



**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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

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

**Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.**

<b>Project reference</b>	<i>This should be the project reference provided in your offer paperwork and <u>not</u> your application number 31-015</i>
<b>Project title</b>	Community-based Orangutan Conservation through Science, Land Rights, and Livelihoods
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	West Kalimantan, Indonesia
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program
<b>Partner(s)</b>	
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Cheryl Knott</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>10/31/2025; HYR2</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<i>savegporangutans.org; @savewildorangutans on Instagram; Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program (Yayasan Palung) on Facebook.</i>

**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.

We are on schedule or ahead of schedule with each of our activities in our proposed timetable. The one exception is the follow-up SAGE evaluation we proposed to do in Q2 of Year 2 (explained below). We have made great progress on protecting additional forest land, with the new Matan Jaya Village Forest running at full capacity with LPHD trained, monthly patrols conducted, business groups being operational, and its first biodiversity survey planned for 2026. The Selinsing Raya (Nek Doyan) Village Forest official decree was received October 5<sup>th</sup>, officially protecting another 4,258 hectares of forest. Socialization meetings have commenced with this village, and will continue through the new year as we prepare them and train them for sustainably managing their forest. The proposal for Pengkalan Jihing Village Forest was submitted and technical verification received, and we await the final decree, expected within the coming months.

Other Highlights:

