



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects **Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus**

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2025

Please note all projects that were active before 1st October 2025 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

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| Project reference | 30-003 |
| Project title | Developing a sustainable model for human-elephant coexistence in Thailand |
| Country(ies)/territory(ies) | Thailand |
| Lead Organisation | Zoological Society of London |
| Partner(s) | Human Elephant Voices Network |
| Project Leader | May Moe Wah |
| Report date and number (e.g. HYR1) | HYR3 |
| Project website/blog/social media | ZSL Thailand (Facebook), Humanelephantvoices.org |

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Output 1.

Regional meetings were held across 3 key forest complexes — the Eastern Forest Complex, Khao Yai National Park (Moo Si Subdistrict), and sWEFCOM (Cha Lae Subdistrict) — to enhance collaboration and develop practical wild elephant management strategies.

Meetings in the Eastern Forest Complex focused on community self-management of human-elephant conflict, use of AI-based alert systems, and promotion of agroforestry and diversified crops to strengthen food security and livelihoods. We supported the Moo Si Subdistrict of Khao Yai to draft plans and routes for elephant management and early warning systems, with an agreement to form a pilot working group integrating government, private, and community efforts.

Following the meeting, joint field surveys were conducted with local stakeholders to identify suitable locations for installing the early warning system. In Chalee subdistrict of sWEFCOM, ZSL and EcoExist facilitated the first meeting of the new Wild Elephant Management Committee to review training outcomes, current efforts, and upcoming activities, identifying challenges and strengthening coordination with the provincial committee. An agreed HEC management workplan from that meeting will be presented to the Provincial committee in November for securing operational and financial support.

The best-practice HEC guide is making steady progress. We are working closely with an artist to develop easy-to-understand visuals for guiding implementation by user groups. In addition, Thai PBS is supporting the development of short video clips on best-practice implementation of select tools for dissemination to increase accessibility. An initial draft of the guide is scheduled for completion by end of October and will be disseminated to a committee made up of elephant experts and user groups who will review the guide and provide feedback on content and accessibility.



Output 2. Recent engagement with the DNP has affirmed that they are focusing on compensation but interested in insurance if proof of concept can be provided. We have thus hired an experienced insurance advisor to support actuarial calculations and drafting of an insurance product pilot for sWEFCOM using HEC and interview data ZSL has collected. The advisor will support the design and drafting of the final feasibility assessment for pitching to investors (i.e. Humanity Insured) for pilot seed funds. Interviews with farmers and local government stakeholders on barriers to accessing compensation in the landscape are ongoing to ensure the product design does not suffer from the same pitfalls as the government compensation scheme. In addition, as a new indicator for this project, ZSL and IIED are leading on a global review of human-wildlife conflict insurance which aims to update the last review conducted in 2019 by IIED, confirm the criteria for success, and share updates and lessons learned from ongoing insurance schemes. The first in a series of 1.5 hour webinars was conducted on 30 September 2025 and successfully engaged 20 participants representing schemes in eight countries. The next meeting is scheduled for 28 October.

Output 3. Information on how to select suitable plant species and design agroforestry models has been published on the ECS website. Key decision-making data for farmers in different areas of Kanchanaburi is presented through short articles and infographics. The plant species list includes detailed information on each species' suitability based on various criteria such as carbon absorption, elevation range, edibility, market value, and compatibility within agroforestry systems. Each criterion is displayed using a star rating and a 100-point scale to make it easy for farmers to understand and compare. User feedback on this Version 1 online tool will be collected and shared with the web development team to inform improvements in future updates.

