



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note":

(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>)

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

Submission Deadline: 30th April 2024

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	30-023
Project title	Rights of Wetlands Operationalisation for Biodiversity and Community Resilience
Country/ies	Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Kenya and Sri Lanka
Lead Partner	Wetlands International Kenya
Project partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands International Global Office, Netherlands • ATAYAK - Asociación de Yachak del Pueblo de Sarayaku, Ecuador • Cobra Collective, UK • Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, USA • International Water Management Institute, Sri Lanka • Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka • North Rupununi District Development Board, Guyana • Practical Action in Bolivia, Bolivia • Universidad Católica de Bolivia "San Pablo", Bolivia • Worcester State University, USA
Darwin Initiative grant value	£599,700.00
Start/end dates of project	01 June 2023 to 31 March 2026
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2023 – Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	01 June 2023 to 31 March 2024 – Annual Report 1
Project Leader name	Dr. Matthew [REDACTED]
Project website/blog/social media	https://cobracollective.org/portfolio/rights-of-wetlands-operationalisation-for-biodiversity-and-community-resilience/ www.rightsofwetlands.org
Report author(s) and date	Dr. Matthew [REDACTED] and Mr. Titus [REDACTED]

1. Project summary

The drive for economic growth, based on unbridled consumerism, continues to dominate wetland use and associated biodiversity loss, with existing strategies for wetland conservation failing. Up to 87% of global wetlands have been lost, contributing to an average decline of 84% in freshwater species populations and 36% decline in coastal/marine species populations since 1970. Biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation and climate destabilisation constitute connected global emergencies that worsen poverty, and now require transformative approaches, including ethical/legal paradigm shifts. Just as it took an ethical shift, from that of a thing or property, to recognise the rights of children, women, Indigenous Peoples, Black and Ethnic Minorities to confront child labour, human trafficking, slavery, and other human rights abuses, a similar ethical shift is required to alter the downward trajectory for wetlands.

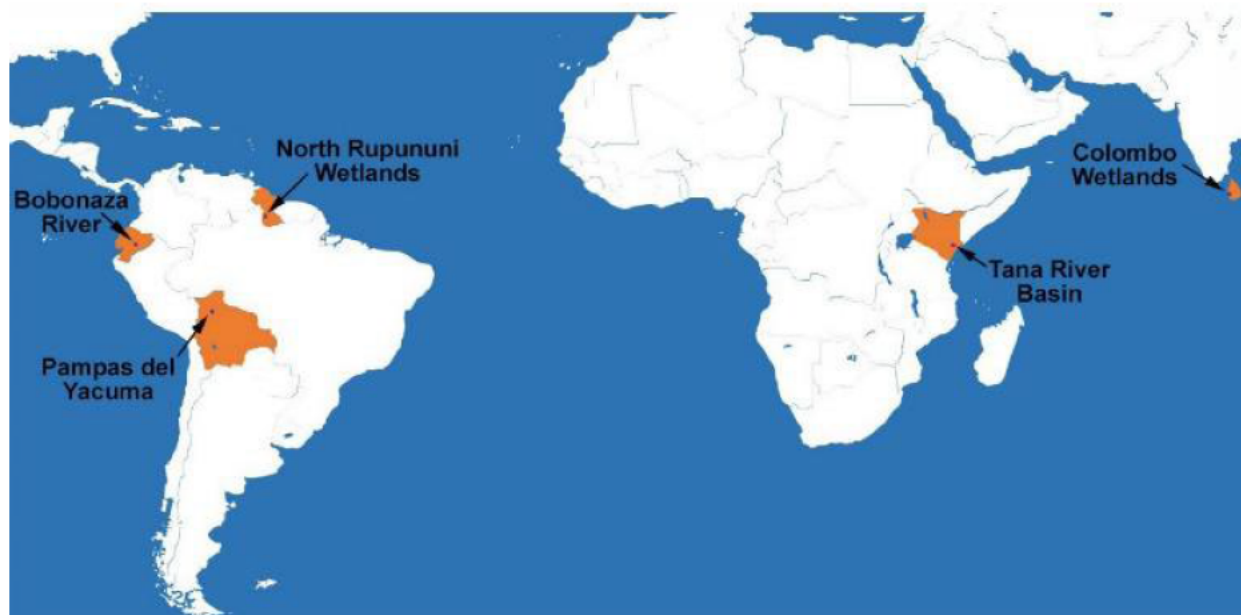
Addressing ethical and legal drivers of biodiversity loss and resulting poverty, Rights of Nature is gaining increased support as a solution, representing a paradigm shift in ethics, policy, law and practice, consistent with many Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' views and increasingly championed by courts, legislatures and international institutions. This framework supports behavioural change in how we interact with Nature/biodiversity, supporting improved management. The shift is radical: from nature being considered a property and commodity, to Nature becoming a rights-bearing entity, resulting in a significant advance in protecting and conserving biodiversity. In most legal frameworks, an environmental lawsuit can be filed only if human injury or loss is proven in connection to degradation of the person's environment (*locus standi*). Within a 'Rights of Nature' framework, one can sue on an ecosystem's behalf, without connection to direct personal injury. Rights of Nature has also advanced to support a position where harm is averted rather than holding those to account post injury (precautionary principle). Although some national governments have legislated for Rights of Nature approaches (e.g. 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution, 2010 Law of Mother Earth in Bolivia, 2018 Colombia Supreme Court recognizing the right of the Amazon to exist), in practice, these have been undermined by other legal mechanisms still promoting a commodified, proprietary approach to nature (e.g. 'Payments for Ecosystem Services' which, when applied, still approach wetland management and governance in piecemeal ways, such as a focus on floodwater attenuation, creating perverse financial incentives that could undermine other wetland functions). A 'Rights of Nature' approach promotes a holistic strategy that protects the integral functioning of a wetland, including safeguards for its constituent species and beneficial human activities that support poverty alleviation.

Project partners have proposed a 'Universal Declaration of the Rights of Wetlands', consistent with the 1982 World Charter for Nature and produced draft guidance on operationalisation (www.rightsofwetlands.org). The project goal is to facilitate the operationalisation of the Rights of Wetlands approach in different country contexts, embedding the right of a wetland to function and exist through community activism and management, ethical framing, policy and legal instruments and governance frameworks, and demonstrating how a more holistic and morally driven relationship with wetlands can deliver successful biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

The project will examine Rights of Wetlands implementation in five different country contexts and specifically in the following five wetland areas (see Figure 1):

- Pampas del Yacuma – Bolivia
- Bobonaza River – Ecuador
- North Rupununi Wetlands – Guyana
- Tana River Basin – Kenya
- Colombo Wetlands – Sri Lanka

Figure 1 – Project locations



2. Project stakeholders/ partners

At the start of the project the roles and responsibilities were agreed among the partners. These formed the basis of the formal partner agreements that were signed between Wetlands International Kenya and all partners. The project leaders liaise with in-county coordinators on a regular basis and formally assess progress every two months. The agreed roles and responsibilities are as follows:

- Wetlands International Kenya, Cobra Collective – Overall project management. Project impact evaluation, reporting and coordination.
- Cobra Collective - Participatory engagement learning capacity building.
- Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund - Legislation and policy reviews, social and environmental rights two-way learning capacity building.
- Wetlands International Kenya, Cobra Collective - Governance and communication frameworks, and legislation and policy reviews.
- Wetlands International Kenya, International Water Management Institute, North Rupununi District Development Board, Worcester State University, Universidad Católica de Bolivia "San Pablo" – In-country technical and logistical delivery and community and stakeholder engagement.
- Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka - Coordination with Sri Lankan government agencies.
- ATAYAK & Practical Action Bolivia - Community management approaches and worldviews review. Stakeholder and community engagement in Ecuador & Bolivia.

All partners have actively engaged government and NGO stakeholders at a national level and local communities at the specific wetland sites. They have achieved this through holding online and in-person workshops and undertaking questionnaire surveys with stakeholders.

3. Project progress

During the period June 2023 to March 2024 the focus under Output 1 has been setting up the project, undertaking a review of the Rights of Wetlands policy, legislation, governance, communication and management approaches context in each of the countries and publishing a review report, undertaking a questionnaire to assess the baseline understanding regarding Rights of Wetlands, holding stakeholder and community workshops and initiating the community consent process for further engagement during the project.

Output 2 has just been commenced by reviewing the training requirements of stakeholders and communities and beginning the development of training courses.

