, and facilitate advice on targeted improvements at reapplication, during follow-ups half-way through and at the end of the project (for winner communities).

Field inspections for finalists communities will be used to confirm the application category, and will include a rapid socio-ecological assessment. This assessment, together with the reapplication scoring, will set a baseline for wildlife occurrence, human-felid interactions, and sustainable coexistence practices, all to be evaluated over the duration of the project.

Additionally, the experiential learning-based evaluation and performance analyses related to the Amigos de Felinos scheme will build on preliminary results, and be used to advise work teams and the entire association network as to what corrective actions are needed. Performance analyses will account for categorical differences (ie, existing program vs pre-organized vs new participants), and will incorporate technical reports from the communications, marketing, and local teams (entrepreneurship and monitoring). Camera-traps will be set at the end of each contest iteration, with data collected every three months to permit evaluation of baseline data and initial results to inform decision-making and implementation. This will yield 10 months of data for first year winners, and a maximum of three months of data for second year winners considering the proximity to the end of the project. However, camera-traps will continue to function to collect another 10 months of data for scientific analyses.

The M&E for model to achieve scalability will focus on communication campaign effectiveness, as well as validation from the international community (scientific and commercially). This will include the use of call center inquiry data, along with the aforementioned relevant technical reports (including results on investment return), and reach-response indexes. Having two iterations of the contest will allow us to evaluate data from the first year, and adapt it to benefit the second. International validation will occur commercially through the development of business partnerships and new sales markets, and scientifically through exposure at international conferences and peer-reviewed papers.

Total project budget for M&E in GBP (this may include Staff, Travel and Subsistence costs)	£ [REDACTED]
Number of days planned for M&E	84
Percentage of total project budget set aside for M&E (%)	[REDACTED]

Section 16 - FCDO Notifications

Q34. FCDO Notifications

Please state whether there are sensitivities that the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office will need to be aware of should they want to publicise the project's success in the Darwin competition in the host country.

No

Please indicate whether you have contacted your Foreign Ministry or the local embassy or High Commission (or equivalent) directly to discuss security issues (see [Guidance Notes](#)) and attach details of any advice you have received from them.

No

If no, why not?

Contact was attempted since January 14th 2021. The operator was not informed about the Darwin Initiative and instructed us toward the Office of Press and Communications. Our emails to ukin.costarica@fcdo.gov.uk were received (phone confirmation) but not responded at the time of this

submission.

Please attach details of any advice you have received.

No Response

Section 17 - Certification

Q35. Certification

On behalf of the

Trustees

of

Universidad de Costa Rica

I apply for a grant of





£244,330.00

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for key project personnel, letters of support, budget and project implementation timetable (uploaded at appropriate points in application).
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report are also enclosed.

Checked

Name	Ronit Amit Rojas
Position in the organisation	Instructor professor
Signature (please upload e-signature)	 firma_ronit  09/02/2021  17:35:47  jpg 21.35 KB
Date	09 February 2021

Section 18 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance, including "Guidance Notes for Applicants" and "Finance Guidance" .	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund .	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project .	Checked
I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April - 31 March and in GBP .	Checked
I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application .	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have included a 1 page CV or job description for all the key project personnel identified at Question 12, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a letter of support from the the Lead Organisation and main partner organisation(s) identified at Question 11, or an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a cover letter from the Lead Organisation, outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant.	Checked
I have included a copy of the lead organisation's safeguarding policy, which covers the criteria listed in Question 30.	Checked
I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts for the Lead Organisation, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on GOV.UK.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in this application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the latest copy of the Privacy Notice for Darwin, Darwin Plus and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund available [here](#). This Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information, but not personal data, may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead organisation, location, and total grant value) on the GOV.UK and other websites.

Information relating to the project or its results may also be released on request, including under the 2004 Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Defra will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).