

## **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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

<b>Project reference</b>	IWT083
<b>Project title</b>	Illegal trade & sustainable use of medicinal orchids in Nepal
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Nepal
<b>Lead partner</b>	Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Greenhood Nepal, Department of Forests and Soil Conservation (called as Department of Forest at the time of our application), The Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN), Annapurna Conservation Area; University of Oxford, IUCN SSC Orchid Specialist Group - Global Trade Programme, the University of Hawaii at Manoa
<b>Project leader</b>	Jacob Phelps
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	Social media: #NepalOrchids @GreenhoodNepal

**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 end September).**

Activity 1.3: Conduct review of Nepal's recent legislation (i.e. CITES law), and conduct consultation with legal/forestry officials to summarise and clarify Nepal's rules about orchid harvest and trade

Review of Nepal's recent legislation completed. We submitted the manuscript for publication in *Biological Conservation* and is under review. This analysis was also used to develop a Policy Brief, which has been published.

Activity 1.8: Analyse primary data (field observations, interviews, etc.) into a report

We have prepared site-specific reports based on field observations and interviews with stakeholders (enforcement, community forest user groups, harvesters, traders, middle-men). We conducted a series of trade-chain mapping activities with a range of stakeholders at various levels (community, district, province, and national level). We are working on a manuscript to incorporate a trade-chain mapping exercise. Most notably, this has been developed into a draft Policy Brief, which will be completed once all of the 2022 data is collected (this was delayed due to COVID).

Activity 1.9: Prepare journal publication

We submitted a manuscript on the legal review (see, Activity 1.3)

Activity 2.3 Local NTFP harvester self-reporting trialled in 1 CHAL harvester community for 4 months with engagement of the eco-monitor

We started an additional round of harvest monitoring with the same harvesters in the new harvest season from September 2022 (expected to last until November). This was needed because our original monitoring was delayed by COVID, and the project no-cost extension allowed us to start a second round. We are working on the data entry and draft report of harvester-collected data. Alongside this, we are working on a journal manuscript and policy brief.

Activity 2.5 Analysis and report on orchid harvest dynamics, based on community-based reporting data to help inform sustainability of legal harvest (see Output 2; baseline=0 such analyses globally, end Y2)

We have done this for the data collected during the first round of harvest monitoring and are starting it with the additional data (see Activity 2.3).

Activity 2.7 Trial establishment of a district-level Task Force to discuss new orchid data (i.e. Indicators 2.1-2.6) implications for their 5-year District Management Plan (baseline=no such platform exists, and orchid resources management is not currently explicit in the current management plans; established mid-Y2, with ongoing support into Y3)

We revised this in our logframe (approved by IWTCF) to instead focus on re-activating and engaging the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). We have been meeting with WCCB members to include orchids in their conservation and enforcement plans. We also conducted an interaction program with the WCCB members of Hetauda, a sub-metropolitan city in the Makwanpur District of Bagmati Province in central Nepal, to present our results and discuss how these affect their planning.

Activity 2.8: Establish Task Forces in the target village, including appointment of an independent eco-monitor to oversee the harvester data collection

As above, we revised this to focus on engagement with WCCB and removing the Task forces. We are continuing to follow up with the district-level WCCB's medicinal plant focal team and their progress (also see Activity 2.7). The eco-monitor remains active in the monitoring of the data collection by households (see Activity 2.3).

Activity 2.9: Harvesters self-collect data through their normal peak-season for harvest, with regular (e.g., weekly) check-ins and engagement with the independent eco-monitor to submit their data.

We resumed an additional round of monitoring with the same harvesters in the new harvest season for at least 2 months (See Activity 2.3).

Activity 3.1: Prepare and publish policy brief, "Combating illegal orchid trade in Nepal"

We published and disseminated the policy brief. URL: <https://greenhood.org/reports/enforcing-nepals-law-to-protect-orchids/>

Activity 3.2: Prepare and publish policy brief, "Trialling monitoring and exploring sustainable legal orchid harvest to reduce IWT"

We have prepared a draft based on the harvest monitoring, and are waiting to update this with data from the second field season (ending Nov. 2022).

Activity 3.5: Recruit "champions" in CHAL and nationally during various meetings/workshops, keeping records of likely supportive candidates and keeping in touch with them via meetings and email updates

We have identified 30 champions in CHAL and nationally who have engaged with us supportively throughout the project, including government officials. We have prepared a brief introduction of each Champions including their contributions/commitments on orchid conservation. We are working on handover documents (certificate and a token of appreciation) to formally handover to them before December. We will continue to share the final results of our analyses with them, encouraging them to engage with these, share them, and see how they influence their work.

Activity 3.6: Monitor government enforcement data/seizure records throughout project the project duration

Activity 4.1: Workshop conducted in 5 harvester communities/Community Forest User Groups in CHAL (n=200 participants) to highlight baseline data collected, provide legal clarity, and discuss their implications for harvester livelihoods and sustainability

We conducted 4 half-day workshops with 130 participants (2 in Kaski and 2 in Makwanpur Districts) to highlight the results from baseline data collected, legal clarity about status of orchid trade in Nepal, and implications for harvester livelihoods and sustainability. One more workshop is planned for Gorkha District.

Activity 5.1: Maintain active Facebook and Twitter presence, highlighting project progress including sharing knowledge products.

Active social media outreach ongoing. So far we have posted 78 posts with the #NepalOrchids hashtag over Greenhood Nepal's social media platforms

Activity 5.2: Publish 4 blogs (e.g., on PVA, harvest, enforcement data analysis, trade data analysis)

We submitted an article to the American Orchid Society, which is in press. Also, we submitted an article for the IWT Challenge Fund newsletter. We have two further drafts prepared.

Activity 5.3: Publish 4 editorials in Nepal (e.g., on PVA, harvest, enforcement data analysis, trade data analysis)

We are working on an editorial for Himalkhabar, a famous media platform in Nepal. We are also discussing a long-read story with ThirdPole that will cover our work. We have shared about our project progress in different interviews and platforms like Harper's magazine and handbook publication of Division Forest Office Makwanpur.

Activity 5.4: Participate in international conferences to highlight outcomes (target conferences: SCB, ICCB, National sharing platforms)

We presented the project at 1 national conference (Nepal Academy of Science and Technology Conference ), and 1 international conference (Women in Nature Network Conference)

Activity 5.7: Side-event at CITES Meeting

A.Hinsley is presenting our work at the IWTCF Side-Event at the 19th CITES CoP in Nov. 2022. We are also negotiating whether we can present our results during the TRAFFIC side-events on plants.

**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.**

We have had considerable catch-up during this period due to COVID. This included extending our harvester monitoring for a second season, which itself was somewhat delayed due to an extended monsoon season. It also involved postponed travel by J.Phelps to Nepal (Sept. 2022) and postponed travel by R.Bashyal and K.Paudel to the UK (Oct/Nov 2022) due to post-COVID visa delays. This was all possible due to a no-cost extension, which was approved via NIRAS-LTS; with this extension the changes should not affect the budget or timetable.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

Change request reference if known: Unknown

**4a. 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: £

**4b. 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.**

NA

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

NA

**If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), 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.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with NIRAS-LTS International 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](mailto: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**