

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	IWT 109
Project title	Preventing the extinction of Bolivia's Critically Endangered Red-fronted Macaw
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Bolivia
Lead partner	Natura Bolivia Foundation
Partner(s)	The Mother Earth Authority, Ministry of the Environment, Government of Bolivia and the Municipal Governments of Omereque, Pasorapa, Saipina, Comarapa and Aiquile
Project leader	Nigel Asquith
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	n/a

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).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Output 1: *Teams of local Macaw Guardians are formed and are patrolling nest sites and forage areas.*

Indicators:

- 1.1 300 local Macaw Guardians are trained by June 2024
- 1.2 50 Macaw Guardian teams are patrolling all important nesting and foraging sites by December 2024
 - 1.1.1 Signatures certifying attendance at Macaw Guardian Training Courses
 - 1.1.2 Patrolling commitments signed by Guardians and their communities.
 - 1.1.3 GPS points of patrolling missions

Advances reported in AR 1: *50 local Macaw Guardians have been trained and 4 teams are patrolling important nesting and foraging sites.*

Advances for HYR 2: Since our AR 1 report, we have provided further training to our seven local community coordinators, who are now leading the field monitoring patrols. As part of their training, the community guardians undertook 34 days of SMART monitoring in two municipal protected areas: (Lagarpampa-Mollepampa (Aiquile) and Pasorapa. The transects covered over 483 km, with emphasis on birds with 280 observations (note that the high level of bird observations were related to the corn fruiting season that generates high congregations of

birds, including macaws and parrots). Elsewhere, in the community of Seibas for example, the monitors have completed 30 monitoring days covering 351 kilometers; and have made 5094 observations of wildlife (of which 4188 were birds) and noted five threats (all hunting). They have also installed 18 camera traps.

We have also hired a specialist ornithologist – José Balderrama – who is helping strengthen the capacities of municipal technicians, local actors, and community guardians in bird observation techniques and the potential for bird tourism in their areas. Jose is also working on the creation of two new protected areas for the Macaw in Saipina and Comarapa municipalities, through evaluation of active nest sites, their conservation status and evaluation of bird tourism, and diversity of other species of birds in each area.

Output 2: *Local community members receive direct, continued economic benefits in exchange for conservation activities and for stopping the macaw trade.*

Indicators:

2.1 800 local landowners in 40 communities, at least 75% of whom are females, receive economic incentives worth \$40,000 from eight Municipal Macaw Conservation Incentive Programmes (MMCIP), and have increased their annual incomes by 30%, by June 2025

2.1.1 Signed agreements detailing delivery of development projects such as honey production, improved irrigation systems.

2.1.2. Receipts showing value of delivered incentives (i.e., cost of beehives, irrigation pipes)

Advances reported in AR 1: We signed conservation agreements in three communities in Pasorapa (Ceibas, Buena Vista and Ruda Pampa), resulting in 14,559 new hectares under conservation, and supporting 55 families, with projects worth \$40,000 (all funded by the municipal government). In Saipina, an additional 440 hectares were put under agreements. In Aiquile, the government has prioritized and made an agreement offer (for ~ \$5,000) in the communities of Lagarpampa and Molle Pampa.

Advances for HYR 2: The Natura team and the municipal governments of Saipina, Aiquile and Omerque have consolidated the conservation of 14,835 hectares of red-fronted macaw nesting and foraging sites. Biodiversity Conservation Agreements were signed with 138 families who have benefited with water access and productive development projects that are improving their livelihoods.

We have also worked in the creation of two new protected areas, specifically focused on important macaw nesting sites. We have concluded a land tenure analysis, based on an evaluation and specialization of the ownership rights of nesting and foraging areas. This analysis served as the basis for determining the potential polygon of the Saipina and Comarapa protected area process, identifying the private actors or communities with rights over the land, and in turn, initiating the socialization processes in their different stages.

We have made contact with the 9 individuals who represents 100% of the Saipina PA polygon: (1) Santos Machuca; 2) Oscar Salguero; 3) Marcelo Cadima; 4) Emitterio Oronoz; 5) Fabiola Mendoza; 6) Francisco Navia; 7) Frankilina Pantoja; 8) Sandra Cano; 9) Dainer Reyes, In Comarapa, 9 other private owners own 100% of the polygon: 1) Andrés Jiménez Gamboa and others; 2) Eusebia Gutiérrez and others; 3) Vicenta Escobar Nogales and José Rodríguez Llanos; 4) Eusebia Ávila Paniagua and Others; 5) Bautista Reyes Tapia; 6) Julia Arimosa de Reyes; 7) Heidy Paola Valverde Nova and others; 8) Yamil Nova Delgadillo; 9) Emitterio Oronoz Arana.

