

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: 31st 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 including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	29-006
Project title	People, Primates, Plants: Co-managing Biodiversity and Improving Livelihoods in Vietnam
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Vietnam
Lead Organisation	Botanic Garden Conservation International (BGCI)
Partner(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), World Agroforestry – Vietnam 2. Center for Highland Natural Resource Governance Research (CEGORN) – Vietnam 3. Langur Voluntary Conservation Group (VCG), Tuyen Hoa district – Vietnam
Project leader	Joachim Gratzfeld
Report date and number	31 October 2024 (HYR3)
Project website/blog/social media	BGCI: https://www.bgci.org/our-work/projects-and-case-studies/people-primates-plants/ ICRAF: https://worldagroforestry.org/project/people-primates-plants-co-managing-biodiversity-and-improving-livelihoods-vietnam https://www.facebook.com/groups/ICRAFFvietnam CEGORN: https://cegorn.org/ Langur Voluntary Conservation Group (VCG) fanpage: https://www.facebook.com/Hatinhlangur

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).

Report on Activities initiated during the reporting period (April-Sept 2024)

Overarching, project management level: A project steering committee will be established to oversee project implementation, monitor progress and enable adaptive management.

During the first and second quarters of year 3, the Project Management Team (PMT) held two meetings in April 2024 for preparation of Annual Report 2 and in September 2024 to address reviewer comments on the Annual Report 2 Review (AR2R), preparing for half year report 3 and discuss the implementation of year 3 activities. Besides that regular technical meetings were held to review public awareness activities in April, May, June, July and August 2024.

Output 1. The socio-economic status, income sources and market situation of households in Tuyen Hoa district are assessed and market-based agroforestry practises are established.

1.1. Design and conduct household surveys to characterise and assess the project's impacts on local livelihoods, farming systems, and forest uses (years 1 and 3).

Baseline survey was completed in year 1 and reported in Annual Report 1(AR1). Endline survey is expected to take place early March 2025.

1.2. Characterise good local agroforestry practices in the 4 communes of Dong-, Son-, Thach- and Thuan Hoa, as options for agroforestry interventions (year 1).

Agroforestry characterisation survey was completed in year 1 (reported in AR1).

1.3. Design and conduct market opportunities and value chains, with a special focus on gender roles and equality, of at least 4 key agroforestry products (year 1).

The market survey for 4 products (chicken, fish, honeybee and pomelo) completed and report can be found

1.4. Implement participatory development of market-led agroforestry pilots with local communities in the 4 project communes (years 1-2).

In Year 3, agroforestry pilots expanded with the project supplying turmeric and taro for integration with fruit trees. Market development promoted among local communities with activities such as capacity building on food processing and e-commerce, product marketing. Four business groups were developed and assisted to receive registration certification. The pomelo business group earned VIETGAP (Vietnam Good Practice product) certification and connected products to the Hanoi market ([details on their fanpage](#)). The chicken business group was trained to produce salted and dried chicken with lime, generating income for women (more information on the group's [fanpage](#)).

1.5. Provide ongoing support to local communities for monitoring and evaluation of agroforestry pilot farms (years 2-3).

Agroforestry pilots were regularly monitored by the local commune staff and local authorities of Tuyen Hoa DARD

Output 2. The SUF community co-management plan is jointly developed and implemented with community members and local authorities.

2.1. Organise multi-stakeholder, participatory workshops (years 1-3) to develop the community co-management plan, including options for ecological connectivity of SUF patches as a key measure to regenerate the Hatinh langur's habitat.

In February 2024, a conference to review the management and biodiversity conservation in the Special-Use Forest area with communes developing action plans was co-organized the Forest Protection Department. A follow-up conference is being planned for December 2024.

2.2. Carry out an eco-geographical survey of the SUF and surrounding areas (year 1).

Eco-geographical survey was completed in year 2 and reported in AR2

2.3. Assess the potential of human-langur interaction and associated risks of zoonotic infection (years 1 and 2).

The survey was completed in year 2 and reported in AR2

2.4. Carry out forest restoration (years 2 and 3) engaging local communities and local authorities, including enrichment planting with native tree species raised in the new nurseries to demonstrate implementation of the SUF co-management plan.

