

British American Tobacco Biodiversity Partnership Capacity Development Programme Evaluation (2006-2010)

The aim of Earthwatch's Capacity Development programme is to offer emerging scientists practical experience as part of a scientific research team – to gain new skills, learn new ideas and network with their peers. Its aim is to build the capacity of not only the individual but the organisation/institution for whom they work.

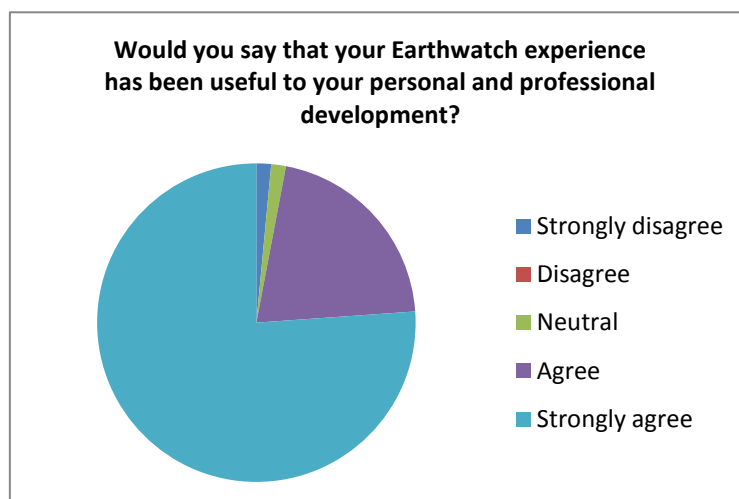
In the past 5 years the British American Tobacco Biodiversity Partnership (BATBP) has supported 170 individuals to join over 10 Earthwatch projects across the world and gain this experience. An evaluation was essential to measure the impact of the programme and the training experiences on the individuals who have participated and their organisations. The results have been used to gauge the success of the programme and inform future development of the partnership and other Earthwatch programmes.

In September 2010 all BATBP funded individuals who participated on a project between 2006 and 2010 were asked to undertake a short online survey (using Survey Monkey). 67 fellows completed the survey, the results of which can be seen below. Further interviews were then conducted with both the fellows and their organisations to build up more detailed case studies.

Results

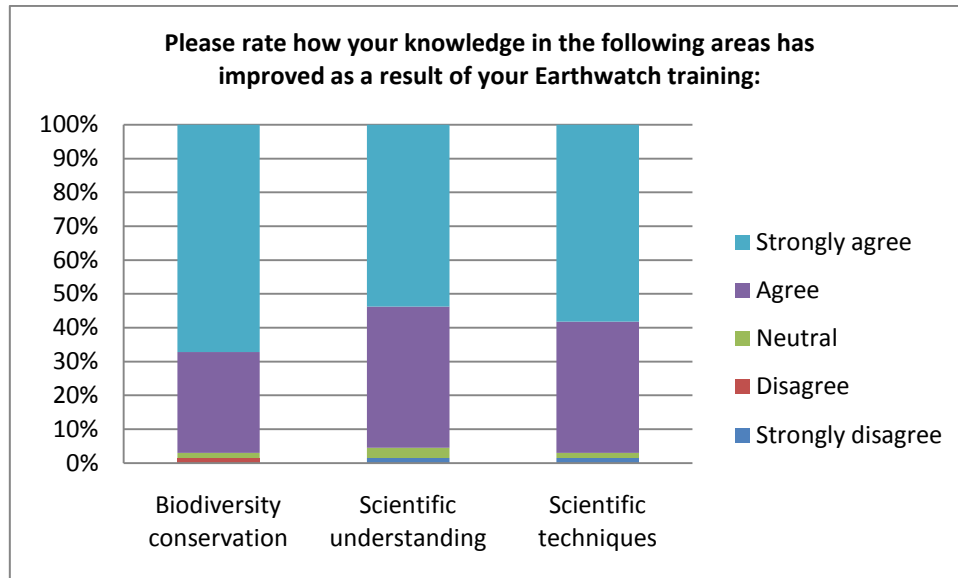
The following charts illustrate the results of the survey and quotes have been taken from either survey answers or one of the interviews conducted.

