



**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 2024**

**Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 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>	DIR30S2\1080 <b>31-016</b>
<b>Project title</b>	Building climate resilient communities and ecosystems in Eastern Indonesia
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Rote Island, Indonesia
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF)
<b>Project leader</b>	Dr. William Marthy
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR1: 1 April – 30 September 2024
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	N/A

#### **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).**

During the first six months, the activities focused on fulfilling outputs 1, 2 and 3 of the project. Below is a summary of key actions taken during this period: **OUTPUT 1. Activity 1.1.** On August 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 2024, an internal refresher training was held at the WCS office in Bogor for the Rote team (**Fig 1**). The training covered WCS's policies and best practices, focusing on Safeguards, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH), and Health, Safety, and Security (HSS), activity report is provided in Indonesian (see <https://tinyurl.com/darwin-rote>). **Activity 1.2.** Community outreach efforts related to the project are currently underway, concentrating on co-developing Village Action Plans with three communities. Until September, activities have been focused on Daiama Village (**Fig. 2**), with plans to proceed next to the remaining two villages. **Activity 1.3 and 1.4.** To facilitate these tasks (1.3 & 1.4), a consultant is being recruited to undertake the studies. However, the recruitment process has encountered delays due to a lack of competitive bidders from East Nusa Tenggara Province. We have now broadened the procurement process to include potential bidders from outside the province. We are confident that this activity will be completed within the next six months. **Activity 1.5.** The process of establishing the community-government forum was initiated in June-July 2024 through several separate meetings with various parties from the Rote Regency government. On July 18, 2024, a focus group discussion (FGD) attended by approximately 35 participants (25 men and 10 women) was held to align perceptions and clarify the roles of each stakeholder involved in the forum (**Fig. 3**). Following this, the forum's establishment will be formalized through a decree issued by the Regent of Rote. Currently, the legal drafting of the decree is in process and awaiting the Regent's signature for finalization. **Activity 1.6.** With current knowledge from climate change studies on Eastern Indonesia, we are developing general awareness materials to raise community awareness. More detailed materials will be created following the completion of the study in Activity 1.4. **Activity 1.7.** Despite the forum is still in the process of legalization (Activity 1.5), we continue to maintain communication with the members to ensure effective community and government engagement in discussions on climate change risks, ecosystem-health interdependencies, and locally viable solutions. **OUTPUT 2. Activity 2.1. and 2.2.** Before conducting the BNS, NRG, and KAP surveys, we organized several preparatory activities in 2024. This included a training session for

WCS's Rote Team from August 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, in Bogor (Fig. 4), and a sharing session on September 16<sup>th</sup> with WCS's Aceh team, who have experience in conducting BNS, NRG, and KAP surveys. This was followed by a joint training with WCS's Rote Team and BBKSDA NTT from October 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> in Kupang (Fig. 5). From October 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, the team held an FGD to gather data for identifying basic necessities and to conduct stakeholder mapping for the NRG survey in six villages, consisting of three intervention villages (Daiana, Daurendale, and Maubesi) and three control villages (Sotimori, Papela, and Lidabesi) (Fig. 6). This data will be used to develop a questionnaire for the upcoming survey in November and December 2024. **Activity 2.3.** The livelihood improvement strategy is being implemented through agricultural development in intervention villages. Activities conducted in September 2024 (27 meetings in total) include the development of horticultural farming for three groups—adult men, women, and youth—in Daiana Village (15 M/10 F) on September 14<sup>th</sup> (Fig. 7). Meeting was conducted to determine the commodities that will be planted through a participatory approach. This agricultural initiative will follow an individual farming model. Support will be provided to small-scale farmers who take the initiative to prepare the land. Once the land is ready for planting, initial support will be given in the form of seeds and farming tools. **Activity 2.4.** Farmer training programme and technical assistance on climate resilient livelihoods are scheduled in the next 6 months. **Activity 2.5; 2.6; 2.7; 2.8** are scheduled in Year 2. **OUTPUT 3.** **Activity 3.1 and 3.2** are scheduled in the next six months. The biodiversity survey training is scheduled for Q1 2025, with the timing adjusted according to the university's schedule. **Activity 3.3 and 3.4.** In August 2024, three undergraduate students were recruited through the Research Fellowship Program (RFP) scheme to join the RFP of WCS-MoEF. Two awardees are from the University of Nusa Cendana in Kupang, and one is from Diponegoro University in Central Java (Fig. 8). **Activity 3.5.** We are still conducting data analyses. A ground check is scheduled for October 2024 to validate findings (Fig. 9). **Activity 3.6.** Dissemination of survey findings will be conducted after the survey is completed. **Activity 3.7.** The patrols are conducted once a month using the SMART patrol method, involving WCS, BBKSDA NTT, and local lake management groups. From April to September 2024, six patrols were completed (Fig. 10). A key finding has been the decrease in water levels in these enclosures, prompting the team to take corrective actions. Starting in November, the patrol frequency will increase to three times per month as the Rote turtles are now in soft-release enclosures.

**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.**

WCS's MoU with its main partner, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), expired in September 2024, and we are currently working on its renewal. Additionally, the recent October 2024 political transition, with a new president and cabinet, may result in the MoEF splitting into two ministries, potentially impacting our work and requiring adjustments. We will maintain proactive communication with MoEF throughout this period.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes/ <b>No</b>
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/ <b>No</b>
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/ <b>No</b>

Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

**4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)**

Actual spend: £ XXXXXXXXXX

**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 2025)?**

Yes ☐ **No** ☒ Estimated underspend: £

**4c. If you expect and 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. 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 BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

No

**6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report.** If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

1. Photos of field activities can be accessed through this link <https://tinyurl.com/darwin-rote>
2. You should clarify the people-related targets, including specific targets at the household level or more detailed if possible. Specifically, for indicator 1.2, does this 75% increase apply to all residents of the 3 lakeland communities mentioned in the Output (and is this the same as the 100 households and 500 people mentioned elsewhere?). **Response:** For Indicator 1.2, which aims for a >75% increase in local awareness about the risks of climate change and biodiversity loss among community members in three communities, this target applies to all residents of the three lakeland communities central to the project. Additionally, Output 2 targets climate-resilient livelihoods and reductions in multidimensional poverty for >100 vulnerable households in three priority villages through farmer livelihood support to address climate stressors and facilitate improved land use, farming, and livestock practices. These >100 households are included in the target for Indicator 1.2. Furthermore, we aim to engage >500 community members, which also contributing to the >75% target specified in Indicator 2.1.
3. To improve your risk register please separate each of the safeguarding risks as they relate to SEAH, HSS and Environmental/Social Safeguards and include the revised register with your HYR. **Response:** In our previously submitted risk register, we identified seven risks: one fiduciary, three delivery, and three safeguarding risks. In the current updated register, we have added some details on two specific safeguarding risks: (1) reduced access to resources, adding health, safety, and security risk in strengthening land/resource management, and (2) priority-setting and planning exercises exclude certain groups' interests. We believe the remaining risks remain self-explanatory. Please find our updated risks register in the excel file that can be accessed from this link <https://tinyurl.com/darwin-rote>

## Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024)	
Have you <b>responded to any additional feedback</b> (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	Yes
If not already submitted, have you attached your <b>risk register</b> ?	Yes
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024)	
Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review</b> ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	N/A
For All Projects	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCFs-Report@niras.com">BCFs-Report@niras.com</a> .	Yes
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	Yes
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project</b> ?	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes