

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: 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 2022

Project reference	DARCC006 Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity
Project title	Strengthening collaborative tree seed supply systems for restoration in Asia
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Philippines
Lead partner	Bioversity International
Partner(s)	Bangladesh Forest Department Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), India National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia University of the Philippines Los Banos Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Project leader	Riina Jalonen
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.apforngen.org/initiatives/strengthening-seed-supply

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

Output 1: Identified gaps in seed source availability for native species in four countries

1.1 Develop methodology for gap analysis on tree seed sources (Q1 Apr-June 2022)

Methodology was discussed and approved at the project's inception workshop (see report at: www.apforngen.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Darwin_Inception_workshop_report_2022_-_FINAL.pdf)

1.2 Develop seed zone maps for current and future climates in target countries and validate them with experts (Q1 Apr-June 2022)

Seed zone maps were developed following the methodology of Fremout et al. (2021) with country-specific adjustments and validation as follows:

Bangladesh: In total 9 experts contributed to validating the seed zone map, from the Planning unit and the Resource Information Management System (RIMS) of the Bangladesh Forest Department and from the Forest Inventory Division of the Bangladesh Forest Research Institution. Seed zones were assigned to the smallest administrative units, union councils, for easier implementation.

India: The seed zone map covers the 4 southernmost states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The maps were validated by experts from the IFGTB, Coimbatore; Tamil Nadu Forest Department; Kerala Forest Department; and Institute of Wood Science and Technology.

Indonesia: The map was developed by dividing the existing seed zones of the generic National Seed Zone Map (*Peta Zona Benih Tanaman Hutan Indonesia*, issued by the

Ministry of Environment and Forestry), into environmental clusters to obtain the dynamic seed source map that can be projected to future climate conditions. The resulting map was validated by 4 experts from the National Research and Innovation Agency; the Directorate of Forest Tree Seed, Ministry of Environment and Forestry; and IPB University

Philippines: The seed zone map for Mindanao was overlaid with forest cover and soils maps. The forest cover map is mainly sourced from the National Mapping and Resources Information Authority (NAMRIA) while the soils map is acquired from the Bureau of Soil and Water Management (BSWM) of the Department of Agriculture. The seed zone map was selected based on correspondence with the forest cover and soli maps and geographic continuity of the seed zones.

Final maps are available on the project website at:
<https://www.apforgen.org/initiatives/strengthening-seed-supply/>

1.3 Identify data sources and access options on species distributions, seed sources and land uses (Q1-Q2 Apr-Sept 2022)

The activity has been slightly delayed and will be completed in Q3 of Y1. Data templates were discussed and finalised at the project inception workshop, including with expert guidance from the Royal Botanical Garden of Edinburgh and OECD Plant and Seed Scheme. In total 23 species were selected, including 11 threatened and 4 CITES listed species. As of 30 September 2022, data was being compiled from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), research reports and publications. In addition, the following local and national databases were identified and approached as data sources:

Bangladesh: National Forest Inventory (NFI) sample plots.

India: Fischer Herbarium, field data, and Research Reports of the IFGTB.

Indonesia: Database of the Directorate of Forest Tree Seed, Ministry of Environment and Forestry; Herbarium Bogoriense; Herbarium Botani Hutan, Bogor; and Herbarium Wanariset Kalimantan

Philippines: Projects on *Almaciga (Agathis philippinensis)* and *Aquilaria* spp. by DOST-PCAARRD (Department of Science and Technology); Mindanao Tree Seed Center of the Ecosystem Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; and the National Museum for herbarium specimens.

1.4 Train and mentor 3 experts per country to implement gap analysis (Spatial analysis, R statistics, data on forest cover and land tenure) (1 regional workshop, 15 participants) (Q2-Q3, July to Dec 2022)

The experts have been identified in each country, and the target for >30% of female participants was met in all countries except in the Philippines, where the female candidate did not have a passport and hence could not travel to the training workshop. As of 30 September 2022, the experts were being mentored in compiling occurrence data for the target species through monthly review meetings (30.8. and 19.9) and provision of feedback on data compiled so far. Preparations are underway for the regional training workshop on the gap analysis which will be organised in Coimbatore, India, hosted by the national partner IFGTB, from 28 Nov to 2 Dec 2022.

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.

Only one of the sub-contracts has been signed so far and signing of contracts with the other three partners has been significantly delayed. Reasons raised by partners include detailed regulations for receiving funds from overseas partners and the lengthy terms of sub-contracts which reflect the requirements of the main contract. Subcontracting was expected to take some time and the project work plan was prepared in such a way that activities in the first 6-9 months are being funded by the lead partner. However, if the remaining subcontracts are not signed by December 2022, the implementation of activities 2.1 (validation of gap analysis with stakeholders, 2.2 (evaluation of existing databases) and 3.2 (assessment of capacities) by the partners will be at risk, and a change request will be submitted to reallocate the funds to the lead partner who will then assume a leading role in these activities. We have indicated potential underspending in Y1 due to these delays under 4a.

It was agreed that the Advisory Group on Monitoring and Evaluation will be established once all sub-contracts have been signed, to follow proper institutional processes in each partner organisation.

Some target species in the Philippines are found on indigenous people's territories, and access to these data sources (Output 1.3) is subject to detailed national regulations and lengthy processes on indigenous people's rights. Alternative data sources are being sought to compensate for these data e.g. from published and grey literature.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance N/A

Change request reference if known:

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: ██████████

4b. If yes, then you need to 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 if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

No

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**