

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 2023

Project reference	DARNV011
Project title	A new tool for advancing locally led conservation
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nepal, Philippines, Uganda, Kenya
Lead partner	International Institute for Environment and Development
Partner(s)	RECOTFC Nepal, Bukidnon University, Philippines CORDIO, Kenya Makerere University, Uganda
Project leader	Phil Franks
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website/blog/social media	Not yet established

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).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E 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.

Activity 1.1: The Task Force was established in April 2023 but as the “IPLC-led Governance Working Group” of the WCPA and CEESP Commissions of IUCN. This was in response to initial discussions with core members who felt that the group needed to be framed in terms of its objective rather than just the notion of a group to work in Protected Area governance type. A second consideration was that GIZ and UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre offered to help co-finance the first workshop of the group (activity 1.2) so that it could be fully in person rather than hybrid. This workshop was held at the end of June in Cambridge and exceeded our expectations in terms of diversity of participants, key insights and plans for the working group which include processes and publications supported by GIZ as well as development and testing of the tool that is the focus on this project.

Activity 1.3: in early July immediately after the Cambridge workshop we held a two-day meeting of the project partners to start the process of designing the tool that the project will pilot. The output was a first draft of the multi-stakeholder process that will be used for the assessment. The other key piece of the tool is the analytical framework – indicators under five dimensions of authority/power - that was developed at the workshop – management, governance structure/process, rights and duties, financing and knowledge and values. Developing this analytical framework and multi-stakeholder process to the point where they are ready for piloting has taken four months longer than anticipated because of needing more time for consultations and also the pressure of other elements of IEDs engagement in supporting implementation of the 30x30 target of the Global Biodiversity Framework. However, as of today (October 31st) these two elements of the tool are now sufficiently developed to proceed to piloting (activity 1.3). These pilots will take place in the period December 2023-January 2024. Activity 1.4 is now scheduled for March 2024 rather than December 2023. Round 2 field testing will then take place during the period April-June 2024 and the second workshop of the WCAP/CEESP IPLC-led governance Working Group will take place in July 2024 in Kenya (rather than June 2024). At this point the project will be just 1 month behind schedule but this has no implication for the remaining activities (3.1 and 3.2).

Funding for activities 3.3-3.6 has been secured from GIZ. This includes publication and events targeted at CBD COP16 in late October 2024, but the World Conservation Congress has been postponed to October 2025.

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.

As outlined above, the first round of piloting of the new tool which was planned for August/September 2023 has been delayed till December/January 2024. Since the piloting involves a visit by IIED staff/consultants to each site with substantial cost in terms of staff time and travel, the project at the end of September is considerably underspent. However, as noted above, the project will be able to catch up over the second half of year 1 and first quarter of year 2 to reach the point where it is only a month behind schedule in July 2024. A revised work plan will be submitted with the change request that will shortly be submitted.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No but we are preparing one now

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

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 2024)?

Yes Estimated underspend: £ [REDACTED]

4c. 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.**

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?

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, 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.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS 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**