Personal Impacts

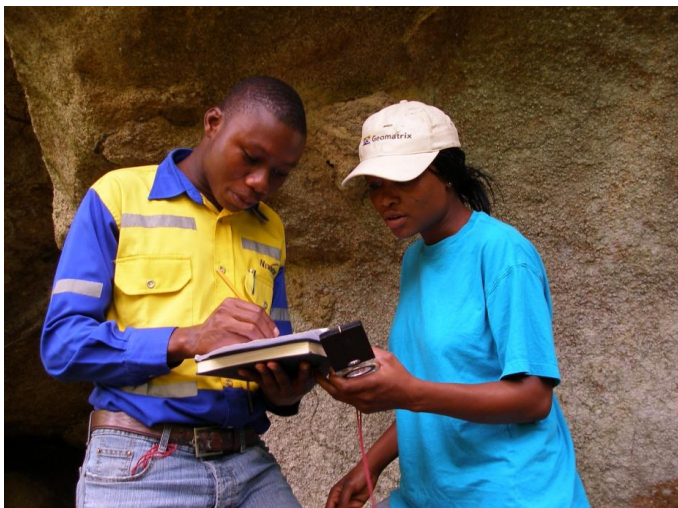


97% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that their Earthwatch training experience has been useful to their personal and professional development.

Participants were then asked questions relating to the skills and knowledge they gained on their projects.



Scientific understanding, knowledge of biodiversity conservation and knowledge of scientific techniques were each found to be improved as a result of the training by at least 95% of participants. 99% of participants have put the skills they learnt into use since the project.



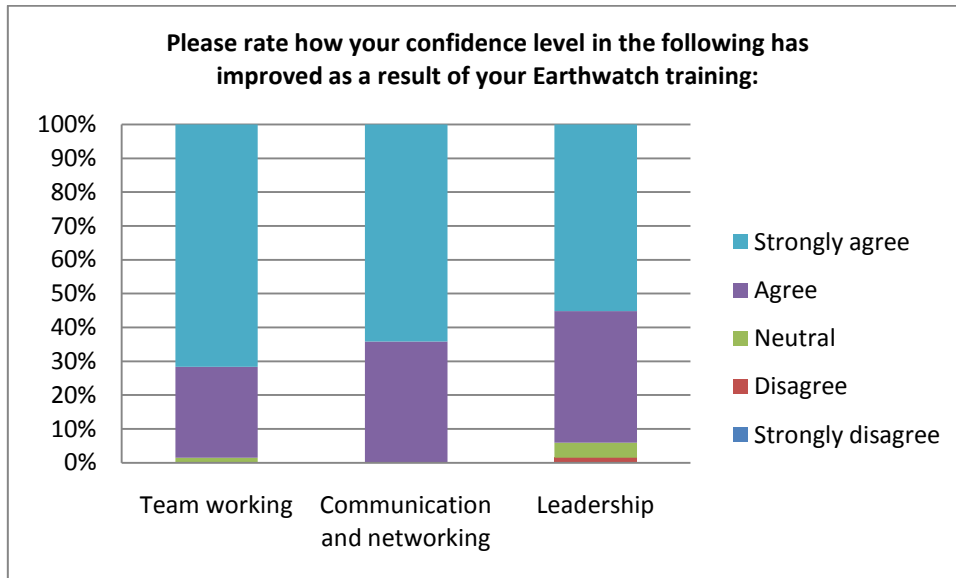
“The programme initiated me into the conservation circle and taught me skills I will always need in my career as a field biologist”

Fidelis Atuo – Ecology and Conservation of the White-necked Rockfowl, 2010

Ghana Rockfowl participants entering nest data

"I applied the skills and knowledge I learned from the Earthwatch program in the field. Additionally, I passed the skills to local students in South Sumatra by holding a workshop"

Chun Chia (Joe) Huang - South East Asian Bat Conservation, 2008



"Working in a diverse team of individuals with varying expertise and experience was important because I knew that not only could I learn from their wealth of experience but it would enable me to enhance my communication and listening skills"

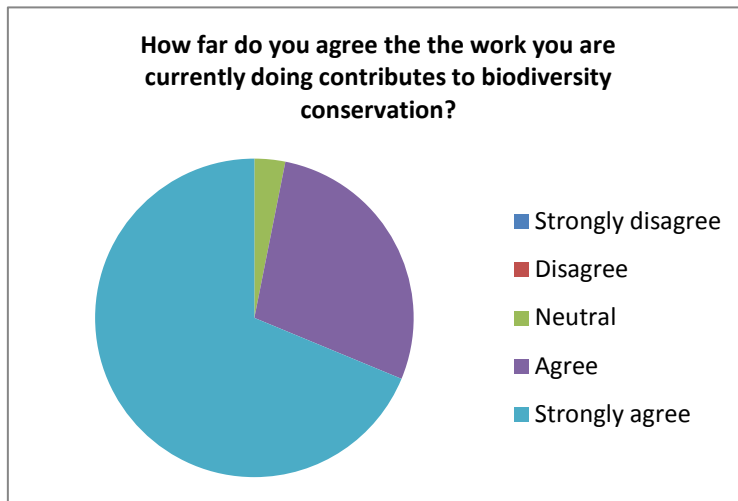
Bose Kosemani – Samburu Wildlife and Communities, Kenya, 2009



"The Earthwatch brings together scientists and people from the industry. We learn to understand each other and make new friends"

Olga Galanina, Belarus Wetlands, 2009

Participants collecting samples, Belarus 2007

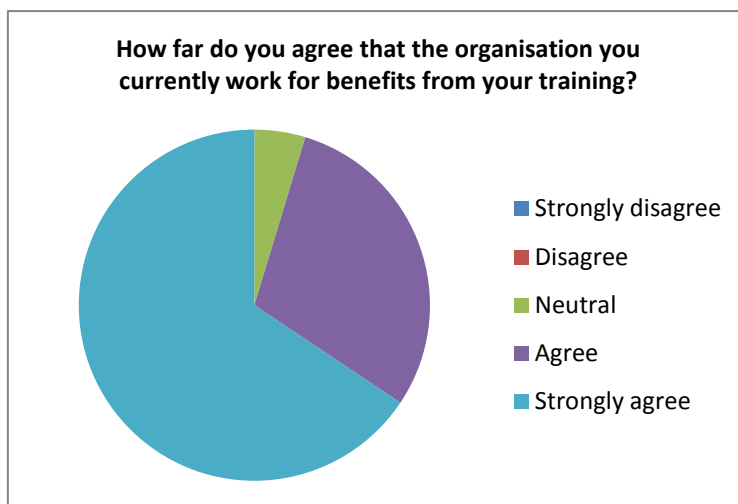


97% agreed or strongly agreed that the work that they do contributes to biodiversity conservation. Many participants commented on how their training had helped them to gain the skills needed to start their own conservation research or project.

"My experience with Earthwatch equipped me with the capacity to effectively participate in the ecological baseline survey undertaken on my project on Biodiversity Management in cocoa farms, Ghana. It has really built my professional career and helped me focus on biodiversity conservation"

Eli Amemo – Mount Mulanje Ecological Monitoring, 2009

Organisational Impact



Participants were asked how far they agreed that the organisation they work for has benefitted from their training and 95% strongly agreed or agreed that their organisation has benefitted.

"As a result of my training the organisation (Lewa Wildlife Conservancy) is now more involved in conservation of some endangered species manatee, sea turtle and marine mammals"

Mary N. Mwololo, Samburu Wildlife and Communities, 2008

All nominating organisations were asked to answer a few questions on what the individual/s they nominated gained from the training experience, if it had benefitted their personal or professional development and how it had affected the capacity of their organisation. The National Conservation Research Center (NCRC), Ghana, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Ecofinder Kenya and National Museums of Kenya have all nominated individuals who have gone on to be funded by the BATBP and participate on an Earthwatch project.

"Emma Lanyo's field experience has helped the organization in terms of improving the skills on plants identification and application of the same in our work. It has increased the number of data collectors, especially female members, and has helped the members of the organization to know the use of GPS during monitoring. As a result of her new skills and confidence she now takes the lead in data monitoring and collection in the field"

Leonard Akwany - Ecofinder Kenya



Irene Madindou from National Museums of Kenya working with the local community in Samburu 2007

"The Programme has contributed greatly to the National Museums of Kenya research capacity by exposing research staff to field work and enabling them to benefit from the guidance of experienced scientists. It has also enabled them establish a network of peers that has contributed

positively to the work and reputation of this institution. The Capacity Building Programme has greatly boosted our research capacity – I am honoured to be associated with your organization”

Geoffrey Mwchala, National Museums of Kenya

“It is not always easy to find international trainings in Madagascar as an island, therefore the trainings offered to our people always helped us to enhance the knowledge and experiences of our team in order to achieve our conservation goal, i.e, saving species from extinction with the local communities whose involvement is crucial. International trainings outside of Madagascar are always a great opportunity, because they can compare on what the others are doing and new techniques. Upon their return to Madagascar, they always told us how the others do on similar activities that we are also do here in Madagascar. Robert now does the Ecological monitoring of Durrell.... It is hard to measure motivation, but I can tell that the training has drastically help them to be more confident. Although Durrell is not a big organization, our staff’s experiences are always needed by the Ministry of Environment and have a big impact on our country!”

Dr Jonah Ratzimbazafy, Durrel Wildlife Conservation Trust – Madagascar Programme

“Earthwatch has been a big influence to the persons we nominated, who benefited from increased confidence in conducting their own field research by providing them with perspective and direction.



Measuring Manatee skulls

It also gave them some very real skills which they have been able to put into practise at NCRC and other organisations in Ghana. Eg. Kweku Aduse-Poku who attended South Africa's hidden species and Cocoa farming and biodiversity in Ghana, later become a PI assistant on the Cocoa project and later formed an NGO for butterfly conservation in Ghana. Patrick Adjewodah who attended Rock fowl project in Cameroon, later became a PI on the Rockfowl project in Ghana and a leading scientist Ghana on various biodiversity assessments. Oke Atitola Oleteju is now leading a manatee research project in Nigeria based on the data methodologies he learnt on the Manatee project in Ghana”

Victor M. Mombu – NCRC, Ghana

Case studies of BATBP funded fellows

Abdoulie Sawo, West African Manatee Conservation, 2009

Abdoulie works as an assistant park warden for the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management in The Gambia and despite his role, had not had the opportunity to carry out field work before. He described the fieldwork as the most important part of the Earthwatch project and said *"It was really useful for my professional development and I have been able to train other people"*.