Output 4 has also been commenced by establishing project websites and producing communication materials such as presentations, briefing notes etc.

To following outputs and activities have been undertaken during this period:

Outputs

Output 1 - Robust Evidence Base of Rights of Wetlands in Five Countries

Output 2 – Increased Capacity for Rights of Wetlands Implementation

Output 4 - Up-scaling and Dissemination

Activities

1.1 Online start-up workshop

1.2 Rights of Wetlands Review

1.3 Stakeholder and community online and offline questionnaire

1.4 Stakeholder and community workshops

1.6 Country Rights of Wetlands Review Reports

1.7 Community Consent Process

1.10 Rights of Wetlands Usage Impact Review

2.1 Training Materials Production

4.1 Development of Dissemination and Communication Strategy

4.2 Establish and Update Project Website Pages

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

The following sections provide the submissions from project partners regarding activities undertaken during this period.

1.1 Online Start-up Workshop

Two online project start-up meetings were held to account for the different timezones of the project. The sessions provided project background, introduced project activities for the year 2023/2024, discussed potential stakeholder engagement and collaboration, and provided details on the Rights of Wetlands approach. The following gives details of participation for each country.

Bolivia

The session involved 14 participants from Bolivia, consisting of 4 women and 10 men representing various organisations including the Santa Rosa local government, the Ministry of Environment and Water (through the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth and the Vice Ministry of Environment), the Sustainable Tourism Board of the Region, the Faculty of Economic and Finance Sciences at Universidad Católica Boliviana, and the NGO Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

Discussions focused on community management and its integration with tourism. The local government expressed a strong interest in receiving support for the effective implementation of their protected area management plan. The National Government recommended alignment with national planning, but expressed concerns regarding the issue of rights, which they found restrictive and in need of clarification for better understanding.

Ecuador

Four participants attended the online workshop from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Environment and Water.

Guyana

11 key stakeholders were invited to the on-line start up workshop. Four (4) stakeholders confirmed attendance but only one (1) person logged onto the online workshop from the Ministry of Public Works. Active engagement, through other activities detailed below, following the start-up workshop were undertaken to improve engagement.

Kenya

Representatives from national government (National Environment Management Authority) county government of Tana River, civil society organisations and local communities attended the online workshop. The objectives of the start-up workshop were to introduce the project to the stakeholders and seek ownership and collaboration especially from the government at national and county level. Opportunities for collaboration were explored especially from ongoing interventions at county level such as that development of the Tana River County Climate Change Action Plan. The need to lobby for the adoption of the draft Environmental Management and Co-ordination (Wetlands, River Banks, Lake Shores and Sea Shore Management) Regulations, 2017 by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry was highlighted by NEMA as key in the realisation of the Rights to Wetlands in Kenya.

In May 2023, a subsequent scoping exercise was conducted to introduce the project, identify areas of improvement, and establish an implementation strategy in collaboration with key stakeholders. Among the stakeholders engaged in this exercise were the Tana Rivers County Government, Nature Kenya, and Kipini CFA. Through comprehensive discussions and interactions, the exercise identified gaps and aligned objectives with the inputs of these critical partners. The insights gathered from this exercise were integrated into the project plan, ensuring alignment with stakeholder priorities and enhancing the project's effectiveness and relevance.

Sri Lanka

The main targeted audience for the start-up online workshop included key state and non-state actors engaged in wetland management.

A subsequent in-person workshop was held on the 10th of Aug 2023 with 43 stakeholders, some of whom were engaged in the previous Darwin project (Increasing the resilience of biodiversity and livelihoods in Colombo's wetlands). An overview of the project was provided by the Ministry of Environment, an introduction to the ROW concept was provided by Cobra Collective and project objectives, activities by IWMI. This was followed by a discussion among stakeholders on the use of the concept in Sri Lanka.

In addition, the project implementing team conducted an informal meeting with environmental law experts on the 30th of June 2023 to understand their views on the applicability of rights of wetlands/rights of nature in Sri Lanka. The discussion was useful in understanding varying views and potential benefits and challenges of RoW/RoN in Sri Lanka. It was understood that the project provided the basis for assessing the feasibility of the concept in the country.

1.2 Rights of Wetlands Review

Each country conducted a comprehensive compilation of information regarding environmental and social laws and regulations. They also reviewed key documents related to decentralisation laws and sectoral policies related to wetlands and any laws, policies or guidance related to Rights of Nature or Rights of Wetlands. By analysing these crucial documents, they gained valuable insights into the legal and regulatory framework governing wetlands and nature in each country. Reports were compiled under Activity 1.6.

1.3 Stakeholder and Community Questionnaire

Bolivia

The questionnaire has been applied in 6 communities, youth association, cattle association, and national and local government in Bolivia.

In addition to the questionnaire, a wetland perception survey with 6 communities and the urban center of Santa Rosa municipality, 155 people in total, was conducted. This questionnaire inquires about: wetlands health, user knowledge, uses, threats, governance actors and future perspectives. The questionnaires help to better understand community perspectives about wetlands and helped identify training needs. This questionnaire has been developed and applied in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society, currently working on management proposals for wetlands in the region. This collaboration helps to expand our data

regarding wetland users in urban areas and the two other municipalities of Reyes and Exaltation.

Ecuador

The Sarayaku people, also known as the Midday People, identify themselves as the Original Kitchwa speaking people of Sarayaku. It's 1,500 inhabitants, are organised into seven communal centres: Kali Kali, Sarayakillu, Chuntayaku, Shiwakucha, Puma, Kushillu Urku and Mawka Llakta. located in the Bobonaza River basin. Their ancestral territory extends to approximately 135 thousand hectares rich in biodiversity: *Sacha* (forest), *Yaku* (rivers), waterfalls, black lagoons, *Allpa* (soil and subsoil) and *Wayra* (air). These sustain a huge number of ecosystems and species of flora and fauna, which are of the utmost importance for the livelihoods of families, who dedicate themselves primarily to hunting, fishing, managing *chakras* (agroforestry systems) and harvesting wild products. Livelihoods are supplemented by small programs and family initiatives focused on the production and sale of handicrafts, community tourism, poultry and fish farms as well as temporary employment in the nearest city, Puyo. Sarayaku's economy also benefits from programs and partnership with international non-governmental organizations. The territory is predominantly tropical Amazonian rainforest, and within its diverse landscape one can find hill forests, floodplains, riparian forests, wetlands, salt licks, *Mauritia* palm swamps.

The questionnaire was administered by local community researchers to a sample of 10 Sarayaku members living in 3 of the 7 communities, and also in Puyo. The sample was constituted by 8 men and two women between the ages of 26 and 59.

Discussion: Even though this survey was not administered to a sample representative of the people of Sarayaku, the survey suggests some key areas of strong concurrence regarding wetlands. Firstly, that wetlands are mostly immediately thought of as lakes, lagoons, rivers and streams. Secondly, that respondents value above all the social and environmental benefits of wetlands and see their importance for the provision of clean drinking water and food sources as well as the maintenance of the forest ecosystem. Thirdly, respondents are concerned with the fast deterioration of their wetlands and think urgent action is needed to protect them. Fourthly, respondents agree that wetland management should be conducted primarily by representative organizations based in the community. Fifthly, respondents are mostly concerned with the impact that mining, contamination, road building infrastructure and climate change can have on their wetlands. Sixthly, respondents also thought that wetlands need to be protected through effective management and monitoring following local guidelines. Finally, respondents stated that floods are the most extreme natural events they experience and report using wetland resources the most between August and October.

Guyana

The questionnaire was piloted during the stakeholder workshops with participants in Georgetown and at NRDDDB. The community researchers conducted surveys in 19 of the 20 NRDDDB communities. Approximately 200 persons were surveyed during these two events.

Participation - participants representing the Government were limited. In Georgetown participants mainly represented Civil Society Organisations and Non- Governmental Organisations. At the NRDDDB participants were from the communities.

Feelings - most participants attempted to define what a wetland was and not define the feelings the term evoked. However, for those who understood the question, terms like calm, connected or interconnected, strength, happiness, feeling good and bad came to mind.

Awareness on RoN and RoW - Georgetown stakeholders were minimally aware of RoN but had no real knowledge on the RoW. The community participants however, indicated they had knowledge of both concepts before the project given NRDDDB's long engagement in advocating for wetlands management in partnership with Conservation International Guyana and WWF Guyana.