In year 3, households (HH) from communes are being registered to plant native trees before end of the project. So far, two communes have submitted lists for 17 households covering 34.64 hectares (14 HH from Dong Hoa registered 18.64 hectares, 3 HH from Son Hoa registered 16 hectares). In that, 7 hectares in Son Hoa, including Lim Xanh and Lat Hoa has been approved for planting 7,777 native trees. Currently, CEGORN is assessing the land in Dong Hoa with local authorities for potential collaboration with Vietnam Afforestation and Restoration Services (VARS) for matched-funding to support additional planting of at least 20,000 trees within year 3. (List of household registration is provided).

2.5 Generate periodic reports on Langur poaching to be presented by VCG at the multi-stakeholder workshops as per activity 2.1 (years 1 - 3)

From April to September 2024, VCG conducted 15 patrols with 119 participants, and an additional 26 patrols combined with production activities, involving 208 people. No violations were detected in the forest area, while sightings of the white-cheeked gibbon increased, averaging two per day, especially in Thach Hoa and Dong Hoa communes. The VCG also collaborated with Cotecons Company and the Hatinh Langur Cooperative to plant over 10,000 native trees and food trees to restore the langur's habitat in these area (more information can be found in fanpage of VCG <https://www.facebook.com/Hatinhlangur>)

Output 3. Knowledge of and capacities and capabilities of local communities in Tuyen Hoa district in forest restoration, sustainable and income generating agroforestry, small-scale farm businesses, and prevention of zoonotic diseases from close animal-human interaction, are increased

3.1. Conduct a gender disaggregated needs-assessment, and develop training materials and programmes for training of trainers (TOT) and farmers engaged in new agroforestry models development (years 1 and 2).

The survey was completed in year 1 and 2

3.2. Provide TOT training for community representatives and local officials on market, small-scale farm businesses, forest restoration and sustainable agroforestry (years 2 and 3).

Two food processing training sessions were held in May 2024 for 26 participants. The first session, on salted chicken and lemon leaf dried chicken, lasted five days and included 14 participants (10 women) from the chicken production group. The second session, on honey processing, lasted two days and included 12 participants. Their honey products are gaining market recognition and are sold under the brand "Tuyen Hoa's Langur Forest Wild Honey".

In July 2024, a two-day training course on sales skills and digital marketing was conducted for 36 participants (20 women, 55.5%) including local staff and representatives of four business groups. The training covered effective sales methods, including AI technology and video/image creation software. After the course, production groups applied their knowledge to market products like salt-cured chicken, dried chicken with lime leaves, and pomelos, sharing updates on their Facebook pages.

3.3. Support TOT participants to provide on-site trainings for community members on forest restoration and sustainable agroforestry (years 2 and 3)

No TOF activities conducted for this reporting period.

3.4. Establish and maintain 2 community-based nurseries for the production of seedlings of native tree and crop species, and assess their market potential (years 1-3).

The Hatinh Langur Cooperative maintains two nurseries in Thuan Hoa, producing over 30,000 seedlings annually. Activities include seedling care during hot weather, preparation for the planting season (October-December 2024), and market connections to ensure sales. By September 2024, the cooperative sold 15,000 seedlings, including 12,000 from Nursery 1, supporting projects like Cotecons-sponsored reforestation for langur food plants (11,000 seedlings), and 3,000 from Nursery 2. Looking ahead, it plans to supply 20,000 seedlings, including native and langur food plants for local reforestation in Tuyen Hoa.

3.5. Undertake public awareness campaigns using local and national outreach channels on SUF biodiversity conservation needs and opportunities, and prevention of diseases from zoonotic transmissions (years 1-3).

