



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

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 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	IWT109
Project title	Preventing the extinction of Bolivia's Critically Endangered Red-fronted Macaw
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Bolivia
Lead Organisation	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 Aiquille
Project leader	Nigel Asquith
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR3 October 31 st 2024
Project website/blog/social media	n/a

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

We focused on three main tasks during the first half of 2024-2025:

1.vi. Collaborate with local communities and law enforcement agencies to document and act on results of patrolling activities: The Municipal Autonomous Governments (GAM) of Aiquile, Pasorapa, Saipina and Comarapa have hired municipal technicians with a contribution investment of 60% of salaries paid by the GAM's and 40% of salaries paid by the IWT project. The project also hired two municipal managers whose tasks will comprise:

- Leading the management and promoting the visibility of the macaw protected areas in their assigned municipalities, and
- Consolidating community monitoring and camera traps in the protected areas at the local level, documenting and acting on patrolling results, liaising with law enforcement as and when required, and initializing the operation the Protected Area Management Committees.

Also, we are on track for an announcement by the end of October, that the governments of Comarapa and Saipina will have ratified the legal documents to create two new protected areas.

2.ii. Offer incentive packages for community patrolling and on individual land parcels in communities close to all important macaw nesting, foraging and sleeping sites; 2.iii Sign conservation agreements with community authorities and volunteer landowners; 2.iv Deliver compensation packages (i.e. bee hives, irrigation systems, fruit tree seedlings etc.): On August 15, 34 families from the Hoyadas community in the municipality of Totorá agreed to better conserve Red-fronted Macaw and committed to conserve 1,304 hectares of forested nesting sites and forage areas. Community members signed their conservation agreements in the presence of their local authorities (Mayor, Municipal Council and community leaders), and in exchange for their commitment, received water tanks, barbed wire and corrugated iron, material that will allow them to store and harvest water and protect their water sources from cows.

Similarly, on August 21, in the community of Chajra Mayu, in municipality of Presto in Chuquisaca, 606 hectares of forest was put under conservation agreements within the El Palmar Integrated Management Natural Area. 19 families will benefit from materials provided by the Municipal Government of Presto and the project.

In the community of Quinori, Pasorapa, Mayor Ismael Ríos, hosted an event with community representatives to highlight the importance of their commitment to conservation. Community members have agreed to conserve 96 hectares of nesting sites and 1709 hectares of macaw forage areas. In exchange, 47 families will benefit from a project that will install more than 60 water meters to promote more efficient use of the resource in the community.

3.2.iii Support municipal implementation of Municipal Macaw Conservation Incentive Programs fund as the governments purchase development projects and take on long term project management: In September we held a meeting of 15 municipal technicians and authorities and representatives of the management committees of 2 protected areas to exchange lessons of what they have learned from the project and how they hope to continue conserving the macaw. Invited municipalities were Aiquile, Pojo, Saipina, Comarapa, Pasorapa and Omereque. This event was designed to promote the exchange of experiences, strengthen the knowledge of municipal technicians, management committees and community monitors, and improve conservation strategies for the Red-fronted Macaw. In the event we:

- Trained municipal technicians and authorities and representatives of management committees in the management of municipal protected areas.
- Shared successful practices and lessons learned in the management of municipal protected areas and conservation areas, identifying joint actions and strategies for the conservation of the red-fronted macaw.
- Strengthened the institutionality of municipal governments committed to the conservation of the red-fronted macaw, by preparing (draft) a manual of functions for those responsible for municipal protected areas. This manual will focus on:
 - Creation and Design of Municipal Protected Areas.
 - Governance and Institutionality of the Protected Area.
 - Planning of the Management of the Protected Area.
 - Effective monitoring, control and surveillance of a municipal protected area.

Comarapa is another example of how we are strengthening the Municipal Conservation Funds. Natura, and the IWT project are not contribute cash to the Conservation Fund, rather we have provided technical support that has allowed the Fund to consolidate its own financing namely:

- Comarapa Water Cooperative
- Municipal Government of Comarapa
- Municipal Government of Saipina
- Irrigation Association of Saipina

- Irrigation Association of La Pista
- Comarapa Savings and Credit Cooperative

With IWT-project technical advice and support, Comarapa fund managers were able to use 100% local financing to put 150 hectares under conservation agreements in Q1 2024, with more hectares planned for Q4.

The final five activities of the project will be undertaken in Q3 and Q4 2024-2025

2.v Monitor compliance and, if appropriate, renew agreements

4.2.i Design and implement macaw population survey at project end

4.2.ii Draft, review and finalize publication of results

4.3.i Design and implement socioeconomic and perceptions survey

4.3.ii Implement the same survey post project 3

4.3.iii Draft, review and finalize publication of results

Meanwhile, we consider that the project is advancing well, and that our indicators are still relevant, and our assumptions still hold true.

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.

There have been no notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt. We expect that the budget and timetable of project activities will continue as planned.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:

No

Formal Change Request submitted:

No

Received confirmation of change acceptance:

No

Change Request reference if known: [If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome](#)

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend:

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 2025)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

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

No other issues

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment, please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

No feedback was made about the last AR that required a significant change in project direction. However, the reviewer did suggest that "The project could consider revisiting its approach to safeguarding, including staff training and how its safeguards participants in project activities, particularly more vulnerable members of local communities". In response to this suggestion, we have initiated a safeguarding training program for all staff and partners that will be completed by the end of Q3.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	n/a
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	Yes
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	Yes
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes