

Darwin ECTF M&E Programme: Final Report Review

Basic Project Details

Project Ref No.	14-031
Project Title	A market led conservation response to the domestic bird trade in Indonesia
UK Contractor Holder Institution	Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford
UK Partners Institution(s)	Oxford University Centre for the Environment
Host Country Partners Institution(s)	Burung (formerly BirdLife) Indonesia Pelestari Burung Indonesia (PBI) AC Nielsen Indonesia Aksenta
Darwin Grant Value	£ 196,438
Start/End date	July 2005 to March 2008
Review date	30 July 2008

1 Project Context

Bird keeping is a widespread hobby in Indonesia and caged song-birds are a major element in this. The trade in wild collected birds has had serious impact on natural bird populations, leading to extinction in the wild of some popular species. As an alternative to regulation, given the size of the market and the impossibility of effective control, the Project Leader developed this project to determine the feasibility of voluntary systems.

The project Purpose was: *To reduce the conservation impacts of the passion for bird keeping in Indonesia through the development of a market-led (substitution) mechanism.* Within this the main activities and outputs were focused on developing a strategic framework within which to promote captive bred birds and to study and analyse the size and economic attributes of bird-keeping, including the supply chain. In parallel with these two main outputs, training, strengthened networking and increased public awareness of the issues and potential were delivered.

The project found an enthusiastic local partner, which shared concerns of the conservation impacts of the bird trade. This provided the project with an “open-door” and it successfully achieved its Purpose, including a certification structure and system.

2 Support to the CBD (summary section)

This was a relatively small project in terms of the relative size of Indonesia and the magnitude of the captive bird trade. The main contribution has been in developing a voluntary mechanism that addresses the core problem of taking birds from the wild. It has also generated solid understanding of the social and cultural background to the trade and of the economic dimensions of the trade. This is of immense and direct importance to clearer understanding of sustainable use of biodiversity.

In terms of CITES issues, the certification system run by an interest based association seems to be far more effective than a regulatory mechanism, which would be expensive and ineffective given the scope of the trade. The project has made a significant contribution to the parallel reduction of demand through the cultural changes to the perceptions of conservation.

3 Project Partnerships

The project partnerships are a particularly successful element of this project. Interestingly, the government partner was a very minor player.

The assistance from AC Nielsen in market research information gathering has been crucial to the success of this project. As well as adding questions to their regular market surveys, the company provided substantial advice and skills training. The scope of the market research that was opened up by the connection with AC Nielsen was hugely beyond anything that the project itself, or indeed any Darwin project, could have undertaken. This partnership has been seminal to the project success and is worth many times more than even the value of the generous assistance given.

Burung Indonesia was the main national partner for the research component of the project. This partnership generally worked well and was an important part of project success. The later link to PBI was in some ways more important as it opened access to the bird-keeping community. PBI already had conservation concerns and the synergy between the project and PBI has been crucial to access to bird keepers.

The partnership with Aksenta concentrated on the development of certification. Networks into the conservation community were strengthened as a result of their inclusion and the participatory manner in which the certification system has been developed reflects the value of these networks.

In terms of government linkages, there has been good communication with the government conservation agency but they have been a passive partner. This was appropriate for the approach piloted by the project, one of voluntary certification. It is highly unlikely that a regulatory approach would have remotely similar potential to develop the conservation impact that is now possible through the certification approach.

4 Project Achievements

This was a highly relevant project from its inception and the enthusiastic response in country confirms the timeliness of the intervention. As discussed under partnerships, the effective capture of the synergy between the song bird association and the project is perhaps the most crucial element while the comprehensive market research that has been possible has provided substantial new knowledge on the social, economic and cultural dimensions of bird keeping in Indonesia.

The assumptions identified, correctly, in the project document was whether there would be a positive response from the song bird community. In the event, the partnership forged with PBI addressed this possible concern effectively.

4.1 Impact

The biodiversity impact from this project will occur after project completion. While addressing the issue of wild capture, this was not done directly and field monitoring was not required. Despite this, the potential impact is considerable. Firstly, there will be a measurable decrease in wild bird capture. Secondly, the approach developed – voluntary certification – appears to have considerable potential for application in similar circumstances. These are in essence a diffuse supply chain and huge demand.

4.2 Project Purpose/Outcomes

The project exceeded its original target outcomes by a considerable margin. In essence, the project aimed to examine the possibility of voluntary certification. Through its partnerships and in the depth understanding acquired of the socio-economics of song bird keeping, it has been able to reach agreement on a certification system and encouraged irreversible change in the attitude towards wild capture of caged birds.

The access to expert advice on market research has allowed a much more comprehensive and professional attitude survey than would normally be possible in a project of this type. This provides a valuable resource for further studies.

4.3 Project Outputs

Revision of the Logical Framework from the original project was discussed during the Midterm Review. Despite agreement, the project was to some degree overtaken by the rapid change in support from the bird song community, led by PBI. In terms of the original Outputs, all were exceeded. The most significant is the progress beyond a strategic framework (Output 1) to a certification system being developed ready for testing and application.

Public awareness (Output 5) as measured by the surveys has changed substantially but not all of this can be directly ascribed to the project. Nevertheless, the combination synergy developed amongst the partners has a result of the project owes a great deal to the project and has been instrumental in securing the change of attitude.

4.4 Project standard measures and publications

The change of the project to take account of the synergy offered by the partnerships affected the relevance of the standard measures originally proposed. The formal training targets for undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications were not achieved. This was due to lack of interest on the part of potential students and the project made repeated efforts to find suitable candidates.

Of the other standard measures, there has been some change in the number of radio interviews but this has been more than adequately balanced by the series of presentations. Furthermore, the commercial sponsorship secured from Fancy bird foods is a major achievement and much more valuable than just the single “dissemination network” recorded.

In terms of publications, once the articles still in preparation are accepted and published, the target will be exceeded. In addition, the value of the supply chain analysis for further research and publications is very large.

4.5 Technical and scientific achievements and co-operation

The quality of the socio-economic research undertaken by this project has been very high as noted previously. Much of the training related to market research and was supported by AC Nielsen. Consequently, it was of exceptional quality. Because the training was followed by supervised fieldwork, the project was able to both validate the skills transfer and provide additional training on an individual basis when required.

The cooperation amongst the partners was very good. Mention must also be made of the cooperation from the members’ song bird community themselves. Without this, the project would not have been able to achieve what it did.

4.6 Capacity building

The capacity of all the partner institutions was improved as a result of the project, especially through the objective information on the size and scope of the sector and the improved understanding of attitudes. This is a sustainable change.

At the same time, the network amongst the partners has created a system that will continue beyond the life of the project. The project was able to build on existing personal networks but without its resources and drive, it is hard to see that the networks would have been as dynamic and productive as they appear to be.

4.7 Sustainability and Legacy

This has proved to be a discrete project in that its outcome has achieved a sustainable endpoint. The change in understanding of conservation impacts in the song bird community seems to be irreversible. The certification system that has been developed is also irrevocable.

The information gathered and the understanding gained of the economic importance of the bird trade and of the cultural drivers gives scope for further studies but has already clarified the situation. Local partners can now take matters forwards.

Replication is a more difficult aspect to assess. There are highly specific factors concerning the partnerships. Despite this, the approach itself has value in other countries, provided an appropriate situation exists.

Key elements seem to be:

- Strong and effective national partners representing stakeholders;
- Solidly professional partners on technical issues; and
- A willingness on the part of government to adopt a relaxed approach to new concepts.

5 Lessons learned, dissemination and communication

The main lesson learned from this project is the importance of being sufficiently confident to press forward with new strategies when they present opportunity to further the broad objectives of the project. Equally important is to be flexible in adapting project design to accommodate these opportunities and to revise the approach when circumstances dictate, as with the formal training.

The project has made every effort to acknowledge the Darwin support and the initiative is well known amongst professionals and the conservation community. It is not widely known amongst the general public although the use of the logo on some of the widely disseminated material may have helped a little.

Communication amongst partners was excellent and open, with regular electronic contact as well as visits.

Dissemination of project findings has been wide spread to the extent that the project has supported PBI in making the bird song community aware of the need for captive breeding and changing attitudes to support this. The commercial sponsorship agreement was well targeted and very helpful in this regard in securing a widespread message.

The development of the voluntary certification approach as an alternative to legislation has generated considerable interest in the international ornithological community and the idea and results are being widely disseminated to this group. This should be helpful in stimulating interest and pilot testing elsewhere in the world.

6 Monitoring and evaluation

The project undertook internal monitoring effectively and its reports were clear and concise. Responses were given in full to comments raised on reports.

The MTR was appreciated and although this proposed revising the Logical Framework, this was not done due to changes in project scope, as discussed in section 4.3.

7 Project Expenditure

The project underspent by £ 32,600. There is a line of text missing in the Final Report confirming this. The tables would have benefited from showing overall totals. More explanation would also be useful but there appears to have been some issues with bookkeeping for the project making precise details hard to come by.

Year	Salaries		Other		Total	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
2005-06	22,895	19,847	42,831	39,790	65,726	59,637
2006-07	25,008	22,639	40,947	38,521	65,955	61,160
2007-08	25,653	13,739	37,949	28,147	63,602	41,886
Total	73,556	56,225	121,727	106,458	195,283	162,683
Underspend		17,331		15,269		32,600

8 General Assessment

This has been a highly successful project which more than met its original targets. It was well delivered and benefited from highly effective and complementary partnerships. That with AC Nielsen was particularly noteworthy as it enabled the project to have access to highly professional market research expertise and systems for information gathering and training.

The basic certification system that has been developed to support the captive breeding of songbirds is a useful product of wide application. The combination of the project funds and expertise with the interest and aspirations of the bird keeping and bird song competition communities gave this project huge synergy. It represents excellent value for money for the Initiative.

9 Key facts for project publicity

- Captive breeding of song birds is possible and can be adopted to reduce pressure on wild populations;
- Experienced breeders seem able to achieve breeding success with most species given time and care;
- The economic benefits of captive breeding in terms of benefits along the supply chain appear to outweigh those from wild capture;
- There are few or no livelihood losses from moving to captive breeding, which creates ample opportunities for a range of people in different locations and with differing skills. The capture process itself has no livelihood value;
- Understanding the cultural background to use of biodiversity brings opportunities to develop sustainable systems that are consistent with culture and acceptable to stakeholders;
- Voluntary certification seems to be readily acceptable when it is developed in an open and participatory manner and responds to the needs of the system under review;
- There is an important and increasing awareness of conservation issues across the range of social classes developing quite rapidly in Indonesia.