Engagement - most participants were willing to continue engaging with the project.

Benefits of RoW approach - For Georgetown stakeholders it was the improved management that was priority while for the NRDDDB leadership it was the potential of developing legal tools

for the defense of the wetlands that ranked highly but most community members believed that all the highlighted benefits were important in sustainably managing their wetlands.

Challenges of RoW approach - while community members believe that the lack of funds to support long term implementation would be the major challenge, community leaders and Georgetown stakeholders saw Government resistance to legislative change being the main obstacle.

Actions for Operationalisation - most community members believe that all possible actions should be taken to ensure that the RoW approach is operationalised. Georgetown stakeholders placed emphasis on education and public awareness and working towards legal recognition.

Knowledge of legislation - Georgetown stakeholders had awareness of the environmental, human/social laws. For environmental laws they did not feel they were strong enough, were uncertain on their implementation and whether they would effectively protect citizens and the environment. They were less certain about the effectiveness of the human/social laws, their implementation and ability to protect citizens. From a community perspective, they are aware that these laws exist but they have limited knowledge on the content, their implementation and effectiveness.

Activities done in sustainable or wise use approach - for the Rupununi there were mentions of community tourism, fisheries and wildlife management, nature education through the wildlife clubs and community projects. Georgetown stakeholders highlighted the work being done with the mangrove forests along the coast in Region 1 - Barima - Waini and East Coast Demerara.

Information/Capacity building - most participants are willing to be engaged. Most would prefer face-to-face interactions with support using videos or other written materials. On-line modes of dissemination were the least desired means of interaction.

Training courses - community participants want to understand more about the Rights of Wetlands. They also want to see more capacity built with the integration of traditional knowledge into resource management, wetland ecology and resource management. For many fire management is also an area of great importance.

Sri Lanka

The questionnaire on ROW operationalisation for biodiversity and community resilience was finalised and translated to Sinhala and was coded in Kobo Toolbox for both online and offline data collection. Data collection is ongoing, where currently 124 responses have been received (26 responses from the project stakeholder network, 73 responses from Mulleriyawa community and 23 responses from Attidiya community). The mode of data collection varied from online circulation, school programs and community meetings.

The questionnaire has been shared online with around 70 government/NGO stakeholders, out of which about 26 have responded. Following the acquisition of approval from the zonal education office, an initial training on Kobo was also provided to 16 students (10 male, 6 female) Mulleriyawa and they have initiated the collection of community responses.

1.4 Stakeholder and Community Workshops

Bolivia

In the initial phase of our project, we focused on mapping key stakeholders and engaging with local communities through a series of workshops in the Santa Rosa municipality, visiting various villages such as San Bartolomé, Triunfo – Petas, Rosario, Aguayzal, Puerto Tucumán, and Villa Fátima. Through these interactions, we assessed demographics, economic activities, and perceptions of wetlands. It became evident that these communities rely heavily on wetlands for their livelihoods, engaging in activities like tourism, livestock rearing, fishing, and agriculture. Moreover, they expressed a clear understanding of the importance of wetland conservation, recognizing their role as vital water sources essential for sustaining their economic activities in the long term. Our engagement also extended to technicians and park rangers at the Pampas del Yacuma Municipal Protected Area (MPA), who highlighted the need for ongoing wetland monitoring and emphasised the potential synergy between tourism and

wetland conservation efforts. Furthermore, there was a notable eagerness among these stakeholders to receive support for the effective implementation of their protected area management plan.

In parallel, discussions with the Vice Ministry of Environment, Wildlife Conservation Society team and the Destination Sustainable Tourism Council underscored the critical importance of empowering local communities with knowledge about Convention on Wetlands' sites and wetland conservation. They emphasised the lack of reference models for managing these sites in the country and highlighted the need for delineating these areas to support the development of effective management strategies. From a tourism perspective, these wetlands are significant attractions for the destination, further emphasising the intricate connection between conservation, management, and tourism in ensuring the sustainable development of these vital ecosystems.

Overall, our initial engagements have revealed the interconnectedness between local livelihoods, conservation efforts, and tourism development, underscoring the importance of holistic approaches in preserving these invaluable natural resources.

Ecuador

A series of workshops have been undertaken with community groups to discuss Rights of Wetlands and meetings held with government agencies.

Guyana

Workshops conducted in Georgetown and the Rupununi region gathered stakeholders together to assess their understanding of wetland rights, evaluate community activities against these principles, and identify information needs. Key activities aligned with wetland rights included protected areas management, environmental education, and research, while threats included infrastructure development, pollution, and unsustainable resource use.

Strengths of wetland conservation efforts included existing legislation and political will, while weaknesses included inadequate enforcement and limited capacity. Opportunities included potential for employment, growing awareness, and international support, while threats included climate change impacts and unsustainable practices.

Feedback from stakeholders highlighted the need for improved legislation, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, as well as addressing challenges such as climate change and weak policy enforcement. Building partnerships and advocating for wetland rights will be crucial for the success of the project and the conservation of wetlands in Guyana.

Kenya

In collaboration with Nature Kenya, Wetlands International Kenya initiated the processes of developing a water protocol for Tana River. After engaging in a consultative stakeholder meeting in March 2024, we have taken significant strides by developing two detailed position papers tailored to outline the unique water management needs of both Lamu and Tana River County. This collaborative effort marks a crucial step towards sustainable water resource management in these regions, fostering environmental conservation and community well-being.

Sri Lanka

Two wetland communities, one from Mulleriyawa-Kotikawatte and the other from Attidiya, have been selected. Introductory meetings have been conducted on the 19th of January 2024 for both communities; For Mulleriyawa a meeting was also held on the 30th of November 2023 and based on their suggestions, an awareness and training program on ROW and conducting surveys for the school in Mulleriyawa was initiated.

1.6 Country Rights of Wetlands Review Reports

All country reviews were combined into the Rights of Wetlands Review along with a review of Rights of Wetlands and Rights of Nature completed by international partner organisations. The review is attached to this report.

1.7 Community Consent Process

Bolivia

The project consent form template was adapted and translated into Spanish and applied with authorities from 6 communities and representatives of the main local stakeholders. Additionally, a meeting with authorities from the local government of Santa Rosa was held to obtain their approval for the initiation of community consent process in the communities.

Ecuador

Community researchers have adapted the consent form and used to engage all participants of the project.

Guyana

From October 2023 to March 2024 the two community researchers conducted community meetings and carried out the questionnaire with the 20 Villages of the NRDDB. 19 of the 20 communities signed the consent forms for participation. NRDDB hope to address any concerns the remaining village may have about participation at the next board meeting and perhaps do a follow up visit for a public meeting with the community. As part of the meetings the communities discussed the main issues of concern in their communities which included items under environmental degradation, cultural preservation, livelihood and employment, community health and well-being, land rights and governance, social issues, education and awareness, resource management, infrastructure and access, and community engagement and participation.

Kenya

We have completed the consent and data collection phase from various community groups, including Beach Management Units (BMUs), Community Forest Associations (CFAs), and Water Resource User Associations (WRUAs). Currently, we are actively engaged in analysing the gathered data. This emphasis on community participation underscores our commitment to inclusive decision-making and ensures that the resulting protocol truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the local stakeholders

Sri Lanka

Community consent forms have been developed and community members, especially from the Mulleriyawa-Kotikawatte community, have signed the consent forms. This process will be conducted for the Attidiya community members as project engagement progresses.

1.10 Rights of Wetlands Usage Impact Review

The usage impact review has been included within the Rights of Wetlands review completed under activity 1.6.

2.1 Training Materials Production

A review, undertaken with stakeholders, of training required in each country has been completed. Topics have been identified in addition to those identified with stakeholders during the development of the project proposal.

Training topics

- Community environmental management – including core concepts, participatory techniques for engagement communities, digital skills, environmental monitoring approaches, community monitoring, community wetland management and integrating community monitoring and management into frameworks of policy and management.

- Traditional knowledge – including what it is and its importance, relevant international conventions, what does good practice look like, challenges, and legal instruments and frameworks.
- Social and environmental rights
- Rights of Nature and Rights of Wetlands
- Planning and wetlands
- Natural ecosystem dynamics of wetlands
- Mangrove wetland management
- Climate change and impacts on wetlands
- Restoration of the wetland ecosystems
- Need-based Nature Based Solutions towards addressing societal challenges and supporting human well-being

The community environmental management, traditional knowledge and mangrove wetland management training courses have been produced. On 16 April 2024, specific training on mangrove and catchment restoration for Kipini CFA in Tana Delta was completed. This informed the establishment of mangrove restoration pilots by the CFA.

Training of all project partner staff was undertaken in February 2024 on Rights of Nature and Rights of Wetlands.

4.1 Development of Dissemination and Communication Strategy

Presentations, project briefs and flyers have been developed for use by all partners.

In Bolivia information has been posted on the following pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/iisecucb/posts/pfbid02wKc1otEav3ybWkda4NJBmjbjSCgADn1QL25YcMnZdmaBmK8SWPvLx3Pc6HcRkmBjl>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/zkdnMswEUsD48Jau/?mibextid=xfxF2i>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/LMw2w8fgHvxzsfUJ/?mibextid=xfxF2i>

In Guyana Radio Paiwomac is being used to communicate information about the project to mobile communities. They are also developing monthly newsletters that will try to address some of the topics of interest identified during the surveys.

4.2 Establish and Update Project Website Pages

Project website information is included on:

<https://cobracollective.org/portfolio/rights-of-wetlands-operationalisation-for-biodiversity-and-community-resilience/>

www.rightsofwetlands.org

4.6 Development of Policy Briefings

Policy briefings on Rights of Wetlands are in development for each country.

In Kenya a policy brief on 'Mangroves Values, Threats and Opportunities: Need to implement the National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan' has been already developed. It highlights the challenges facing the mangrove conservation in Kenya as identified in the National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan including development challenges.

Wetlands International Kenya have also developed a Kenya Case Study on National Law and Policy to Achieve Global Mangrove Goals. The Case Study illustrates how Kenya has included wetlands in the ongoing process of revising its NBSAPs and they are currently developing a policy brief on the role of communities in mangrove governance in Kenya that will provide recommendations for policy makers.

In Sri Lanka, IWMI, CELDF and Cobra Collective are supporting the Ministry of Environment in developing the National Policy on Living Entities, which recognises the need and significance of

granting legal rights to natural habitats within the country (recognised as 'Living Entities'). The second draft of the policy has been developed and includes explicit reference and is currently under review by national stakeholders.

The project commitments have also been included as an action under the UN Water Agenda and was chosen to be discussed at a recent symposium on the UN Water Action Agenda organised by IHE Delft in the Netherlands.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1 - Robust Evidence Base of Rights of Wetlands in Five Countries

Good progress has been made developing a robust evidence base for Rights of Wetlands. The Rights of Wetlands Review provides an important evidence base for the context within the five project countries. This is a living document that will be updated as the project progresses.

Community and stakeholder questionnaires have provided information on the relationship people have with wetlands and their views of Rights of Nature and Rights of Wetlands. More detailed engagement in Year 2 will build on this evidence.

Output 2 - Increased Capacity for Rights of Wetlands Implementation

Training courses are currently being developed and will be delivered in each country Year 2 of the project.

Output 4 – Up-scaling and Dissemination

Initial dissemination of awareness materials about the project, specifically about Rights of Wetlands, have been developed and used to engage stakeholders. More dissemination activities will be ongoing throughout the project.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

We have achieved significant success in securing community and local stakeholder engagement with the project in all five countries. Through proactive efforts, we have identified and obtained local consent from communities, in each wetland area, to actively participate in our project initiatives. As part of our initial questionnaire surveys, we have developed a comprehensive baseline to assess the perceptions regarding wetlands and Rights of Wetlands. This collaborative approach lays a solid foundation for our project's implementation and underscores our commitment to inclusive and participatory community involvement in wetland conservation efforts.

Stakeholder and community engagement has led to increased awareness on the subject of Rights of Wetlands and Rights of Nature, and this can be viewed as an opportunity to shift away from anthropocentric views to considering humans as part of nature. In Sri Lanka, for example, national government, Ministry of Environment's support towards the development of a policy on living entities indicates interest towards operationalising Rights of Nature.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

The project partnership has been regularly monitoring the risks and assumptions related to delivery of the project outcome and outputs.

During Year 1 issues in Bolivia and Kenya were reported to impact project activities but no other problems were reported in the three remaining countries.

Bolivia

The following risks were identified during project activities:

1. Given the recent occurrence of forest fires in the Santa Rosa municipality last semester, local government prioritized fire control efforts, leading to a temporary suspension of our

coordination activities. This implies that the community and local stakeholders may have diverted their attention and resources away from our project objectives during this period.

2. Bolivia is currently experiencing a severe drought stage, impacting the flow and volume of rivers and lagoons within the intervention area. It is assumed that this drought situation is causing concerns about the sustainability of vital economic activities such as tourism and agriculture. Additionally, the reduced water levels and drought conditions are likely posing potential threats to the health and integrity of the wetlands in the region. This assumption underscores the importance of addressing water scarcity and drought resilience measures in our project planning and interventions.

3. On other hand, after fires, heavy rains made it difficult to visit two communities slowing down the process of community consent and baseline questionnaire.

4. Given the strong support received from the local government at all levels, including the mayor, it is assumed that local politics pose a low risk factor to the project. However, recent developments indicate a potential shift in this assumption. The mayor's recent confrontation with a legal requirement raises concerns about the continuity of their support and may introduce delays in project processes.

To mitigate these risks the following measures have been put in place:

- Delivery of additional engagement activities to ensure good communication with communities.
- Ongoing and regular engagement with local government to ensure project activities are not impacted.
- Maintenance of strong partnerships with local CSOs and community representatives.

Kenya

Security concerns in the community areas hampered initial engagement activities.

To mitigate this risk the following measures have been put in place:

- Some workshops and training have taken place outside of high risk areas.
- Engagement with and identification of community representatives to share and disseminate project information to their local communities via social media platforms.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction

Although the project is still within its first year, we feel that enhanced recognition and strengthened policy environment for facilitating protection of biodiversity has occurred in all countries. This has been particularly demonstrated through the National Policy on Living Entities developed in Sri Lanka through support of the project.

Increased awareness of Rights of Wetlands, especially among youth, can lead to positive attitude and behavioural changes that improve the relationship between humans-wetlands. When nature is treated with kindness and respect, it results in healthier habitats that can provide a number of ecosystem services that support livelihoods and ensure social well-being. Awareness raising among stakeholders and communities is helping to create a behavioural change but this will be monitored in more detail in Year 2 and Year 3.

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

The Convention on Wetlands Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) has been made aware of the project and its activities as have the National Focal Points in each country. The project has also supported the work of the STRP in developing guidance for how wetlands can be included within NBSAPs to fulfil the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets. Within this guidance there is specific mention of Rights of Wetlands. Country partners, in many countries, are supporting the development of NBSAPs and ensuring wetlands are prominent in them.

The project team has held meetings with government agencies in Ecuador and Sri Lanka about developing a draft resolution on Rights of Wetlands to be considered at the Convention on Wetlands’ COP15 in Zimbabwe 2025 where we will also hold a side event to discuss the promote outputs.

In Ecuador we held in-person meetings with staff of the Directorate of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition of Ecuador to engage the ministry regarding the possibility of Ecuador being a leading proponent of the draft resolution. However, the Director of International Cooperation for the Ministry of the Environment, Water and Ecological transition subsequently sent an email affirming their support for the proposal but stating that Ecuador lacked the human resources to lead the proposal.

We are still working with the government of Sri Lanka and we hope if they are willing to lead the draft proposal then Ecuador will be willing to also support the proposal.

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

Human health, well-being and livelihoods, particularly for wetland dependent communities, are inextricably linked to the health and well-being of wetland ecosystems and their biodiversity. The project considers the multiple dimensions of poverty reduction within a Rights of Wetlands approach by ensuring that healthy wetland ecosystems provide sustainable benefits through comprehensive ecosystem service delivery. This needs to be realised in an equitable way to all members of human and nature communities. The relationship between the Rights of Nature and poverty reduction will be investigated and considered further throughout the project.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ .	50%
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women ² .	50%

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn’t quite meeting the requirements of a ‘sensitive’ approach	
Sensitive	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	
Empowering	The project has all the characteristics of a ‘sensitive’ approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	X
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an ‘empowering’ approach whilst also addressing	

¹ A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

² Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

	unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	
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Our community and stakeholder engagement activities are at initial phases but all engagement and capacity building activities are undertaken using a range of participatory techniques that build on the fundamental core concepts of the project and the project partnership in terms of equity and inclusion. These techniques ensure that all voices are heard and engaged throughout the project and all project partner staff have or will be trained in these techniques. The use of participatory video is a way to ensure that women and marginalised groups are empowered to share their experiences and issues in a non-confrontational and inclusive manner. The project will be undertaking participatory video in a more of comprehensive way in Year 2 to build on the initial engagement activities.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Wetlands International Kenya and Cobra Collective monitor indicators across the whole project and individual in-country partners monitor their own activities.

