

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 2022

Project reference	IWT094
Project title	Ensuring the deterrent enforcement of counter IWT legislation in Malawi
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Malawi, Zimbabwe
Lead partner	Lilongwe Wildlife Trust
Partner(s)	Multiple Malawi law enforcement agencies and judiciary, Tikki Hywood Foundation, C4ADS
Project leader	Jonathan Vaughan
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2 (2022-23)
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.lilongwewildlife.org/programmes/wildlife-law-enforcement/ (not specific to IWT094 project but this project is part of our Conservation Justice programme).

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).

Activities under the following objectives were included in the implementation timetable for this period (IWTCF and cost-share) and updates are provided as below.

2.1 Wildlife crimes - on endangered/listed species – and forestry crimes – on Mukula trees and rosewood - court cases are monitored. Qualitative legal expertise is provided.

We continued to monitor wildlife and forestry cases at a national level including pre-trial meetings, follow-ups on the prosecution strategy (through court monitors' reporting) and continuous remote guidance on trial status. A total of 202 of 231 scheduled hearings were monitored nationally and over 20 pre-trial meetings were held in this period.

2.2 High profile wildlife crimes - on endangered/listed species – and forestry crimes – on Mukula trees and rosewood - cases are prosecuted in collaboration with public prosecution

LWT continued to support investigators, prosecutors and magistrates through training or mentoring on legal tools and on-going operations. As a result, the conviction rate for Listed Species related crimes (i.e., elephant/rhino/pangolin) is 92% in this period.

Co-prosecution cases: 34

Judgements passed: 55

Convictions: 100% for elephant related offences and 87% for pangolins

2.3 Outstanding case review meetings are organized quarterly and regionally with prosecution to review progress of ongoing cases and ensure effective development of the proceedings

A national judiciary case review workshop to discuss wildlife and forestry crime was held 29-30 June 2022 and was attended by forty magistrates from 19 districts. It was facilitated by 3 chief resident magistrates and included presentations from LWT and DNPW. Two regional prosecutor case review meetings were also delivered, attended by 100% of prosecutors taking wildlife crime cases.

2.4 High Profile Wildlife and Forestry court cases outcome are published into the media (Newspaper, Radio, TV) to increase deterrence of the sentencing

We continued to support the media in attendance of high-level IWT cases by providing information and logistics for the journalists to attend the court case proceedings. The seven journalists (6 M, 1F) that have been following two high profile cases since the first hearing (Kebby Malambo and Bin Liu) attended all the court proceedings and 12 stories were published on radio, TV and online platforms. In addition to stories on these high-profile cases, over 20 stories were published on radio, online, and TV platforms, with a high focus on arrests and pangolin-related information.

3.2 Court case data, regional and domestic Case Law, international and domestic legislation are regularly uploaded and updated into WiCIS and accessible to relevant government partners

All court case data and associated documents for the period have been uploaded into WiCIS, and the previous backlog in updating charge sheets, rulings etc (mainly due to delays in receiving these from law enforcement/courts) has mostly been cleared so that case data is available to prosecution teams and government partners for case management, monitoring and reporting. We also initiated additional work supported under cost share to improve the functionality of this platform.

4.1 A baseline survey on wildlife and forestry conservation perception is implemented among local communities and government partners offices

The baseline household survey was completed in communities around Nyika NP and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. This small survey was intended to provide an indication of the knowledge of wildlife laws and penalties and community perception of the same. We also specifically included questions on pangolins to support future potential awareness work on this species. We interviewed heads of 55 households, which covered a total of 290 people (136 adults and 141 children). The information gathered is now being used to develop the messaging for a short awareness film, which will be shown to communities in these areas.

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.

Activity 4.1 was a little delayed but has now been completed. We decided to combine this household survey with a similar survey specifically on vultures in IWT under another project since the survey area was similar and we wanted to ensure team members could collaborate and share costs to avoid duplication of effort.

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/No (in Yr 1 report)

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No N/A

Change request reference if known:

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.

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

No issues, as ever we are grateful to the NIRAS-LTS team for their support in administering this grant. Please note we provided comments on the external reviewer's report for Yr 1 in our letter of 8th August 2022 to NIRAS-LTS and remaining comments will be addressed in the annual report.

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. 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**