



**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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

**Please note all projects that were active before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 are required to complete a Half Year Report.**

**Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.**

<b>Project reference</b>	IWT127
<b>Project title</b>	Conservation Litigation & Wildlife (CLAW)
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	U.K., Indonesia, India, Cameroon
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Lancaster University
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Conservation-Litigation.org (CL.org), Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), Indonesian Center for Environmental Law (ICEL), Environmental Law Institute (ELI), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Last Great Apes Organisation (LAGA)
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Jacob Phelps</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	28 October 2025 HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="http://www.conservation-litigation.org">www.conservation-litigation.org</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/conservation-litigation">https://www.linkedin.com/company/conservation-litigation</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).**

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) 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.

**Indicator 1.2** establish new Conservation Litigation Network, engaging >200 student/junior and >50 practising lawyers with CL concepts across >7 countries, including through student "law clinic" volunteers helping with cases; presentations within undergraduate law modules in >3 countries, 2 virtual global workshops targeting legal practitioners, scientists and potential plaintiffs

- This work was presented by partner, ICEL, at the 5th ASEAN Environmental Law Conference (AELC) "*Advancing Regional Commitments for Environmental Justice through Legal Approaches*" in Bali, Indonesia, July 7–9, 2025. This work was one of the topics in the biodiversity parallel session. Difa Shafira (ICEL) presented the significance of urgent application of liability litigation, opportunities in Indonesia's legal context, and framework to craft innovative remedies.
- An e-poster "*Conservation-Litigation: A radical legal approach to save biodiversity*" was submitted to the IUCN World Conservation Congress being held in Abu Dhabi in October 2025.

**Activity 1.6** ICEL and WTI to announce "law clinic" opportunities for law students, and recruit >6 students to support case development (e.g., legal research, preparing documents)  
WTI has a student from Jamia Milia University working to identify cases for compensation. The student is also working on damage claims.

**Activity 1.7** ICEL, LAGA, WTI, LU, LaW present strategic conservation litigation to undergraduate law modules in >3 countries via the partners  
ICEL has submitted its proposed curriculum incorporating this work to Universitas Riau, and is awaiting the finalized version.

ICEL has integrated this material into the *Kapita Selektta Hukum Pidana* (Selected Topics in Criminal Law) course at University of Indonesia. The session will be delivered by Marsya Mutmainah Handayani, an ICEL researcher, during the fourth week of October.

**Indicator 2.1** Legal report and "In Brief" summaries resource published for 7 countries (Indonesia, India, Cameroon, Mexico, Brazil, Philippines, Uganda)  
Pending reports for India and Mexico are well on their way for publication by the end of 2025-26. The workshop in Mexico was held in September 2025. India's report is in final revision.

**Activity 2.11** LU to lead partners in co-authorship of blogs/editorials, website updates, and 2 key academic publications via collaborative GoogleDocs  
"How legal actions can help reimagine relationships with nature" was submitted to the *CEESP Reimagining Relationships* Chapter in May 2025

**Indicator 3.2** Minimum of 3 cases submitted in courts, at least one in each India, Indonesia and Cameroon

Damage claims for future cases involving chimpanzee IWT in Cameroon were approved by the Ministry. The damage claim for the elephant case in India has been presented to the government team preparing the case. Legal processes remain slow, but CLAW local partners are actively working on filing cases as soon as possible

**Indicator 4.1** partners host in-person workshops for practitioners in the 2 core countries (India, Indonesia), and LaW and LU host virtual workshops in the 4 additional countries (Philippines, Brazil, Mexico, Uganda). These will introduce CL and recruit future plaintiffs

- A workshop was held in conjunction with the UK embassy in The Philippines in May 2025. The workshop launched the Philippines report and introduced CL and remedies to other lawyers in The Philippines.
- A presentation was held by Greenhood Nepal in July 2025 discussing a new case in Nepal involving remedies.

<p>- In July 2025, a Workshop on 'Convictions &amp; Compensatory Measures in Wildlife Crime Cases' was held by WTI in Meghalaya, India.</p> <p>In addition to this progress, in Sept. 2025 we have incorporated <a href="https://www.conservationalitigation.org">Conservation-Litigation.org</a> (CL.org) as a non-profit, charitable organisation based in the Netherlands. This line of work has operated for several years, led by the PI, Jacob Phelps, as a stand-alone project run out of Lancaster University – predominantly funded by IWTCF. It is now maturing into its own organisation, as it expands beyond the scope of what is possible and effective as a University-run project.</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	
<p>Law and Wildlife (LaW), a significant partner in this project, had to shut down as an organisation due to the health of the founder. This resulted in delays of some deliverables, and the need for an appropriate channel for the other LaW employees to remain involved in and paid by this project. The deliverables are on track to be completed by the end of this project. As part of the longer-term plans of this project, CL.org incorporated as a non-profit. With CL.org established as an entity, they were able to take on the LaW staff to ensure continuous coverage in the project, and payment.</p>	
<p><b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b></p>	
Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes
<p>Change Request reference if known: <b>N0489</b></p>	

**Guidance for Section 4:** The information you provide in this section will be used by Defra to review the financial status of projects. This review will identify projects at random for spot checks on financial management and will include requests for evidence of the actual spend information provided below. Please ensure the figures you provide are as accurate as possible and that you have the evidence to support it. You do not need to provide it now.

<p><b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)</b></p> <p><b>Actual spend: £</b></p>
<p><b>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 2026)?</b></p>
<p><b>4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.</p> <p><b>If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible, and not later than 31<sup>st</sup> December. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please</b></p>

<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.</b></p>
<p><b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b></p> <p>Suspensions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to <a href="mailto:fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk">fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>None</b></p>
<p><b>6. Project risk management</b></p> <p><b>6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.</b></p>
<p><b>N/A</b></p>
<p><b>6b. Have any concerns or allegations relating to sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment been reported in the past 6 months?</b></p> <p>Suspensions or allegations related to safeguarding concerns should be reported to <a href="mailto:ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk">ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.</b></p>