Project progress against the Outputs and Activities is reviewed every two months and all partners report on the progress. At the annual project stakeholder meeting, which is to be held in April/May, it will be reviewed whether the Outputs and Activities are actually contributing to the project Outcome.

During this reporting period the following indicators are being used:

1. Community management approaches and worldviews review for each country
2. Legislation and policy review for each country
3. Governance and communication frameworks review for each country

These 15 reviews have been combined into the Rights of Wetlands Review which is attached to this report.

The online questionnaire results are partially complete from the partners but the analysis has to be fully completed before the final report is published.

8. Lessons learnt

The engagement of stakeholders and communities has worked well in all five countries. Initial poor attendance at the start-up workshop, particularly from some government agencies, has led to a series of one-to-one meetings to help identify the key people to engage with throughout the remainder of the project. Following these meetings attendance at workshops has improved.

The implementation of the Rights of Wetlands questionnaire proved challenging in the local context in some countries, as the length of the survey and wording of the questions were somewhat difficult for all local community members to understand. To counter this, interviewers had to explain the questions in more detail but this may have led to guesswork/error in some responses. When analysing the data these issues will be considered. Experiences during the questionnaire and at initial meetings has also led to improvements in the project communication products as it was recognised that some concepts, that the project is based on, are hard to communicate to some stakeholders and community members. An attempt has been made to make sure that the language is more accessible and visual communication tools used to aid understanding. These products will be continually modified and improved during the project to ensure that understanding is available to all.

Communication to all project partners, stakeholders and communities has been difficult in some cases due to the remote nature of some communities. This is particularly the case in Ecuador. Establishing contacts in the nearest town of Puyo to the Sarayaku has improved communication and bi-weekly check-ins are improving updates regarding the project progress.

Political representatives have already changed in several countries since the project was initiated in June 2023. The project strategy is to maintain regular contact to ensure that if people change position we are introduced to the next person in the role as soon as possible to introduce the project and the activities we are undertaking.

9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

We received the following feedback from the initial proposal for funding and have responded below.

- how do the chosen countries vary in the degree to which stakeholders accept a 'rights of wetlands' approach?
 - The countries were chosen for their range of contexts and acceptance of Rights of Nature. Ecuador and Bolivia have mention of it within their constitution and legislation respectively whilst the other three countries do not. Guyana was also chosen because it is not signatory of the Convention on Wetlands so has relatively limited protections for wetlands. The idea was to see whether Rights of Wetlands would be acceptable or not in all contexts. This question was fully investigated as part of the extensive review that was undertaken as part of Output 1 of the project.
- the 'rights of wetland' approach does not include any recognition of the 'rights to wetlands' concept;
 - That is the case. The 'rights to wetlands' concept is a human related construct whilst 'rights of wetlands' is a ecocentric concept where humans are one of many different species communities.
- clarify what is meant by "... a beneficial human activity ...". It is presumed this means activities which are not only beneficial to humans in the context of poverty reduction, but also beneficial to wetlands, though it is not clear what kinds of activities these might be;
 - In this context it means beneficial to humans but relates to activities that whilst benefitting humans, such as fishing, would not have a significant detrimental impact on the entire wetland ecosystem such as overfishing.
- there are no SMART Outcome-level indicators around biodiversity and livelihoods. Indicator 1.4 (output) comes closest, but is not a direct measurement;
 - We felt that, within the timeframe of the project, that having direct measures of biodiversity and livelihoods was inappropriate because the project is trying to engender behavioural change which is likely to provide longer-term biodiversity and livelihood benefits beyond the lifetime of the project.
- you refer, in the cover letter, to a survey before and after 'of community, CSO and government stakeholders, and will assess wetland biodiversity, wetland health, poverty and livelihood status', but this does not seem to appear in the activities nor is it clear how surveys of these actors can tell us directly about biodiversity;
 - It is included in activity 1.3 to assess the overall status of the five wetland sites we are working in.
- the risk management often confuses the description of the risk with the mitigation action. In addition, consider the risk that key stakeholders do not accept that wetlands have rights;
 - We have now included this risk within the risk register.
- consider whether working in fewer countries, and doing more work on indicators, would provide better evidence for the approach;
 - We believe the different contexts in the five countries will allow the project to have wider impact and legacy because the lessons learnt from the project will be applicable in a greater range of countries following the project
- please ensure engagement with the relevant Bolivian Governmental Agencies to gain buy-in;
 - We have managed to engage with Bolivian Government Agencies in the initial workshops and stakeholder meetings.
- please engage with the FCDO Post in Sri Lanka to monitor and review the fragile economic, social and political context in-country.

- We have a very good relationship with the FCDO Post in Sri Lanka and have regular contact. Embassy contacts attended our in-country workshops and provide regular guidance.

10. Risk Management

The following risk register was developed for the project proposal. In the last 12 months we have specifically mentioned fires and security issues to the risk register under 'In-country civil unrest, natural disasters or emergence of disruptive Covid-19 variants'.

Risk Description	Impact	Probability ³	Gross Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Fiduciary (financial): funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated).					
Partners have excellent fiduciary track records over decades. However, organisations reliant on project funding may experience short-term cash flow challenges, and there is a risk that project funding is directed towards the support of core costs. Project equipment and resources (e.g. transportation budget) may also be used on non-project activities.	Moderate	Unlikely	Moderate	Ongoing disbursement of funding reliant on partners meeting activity and project delivery as monitored informally in weekly meetings and formally in monthly reports supplemented with evidence. If challenges emerge, project funding and responsibilities reallocated to other partners or new partners.	Minor
Safeguarding: 'doing harm' incl. sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, staff safety and welfare, or unintended harm.					
Partners are already implementing safeguarding best-practice. However, we always need to prepare for rogue individuals that may break codes of practice.	Moderate	Unlikely	Moderate	In addition to partner safeguarding policies and practices, the project will implement its own protocol explicitly highlighting safeguarding within internal and external activities, e.g. community FPIC process will discuss safeguarding and will have safeguarding as a key component of the FPIC form.	Minor
Delivery Chain: the overall risk associated with your delivery model.					
Operational capacity of in-country partner staff and support infrastructure (internet connectivity, communications network) is variable.	Moderate	Possible	Major	Delivery Chain Risk Mapping will implement monitoring processes and implement capacity building support. Contingencies will be established in order to manage infrastructural challenges.	Moderate
In-country civil unrest, natural disasters or emergence of disruptive Covid-19 variants.					

³ Likelihood: Almost certain (>80%), Likely (>50%<80%), Possible (>20%<50%), Unlikely (>5%<20%), Rare (<5%)

The socio-economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have resulted in an increase in poverty, inequalities and rising costs of living. This may trigger civil unrest within project countries. Security issues may also be a problem due to local tension between ethnic and community groups. Project countries are also vulnerable to extreme weather events (e.g. flooding, fires).	Major	Likely	Severe	Partners have institutional memory of adversity (e.g. extreme 2005 Colombo floods, ongoing Covid pandemic), developing effective mechanisms to mitigate and adapt to disruption. This includes ability to work flexibly in different locations at short notice, to manage activities remotely through communication tools, and to pivot resources to other tasks/partners/countries.	Moderate
Attacks and pressure on in-country 'rights of wetlands' implementors					
Project partners and communities may be subject to attacks and pressure from parties intent on destroying wetlands for economic gain.	Major	Unlikely	Major	Partners are highly experienced in strategies for environmental protection, establishing an appropriate balance between delivering effective change while minimising risks to staff and participants.	Moderate
Escalating project costs					
Runaway inflation and mitigation strategies for challenges result in project budget not able to cover all envisaged activities	Moderate	Possible	Major	Project budget already has contingencies built into it forecasting moderate cost escalations. Some project costs could be reduced e.g. reducing number of individuals undertaking international travel, which would allow redistribution of budgets while minimising impact on project deliverables.	Minor
Stakeholders and communities do not recognise that a wetland has rights					
Stakeholders and communities may be fundamentally opposed to nature having rights	Moderate	Possible	Major	Project activities and the communication strategy are designed to raise awareness and provide stakeholders and communities with information to gain a wider understanding of the issues and concepts behind Rights of Wetlands and why a transformational and behavioural shift is needed	Minor

10. Sustainability and legacy

We have only completed the first year of the project but awareness regarding the project and Rights of Wetlands has increased at a national level in the five countries and across the communities we have engaged with at the five wetland locations. We are working to embed Rights of Wetlands within policy in the five countries and have made significant progress particularly in Sri Lanka and Kenya where policies being developed already explicitly mention Rights of Wetlands. Our project activities will continue to raise the profile of Rights of Wetlands and the project in international forums with initial success within the Convention on Wetlands and the UN Water Agenda already achieved. Building on this initial success, in Year 2 and 3, we are confident that the project will have a legacy beyond the completion of the project.

