



DARWIN INITIATIVE



Pre-Project Funding Report

This report should be completed and submitted with a Stage 1 Darwin Application

Project Title	Sustainable livelihoods in Rift Valley (Kenya) woodlands to conserve Biodiversity
Country(ies)	Kenya
Project Ref No. (if known)	
UK Organisation	University of Leicester and Ecosurveys
Names / Titles of those who travelled to the host country	Dr David Harper Mr Tony Drane
Grant Value	£3000
Start and Finishing Dates	28 th August – 9 th September 2006
Report Date	15 th September 2006

1. Please provide a concise overview of the activities undertaken during the pre-project development visit. (Please also include relevant activities before and after, as appropriate). Please highlight those that were not planned.

Planning meeting David Harper, Tony Drane & David Agassiz with Earthwatch Institute, in Oxford, July

Meetings & discussion topics in Kenya-

Nairobi 28th, National Museums of Kenya Entomology Department, work of individuals within that, need for improved taxonomic capacity, state of existing collections.

Naivasha 29th. Homegrown (horticultural company) reafforestation and land management to reduce erosion (subsequent meetings held with the Lake Naivasha Growers Group to develop these issues outside the timing of this Scoping Study).

Naivasha 30th. Lake Naivasha Riparian Association. Discussion of the work of their new grant of 1 million Kshillings for capacity-building in Eburru forest; the Public Appraisal meetings they have held with communities and the self-help groups within the community at Ndabibi outside the forest.

Nairobi 31st a.m. IUCN East African Regional Office. Biodiversity conservation, current IUCN project funded by EU in Lembus forest and the community groups that they are supporting; our projects' potential added value. 30th p.m. African Forests – a new NGO established to re-afforest 5000 acres of Lord Delamere's land at Soysambu, Elmenteita, as a demonstration project utilising alternative livelihoods (medicinal plant cultivation in gardens, charcoal plantations, coppicing/pollarding native species).

Nairobi, 1st, a.m.. British High Commission. DIFID Environmental & Infrastructure advisor; informed him of Scoping Studies (all 3) and ongoing work funded by Darwin & Earthwatch on Rift lakes. 1st, p.m. Kenya Wildlife Services, Deputy Director Biodiversity Research. Discussed role of KWS in research outside Parks and their need for training of younger staff in biodiversity para-taxonomy.

Kinangop 3rd. Field meeting with Friends of Kinangop, locally-formed NGO by Nature Kenya, to conserve grassland for threatened bird species by promoting sheep rearing and wool weaving. Role of wood-pasture on such grasslands as a means of conserving last remnants of escarpment and river gorge forests.

Rumuruti, 5th. Laikipia Wildlife Forum, Tree is Life (local NGO part of Nyahururu Diocese which has been involved with Rumuruti Forest conservation and tree planting) and field visit to forest. Discussions of forest conservation issues over whole of Laikipia, needs of communities for biodiversity information which they have 'ownership' of and can use.

Baringo 7th. Rehabilitation of Arid Environments Trust. Biodiversity value of the forests which once covered Baringo Rift floor, role of RAE in re-vegetating plots with native grass seed mixes and the natural succession seen in some of these plots leading to wood-pasture use by community incorporating honey production and fodder.

Nairobi 8th a.m. National Museums of Kenya Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and

National Herbarium. Discussion about the extent to which local knowledge is often unique to each forest block, the limited extent to which the uses are recorded and the speed with which they are dying out. KENRIK has limited staff or resources to engage in fieldwork and the Herbarium has limited technical skills to assist them. 8th, p.m. African Conservation Centre. Discussion about their work sensitising Masai through the communities and Group Ranches in the southern Rift, how their work has focussed upon the savannah and has limited involvement in the Rift floor forests, declining through unsustainable uses and increasing length of dry spells. Links with Baringo (pastoralist communities) and Naivasha-Elmenteita area (settled communities) were made.

Naivasha 9th. Eburru/Ndabibi - field visit to the farm of local teacher and conservationist, Jospat Macharia who has turned his 5 acre farm into a demonstration of sustainable living without outside assistance and discussion of the way he could be assisted so that the ideas spread, to help conserve Eburru, preventing unsustainable exploitation for charcoal. Planned visits at the time of writing the Scoping Study application, which were not made due to time constraints and changes in emphasis were to honey marketing organisations (Honeycare Africa, Apitech) and to sustainable charcoal organisations (Soysambu, Kakuzi) but 'phone discussions indicated their willingness to be involved in the full project.

2. Were any difficulties or setbacks encountered? If so, how did they impact on the intended achievements for the visit, and on the intended Darwin project proposal.

There were no difficulties or setbacks. In many cases our planned visits led to further contacts with local members of the communities surrounding forests, which were invaluable in showing what was practical in the context of the subsistence living of most dwellers around forests. In particular, it has given us the contacts with community organisations doing real conservation on the ground and the NGOs supporting them. This means that our full proposal has become much more realistic.

3. Briefly explain how the pre-project funding has helped to confirm or change the planned project intervention – what difference did getting the grant make?

The main difference is that we thought in our Scoping Application that we would need to bring sustainable use ideas to the communities surrounding the forests. However, they already have the ideas, but what they need is help in implementing them. This makes a full project much more achievable because we will be able to give them exactly what they already know that they needed

4. Briefly describe the outcomes and conclusions arising from discussions with the host institution(s). What is the value of the project to the host institution(s) and what will their intended contributions be. Have any other partnerships evolved as a result of the pre-project grant?

A new level of partnership has evolved in many of the forests with the local communities where formerly we knew only the NGOs working with them. This focussed our understanding of their needs. New partnerships also made about carbon-trading and CDM

5. Conclusion and lessons learned from the Pre-Project Grant

Briefly highlight the main conclusions (positive and negative) gained from the pre-project grant. Please also include any suggestions you may have for improving the impact of this funding scheme.

Our overall conclusion is that Scoping Studies should become a normal first stage of Darwin projects because of their value.

Signed: *David Harper*
Dr David Harper, Senior Lecturer in
Ecology, University of Leicester

Date:
15th September 2006