"It's REAL fieldwork. I was able to learn so much, things we don't have in my country"

Manatee spotting by boat

Abdoulie agrees that his scientific understanding and knowledge of biodiversity conservation and scientific techniques have improved as a result of the project. He praised the team work on the project and considers the set up of the teams an important component in the participant's ability to gain 'soft' skills. He described how each participant had a responsibility within the team which allowed them to work responsibly while being coordinated by a team leader. As a result of this his team working, communication and leadership skills have all improved.

Abdoulie expected a lot from the project but found that the lead scientist was very useful and helped him achieve all that he had hoped to. He found another trainer on the project, Karen, particularly useful and said that she gave excellent presentations. He said that he was able to learn so much from what the field staff were doing, and that the knowledge and experience of research in other countries that he gained could be applied in his own country.

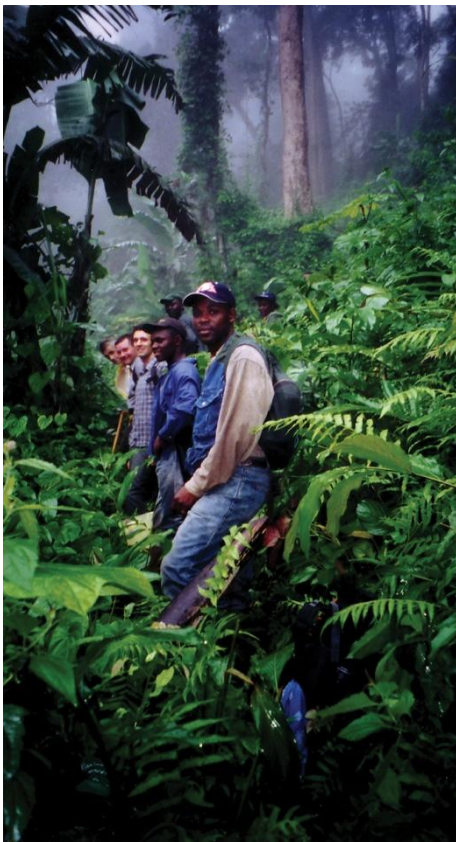
On his return from the project he continued to work for the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management but his role has changed to include project management. He is working on a project funded by the ICUN aiming to set up a biosphere reserve that will encourage locals to manage their own resources. Part of his new role includes working on a Manatee awareness campaign and working, with the rest of his organisation, to create national parks in The Gambia. Abdoulie finds

that the soft skills he acquired on the Earthwatch project have been particularly useful with this *"because to create the parks we must talk to people and convince them of the benefits of the park, like ecotourism."*

Arnold Okoni-Williams, Ecology and Conservation of the White-necked Rockfowl, 2010

Arnold is a lecturer at the University of Sierra Leone and a volunteer for the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone. He has been involved in research relating to Rock Fowl since 1996 but welcomed the opportunity to develop his research skills and increase his understanding of a different approach to Rock Fowl conservation. He found the project changed his view of community involvement in conservation.

Arnold found that during the project, and particularly in the workshops, he developed his team working skills. He experienced working with a range of stakeholders, including government departments, and said that, for him, one of the most important parts of the experience was meeting with the local people, including traditional elders, to popularise Rock Fowl conservation at the local level.



The project gave Arnold the opportunity to network with other scientists. He said *"I cherish the opportunity of getting to know, and networking with, scientists and conservationists working with Rock Fowl in other countries"*. He found the other team members were cooperative and friendly and was impressed by the Lead Scientist's commitment to the project.

"The fact that people from different countries within the range of the species met and shared ideas and experiences was an excellent learning experience"

Participants heading out into the field on the Rock fowl project

Arnold is working towards Rock Fowl conservation in Sierra Leone through population status surveys, breeding site protection, involving local communities by raising awareness of the need to protect the species and conserve its habitat, and building capacity and encouraging participation within communities. He believes that these conservation actions will enhance the population status of Rock Fowl in Sierra Leone. It is also hoped that a group of the project participants are going to be involved in developing a national action plan for the Rock Fowl in Liberia. Arnold says that they developed the idea during the project and resources to carry out the venture are currently being sought.

His role at the University of Sierra Leone has not changed since the project but Arnold thinks that while teaching he will now be able provide additional examples of field orientated approaches to conservation of threatened species based on his Earthwatch experience.