11. Darwin Initiative identity

We have included the Darwin logo and recognised the funding from the UK government within every workshop and meeting that has been held.

The Darwin logo is included on all project presentations, publications and publicity material.

We record mention of UK government funding on social media posts and other forms of communication.

12. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	No
Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	No but we have clear guidance to contact the project lead if there is a concern.
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 30% [9 people] Planned: 10% [3 people]
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.	
There are no lessons learnt or challenges currently.	
Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify.	
No	
Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants.	
We have carried out a free, prior and informed consent process with all communities that have been engaged on the project which includes explicit mention of safeguarding.	
Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved.	
Not applicable	

Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				Travel delayed until Year 2 due to security concerns and climate impacts in project areas (agreed under a Contract Change request)
Operating Costs				Some workshops and activities were delayed and moved to Year 2 due to security concerns and climate impacts in project areas (agreed under a Contract Change request)
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				Costs rose due to exchange rate variance
TOTAL	£211,272.0	£183,253.14		

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			Partners own funding
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			

11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Not applicable as all progress reported in other sections.

12. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

The project is still within Year 1 and has not had any outstanding achievements or significant progress to date as we are still within the initial activities. The key progress is developing a robust baseline of information regarding environmental and social practice, with respect to wetlands, in terms of community practice, legislation and policy, and governance frameworks. This information, for the five project countries, along with a review of Rights of Nature and Rights of Wetlands globally is contained within the Rights of Wetlands Review document.

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption including description, country and credit	Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</p> <p>Wetland loss and degradation addressed using a Rights of Wetlands approach delivering improved community wetland management, legal protection and more effective governance frameworks resulting in biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation</p>		
<p>Outcome Demonstrate how the Rights of Wetlands approach can be transformed from concept into a sustainable practice in five countries using participatory, legal and advocacy processes</p>		
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1- Declaration to uphold the Rights of Wetlands by stakeholders in respect to their wetland landscape [target: 1 x Declaration in each of the 5 countries] (yr 3)</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 3</p>	<p>N/A in Year 2</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2 - Use of Rights of Wetlands principles and practical approaches in community and government policies and activities [target: increased usage in all 5 countries above baseline] (yr 1,2 & 3)</p>	<p>Rights of Wetlands has been included in the development of policies in Sri Lanka and Kenya.</p>	<p>Activity 4.5 Development of policy briefings.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3 - Establishment of formal communication exchange network among community, CSOs and government agencies in relation to Rights of Wetlands [target: 1 communication network per country] (yr 3).</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 3</p>	<p>N/A in Year 2</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.4 - Best practice principles and toolkits for Rights of Wetlands included within the policy arena of other countries [target: at least 1 additional country adopts Rights of Wetlands approach] (yr 3).</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 3</p>	<p>N/A in Year 2</p>
<p>Output 1 Robust Evidence Base of Rights of Wetlands in Five Countries</p>		
<p>Output indicator 1.1 – Community management approaches and worldviews review – Production of country specific review of current community management, traditional knowledge and worldviews [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p>	<p>5 country reviews have been completed and published in the Rights of Wetlands Review (attached to this document).</p>	

<p>Output indicator 1.2 - Legislation and policy review – Production of country specific review of current social and environmental legislation and policy [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p>	<p>5 country reviews have been completed and published in the Rights of Wetlands Review (attached to this document).</p>	
<p>Output indicator 1.3 - Governance and communication frameworks review – Production of country specific community and national governance and communication frameworks review assessed against Rights of Wetlands Governance Principles [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p>	<p>5 country reviews have been completed and published in the Rights of Wetlands Review (attached to this document).</p>	
<p>Output indicator 1.4 – Number of Rights of Wetlands best practice examples that support wetland health, biodiversity, sustainable livelihoods etc. for wetland community management and legal implementation [target: at least 3 from 5 countries (15 total) examples, with significant representation of women’s role in management] (yr 2 & 3).</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 2 and 3.</p>	<p>Activity 1.8 Regional workshops with community groups to introduce Rights of Wetlands, community wetland management approach concepts, techniques and how to identify best practice that maximises biodiversity, increases household livelihoods and resilience, increases access to direct and indirect benefits, whilst maintaining and restoring wetland area and health. Within the workshops best practices for wetland management will be identified and visioning of future wetland/human relations will be recorded using participatory video and photography. (3 workshops x 5 countries (Pampas del Yacuma, Bolivia, Bobonaza River, Ecuador, North Rupununi Wetlands, Guyana, Tana River Basin, Kenya, Colombo Wetlands, Sri Lanka)). Best practices will also be documented with groups in the field following the workshops particularly to identify any seasonal differences in management approaches.</p> <p>Activity 1.9 Key stakeholder workshops to identify best practice in legislation and policy, and governance and communication frameworks regarding Rights of Wetlands (2 workshops x 5 countries (10 total)). Participatory videos will be used to record these examples to share with other project partners and wider.</p>
<p>Output 2. Increased Capacity for Rights of Wetlands Implementation</p>		

<p>Output indicator 2.1 - Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in community engagement and community wetland management including gender-inclusive methods [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 1 & 2).</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 2.</p>	<p>Activity 2.1 Produce training materials – CC has developed a comprehensive set of training materials for community engagement and community wetland management through participatory methods. These will be made bespoke for each country context and translated where required. Additional social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands training materials will also be developed.</p> <p>Activity 2.2 Training in community engagement through participatory methods, including gender-inclusive methods (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.</p> <p>Activity 2.3 Training workshops in social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.2 - Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 1 & 2).</p>	<p>To be completed in Year 2.</p>	<p>Activity 2.1 Produce training materials – CC has developed a comprehensive set of training materials for community engagement and community wetland management through participatory methods. These will be made bespoke for each country context and translated where required. Additional social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands training materials will also be developed.</p> <p>Activity 2.2 Training in community engagement through participatory methods, including gender-inclusive methods (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.</p>

		Activity 2.3 Training workshops in social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.
Output 3. Rights of Wetlands Knowledge Exchange and Advocacy		
Output indicator 3.1 - Number of community peer-to-peer knowledge exchange processes implemented between communities and community groups involved in wetland management [target: within timeframe of project at least 2 communities in each of the 5 countries and all results shared with all countries] (yr 2 & 3).	To be completed in Year 2 and 3.	Activity 3.1 Sharing of community wetland best practices, recorded in Activity 1.8, with other community groups through workshops in 5 countries (2 workshops x 5 countries – 2 days each).
Output indicator 3.2 - Number of video-mediated dialogues between local communities and relevant decision makers. [target: 1 per country. Total 5] (yr 3).	To be completed in Year 3.	
Output 4. Up-scaling and Dissemination		
Output indicator 4.1 – Best practice Rights of Wetlands Legal, Policy, Governance and Communication (RoWLPGC) principles and toolkit developed from evidence from 5 countries [target: 1 x principles and toolkit with country examples] (yr 1 & 2).	To be completed in Year 2.	Activity 4.5 Development of policy briefings. Activity 4.6 Production of RoWLPGC principles and toolkits (Principles and toolkits will be drafted based on the project data, videos recorded and the workshops then used for consultation before being finalised and published on project websites).
Output indicator 4.2 – Rights of Wetlands Wetland Management and Community Advocacy (RoWWMCA) principles and toolkit [target: 1 x principles and toolkit with country examples] (yr1, 2 & 3).	To be completed in Year 2 & 3.	Activity 4.7 Production of RoWWMCA principles and toolkits including best practice management approaches (Principles and toolkits will be drafted based on the project data and videos and the workshops then used for consultation before being finalised and published on project websites).