Once our lawyer Faviola Porcel had developed the municipal regulatory framework for the creation of the Saipina-Comarapa protected areas, the bill was disseminated to the mayor, the technical team and the municipal council for their comments. This socialization is carried out through work tables and independent meetings with both the executive and legislative bodies. Starting from the first draft regulations with the initial approval of the municipal authorities, socialization has begun with the private owners involved in the protected areas polygon, according to the methodological route of the social process. The project has undergone

observations and clarifying recommendations at the level of the articles: Management category, rights granted, and participatory management. This is due to the fundamental role of local actors in both the validation for the creation and the future management of protected areas. After the initial feasibility process with the actors linked to the protected areas, meetings and field trips were held with the private owners linked to the protected areas to recognize the conservation and development values, natural and cartographic limits, discussion of threats and identification of potentialities.

Then, based on our methodological route of the validation process, meetings have been held to return the information (maps, biological studies (flora, fauna), others). These meetings initially with the technical team of the municipal executive, and later, with private owners. Currently, it is in the final stage of validation of both the comprehensive technical justification document and the bill, so that in the next month, it will be officially delivered to the municipal governments for their official analysis and future promulgation of the Law.

Output 3: *Threat reduction and strategies for long-term sustainable management of the macaw population are institutionalized.*

Indicators:

3.1 Bolivian National, Departmental and Local Governments implement a detailed "Conservation Incentives" component of the *Ara rubrogenys* Management Plan that institutionalizes local incentive programmes by June 2024

3.2 Six municipalities with resident *Ara rubrogenys* breeding pairs lead the creation and operation of Municipal Macaw Conservation Incentive Programs (MMCIP) to promote habitat and nest conservation, and to patrol and prevent incursions from traders by December 2023

3.1.1 Detailed "Incentives" component of Management Plan Published

3.1.2 Signed certification from local authorities that at least three of the recommendations of the Management Plan have been implemented.

3.2 Municipal records of Founding charters of MMCIP, bank accounts of MMCIP showing transfers of funds in and out, annual MMCIP implementation reports.

Advances reported in AR 1: *We have held a series of meetings with all relevant stakeholders (communities, municipalities, NGOs, universities, the private sector, water users, and Departmental and National governments) to pave the way to institutionalize the local incentive programs. We have had especially productive meetings with the Biodiversity Directorate of the Vice Ministry and also within the Mother Earth Authority, and hosted an event with the Santa Cruz Departmental Government (along with Armonia, another NGO working on macaw conservation with IWT Challenge Funds) to launch the *Ara rubrogenys* Management Plan*

Advances for HYR 2: To strengthen the institutions in important areas for macaws we signed 2 inter-institutional agreements with the Municipal Government of Presto (Chuquisaca Department); and the Municipal Government and the Campesino Central of Totora (Cochabamba department), with the purpose of consolidating a Macaw Conservation Fund, which will finance the implementation of the Conservation Agreement with local communities.

Output 4: Macaw population dynamics, community well-being and local perceptions about the importance of macaw conservation are increasingly well understood.

Indicators:

4.1 Community members understanding of the importance of Macaw conservation, and their knowledge about what conservation activities they can undertake, has increased by 100%, by December 2024 (baseline, 150 people out of 800 already have such understanding)

4.1.1 Pre- and post- project socio-economic surveys

Advances reported in AR 1: *We undertook two social marketing campaigns (in Omereque and Pasorapa) and have used the techniques and methodologies of social marketing when we engage with local government and communities. We will continue these activities and expand into two more municipalities in 2023-2024. We have undertaken baseline data collection in two*

municipalities to be able to assess change of economic realities and perceptions about the macaw.

Advances for HYR 2: The ornithologist to contribute to the strengthening of the local capacities of municipal technicians, local actors and community guardians, both in the theory about birds in Bolivia, and in observation field techniques to enhance the bird's life. -tourism. In turn, the technical inputs and support in the creation processes of the municipal protected areas of Saipina and Comarapa; and the collection of information on birds, on potential sites for new municipal protected areas.

Within the framework of strengthening bird watching capabilities, the ornithologist - José Balderrama has continued with theoretical and practical training now focused on the municipal technicians of Aiquile, Pasorapa, Comarapa, Omereque, and in turn, continue with the monitors local or community guardians, with the theme: birds of Bolivia, birds threatened with extinction in Bolivia and conservation status, endemic birds of Bolivia, potential for bird tourism in Cochabamba and Bolivia; and in practice bird watching methods, potential viewing sites and times. The training encouraged technicians to know, value and have tools to face the potential of bird tourism in their protected areas, as an alternative to generate economic income for management.

To promote better species and area management, we have also worked with other conservation groups on the evaluation of Bolivian Key Biodiversity Areas. Information from community monitoring and camera traps in 20 subnational protected areas allowed us to determine species with some category of threat, mainly mammals, and to propose 4 new KBAs. In the bird group we participated and contributed significantly to the re-evaluation of the Red-fronted Macaw KBA, using our monitoring information in the municipalities of Aiquile, Pasorapa, Saipina and Comarapa. The re-evaluation has allowed a redefinition of the KBA of the Red Front Macaw focused on a separation into different management units (protected areas) and with new more precise limits.

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.

No problems or unexpected developments.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: Yes/No

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Estimated underspend: £
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.</p>		
<p>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</p>		
No		

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**