



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report



(due 31st October 2017)

Project reference:	IWT041
Project title:	Strengthening community anti-poaching and ecotourism in the Western Terai Complex
Country(ies):	Nepal
Lead organisation:	Zoological Society of London
Collaborator(s):	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and Himalayan Nature (HN)
Project leader:	<i>Hem Sagar Baral</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1):	<i>31 October 2017, (HYR1)</i>
Project website/blog/social media etc:	NA

1. 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 the end September).

Meetings were held with the project partners to share project activities; proposed outputs; roles and responsibilities; revised timeframes for each activity; approved revised budget; and to develop a plan of action to implement the project. The project proposal was discussed at the Project Coordination Committee (PCC), a mechanism already developed by ZSL to implement previous UK government funded projects in Nepal. The PCC is led by the Deputy Director General of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and includes senior staff from DNPWC and ZSL-Nepal. Representatives from partner organisations are also invited to attend as required. With the recommendation of the PCC, the final project proposal was approved by DNPWC for implementation.

Similarly, at each project site, ZSL replicated the successful model of Project Management Units (PMUs) building on lessons learnt from ZSL's previous Darwin Initiative project in Nepal. PMUs are a local implementation structure led by protected area managers and comprising partner organisations and ZSL. PMU attendees include the Chairman of the Buffer Zone Management Committee (BZMC), the head of the Nepal Army and other relevant conservation stakeholders for each site. PMUs provide a forum to plan project activities, discuss project progress, and help avoid the duplication of activities.

A project inception workshop was conducted at Bardia National Park with participants from all three project sites. Project activities, implementation methodologies and intended results from the four-year project were shared during the inception workshop.

Similarly, a project agreement was signed with the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and Himalayan Nature (HN) for implementation of the project activities on the ground.

Progress against agreed milestones for the 1st half year:

Output 1: Effective and efficient rapid response network utilising the latest technology and tools to combat wildlife crime

Site level workshops led by the respective protected area managers, and including the Nepal Army battalion commander from each site, have been completed to discuss the preparation and implementation of the site-specific Rapid Response (RR) protocols (*Activity 1.1 - complete*). Similarly, the assessment of the RR units and RR centre was completed in coordination with respective protected area management to identify specific needs to strengthen and operationalise the RR units at each site (*Activity 1.3 - complete*). Training in the use of GSM-enabled cameras was provided to the RR teams in Suklaphanta, Banke and Bardia National Parks (*Activity 1.7 – ongoing*). The team also identified locations vulnerable to poaching based on existing protected area records. Following the assessment, 20 GSM-enabled cameras were provided to each protected area (*Activity 1.8 - ongoing*).

Output 2: 12 (4 per site) 10-man Community Based Anti- Poaching Units (CBAPUs) effectively collecting and disseminating anti-poaching intelligence, using the SMART approach.

A community meeting was held at each site, led by protected area staff and attended by BZMC members and community leaders. It identified candidate communities for strengthening CBAPU capacity (*Activity 2.1 - complete*). An assessment of the existing CBAPUs was completed. Four communities were selected in each site for the establishment of new CBAPUs, identified on the basis of vulnerability to poaching (*Activity 2.2 - complete*). The BZMC at each site is leading the registration of CBAPUs in close coordination with the respective protected area management (*Activity 2.5 – ongoing*). Following the assessment, new guidelines for the formation and operation of CBAPUs, as well as mechanisms for sharing the information collected by CBAPU members, have been developed (*Activity 2.7 – ongoing*).

Output 3: Improved intelligence gathering and sharing and collaboration between relevant Nepal agencies (e.g. DNPWC, BZMC, Nepal Army, Nepal Police, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)) and enhanced transboundary intelligence collaboration.

A meeting was held with DNPWC and the South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) to begin development of a secure centralised wildlife crime database. SAWEN is a regional intergovernmental body for strengthening wildlife law enforcement and trans-boundary collaboration among South Asian countries (*Activity 3.1 – ongoing*). The project supported DNPWC to host a transboundary meeting between Nepal and India to increase collaboration, and the sharing of information and technology, to fight wildlife crime (*Activity 3.8 – ongoing*).

Output 4: Cooperative community ecotourism venture successfully operating in the WTC supported by an endowment fund established to make soft loans to ecotourism enterprise.

Meetings with the protected area management, BZMC and community members were held at each site to identify potential sites for livelihood support to local communities via the promotion of eco-tourism. Similarly, locally suitable alternative livelihood options were also explored during the consultation meeting. (*Activity 4.1 – ongoing*)

2a. 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.

None to report.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. 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 rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget, so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to IWT challenge Fund management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

None to report.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R3 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Victoria Pinion at IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: IWT001 Half Year Report.**