

**Projects funded by the Biodiversity Challenge  
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Plus**

**Semi-Annual Report**

It is expected that this report will be a maximum of 2 to 3 pages .

If the report contains confidential information that you do not want to be shared on our website,  
please be sure to make this clear.

Submission deadline: October 31, 2024

Please note that all projects that were active prior to October 1, 2024 are required to complete a  
semi-annual report.

Send it to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) with your project reference in the subject line.

<b>Project reference</b>	<b>DARCC059</b>
<b>Project Title</b>	Capacity building to combat the illegal primate trade in DRC
<b>Country/Territory(ies)</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>Main organization</b>	Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (Pasa)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, J.A.C.K Sanctuary & Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Centre.
<b>Project leader</b>	Kizito Kakule Musubao
<b>Date and number of the report (e.g., HYR1)</b>	October 30, 2024
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	www.pasa.org

**1. Describe the progress made over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation schedule (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report the period from start to end of September).**

While we are not looking for specific reports on your indicators, please take this opportunity to review the relevance of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report on any standard indicator, are your assumptions still true?). Guidance is available on the resources page of the relevant fund's website.

**1.1 With MoE, identify training needs and agencies and officials to participate in training.**

We have identified specific government departments that are the highest priority to receive training to combat illegal wildlife trade. In conjunction with another grant (INL), PASA is working with a local environmental justice organization in the DRC that provides valuable information to identified stakeholders and involving the justice sector in the target provinces as well as ICCN in the fight against wildlife crime. The project lead has met several times with the Goma Airport Authority in North Kivu province, to discuss training opportunities for control officers (import and export) on wildlife species identification and baggage screening for domestic and international transport.

**1.2 Conduct specialised training for 50 personnel from government agencies from three provinces.**

This activity is due to begin next quarter. A training plan is currently in the process of being developed and tailored to specific agencies and provinces.

**1.3 Train 25 personnel in “train the trainer” method and provide monitoring to ensure at least one colleague is trained by each trainer.**

This activity is due to begin next quarter.

**1.4 Distribute 50 protected species and related law guides in French to attendees**

We have compiled the content of identification and pocket legal guides for capacity building for agents of the various state services working at checkpoints (borders and border posts). We identified frequently traded species and collected information on their conservation and protection status in DRC and CITES regulations.

**1.5 Conduct training for CITES management authority in Kinshasa.**

The project manager discussed with the CITES/DRC coordination on the development of the term reference with a probable date to organize a capacity building workshop for the CITES Scientific Authority and the Management Authority to advance communication, management and updating of the conservation status of listed and trafficked wildlife species in the DRC and CITES in Kinshasa.

**2.1 Collect data with officials detailing barriers to record keeping of IWT issues at check points.**

This activity is due to begin next quarter. The project manager is in regular contact with the ICCN General Management and other authorities in the provinces, particularly the provinces with heavy traffic such as North and South Kivu, Sankuru, Haut Katanga, Tshopo and Bas Uele. We are in the process of hiring a monitoring and evaluation officer.

**2.2 Trial record keeping system in one province and evaluate success.**

This activity is due to begin in Y2.

**2.3 Make necessary refinements and roll out record keeping system to checkpoints in three provinces.**

This activity is due to begin in Y2.

**3.1 In series of meetings with ICCN, MoE and other agencies to draft a confiscation protocol for the seizure of trafficked live apes and other animals**

While this is due to begin next quarter, the Project Lead and the partner wildlife centers met with the DG of the ICCN in October to discuss confiscations protocols and the workshop to increase collaboration with the ICCN and draft a confiscation protocol for DRC is being planned.

**3.2 Develop communication system allowing quick communication between relevant agencies in event of trafficking incident, and trial in one province.**

This is due to begin in Y2.

**3.3 Make necessary refinements and roll out communication system to checkpoints in three provinces.**

This is due to begin in Y2.