Output indicator 4.3 – Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in Rights of Wetlands principles and toolkits [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 3).	To be completed in Year 3.	N/A in Year 2
Output indicator 4.4 – Side events at Ramsar and CBD CoPs promoting Rights of Wetlands. Toolkits, policy briefings, training materials and reports shared at national and international platforms and events and distributed to National Focal Points [target: at least 3 events] (yr 3 and beyond).	To be completed in Year 3.	N/A in Year 2
Output indicator 4.5 – Online International Rights of Wetlands Event to promote project outputs [target: 1 event] (yr 3).	To be completed in Year 3.	N/A in Year 2
Output indicator 4.6 – Website pages, with regular posting of content [target: 2 types of content posted per month] (yr 1, 2 and 3).	Website pages have been established and will be updated in Year 2 and 3.	Activity 4.2 Establishment of project website pages.

Annex 2: Project’s full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project Summary	SMART Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Impact: Wetland loss and degradation addressed using a Rights of Wetlands approach delivering improved community wetland management, legal protection and more effective governance frameworks resulting in biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation (Max 30 words)</p>			
<p>Outcome: Demonstrate how the Rights of Wetlands approach can be transformed from concept into a sustainable practice in five countries using participatory, legal and advocacy processes (Max 30 words)</p>	<p>0.1 Declaration to uphold the Rights of Wetlands by stakeholders in respect to their wetland landscape [target: 1 x Declaration in each of the 5 countries] (yr 3).</p> <p>0.2 Use of Rights of Wetlands principles and practical approaches in community and government policies and activities [target: increased usage in all 5 countries above baseline] (yr 1,2 & 3).</p> <p>0.3 Establishment of formal communication exchange network among community, CSOs and government agencies in relation to Rights of Wetlands [target: 1 communication network per country] (yr 3).</p> <p>0.4 Best practice principles and toolkits for Rights of Wetlands included within the policy arena of other countries [target: at least 1 additional country adopts Rights of Wetlands approach] (yr 3).</p>	<p>0.1 Stakeholder wetland declarations published on partner websites and within media (yr 3).</p> <p>0.2 A report on the content analysis of national, CSO and local policy/documents to see usage of key project approaches (yrs 1 and 3).</p> <p>0.3 Number of organisations joining and attending network meetings (Pre- and post- meeting questionnaires and evidence to assess improved communication and impact of Rights of Wetlands (yr 1, 2 & 3).</p> <p>0.4 Web analytics data on the use and take up of the dedicated resources such as best practice toolkits and published policies, legislation and guidance from identified countries. Responses of CBD and Ramsar National Focal Points (yr 3).</p>	<p>Political and economic stability in all five countries enables the project to be completed [although there has been some political disruption in some of the project countries, project partners are confident that day to day activities and project activities would not be disrupted].</p> <p>COVID-19 travel and engagement restrictions [the project has been designed so that many activities including workshops and training can be undertaken online or as downloadable offline digital content, so accessible even for remote communities. This overcomes travel restrictions and reduces the overall carbon impact and cost of the project. Some face-to-face meetings are needed, particularly with communities, but in-country partners and their staff are in a position to undertake the activities].</p> <p>In-country institutions, especially government agencies, remain committed to community-led wetland management, biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation, respect for human rights and sustainable development, and are willing to implement Rights of Wetlands approaches to achieve these goals [project was conceived with in-country partners and through discussion with government agencies who have a vested interest as they are obligated to deliver biodiversity</p>

			conservation and sustainable development goals and the project has been designed to target their priorities.].
<p>Outputs:</p> <p>1. Robust Evidence Base of Rights of Wetlands in Five Countries</p>	<p>1.1 Community management approaches and worldviews review – Production of country specific review of current community management, traditional knowledge and worldviews [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p> <p>1.2 Legislation and policy review – Production of country specific review of current social and environmental legislation and policy [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p> <p>1.3 Governance and communication frameworks review – Production of country specific community and national governance and communication frameworks review assessed against Rights of Wetlands Governance Principles [target: 1 report per country (5 total)] (yr 1).</p> <p>1.4 Number of Rights of Wetlands best practice examples that support wetland health, biodiversity, sustainable livelihoods etc. for wetland community management and legal implementation [target: at least 3 from 5 countries (15 total) examples, with significant representation of women’s role in management] (yr 2 & 3).</p>	<p>1.1 Online questionnaire results that report on wetland health, sustainable livelihoods, legal and management approaches including number of respondents and stakeholder and gender-disaggregated attendance records for community workshops in each country (x 5). Reports from workshops. Pre- and post-workshop interviews with men and women/participatory monitoring and evaluation (yr 1).</p> <p>1.2 & 1.3 Translated community management approaches and worldviews review, legislation and policy review and governance and communication frameworks review reports for each country published on project and partner websites (15 reports) (yr 1).</p> <p>1.4 Participatory videos available online on project website (yr 2 & 3).</p>	<p>Appropriate government, non-governmental staff and male and female community leaders are available to participate in stakeholder workshops and have access to online questionnaire, to be able contribute to the contextualisation assessment and retain their roles during the course of the project [Project partners have long-term collaboration with relevant agencies/organisations within each country, as well as experience of working with communities and organising events/workshops and arranging digital access in their respective countries].</p>
<p>2. Increased Capacity for Rights of Wetlands Implementation</p>	<p>2.1 Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in community engagement and</p>	<p>2.1 Training materials, presentations and reports from workshops. Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires to evaluate understanding and impact of community engagement</p>	<p>Appropriate government and non-governmental stakeholder staff and, local and Indigenous leaders are available to participate in online and in-person capacity building activities and</p>

	<p>community wetland management including gender-inclusive methods [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 1 & 2).</p> <p>2.2 Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 1 & 2).</p>	<p>and community wetland management (yr 1 & 2).</p> <p>2.2 Training materials, presentations and reports from workshops. Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires to evaluate understanding and impact of social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands (yr 1 & 2).</p>	<p>retain their roles during the course of the project [Project partners have long-term collaboration with relevant agencies/organisations within each country, as well as experience of working with communities and organising training programmes and arranging digital access in their respective countries].</p> <p>Workshop participants are willing to provide feedback on the impact of the training post-workshops and online courses [regular contact with participants will be undertaken post workshops and after online questionnaires to ensure continuity and engagement].</p>
<p>3. Rights of Wetlands Knowledge Exchange and Advocacy</p>	<p>3.1 Number of community peer-to-peer knowledge exchange processes implemented between communities and community groups involved in wetland management [target: within timeframe of project at least 2 communities in each of the 5 countries and all results shared with all countries] (yr 2 & 3).</p> <p>3.2 Number of video-mediated dialogues between local communities and relevant decision makers. [target: 1 per country. Total 5] (yr 3).</p>	<p>3.1 Stakeholder and community workshop gender-disaggregated attendance records. Reports from workshops. Pre- and post-workshop interviews with men and women/participatory monitoring and evaluation (yr 2 & 3).</p> <p>3.2 Pre and post evaluation of screenings of participatory videos to decision makers to assess response and actions. Records of community meetings to discuss decision maker feedback (yr 3).</p>	<p>Appropriate government and non-governmental stakeholder staff and, local and Indigenous community leaders and members are available to participate in participatory engagement activities [Project partners have long-term collaboration with relevant agencies/organisations and community groups within each country, and experience of using participatory engagement techniques to identify successful management, governance and communication approaches].</p>
<p>4. Up-scaling and Dissemination</p>	<p>4.1 Best practice Rights of Wetlands Legal, Policy, Governance and Communication (RoWLPGC) principles and toolkit developed from evidence from 5 countries</p>	<p>4.1 Draft and final online RoWLPGC principles and toolkits, made bespoke from Rights of Wetlands Operationalisation Templates that have already been produced, published on project and partner</p>	<p>Communities will have a continued interest in the project, and knowledge exchange will be sufficient for beneficiaries to successfully understand and apply Rights of Wetlands best management practices [partners have</p>

