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	DARNV026
Project title	'Diversifying Tanzania's Native Tree Species portfolio for people and biodiversity'
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania
Lead Organisation	Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)
Partner(s)	Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS); ECHO East Africa Impact Center; Tanzania Tree growers Association Union (TTGAU); Migombani Botanic Garden
Project leader	Cristina Coletto
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	

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).

The project is progressing in line with the work plan, and the main activities by output implemented during the first semester are shown below:

- Output 1:
1.1. The Seed/seedling Suppliers Consultation Group (SSCG), including Government, NGOs/CBOs and private sector suppliers has been established. Terms of refence for the SSCG have been agreed and shared to all members. The SSCG has around 30 members, from Tanzania Forest Service, Zanzibar Forest Department, Tree Seed Centres, Research Institute, Botanic Gardens, Academic Institutions, and NGOs working on biodiversity conservation and tree planting projects. The first SSCG meeting was held online the 12th of July 2024, with the participation of 23 members, discussing: project overview, role of SSCG, resource gap analysis and species prioritisation and conservation action planning.

1.2. A consultation across sectors to identify the main policy and practical constraints to collecting, storing, growing and supplying NTS is ongoing.

1.3. A first baseline survey of technical capacity and availability of NTS seeds/seedlings across the project partners is also being carried out and it will be extended to Government, NGOs/CBOs and private sector suppliers.

1.4 The species prioritisation rationale has been developed and shared to the SSCG. A comprehensive set of selection criteria has been developed to enable the prioritization of the 100 useful and ecologically important NTS to be targeted by the project. The same criteria will also be used to identify the 30 NTS for development of propagation protocols. A survey data sheet has been developed to collect information on the potential species across Tanzania that will be administered by the project partners and members of the SSCG. A workshop to finalise the species selection is planned for February 2025.

- Output 2:

2.2 We have started collating information, data tools and resources that are already existing for Tanzania, that will be added into the NTS web platform, planned to be created by the project. The members of the SSCG are also starting to contribute to these resources and identifying gaps in resources that can be filled by the project and uploaded on to the web-based hub.

2.3 We have developed terms of reference for the development of seed zone and potential vegetation maps for at least 100 useful and ecologically important NTS. The process of selecting the right service provider to aid in the development of the maps is currently underway.

2.4 The process of prioritizing the 30 NTS for development of seed storage, germination and propagation protocols has already started and more activities will continue in the next semester.

- Output 3:

3.1. Technical capacity needs assessment for Tanzania on NTS conservation was conducted through the project partners and SSCG members. We received good results and indication of where knowledge gaps are, especially regarding the propagation of individual NTS. This has informed the development of the content for the ToT trainings, aimed at filling all the gaps identified to enable a more diverse NTS portfolio for Tanzania. The ToT training on seed collection, processing and storage will be held from the 8th to 10th of October in Arusha. Around 35 trainers have been selected from NTSC and NGOs/CBOs.

- Output 4:

Activities will start in the next quarter and will continue in Y2.

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.

Due to the extensive process and departments involved in getting grant agreements reviewed and signed by Tanzania Forest Service, we encountered some delays in the first half of the project. However, by the end of September, the agreement was nearly completed. TFS was able to participate in the above-mentioned activities since any financial implications were needed to be covered by funds allocated to the lead partner. This helped in ensuring there were no great delays in activities implementation. We are currently discussing with TFS their ability to complete all scheduled activities for Y1. At present there is no indication that there will be any significant impact on the budget or timetable. Should our assessment reveal any risk in this regard, we will submit a change request before the end of the year.

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: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome* N/A	

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.

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

N/A

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6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

We will respond to the feedback received in the annual report.

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)?	N/A

If not already submitted, have you attached your **risk register**?	N/A
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to **feedback from your latest Annual Report Review?**	N/A
For All Projects	
Include your **project reference** in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to **BCFs-Report@niras.com**.	Yes
Have you reported against the most **up to date information for your project?**	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes