

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

Half Year Report

Project reference	IWT-113
Project title	Legal Intelligence and Community Governance for Cheetah Illicit Trade (LICIT II)
Countries/territories	Ethiopia, Somaliland
Lead Organisation	Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)
Partners	Legal Atlas, TRAFFIC
Project leader	Dr. Laurie Marker, Executive Director, CCF
Report date and number	31/10/2024 HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	www.cheetah.org

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable.

Project partners made the following progress over the past half-year:

Activity 1.3.2: Execute legal and administrative steps to establish formal conservation governance structure in selected community. CCF, assisted by project legal consultant, completed the process of obtaining Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) from 20 villages located in the pilot conservancy area, as the initial step toward building a community conservation governance structure. CCF and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) staff engaged with groups of five individuals in each village consisting of the Headman and representatives of women, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The process involved three rounds of meetings: an initial meeting to explain the FPIC process followed by a two-week period to allow the representatives to consult within their villages. A second round of meetings was held to receive feedback, which was used to inform drafting of the FPIC agreement. The third and final set of meetings was held to take the village representatives through the draft agreement and, when they were satisfied with it, obtain their signatures. All signed, allowing their villages to participate in the governance scheme. See Annex A, B.

Activity 1.4.2: Arrange two meetings between natural resource conservation organisations participating in the Somaliland Association of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Organisations (SACSO). The two meetings envisioned for this Activity were held in Year One of the project, however CCF has continued to support the development and functioning of SACSO, as its members are important stakeholders in the community resource governance process due to their community development work. CCF convened a SACSO meeting in July 2024 to discuss elements of the community conservancy initiative and brief members on the upcoming FPIC process. See Annex C.

Activity 1.5.1: Organise and conduct Hargeisa based governance training in Year 2 and 3 (up to 6 people from the pilot community). CCF began work to organise this activity, which will be scheduled in the second half of the project year.

Activity 1.8.1: Organise and conduct field training in Year 3 for FFA in pilot community for up to 250 farmers led by CCF staff and governance structure leadership in the community. Six FFA training workshops were delivered to a total of 90 individuals from the pilot conservancy community in September 2024. This brought the number of FFA beneficiaries to 244 out of a target of 250 (Standard Indicator A01). Data analysis on impact of these and previous FFA workshops (Standard Indicator A02) is in process. Further workshops could be scheduled if time and resources permit. See Annex D, E.

Activities 3.3.1. : Identify regional and national public and private stakeholders for consultation phase, and 3.3.2: Conduct technical consultations with stakeholders to fill out the ECUs Legal Drafting Guide. Partners collaborated with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat to identify regional and national stakeholders in seven IGAD member states (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda) and organize a national stakeholders consultation with each country in September 2024 (Indicator 3.3). Three consultations were conducted in person by CCF staff and four virtually. Questions addressed included the value of developing a regional legal framework for national Environmental Crime Units (ECUs). Stakeholders' consensus view was that such an effort would be worthwhile, which confirmed the country support necessary for continued work on Output 3. See Annex F.

Activity 4.1.5: Organise and conduct monthly meetings of Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee concluded its work on draft new wildlife legislation by the end of 2023, substantially ahead of schedule (Indicator 4.1; Standard Indicator B20). Since then, Partners have continued to work with the Drafting Committee as time and resources have permitted to begin consideration of regulations that will be needed to implement the new law once it has been enacted by Somaliland's Parliament. Four draft regulations have been prepared and are under review. See Annex G.

The project is generally on schedule. Some activities have been delayed (see Section 2 below) but enough time and flexibility remain to make any needed adjustments to the timeline and work plan. Based on experience to date, partners judge that project Indicators remain valid. At this point in the project, Activities related to Indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 4.1 have been completed and these Indicators can be considered as fully achieved. Assumptions remain valid in relation to work completed or in progress. Some assumptions relate to future activities and have not been fully tested. Some of the selected Standard Indicators refer to results that will not be measurable until the end of project Year 3.

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.

[REDACTED]

Partners have also encountered delays in rolling out the Somaliland database (Activity 2.2.3), which remains under development using the ESRI ARCGIS platform. This has impacted the project by delaying additional training for designated database users within government agencies (Activity 2.2.6).

At this point, neither of these issues has risen to a level that would require submission of a change request, and neither is anticipated to significantly affect the project timetable or budget.

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:	N/A
Change Request reference if known: N/A	

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)	
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 2025)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: £	
4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. N/A	
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 to raise at this time.	
[REDACTED]	

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report.	
The review of the most recent annual report did not request any responses in this report.	

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 a response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	N/A

If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	N/A
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.	X
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	X
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	X
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	X
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	X