

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

Note: 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 2023

Project reference	<i>This should be the project reference provided in your offer paperwork and not your application number</i>
Project title	Enhancing knowledge to tackle illegal trade of Madagascar's medicinal plants
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Madagascar
Lead partner	TRAFFIC
Partner(s)	Royal Botanical Gardens Kew (RBG Kew), the Department of Plant Biology and Ecology of the University of Antananarivo, the
Project leader	David Newton
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	31 st October HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	

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

Output 1: Source locations, harvesting practices, trade volume and value, destination markets and supply chain for key traded high-value species are identified

1.1

TRAFFIC and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew), in collaboration with the Botanical and Zoological Park of Tsimbazaza (PBZT) and the Department of Plant Biology and Ecology of the University of Antananarivo (DBEV), completed the literature review and statistical data collection on Madagascar's medicinal plants' harvest and trade. Partners collected statistics among government institutions involved in medicinal plant management and trade control, including the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the National Institute for Statistics, and the Ministry of Health and Customs. TRAFFIC and RBG Kew collated trade data from online sources: Comtrade, CITES trade data, and the IUCN red list to understand the conservation status of the traded species.

1.2

During July and early August, RBG Kew recruited two consultant botanists to assist with the market surveys and fieldwork. Once the consultants were on board, RBG Kew finalized the literature review and statistical data collection and prepared the survey forms to interview harvesters, collectors, herbal sellers, and transforming or exporting companies. Surveys have been initiated among 60 herbal sellers in Antananarivo, where the largest number of sellers is recorded. *Drosera madagascariensis*, *Aloe macroclada*, *Centella aff. asiatica*, *Cinnamosma fragans*, *Cryptocarya agathophylla*, *Harungana madagascariensis*, *Cinnamomum camphora*, *Prunus Africana*, *Adansomia grandidieri*, *Catharanthus roseus*, *Cedrelopsis grevei*,

Tambourissa thouvenotii, *Uncarina* ssp and *Vanilla* ssp are among the most traded species. All species are native to Madagascar except *Cinnamomum camphora*. From the literature review and preliminary market surveys, the main production regions identified are Amoron'i Mania, Anosy, Alaotra Mangoro and Analamanga.

1.3

RBG Kew conducted fieldwork in the Alaotra Mangoro region, focusing on the harvesters and collectors surveys. The team surveyed 43 harvesters, two small collectors, a large collector (MGP) and one transforming company. The most collected species in the Alaotra Mangoro Region are *Centella asiatica*, followed by *Drosera madagascariensis* and *Tambourissa* sp. The species of *Tambourissa* was only identified after collecting a herbarium specimen and morphological comparison. It was identified as *Tambourissa thouvenotii*.

The surveys among harvesters' communities revealed that the revenue from medicinal plant harvest contributes largely to the harvesters' livelihood as it covers the daily expenditure of harvesters. The price of 1 kg of dry *Centella asiatica* varies from 8 000 to 10 000 MGA (ie 1.5 to 2 GBP). A woman harvester claimed her daughter's school fees were entirely sourced from the *Centella asiatica* harvest wages, and her daughter is already a school director. The team also collected data from the Regional Directorate of the MEDD on medicinal plant species collection, transport permits and quotas.

Output 2: Madagascar's MAP legislative, policy gaps, and law enforcement challenges that facilitate the illegal medicinal plant trade are identified.

2.1

TRAFFIC completed the medicinal plant's legislative compilation and assessment. The main findings and recommendations were presented during a multistakeholder workshop in Antananarivo on 15 September. Initially, this workshop was designed exclusively for government stakeholders; however, from a strong recommendation from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), the workshop was open to all stakeholders involved in the MAPS trade and governance, including the government sector, medicinal plants industry representatives, research institutions, and civil society members. This was organised under the auspice of the General Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. In total, 34 participants from these sectors attended the workshop. Among the main recommendations gathered were

- to repeal the 1997 text relating to forestry legislation and revise 98-782 or define another decree on accessory products with an exhaustive list of medicinal plants.
- to build the capacity of law enforcement agents on legislation about medicinal plant species conservation and trade and harvest, collect and trade permitting system
- plan sharing and clarification sessions on the Nagoya Protocol and ABS and how it will affect the harvest and trade of medicinal plant species
- support digitalisation and a more effective and efficient way to process authorisation and export permits.

At this reporting stage, the legislative assessment report has been finalised based on the additional inputs from the workshop.

2.2

Between 1 June and 30 August, TRAFFIC interviewed 45 enforcement officers from various government agencies involved in CITES enforcement, including the regional directorates of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (locally known as DREDDs), the CITES management authorities (represented by the CITES Focal point, the chief of service of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem and the director general of environment governance, customs, police and gendarmerie officers involved in export control at airports).

The interviews among the medicinal plants' stakeholders showed that the knowledge of MAPs and IWT is limited to the MEDD and DREDDs officers. Although officers from the other agencies are aware of the emerging trend of medicinal plant use since COVID-19, they are not sensitised to the scope of the illegal trade and the legislation that governs the trade of these species, and none of the interviewed officers received capacity building on this sector.

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.

The unforeseen development that has impacted the project implementation is the strong interest from the MEDD to be involved in the data collection. Although it is a positive sign that the MEDD is interested in and very supportive of the project, the bureaucratic system at the MEDD has slowed down, for instance, the statistical data collection from the regional directorates (DREDDs).

On data collection, obtaining data at the level of collectors, exporters, and transformers is very difficult. The company representatives at the local level are not willing to provide data even when presenting the letter of introduction issued by the Ministry of Environment. This is due to the prohibition coming from their hierarchy. The MEDD has also requested that an agent from their side should accompany the team during the fieldwork, to facilitate access at the local level; however, the per diem requested by the DREDD/CIREF agent is very high, which may have an impact on the budget as this was not included in the initial budget.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: /No

Received confirmation of change acceptance /No

Change request reference if known:

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: £ £ [REDACTED]

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 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. If yes, then you need to 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 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?

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**