**2. Provide details on any notable issues or unexpected developments/lessons learned that the project has encountered in the past 6 months. Explain the impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and schedule of project activities.**

We experienced some communication issues working with a local designer to produce the species identification. The designer travelled abroad without informing us and we were unable to contact him. This led to some delays with the drafting and design of the guides, but the process is now back on track.

The Mpox epidemic, which has been declared as a health emergency in the DRC since April, has disrupted our outreach to some stakeholders. This means that some actors and government departments targeted for training (capacity building) are more focused on the response to this outbreak than making themselves available for other activities regarded as of lower priorities. We will continue to engage the necessary officials and departments and evaluate whether any changes need to be made to the workplan in light of this health emergency.

Communications with ICCN can sometimes be difficult in terms of organizing meetings or workshops. While this was factored into our workplan, it has been taking even longer than expected for them to respond to us and this in causing some delays to the planning of our scheduled activities. Some of the challenges could be due to the fact that they have the obligation to organize workshops and trainings due to their obligations to other NGOs and that they are

overwhelmed. In addition, the programming of workshops and training outside Kinshasa is affected by logistical challenges, which in turn lead to some budgetary challenges. There are various logistical constraints such as the disruption of flight schedules for airlines and variable poor road conditions for ground transport which impact the implementation of other activities leading to a knock-on effect.

Additionally, ICCN management and leadership can sometimes travel extensively outside the country to attend international meetings, and these absences delay our timelines for implementing activities. We will continue to monitor the communication situation with the government officials over the next few months and if it seems that these issues may cause significant delays to the implementation of the project activities we will reach out to NIRAS to discuss potential solutions.

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

Discussion with NIRAS:

No

Formal amendment request submitted:

No

Confirmation of acceptance of the change received:

No

Change request reference if known: *If you have submitted a financial change request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the result*

**4a. Please confirm your actual expenditures in this fiscal year to date (i.e. April 1, 2024 to September 30, 2024)**

Actual Spending: £ [REDACTED]

**4b. Do you currently expect there will be significant underspending (e.g. more than £5,000) in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2025)?**

Yes  No  Estimated under-utilization: £

**4c. If you plan and spend less, you should carefully consider the budget needs of your project.** Please keep in mind that all funds agreed to for this fiscal year are only available for the project during this fiscal year.

**If you anticipate significant underspending due to justifiable changes within the project, please submit a budget change request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will accept a re-budget, so make sure you have enough time to make the appropriate changes to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send them in the same email as your report.**

**NB: if you plan to underspend, do not claim anything more than what you plan to spend for this fiscal year.**

**5. Are there any other issues you would like to raise regarding the project or FCC's financial management, oversight or procedures?**

None.

**6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided during your project confirmation or your most recent annual report.** If your project has been the subject of an evaluation of security and justice assistance abroad, please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks and to address any additional mitigation outlined in

your letters of offer. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided an answer, please confirm when.

• There are complex issues within the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT). It is not just about staff capacity, but also encompasses staffing levels and budgets, operational effectiveness, international criminal networks in IWT, political will for change, etc. Training is just one factor in addressing IWT. How will the project address or at least build evidence for the rest?

We are very cognizant of the persistent and systematic challenges in tackling IWT in the DRC including pervasive corruption and the historic insufficient government response. We have seen an ongoing positive, albeit slow, change in the government's attitude towards the management and conservation of wildlife. For instance, our local great ape sanctuaries have been included in the government's planning on conservation activities in tackling IWT for the first time in the history of DRC. The project will work closely with the government agencies to, alongside providing training, increase political awareness and will for change. While tackling the criminal networks involved in IWT is outside the scope of this project, we are working on concurrent projects to investigate and aid in the prosecution of wildlife crimes that complement the activities planned here. PASA and our partners' sustained presence and other activities in DRC will help the training implemented here contribute to greater long-term change. We will report on exchanges with high-level government officials in the project reports to provide insight to the level of political will to fight the IWT throughout the project.

• the number of pocket guides seems small: could this be scaled up or are there other constraints?