	<p>[target: 1 x principles and toolkit with country examples] (yr 1 & 2).</p> <p>4.2 Rights of Wetlands Wetland Management and Community Advocacy (RoWWMCA) principles and toolkit [target: 1 x principles and toolkit with country examples] (yr1, 2 & 3).</p> <p>4.3 Number of people (staff from governmental, non-government organisations, and local and Indigenous leaders) trained in Rights of Wetlands principles and toolkits [target: at least 25 per country (125 total) with significant representation of women] (yr 3).</p> <p>4.4 Side events at Ramsar and CBD CoPs promoting Rights of Wetlands. Toolkits, policy briefings, training materials and reports shared at national and international platforms and events and distributed to National Focal Points [target: at least 3 events] (yr 3 and beyond).</p> <p>4.5 Online International Rights of Wetlands Event to promote project outputs [target: 1 event] (yr 3).</p> <p>4.6 Website pages, with regular posting of content [target: 2 types of content posted per month] (yr 1, 2 and 3).</p> <p>4.7 Peer-reviewed journal articles published [target: 2 articles] (yr 3 and beyond).</p>	<p>websites and minuted as presented at annual project workshops (yr 1, 2 & 3).</p> <p>4.2 Draft and final online RoWWMCA principles and toolkits published on project and partner websites and minuted as presented at annual project workshops (yr 2 & 3).</p> <p>4.3 Training materials, presentations and reports from workshops. Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires to evaluate understanding and impact of Rights of Wetlands principles and toolkits (yr 3).</p> <p>4.4 Record of dissemination platforms and events such as Ramsar CoP and CBD CoP side-events. Downloads of resources and online activity tracked (yr 3 and beyond).</p> <p>4.5 Recording of online event and attendance records. Downloads of resources and online activity tracked (yr 3 and beyond).</p> <p>4.6 Number of postings of written and audiovisual content including participatory videos, briefings, reports and blog articles (yr 1, 2, 3 and beyond).</p> <p>4.7 Number of articles submitted and then published to peer-reviewed journals (yr 3 and beyond).</p>	<p>in-depth experience of implementing peer-to-peer knowledge exchange at community level, and comprehensive evidence of effectiveness. Partners have also established community interest groups such as Indigenous and local groups, wetland community committees, farmer groups, self-help groups, women groups and youth groups which will be engaged through the project].</p> <p>All government and non-government organizations will engage with Rights of Wetlands governance and communication principles and toolkits [Project partners have long-term collaboration with relevant agencies/organisations in all countries, as well as experience of working with communities so are ideally placed to disseminate approaches refined within the project].</p>
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Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

- 1.1 Online start-up workshop to outline Rights of Wetlands approach and project activities and to co-develop baseline indicators to assess project activities against – all partners and key stakeholders. The baseline indicators will build on the logframe and include the measurable indicators for the project outcome. These will provide the core baseline indicators but through the 10 workshops for 1.4 the baseline indicators will be expanded to include indicators relevant to the stakeholder groups. The workshops and subsequent consultation will refine an agreed list that communities and project partners feel will fully assess the impact of the project.
- 1.2 Initial review of all available information related to Rights of Wetlands, social and environmental rights and wetland management approaches in each of the five project countries and an assessment made about the likelihood of each country and communities to adopt a Rights of Wetlands approach.
- 1.3 Online and offline questionnaire to key stakeholders and community groups regarding wetland health (biodiversity, water quality, water regime, drivers of wetland health change, threats etc.), sustainable livelihoods, Rights of Wetlands, social and environmental rights and wetland management approaches in each of the five project countries. Questionnaire will be undertaken at the start and end of the project to assess project impact and see whether drivers of change and threats have been removed or reduced.
- 1.4 Online or offline follow-up stakeholder and community workshops to discuss in more detail existing social and environmental rights from a stakeholder and community perspective and project impact indicators (will include government agencies, local community groups, local conservation groups etc, farmers groups, schools, universities, women's groups, CSOs – 2 x workshops per country).
- 1.5 Annual project meetings to review project progress and to evaluate impact with partners and key stakeholders.
- 1.6 Production of community management approaches and worldviews review, legislation and policy review and governance and communication frameworks review reports for each country.
- 1.7 Undertaking free, prior and informed consent process with key community groups engaged in the project (2 workshops x 5 countries (10 total)).
- 1.8 Regional workshops with community groups to introduce Rights of Wetlands, community wetland management approach concepts, techniques and how to identify best practice that maximises biodiversity, increases household livelihoods and resilience, increases access to direct and indirect benefits, whilst maintaining and restoring wetland area and health. Within the workshops best practices for wetland management will be identified and visioning of future wetland/human relations will be recorded using participatory video and photography. (3 workshops x 5 countries (Pampas del Yacuma, Bolivia, Bobonaza River, Ecuador, North Rupununi Wetlands, Guyana, Tana River Basin, Kenya, Colombo Wetlands, Sri Lanka)). Best practices will also be documented with groups in the field following the workshops particularly to identify any seasonal differences in management approaches.
- 1.9 Key stakeholder workshops to identify best practice in legislation and policy, and governance and communication frameworks regarding Rights of Wetlands (2 workshops x 5 countries (10 total)). Participatory videos will be used to record these examples to share with other project partners and wider.
- 1.10 Undertake a review of Rights of Wetlands usage within current environmental and development policies and strategies in 5 countries, to provide baseline in year 1 and impact in year 3.

- 2.1 Produce training materials – CC has developed a comprehensive set of training materials for community engagement and community wetland management through participatory methods. These will be made bespoke for each country context and translated where required. Additional social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands training materials will also be developed.
- 2.2 Training in community engagement through participatory methods, including gender-inclusive methods (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.
- 2.3 Training workshops in social and environmental rights and Rights of Wetlands (Online training and 1 x face-to-face workshops in five countries) and ongoing training during community engagement activities.

- 3.1 Sharing of community wetland best practices, recorded in Activity 1.8, with other community groups through workshops in 5 countries (2 workshops x 5 countries – 2 days each).

- 3.2 Establishment of video-mediated dialogue network meetings between local communities as rights holders and government representatives as duty bearers to create awareness on the Rights of Wetlands approach and to establish a formal, on-going communication network in each country (1 x video-mediated dialogue process in each country and 1 x communication network meeting in 5 countries).
- 4.1 Development of a Dissemination and Communication Strategy that identifies key audiences and methods to reach them (1 x partner online meeting) during and beyond the project.
- 4.2 Establishment of project website pages.
- 4.3 Analysis of community best practice wetland management to determine the most effective community advocacy and management approaches sympathetic to a Rights of Wetlands approach and future healthy wetland/human relations.
- 4.4 Analysis of legal, governance and communication best practice to determine the most effective legal, policy, governance and communication approaches sympathetic to a Rights of Wetlands approach and future healthy wetland/human relations by mapping and collation of relevant policies and legal frameworks and a gap analysis in relation to Rights of Wetlands.
- 4.5 Development of policy briefings.
- 4.6 Production of RoWLPGC principles and toolkits (Principles and toolkits will be drafted based on the project data, videos recorded and the workshops then used for consultation before being finalised and published on project websites).
- 4.7 Production of RoWWMCA principles and toolkits including best practice management approaches (Principles and toolkits will be drafted based on the project data and videos and the workshops then used for consultation before being finalised and published on project websites).
- 4.8 Training in Rights of Wetlands principles and toolkits. (Online course with 2 x follow-up workshops for each country).
- 4.9 Dialogue with communities, CSOs, NGOs, governments and the private sector to disseminate gap analysis, policy briefs and share RoWWMCA and RoWLPGC principles and toolkits in 5 countries.
- 4.10 Identify and support (if possible depending on opportunities in country context) formulation of at least one policy/legislation/strategy/plan on wetlands management.
- 4.11 Submission of applications for side events at Ramsar and CBD CoPs and distribution of project outputs to all National Focal Points and other key stakeholders identified in the Dissemination Strategy and produce a Draft Resolution for the Ramsar COP15.
- 4.12 Hold online International Rights of Wetlands Event to promote project outputs.
- 4.13 Draft journal articles.

Annex 3: Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	People	Men	20			20	250
DI-A07	Number of government institutions/departments with enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity and associated poverty issues	Government institutions	Government organisation type	10			0	15
DI-C01	Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed	Number	Knowledge/practice area, product typology	0			0	2
DI-C10	Number of case studies published	Number	Case study type	0				15
DI-C19	Number of other publications produced	Number	Annual downloads, publication typology	1			1	2

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
Rights of Wetlands Review	Report	Rights of Wetlands Partnership, 2023	N/A	N/A	Project partnership	https://www.rightsofwetlands.org/resources

Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	x
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the Subject line.	x
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	x
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see Section 16)?	x
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	x
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	x
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report. No	