



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report

(Due 31st October 2019)

Project reference:	IWT074
Project title:	Cracking Wildlife Smuggling in Madagascar
Country (ies):	Madagascar
Lead organisation:	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
Collaborator(s):	Flics sans Frontières; Alliance Voahary Gasy; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Environment, Ecology and Forests; DLA Piper
Project leader:	Jeffrey Dawson
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1):	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media:	https://www.durrell.org/wildlife/species-index/ploughshare-tortoise/

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).

Project activities so far have focused principally on laying the foundation for meaningful institutional collaboration between project partners and stakeholders including DLA Piper, Alliance Voahary Gasy (AVG), Cops Without Borders/Flics Sans Frontières (CWB) and the Ministries of Justice and Environment, and Sustainable Development in Madagascar. The project was officially presented to all partners in June and a meeting was held with DLA Piper to prepare for the roundtable (Output 4; Activity 1). The purpose of this meeting was to give DLA Piper as much information as possible on IWT in Madagascar, the situation of the ploughshare tortoise in particular and counter-IWT contexts, procedures and existing laws in Madagascar so that they could identify the key requirements and specific legal capacity needed to achieve our objectives. The roundtable itself (Output 4; Activity 1) took place in July and was preceded by courtesy visits to the Ministry for Justice and Ministry for Environment and AVG. The roundtable gave the opportunity for each partner to present its role and responsibility in the fight against the IWT and review the current Counter Wildlife Trade (CWT) procedures in Madagascar (see DLA Piper report attached for full details).

In August, Project Manager Hasina Randriamanampisoa (HR) participated in the 18th CITES CoP in Geneva as an official member of the Malagasy delegation. The main objective of this was to confirm with the Secretariat and the Parties that Madagascar's position (solicited during the 17th CITES CoP in Johannesburg by HR) is upheld regarding the fight against tortoise smuggling. Following the 17th CoP, it was agreed that a Task Force would be set up and investigators would be sent to Madagascar to assess the situation but, for reasons not publicly disclosed, the representative of Interpol in Madagascar advised the investigators not to come on two occasions. It was therefore a priority that the Malagasy delegation, including HR as Durrell representative, reinforce the severity of the situation to the Secretariat at the 18th CITES CoP and declare in its speech to the parties that Madagascar is committed to playing its part in

protecting its endemic tortoise species. Follow up actions were agreed and the Secretariat gave the precise instruction that Madagascar must write an official demand towards the Task Force and this demand must come from the Interpol Bureau of Madagascar (relating to Output 4; activity 4). Furthermore, Madagascar must report progress on all activities in due time to CITES as an independent method of ensuring accountability. The first report will be for the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee in October 2020.

Project activities commenced in June 2019 due to not receiving the final outcome of the proposal until that month. Therefore, the next stage will be to conduct a desk review and semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders to evaluate barriers to successful CWT mechanisms, and to begin implementing (CWB) reviews of national and international media to track communications on the IWT relating to Madagascar.

Relating to Output 1: 801 patrols having taken place since April 2019 covering a distance of 9,322km. SMART data reports are produced monthly (activity 6). Patrols have identified a total of 31 infractions in this time including 10 incidences of illegal timber extractions, 3 signs of poaching activity and 15 fires in the core zone. Patroller training has been conducted by G4S with concurrent funding to date and IWT funds will be used to support this training from project Q3 as per the work plan. Two activities are yet to commence under Output 1 and the reasons for this are explained below in 2a.

Relating to Output 2: Ministries of Justice and Environment have appointed new persons to the relevant law enforcement positions and these persons have been identified and directly involved in the project activities through the roundtable in July. Discussions are ongoing with AVG regarding convening meetings with senior management of law enforcement agencies to agree officer training participation, and we are still on target to have completed all scheduled activities under Output 2 by end of the first year of the project. Training terms of reference have been obtained from Flics Sans Frontières and will shortly be discussed with Malagasy training counterparts and translated into French soon after.

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.

We have not made as much progress with activities 1.1 and 1.3 as planned as various changes on the ground in Baly Bay have prompted a review of patrol management structures for the park. The situation and proposed next steps to bring the delivery of our activities back in line with the proposed schedule are summarised below:

In October 2017, seven juvenile tortoises were stolen from the Beaboaly enclosure (west of Baly Bay) and in April 2018 one sub-adult was stolen. These two cases have had great impacts on the organization of patrols in Baly Bay as village patrollers and a member of Durrell staff became suspects. The innocence of two patrollers was proven at the trial for the first theft in April 2019 and the official investigation is still ongoing for the second.

Village patrollers are recruited on the recommendation of members of their communities, who propose them to MNP and Durrell as people that can be trusted in these positions. Despite the resource that Durrell has invested in defending those held in custody, these arrests have led to a breakdown in trust between communities, MNP and Durrell, and undermined the sense of unity in protecting the ploughshare tortoise.

In addition, the appointment of a new Madagascar National Parks Director in 2018 has prompted the need to review the co-management strategy for patrolling in BBNP. Currently, MNP is in overall charge of the patrol system and Durrell co-manages the patrols in the core zones with MNP and pays patroller stipends. Following arrests and the resulting breakdown in trust between the stakeholders, the two institutions are looking for the best ways to collaborate regarding the co-management of the patrols.

With regard the communities and Durrell, this relationship is good and is being strengthened through concurrent activities to improve people's wellbeing and livelihoods such as training in new Climate Smart Agriculture techniques that improve crop yields over smaller areas of cultivation, the establishment of village savings and loans schemes and creating new locally managed marine areas.

Reinstating this sense of trust and cohesion, and renegotiating the co-management responsibilities for patrolling, is now the highest priority for Durrell in BBNP, as this will enable the effective implementation of proposed patrol activities in Baly Bay, notably implement a patroller incentives scheme.

Although there are these issues, community patrols are and will continue to operate producing SMART reports (Activity 1.6) with regular feedback meetings (Activity 1.4) and further training planned (Activity 1.2). In addition, we are confident that we will be able to deliver activities 1.1 and 1.3 by the end of Yr1 without causing disruption to the overall project schedule.

Whilst we are well on track with progress under Output 4 and pleased with partner and stakeholder engagement thus far, we would like to notify Darwin IWTCF of a few important pieces of information that may impact work (presenting both opportunities and challenges) between now and the first full year report in April 2020.

As stated above, the project has been presented to the Ministries of Environment and Justice and, as a new government took office earlier this year, new people have been appointed to the positions of influence presenting a real opportunity to deal with the struggle against combat IWT with renewed vigour and commitment. On the other hand, at the Ministry of Justice, these people are new to environmental matters and the intricacies of IWT in Madagascar so we acknowledge that this may mean the review and CWT framework development processes may require additional time, which we will factor in advance so outputs can still delivered on schedule.

Finally, the prosecutor at the regional tribunal has made the decision to hold all suspects in IWT cases in custody pending investigation and trial. Whilst this is a positive sign of the increasing severity with which IWT cases are being treated in Madagascar, Durrell staff are threatened with long-term custody if unjustly implicated. Going forward, Durrell must balance encouraging the tribunal to apply the law without prejudice and demonstrate to the local community that we are not apart from the law, whilst also protecting the integrity of our staff cohort and maintaining effective management of our captive facilities.

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: Yes/**No**

Formal change request submitted: Yes/**No**

Received confirmation of change acceptance: Yes/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?

N/A

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.

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 DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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.**