We are currently working on the design of the guides and after the first distribution we will be able to better judge the usage and budget constraints that may allow us to include more copies. We will also look into alignment with other grants to explore the possibility of distributing a higher number of the pocket guides. We will report on this in future reports.

• will there be an incentive for using the new systems once in place?

Our aim is to engage the departments at the highest levels to encourage directives and buy-ins to utilize these new systems. Our M&E will allow us to evaluate whether there are adjustments that can be made to increase take up of the system and reveal whether there are barriers to using these systems.

• how will the individuals trained in IWT realistically be able to make a difference in tackling the trade, given the complexity of institutional and governance issues in DRC?

As stated above, there are systematic and historic challenges in DRC in tackling IWT. Consistent and persistent engagement with high-level ICCN and Ministry of Environment managers and leaders are necessary to secure their support and political will on addressing governance and institutional concerns. We will take advantage of a new CITES team to sustain the increased awareness and support of the government to address wildlife crime. Our project leader has an excellent relationship with these high-level actors and therefore his continued engagement with these government officials will complement the training activities in the grant. Our partners in DRC frequently report that the frontline officers that they interact with while trying to rescue/confiscate animals have little knowledge of the protected status of animals nor are they able to identify and distinguish species. While it is a small first step, it is a necessary piece to ensure that the frontline officers are able to recognize protected species and their legal status. Within the judicial system, by training and building awareness in judges and prosecutors, we suggest that this may make a notable difference in regional courts and the proportion of cases that are effectively investigated and prosecuted. Our regular follow-up with these individuals and departments post-training will allow us to evaluate the efficacy of this approach.

• it appears that the Training of Trainers element is modest and will lead to training of only one other staff member. Why is this approach being taken?

From our experience with the same format in other countries, we wanted to set a modest target to ensure that the proper level of training and follow-up could be achieved. We hope that this approach can be expanded in future projects but judged it important to be able to effectively deliver this as an important first step.

• your budget shows you have split your audit request across both financial years. We only require an end of project audit so will consolidate your audit request into the second year of the project. If you do not want us to do this, please get in touch as soon as possible;

We note that this will be consolidated into the second year

• the project's indicators would benefit from 'unpacking' of some of the indicators, e.g: o 1.4 'the CITES Management Authority in Kinshasa has increased knowledge of CITES regulations and

procedures'. Beyond training course attendance: how will this increased knowledge impact on its work?

We plan to get in regular contact with the CMA in Kinshasa and review their implementation of various CITES measures concerning the DRC to evaluate the efficacy of the training. We will also plan to use interviews and in-person meetings to discuss the value and impact of the training.

• for Output 2, what is the expected change from improving government records of wildlife crime in three provinces, beyond an improved record-keeping system?

Currently there is no viable record keeping system for wildlife crimes in DRC, especially on the provincial level, and without this crucial data, it will be impossible to effectively develop interventions to tackle this trade. Therefore, we consider the collection of this data to be highly important in allowing us to identify key locations and species which require prioritization for intervention activities.

## Submission Checklist

<b>For new projects (i.e. starting after April 1, 2024)</b>	
Have you <b>responded to any other comments</b> (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say that your request was accepted and which requested a response from HYR (including save points)? You must respond to Section 6, Schedules, for the other requested documents, if applicable.	Y
If you haven't already done so, have you attached your <b>risk register</b> ?	Y
<b>For existing projects (i.e. started before April 1, 2024)</b>	
Have you responded to the <b>comments made as part of your last review of the Annual Report</b> ? You must respond to Section 6, Schedules, for the other requested documents, if applicable.	
<b>For all projects</b>	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of the submission email.	Y
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCFs-Report@niras.com">BCFs-Report@niras.com</a> .	Y
Have you <b>clearly highlighted</b> confidential information in the report that you do not want to be shared on our website?	Y
Have you submitted reports based on the most <b>recent information for your project</b> ?	Y
Please ensure that claim forms and other communications for your project are not included in this report.	Y