We have made significant progress in raising public awareness on biodiversity conservation needs and zoonotic disease prevention under activity 3.5. The school program we launched was highly successful with 766 students and 40 teachers from four secondary schools participating in the activities. To maintain momentum with schools, we developed a comprehensive teacher toolkit, which includes various activities aimed at raising awareness of the importance of protecting the Langur.

To further engage local communities and promote general awareness, we created a poster highlighting the importance of protecting Langur and taking preventative measures against potential zoonotic diseases. This poster will be displayed in key public locations frequented by both locals and tourists. Additionally, informational leaflets covering the langur's ecology and habitat and informing about zoonotic disease prevention have been distributed in schools, with plans for broader dissemination across community areas and at upcoming events.

Furthermore, we produced a video ([link](#)) emphasising the importance of conserving the Langur and raising awareness about zoonotic risks. Another video made by Cham film ([link](#)) explains the important role of the local volunteer group in protecting the species.

Output 4. Best-practice of development and implementation of community-based management of SUF, including forest ecological restoration and sustainable agroforestry models, is promoted for integration in national and sub-national policies by the end of the project (2025)

4.1. Conduct participatory suitability mapping for upscaling sustainable agroforestry models from the project site to the district scale (years 2 and 3).

Until September 2024, we have collected land use maps, and weather records for 30 years and decided on the list of trees for analysis. We have conducted a consultation workshop with representatives from communes and Tuyen Hoa district to consult on the land use map, land use status, local policies on expanding fruit tree plantation, and constraints for agroforestry

expansion. In the next half year, we will conduct the data analysis, consult fruit tree experts on the ecological requirement of fruit trees in the list, and combine other social aspects.

4.2. Document project best practices of community-based management of SUF, and incorporate in the SUF co-management plan (year 3).

Currently, the best community-based management practices have been documented and prepared for a stakeholder meeting on 12 December 2024.

4.3. Produce policy recommendations for local, provincial and national authorities on community-based management of SUF, as well as public awareness materials, and share them widely through local and national media channels (years 2 and 3).

Public awareness materials, including an education toolkit, posters, leaflets, and a video have been widely shared through face-to-face events and social media (LinkedIn, Facebook). The goal is to raise awareness about SUF management. Project findings will also be presented at an international climate change conference at Thai Nguyen University from November 4-7, 2024.

4.4. Promote the integration of policy recommendations on best-practice models for SUF community co-management in ongoing and future policy frameworks and strategies for sustainable forest management at meetings with local, provincial and national authorities (years 2 and 3).

Building on the success of conservation programs, the designed SUF Tuyen Hoa was officially recognized in the National Forestry Plan from 2021-2030, vision to 2050. The project partners also supported the Tuyen Hoa People’s Committee and Quang Binh province in proposing an extension of the SUF to cover five additional communes, encompassing a total area of 26,800 hectares under the name Khe Net Nature Reserve. Additionally, project activities in SUF Tuyen Hoa were shared with the National Assembly by Mr. Hong from CEGORN to assess the enforcement of laws related to forest land allocation and management across provinces. The challenges in the policy framework, particularly regarding the role of local communities in the "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECM) framework and the promotion of agroforestry, will be addressed in the National Assembly's final report.

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.

During the summer, a heat wave in Tuyen Hoa from April to May significantly impacted agricultural production. Although households were guided on protecting seedlings planted in March 2024, some tree loss was unavoidable. However, thanks to the efforts of households and regular support from local staff, the mortality rate of trees has remained quite low, around 4%. Annual crops, which struggle to survive in such extreme summer conditions, have been decided for planting in the autumn and winter seasons (August-September and November-December 2024).

Although this gave considerable challenge, through regular discussion and hard work of commune members we were able to reduce the impact. Hence the budget and timeline of the project activities will not be impacted.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:

N/A

Formal Change Request submitted:

N/A

Received confirmation of change acceptance:	N/A
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>	

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

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?

N/A

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.

No respond requested to be reported in HYR3. The project team is working on comments of reviewers to respond in next Annual Report 3 (Final Reporting) that is due in April 2025.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (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.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	

For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	N/A
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	Yes
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	N/A
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes