



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

<b>Project reference</b>	IWT 131
<b>Project title</b>	Countering Jaguar Conflict and IWT in the Bolivian Amazon
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Bolivia
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	WWF UK
<b>Partner(s)</b>	WWF Bolivia, University of Oxford, Pando Jaguar Alliance, Pando Autonomous Departmental Government
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Valeria Boron</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>HYR1</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<i>NA</i>

**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 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.

In the two months covered by this report (August and September 2024), we made progress in establishing a strong foundation for successful implementation.

#### **Contracting and setting up project regular meetings:**

Our efforts have initially focused on contracting key project partners (WWF Bolivia and University of Oxford), ensuring that each collaborator is clear on roles and responsibilities and donor requirements. To this end we conducted a training session with WWF Bolivia covering reporting templates and donor specifications. The contract with University of Oxford is still in

process due to certain clauses that are still being discussed between WWF UK and University of Oxford legal teams.

We have been meeting bi-weekly between the University of Oxford, WWF UK and WWF Bolivia to facilitate open communication and collaborative project planning.

**Local coordination:**

WWF Bolivia held coordination meetings with the Mother Earth Secretariat of the Autonomous Government of Pando, which also leads the Pando Jaguar Alliance. The purpose of these meetings was to familiarise them with the project's details and plan their involvement in its various phases. It has been initially established that, with technical support from WWF, they will lead the baseline data collection through surveys (focusing on jaguar perception, jaguar killing, livelihoods, and other aspects) in the 19 communities (50% of total number of communities present) initially selected from the Manuripi-Santa Rosa del Abuná Corridor. This information will later enable the selection of the 6 communities where the project's subsequent interventions will be developed. The surveys are set to be implemented starting November 1, 2024.

**Baseline surveys design:**

Guided by University of Oxford expertise, we have designed surveys to collect the project baseline data as well as contribute to audience research to inform the behaviour change interventions. The surveys will cover 80-100% households across 19 communities in the Manuripi-Santa Rosa corridors. The survey covers socio-economic dimensions, levels of depredation, perception towards jaguars and levels of jaguar killing. The majority of questions are multiple choice with many including the likert scale.

We are employing the COM-B (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation-Behavior) model to guide these baseline surveys and to inform our behavioural change interventions. We chose this model due to its intuitive and comprehensive framework, which helps us identify and target key behavioural drivers, such as lack of knowledge, resource limitations, or negative attitudes towards jaguars. To ensure accurate data collection and mitigate social desirability bias, we are also using the ballot box method, allowing respondents to answer sensitive questions anonymously, increasing the reliability of our findings.

**Inception workshop planning:**

Additionally, preparations for the project inception workshop are well underway, aiming to further engage all project partners, including the Pando Departmental government and the Pando Jaguar alliance in a meaningful dialogue about project goals and strategies. The inception workshop will take place in Cobija, Pando, Bolivia the week of 18th November and will include sessions focused on reviewing the logframe, building the M&E plan and reviewing project risks, safeguards, and grievance mechanisms. This initial phase has set the stage for a robust and coordinated approach moving forward.

**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.**

Coordination with the Mother Earth Secretariat of the departmental government has been very positive. It has also become clear during the preparation and review of the survey template that the Secretariat team that will implement the surveys must undergo a training process. This is essential to ensure a consistent understanding of the questions and responses, which will help ensure that the information collected is useful for understanding the baseline situation and appropriately selecting the project target communities.

From a practical standpoint, currently, in Pando, there are blockades at various points in the department due to low fuel supply and the resulting rationing, which in turn is driving up food prices. These social conflicts are not expected to significantly delay the implementation of the surveys, but could cause minor delays as they may hinder the technical team's ability to reach the communities involved in the project.

Lastly, signing of the contract between WWF UK and University of Oxford has been slower than previously planned due to slow administrative processes in both organisations (e.g. due diligence and legal). This has not delayed implementation because the project team member from University of Oxford is working on the project regardless while the contract process is still underway.

### 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 ☐ Estimated underspend:

**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?

Although expenditure to date is lower than foreseen, the project team is confident that they will spend a significant proportion of the planned Year 1 budget in the second half of the year. The period October to March is an intense period of field implementation. We will be reviewing the Year 1 budget with partners to make appropriate changes and consider alternatives. We will submit a Change Request Form after the project inception workshop, where we will have the opportunity to discuss project implementation activities and timeline in detail as well as revise all indicators and build the M&E plan.

**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.

Feedback received (text in blue):

• given the project will require continuation of funding following the end of the project, please clarify mitigations in place in case funding is not obtained after the grant period. It would also be beneficial to include further information of the planned exit strategy;

In the application we mention that additional funding would be needed to scale the project in other landscapes/geographies across the jaguar range. WWF has a dedicated jaguar fundraising and advocacy team, and are exploring innovative financial mechanisms including jaguar bonds and wildlife credits to ensure continuous funding to jaguar landscapes across the range.

Regarding the geography where the project is being implemented, we are confident that the project was carefully designed to ensure its sustainability and scalability through wide engagement, training, and lesson sharing . For example, as we outlined in the application:

- Engagement with over 15 institutions; local, national authorities and Pando and National Jaguar Alliance members, as direct beneficiaries and partners contributes to scalability. Their departmental and national reach, mandate to address IWT beyond jaguars, allows the capabilities gained from the project to reach a wider geography, benefit additional taxa, and extend beyond project timeline. The increased capacity on conflict/IWT response, related protocol, data sharing and coordination agreements between participating institutions will remain in place beyond project timeline.
- Trainings on sustainable and jaguar friendly livelihoods will be low-cost, easy to implement practices, for target communities to replicate, and transfer skills across generations and neighbouring communities. Guides documenting those practices will be shared with other communities (and posted online), for access post project completion.
- Project lessons will be shared across WWF global Network, the IUCN Human-Wildlife Conflict Group, the Jaguar Roadmap 2030 Committee, CITES and CMS, to encourage replication across jaguar range.

Lastly, from year 2, we will also work as a project team to plan a robust exit strategy and plan.

• the research approach to create an evidence base could be more clearly set out, as it currently stands it seems to overlap with the baseline survey which serves a different purpose rather than a clear and separate activity;

• to allow for comparability across the project, you may re-consider a sampling approach;

- further clarification is required regarding the extent to which the behaviour change interventions are specifically aimed at consumer demand reduction;

In order to make the project more agile we are carrying out simultaneously the collection of audience research data (e.g., trusted channels and key opinion leaders) and that for key baseline indicators of illegal trade and conflict. We fully recognise that these are distinct processes, and the two data streams will perform different roles.

Regarding the sampling approach, we appreciate the suggestion to enhance comparability across the project. We will reconsider our sampling strategy, ensuring it is standardised across different sites to allow for meaningful comparisons. We will cover 80-100% households in 19 communities, which represents 50% of the overall number of communities in the Manuripi-Santa Rosa corridor. We will then measure impact by repeating the survey at the end of the project including the six target communities as well as additional control communities.

It is indeed important to clarify that our behaviour change interventions are mostly aimed at curtailing supply, by reducing the number of jaguars killed and thus the volume of products entering the market. That said, there may be a level of local demand and so there is also a smaller demand side to our behaviour change initiative.

- the logframe should be strengthened:

- o under Output 3 you should seek to include a measure of improved human-jaguar conflict from authorities or civil society (key actores) to demonstrate achievement;

We have an indicator for this at outcome level (Indicator 0.3, means of verification 0.3.2), focusing on improved response to conflict and IWT from authorities. We could move it to output level if preferred. We will also discuss this further during the November workshop and evaluate whether we could include additional indicators.

- o it would be useful if indicator 2.1 could include a direct measure of livelihood improvement, i.e. household income;

This is challenging as there is no quantification of income by activity, and while the project will strengthen productive activities, these are not the only economic activities being carried out in the communities. However, we included a wealth index in our questionnaire survey in the baseline surveys which is a widely used proxy measure of poverty, allowing to divide the population in different quintiles of poverty. By repeating the survey at the end of the project we will be able to measure any changes in poverty levels.

- o a number of the indicators read as activities i.e. focusing on training and communications rather than a change in target behaviours, capacity or benefits. Please review all indicators and strengthen as appropriate.

Our outcome indicators focus on change in target behaviours (levels of jaguar killing) while also assessing jaguar populations. Indicators at output level focus on results that are beyond activities, such as reduced human-jaguar conflict, improved jaguar perceptions, improved livelihoods and improved capacity of institutions to respond to conflict and IWT. Nevertheless, the indicators on capacity will be reviewed to assess whether it is possible that they focus more on the behaviour change expected after the training. We will review all indicators and complete the project M&E plan during the inception workshop in Cobija in November.

## Checklist for submission

**For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)**

Have you <b>responded to any additional feedback</b> (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.	Yes
If not already submitted, have you attached your <b>risk register</b> ?	Yes
<b>For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)</b>	
Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review</b> ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
<b>For All Projects</b>	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCFs-Report@niras.com">BCFs-Report@niras.com</a> .	Yes
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	NA
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project</b> ?	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes