

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Conservation and cultivation of medicinal plants in Ghana
Country	Ghana
Organisation	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
Project Ref. No.	162/8/048
Report date	31 October 2001

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

No visits were scheduled or made during this period to or from Ghana.

Numbers below relate to activity numbers from item 2.5 in original proposal.

5 Data management

Reports have been received from the three Ghanaian collaborating organisations, Royal Botanic Garden Aburi, and the Department of Botany and CERSGIS at the University of Ghana, Legon stating that data entry is progressing satisfactorily.

Receipt of a financial report from the Department of Botany had been outstanding but a report indicating that staff had received first year payments was finally received by UNEP-WCMC in August, and the second year payment to the department (which had been withheld pending receipt of the financial statement) released.

Discussions were held with the Director of Aburi regarding a visit from him to the UK, but this has not yet taken place.

Discussions have been held regarding a visit during the final six month period with Ben Akuetteh, GIS expert from CERSGIS responsible for spatial data management and production of the final CD-ROM. Ben would bring copies of specimen data from Aburi and the Department of Botany as well as copies of spatial data from CERSGIS to UNEP-WCMC and would prepare the CD based on data from the Ghanaian institutes and UNEP-WCMC and discuss techniques and feasibility of completing an Internet Mapping Facility for the project (exploiting technological developments that were not possible when the proposal was under development). This visit is provisionally scheduled for 17 January 2002. Permission to move budget overheads from the sum originally budgeted for a UK database consultant, to cover Ben's travel costs to facilitate this visit has been approved by the DI secretariat.

2 Development of medicinal plant garden.

Maintenance and development of the Aburi Medicinal Plant Garden is ongoing. Seedlings of target species have been planted on the nursery. These include 1,278 plant seedling which were collected from the wild and potted up on the nursery and 252 seedlings successfully germinated in propagating boxes and poly sacs: Species currently grown on the nursery include: *Adenia cissampeloides*, *Canthium glabriflorum*, *Cinnamomum zeylandicum*, *Cryptolepsis sanguinolata*, *Griffonia simplicifolia*, *Hileria latifolia*, *Kigelia africana*, *Landolphia dulcis*, *Ocinum canum*, *Pachypodantheum staudtii*, *Piper guinense*, *Rouren coccinea*, *Synseppallum dulciflorum*, *Trecalia africana*, *Zanthoxylum xanthioides*.

Progress of the Medicinal plant Garden at the Legon University Botanic Garden has included the establishment of nursery beds within the existing botanic garden site. The preparation of the beds, propagation and planting of target species and regular maintenance in the form of watering and weeding. Plant accessions include *Catharanthus rosea*, *Griffonia simplicifolia* and *Tridax procumbens*.

3 Ethnobotanical Survey.

The survey form was designed in collaboration with all parties. Aburi Botanical Gardens reported that they had surveyed 6 local communities; Adeiso, Konkonoru, Kofisia, Aburi, Mampong-Akuapim and Nkoranza in the Brong-Ahafo. There were 86 respondents. A total number of 339 plants were identified as being used for medicinal treatments by these 6 communities. This information has been added to the database. The last reporting evidence from Legon University (30/7/01) stated that a desk top study of publications and Cape Coast University graduate thesis on the topic of medicinal plants was in progress. The Director of the Legon Botanic Garden is distributing the surveys to garden visitors and students who attend practical demonstrations in the garden. It is expected that the random nature of this distribution will extend the enquiry to a number of regions in Ghana.

8 Production of conservation report

Contents of report discussed during February visit and spread sheet subsequently circulated to all staff itemising tasks and deadlines for all. Output due at UNEP-WCMC by December for inclusion on final CD-ROM.

9 Manual on medicinal plant home gardens

The production of this manual was programmed to be completed by the end of September. Reporting on progress of this work has been hampered by poor communications between the UK partners and Legon University Department of Botany. However, in July Professor Odamtten reported that a list of 40 target plants for inclusion in the Manual had been decided upon and the information on 20 of these had been completed. The Professor expressed confidence that this would be completed in time to meet the September deadline. We are persevering with attempts to communicate with the Department.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments, that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will effect the budget and timetable of project activities. Have any of these issues been discussed with the Department and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The major problem of apparent inaction from the Department of Botany regarding payment to staff appears to have been resolved, following considerable correspondence.

Communication with the Department of Botany at Legon University has been difficult, email has proven to be very unreliable, and there is no fax machine. This has resulted in minimal reporting and a delays in the confirmation of monitoring events.

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

In retrospect, more visits should have been budgeted into the project. I would suggest that such a project dependant upon use very new techniques by those being trained would benefit from at least twice yearly visits. This is especially true in a region like West Africa where communication by email is limited/does not exist and where phone connections may be difficult.

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