- We completed the Participatory Impact Assessments to assess how community members have perceived our programming and to highlight areas for improvement, received the detailed report, and are crafting our 2026 plans with these results in mind
- Patrol camp construction was completed in Rantau Panjang Village Forest April, and in Pulau Kumbang in June. These camps create sleeping conditions that make at least 7 nights camping in the forest each month tenable
- Boundary marking of Village Forests progressed with Village Forest name plates made and distributed in April. In July, additional boundary makers were created for Nipah Kuning and Padu Banjar to make it clearer throughout the extent of the Village Forest
- SMART patrols have taken place in each of 8 villages every month (48 SMART patrols)
- A Joint Patrol was held in Nipah Kuning in July (police, army, KPH, LPHD and our staff) identifying 17 land clearers who signed an agreement to cease their illegal activities
- Village Forest Coordinator presented results on how patrols impact illegal activity in Village Forests at International Primatological Society congress in Madagascar in July
- Agroforestry product processing training held in July (3 men, 30 women)
- A Study Exchange trip took place in August where we sent LPHD members to learn from a successful LPHD in Jambi province on Sumatra where they learned about carbon markets, carbon assessment, sustainable coffee growing
- Annual Biodiversity surveys completed in 5 Village Forests so far
- 400 Pandan seedlings were planted in 4 Village Forests
- Plant nurseries built to cultivate 10,000 coffee seeds. The nurseries will also later be used for other types of trees including forestry seedlings
- 4 organic farming demonstration plots established in 2 Village Forests in April
- Matan Jaya and Lubuk Batu Village Forests created Liberica coffee growing houses in April
- Trained and made organic compost with 3 Sustainable Livelihood groups in April
- Connected the Rintis Betunas Sustainable Livelihoods group to Proklm Program which will give them access to support for seeds, materials for nurseries, and more in April.
- Gauged interest in organic farming in Riam Bersap and Sejahtera villages (areas with high levels of human-orangutan conflict) to expand participation in sustainable livelihoods
- Passive monitoring continued in 6 Village Forests, with camera traps, bioacoustics recorders, rain gauges, and temperature monitor data collected
- Coffee cultivation and training of 4 Village Forests in May (Rantau Panjang, Penjataan, Nipah Kuning, Pady Banjar)
- Bee cultivation construction completed in Padu Banjar in May
- Compost production training held in Tanjung Gunung in May
- In June, SL team attended a meeting about creating project-based education experiences for school children in the region to better understand climate change, its impacts, and what can be done about it. Our Sustainable Livelihoods team joined to offer our support for programs related to sustainable livelihoods training
- Fish feed production training in Tanjung Gunung in July
- Land clearing without burning training in April 2025 with 21 participants (14 men and 7 women) and the in August this training was held again along with firefighting training in (30 men from five Village Forests)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fire prevention meeting was held with forestry service, forest management unit, national army, and community leaders in Nipah Kuning</li> <li>• Firefighting training given to Matan Jaya and Lubuk Batu in May 2025, and fire prevention campaign run in 8 villages with 42 billboards created and installed in June</li> <li>• In May we conducted monitoring of the 2,000 seedlings that were planted in Padu Banjar in December 2024 and 60% of seedlings survived. This will serve as a guide for selecting plant species when conducting rehabilitation activities in other open areas.</li> <li>• In May, we held a kick-off meeting of the PKK (Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga – Family Welfare Empowerment) group – a women’s empowerment group in Pampang Harapan. The focus group discussion identified the main problems faced by the community and laid a general plan for how we will work with them and the local government to address the main concerns, namely those related to sustainable livelihoods. 12 women attended. A second meeting to build on the workplan was held in June.</li> <li>• Attended a West Kalimantan forum on estimating orangutan populations in June, helping us disseminate our successful field methods</li> <li>• Nest survey results and methods paper is ready for submission to a scientific journal</li> </ul>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	
<p>The Participatory Impact Assessments that we completed at the end of Year 1 took longer to implement and analyse than anticipated as they were quite a large undertaking. Thus, we are currently evaluating whether the plan for the planned SAGE assessment needs to be changed and will contact BCF if any such changes are deemed necessary.</p> <p>The results of the PIAs are interesting and informative. The main findings are that our programming is well received by community members, they feel more knowledgeable about conservation issues and about orangutans. Community members that are part of the Village Forest Management Boards and sustainable livelihoods groups feel they are benefitting from the program. These benefits are not felt equally throughout the community, however, and we want to find ways to make the benefits more equitable, especially for women, and have the Village Forest program be widely embraced to maximize its sustainability over the long-term. We plan to find ways to implement some changes without increasing our budget, and any larger changes that require more financial resources may be planned for in a subsequent grant.</p> <p>In August our team was asked to do a biodiversity/orangutan survey of the PT Mayawana Persada timber concession to the north of Gunung Palung National Park. This was a very welcome development as we have been trying to communicate with them for several years to get this done. The concession is known habitat for orangutans, as it is directly adjacent to several of the Village Forests that we assist, and deforestation in this concession has led to the displacement of orangutans that have sought refuge in the village forests. In September our team members were deployed for this survey, which ultimately had to be cut short because of poor planning by the coordinating parties, but we expect to be tasked with data analysis for the survey. To send our survey team on this job, we had to delay one of our regular biodiversity surveys, but we are still on track to complete our target 6 surveys this year. The concession survey was paid for by the corporation and had no impact on the budget for this Darwin Initiative project.</p>	
<p><b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b></p>	
Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes/ No
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/ No

Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/ No
Change Request reference if known: <i>If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome</i>	

**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.

<p><b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)</b></p> <p>Actual spend: £ <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p>
<p><b>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)?</b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: £</p>
<p><b>4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.</p> <p><b>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 31<sup>st</sup> 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. <b>Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.</b></b></p> <p><b>NB:</b> if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.</p>
<p><b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b></p> <p>Suspensions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to <a href="mailto:fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk">fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk</a></p> <p>None.</p>
<p><b>6. Project risk management</b></p> <p><b>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.</b></p> <p>N/A</p>

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

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Suspensions or allegations related to safeguarding concerns should be reported to [ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk)

[REDACTED]

**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.**

The review of our Year 1 Annual Report was quite positive, but the only comments requiring a response relating to further disaggregating some indicators and reporting only on total values achieved during this project rather than totalling from before the project began. It was requested that we make these changes in our next annual report and we will do so.

## Checklist for submission

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