

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

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

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

Project reference	<i>This should be the project reference provided in your offer paperwork and not your application number</i> 31-015
Project title	Community-based Orangutan Conservation through Science, Land Rights, and Livelihoods
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	West Kalimantan, Indonesia
Lead Organisation	Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program
Partner(s)	
Project leader	<i>Cheryl Knott</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	10/31/2024; HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	<i>saveporangutans.org; @savewildorangutans on Instagram; Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program (Yayasan Palung) on Facebook.</i>

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

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

We are on schedule or ahead of schedule with each of our activities in our proposed timetable. The one exception is the implementation of the Participatory Impact Assessment. As detailed below, it was challenging to hire an appropriate party for this, but we will conduct these starting in November 2024. We have made great progress on protecting additional forest land. The 2200 hectare village forest in Matan Jaya was made during Q1 of the project. The LPHD (Village Forest Management Board) of Matan Jaya has been formed and they have received training in SMART patrols and passive monitoring, along with the newly formed LPHD of Lubuk Batu. We have also identified two new forest areas that have great potential for village forest designation: Gunung Tarak Protected Forest and the Nek Doyan Production Forest. We and the community are currently pursuing the Gunung Tarak Protected Forest which will be proposed as the (1) Village Forest of Nek Doyan and (2) Pengkalan Jihing Village Forest. The area that will be proposed as a village forest is directly adjacent to Gunung Palung National Park. In September 2024, we completed the proposal for Nek Doyan Village Forest, covering an area of 4,263 hectares. We also helped establish the LPHD in Nek Doyan, with a total of 27 members. The proposal file has been submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia. The proposal for Pengkalan Jihing Village Forest will be initiated in November 2024.

Other Highlights:

- SMART patrols have taken place in each of 6 villages every month (36 SMART patrols), plus the two newest Village Forests commenced their monthly SMART patrols in August 2024 after receiving the requisite training on the methodology as well as first aid training.
- We provided 2 units of fire extinguishers for LPHD Rantau Panjang and LPHD Lubuk Batu. We have also provided extra length to fire hoses with 100 meters each for 6 LPHDs and provided firefighting equipment (helmets, boat shoes, glasses, masks, clothes and pants, and others) for 6 LPHDs. Firefighter training activities will start in November.
- In September 2024, we began to build camps in village forests, starting in the forests of Padu Banjar Village and Penjajaan Village Forest.
- A seedling nursery was initiated in Padu Banjar and Pemangkat Villages. The seed types include forestry plants such as *Melicope latifolia* (Melansing Wood), *Macaranga* sp (Mayang Wood), *Alstonia* (Glutinous Wood), *Archidendron clypearia* (Forest Jengkol Wood), and *Ficus* sp. (Ara Wood). A total of 4,000 seedlings (2,000 in each village) planted.
- In November and December 2024, land rehabilitation planting activities will be carried out in Padu Banjar Village Forest and Pemangkat Village Forest.
- In August and September 2024, two joint patrols were carried out to enforce the law against logging activities in the Village Forests of Pemangkat and Nipah Kuning involving Gunung Palung National Park rangers, the Forest Management Unit (KPH), the Indonesian National Army (TNI), the Police, our staff, and LPHD. We found 1 perpetrator of illegal logging in each village, and he was given a formal warning in both cases.
- In September 2024, we formed 2 KUPS (sustainable livelihood groups) in Lubuk Batu Village each with 22 members, for a total of 44 new participants. Two additional KUPS were formed in Matan Jaya Village Forest, with a total of 20 members in one and 19 members in another for a total of 83 new participants in sustainable livelihoods so far in the project period, which significantly exceeds our goal of 53 new participants by the end of the project period.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

At the very start of the project, a corporation called Mayawana Persada was ordered by the federal government to stop the rapid deforestation that they were responsible for in an area adjacent to several of the village forests that we support. While this is a very positive development, it remains to be seen if they will continue to abide by this order. In the meantime, there has been an increase in human-orangutan conflict in the communities adjacent to the concession, likely a direct result of the animals being forced out of the logged area and into human communities and gardens. We do not anticipate this to impact the project, as we will use other funds to increase our conflict mitigation efforts. We thought it possible that the affected communities may have a poorer attitude when it comes to orangutan conservation as a result of the issues caused by orangutans raiding their gardens. While they do not appreciate

having the orangutans so close and causing damage, from human-orangutan conflict surveys we conducted, it seems people actually feel more strongly about forest protection as a way to avoid these issues, and they attribute the increase in conflict to the deforestation by Mayawana Persada.

We have found it more challenging than expected to identify qualified and available individuals to conduct the Participatory Impact Assessments. We have worked this out recently, however, and while they will commence a bit later than anticipated, they will still be conducted within the first year of our project.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes/ No
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/ No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/ No
Change Request reference if known: <i>If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome</i>	

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

Actual spend:

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2025)?

Yes No

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

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

There are no other issues to report.

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations

outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Comment 1: The Theory of Change states that improved access to resources through '*hutan desa*' will lead to decreased reliance on illegal or environmentally destructive processes. What assurances does the *hutan desa* process provide that this is the case?

Response 1: As part of the federal Social Forestry program, *hutan desa* designation allows communities to take advantage of government funding for access to seeds and seedlings for land rehabilitation, seed money to initiate sustainable livelihoods (baby fish to start aquaculture, seeds for coffee beans, etc.), and similar support. Our organization also supports each *hutan desa* beyond the verification process, and funds the LPHD to conduct SMART patrols, biodiversity surveys, and passive monitoring checks. The income from the livelihoods programs and the LPHD activities replaces the income that would have been generated from illegal forest destructive activities. As part of our impact assessments, community members will be asked about how the *hutan desa* program has impacted them so we can assess the assumption.

Comment 2: how will impacts on biodiversity be independently monitored and measured?

Response 2: biodiversity surveys and passive monitoring (camera traps and bioacoustic monitors) in each *hutan desa* measure biodiversity and we will compare the biodiversity indices from before the project to the end of the project.

Comment 3: the safeguarding risk could be broadened;

Response 3: We included in our cover letter for the award acceptance more details of our safeguarding policies that include broad safeguards for stakeholders in the form of Standard Operating procedures with each community.

Comment 4: the relationship between Darwin Initiative funding and other sources of funding is not entirely clear and suggests a rolling programme, rather than a discrete project. Please clarify;

Response 4: We implement cost sharing to ensure that most of our activities can still take place even if a grant is not awarded.

Comment 5: the logframe should be strengthened:

Comment 5a: indicators are not able to measure/demonstrate biodiversity and livelihood benefits, though the project's existing activities could be used to capture relevant information in order to monitor change. Output 4 is about testing and reporting on survey methods, largely of habitat, wildlife, and factors that threaten them. However, these are established methods, and throughout the project period there will be considerable monitoring of disturbance (4.3), orangutan presence and distribution (4.6) and biodiversity (4.1), with a project end analysis of changes over time (4.5). It would be straightforward to set targets for stability or improvement in these, as appropriate, between project inception and end. Similarly, Output 5 aims to documents community wellbeing rather than to improve it, although the activities will actually measure changes;

Response 5a: These points are helpful. Our methods will indeed allow for these measurements of improved or stable biodiversity from project start to end and we have changed the logframe to reflect that so measurable changes.

Comment 5b: a revised logframe should disaggregate benefits arising from the current and previous projects where possible. For example, for Indicator 0.3 please disaggregate the number of people benefiting from Village Forests established as part of this and previous projects;

Response 5b: We have done this to make clear what values are for this project period

Comment 5c: the livelihood benefits seem unambitious with only 60 people expected to report livelihood benefits in Output 5.1. This also does not tally with the Output 3 statement ('expanded participation from 447 to 500 people in sustainable livelihoods...')

Response 5c: We chose a minimum of 60 people out of the 100 that will be surveyed. The Participatory Impact Assessments are very involved, and thus, only a subset of the participants will be surveyed in this way. While we hope for 100% improvement and satisfaction among participants, we expect there to be some room for improvement that will be revealed by

the PIAs and thus, used a conservative goal that well over half of those surveyed will experience benefits. The two values do not match because we plan to survey not only new participants in sustainable livelihoods, but also those that have been participating for a while. We want to see improvement over the project period.

Comment 5d: many of indicators are activities rather than measuring the change expected from project actions: 'reports compiled', 'expanded professional networks', 'results published', 'Village Forest proposals started', 'people trained' etc.

Response 5d: We have increased the specificity of our indicators wherever possible. For example, Indicator 2.1: Changed “Seven Village Forest Management Boards have increased capacity for SMART patrols...” to “Seven Village Forest Management Boards increase average number of days for patrols from 5 to 7 per month”

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	X
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	Already submitted
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	