Output 4. Building on the regional business plan developed for the sWEFCOM in Year 2, we are supporting demonstration sites in three agroclimatic zones as proof of concept for sustainable, wildlife-friendly and elephant-resilient agroforestry. In Chalee, we are focusing on

continued support for the Chang Yim community enterprise (35 members), which aims to diversify markets for coffee farmers and promote mixed intercropping and sustainable agricultural practices. In Huay Khayeng, we signed an agreement with and supported the Chang Pa coffee farmers (10 members) to obtain permission from the Royal Project to use a 10-rai plot of land for trialling diversified agroforestry as proof of concept. Though the Darwin project funded initial costs for seedlings, inputs, and equipment, the Royal Project is able to provide water (a key identified barrier for this region), and the Chang Pa members will provide the labor and maintenance for 1 rai of land each. This plot will serve as a low-risk trial to demonstrate proof of concept for agroforestry without affecting farmers' current income, and incentivise adoption and scaling if the model is successful. An agronomy technical advisor supported the co-design of the planting model and provides regular consultations and advice for the group via Line. Our team has also been regularly engaging with the group to support registration as a community enterprise (planned for October-November 2025) and has supported the group to develop a business plan to apply for funding from the local Subdistrict Administrative Organization for continued support beyond the life of the project.



In this reporting period, two farmers from the Chang Yim Group submitted coffee samples to a national green coffee competition, both achieving scores above 80 (80.67 and 80.42), qualifying as Fine Robusta under specialty coffee standards. The results were published on the Thai Specialty Coffee Facebook page, and the certificates will be uploaded to the Coffee Quality Institute (CQI) website. This recognition has significantly boosted farmers' confidence and serves as a valuable marketing tool when engaging with buyers. Several Chang Yim farmers also passed chemical residue and quality tests, which will contribute to the development of the Chang Yim Standard, a holistic guideline based on four pillars: agroforestry practices, chemical safety, Fine Robusta coffee quality, and the use of non-violent methods to deter elephants. Four advanced members attended a roasting workshop and now serve as peer trainers within the group. With support from the village headman, Chang Yim is establishing a community learning center, which will function as a meeting space and venue for self-organized training on coffee defects, quality evaluation, and basic roasting. Coffee from the award-winning lot was used for marketing and distributed to local government offices, coffee shops, domestic roasters, and NGOs, all of which sold out within two months. A small focus group involving Chang Yim representatives, local government, and ECS was formed to align the group's work plan with local government strategies and explore future budget support, ensuring the group's sustainability beyond the end of the project.



2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Following ongoing challenges and re-orientation of stakeholder priorities in Year 2, some adjustments were made to the logframe to make the indicators SMARTer and more representative of the project outcomes. This was submitted and approved by NIRAS.

Ongoing political changes have delayed progress against regional priorities in the Eastern Forest Complex and Phu Kiao-Nam Nao Forest Complex. We are keeping an eye on the situation for possible opportunities, but currently prioritizing the other regions. Another ongoing challenge is the lack of baseline data on wellbeing and attitudes from engaged farmers due to limited availability. Initial capacity and needs has been assessed upon registration of new farmers with Chang Yim, given the late registration in Year 2 and ongoing registration of new farmers every year, quantitative differences in capacity may be difficult to assess. We are thus planning to conduct a post-project survey with all engaged farmers (ca. 45) in February-March 2026 to assess perceived changes as a result of project workshops, activities, and engagement.

We do not anticipate significant changes to Year 3 project activities or spending.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

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| Discussed with NIRAS: | Yes |
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| Formal Change Request submitted: | Yes |
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| Received confirmation of change acceptance: | Yes |
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| Change Request reference if known: N0445 | |
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Guidance for Section 4: The information you provide in this section will be used by Defra to review the financial status of projects. This review will identify projects at random for spot checks on financial management and will include requests for evidence of the actual spend information provided below. Please ensure the figures you provide are as accurate as possible and that you have the evidence to support it. You do not need to provide it now.

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)

Actual spend: [REDACTED]

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2026)?

Yes ☐ No ☒ Estimated underspend: £

4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible, and not later than 31st December. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Suspensions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk

n/a

6. Project risk management

6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.

n/a

6b. Have any concerns or allegations relating to sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment been reported in the past 6 months?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please provide further information, ensuring no sensitive data is included within responses.

Suspensions or allegations related to safeguarding concerns should be reported to ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk

n/a

7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.

Checklist for submission

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| Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Submit to BCF-Reports@niras.com | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |