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SECTION A: PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Project Title:	Tarsiers of The Philippines			
Principal Investigator (PI):	Name:	Sarah Lahti	College/Dept:	CACE
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List all Co-Investigators below, including those from other institutions:

Name	Email	Highest Degree	University/ College

1. Abstract - Please provide a concise summary of the proposed research in plain language (max. 150 words).

This proposal seeks to build public awareness about the small primate known as the tarsier, and their categorization as an endangered species due mainly to habitat destruction and hunting. Media has the power to shape opinions of people, including young people, and policy makers. Through the use of photography and digital video, the conservation efforts of tarsiers in The Philippines will be highlighted, as well as the destructive forces of the slow creep of urbanization of tarsiers' forest habitat.

Tarsiers are the second-smallest primate in the world, with characteristically huge eyes, heightened sense of hearing, incredible jumping capabilities, and they are (unusually for primates) totally carnivorous, their diets mainly consisting of insects. Tarsiers' shy, solitary way of life is threatened by human development, however people can also play a role in ensuring their continued existence. It is this dichotomy that will be explored in this project.

2. Time Period – are you requesting a one-year or two-year grant?

one-year grant two-year grant

3. Students – Does the project contribute to student research training?

Yes, describe briefly

No

4. Budget - What is the total budget requested for this proposal over the entire research period?

20,000 Dhs

5. Facilities and Equipment - Are you requesting space for a research assistant(s) and/or special equipment? If so, please describe briefly:

No

6. Ethical Clearance - Does this proposed research involve human or animal subjects?

Yes – you will be required to apply for ethical clearance through the Research Ethics Committee if your proposal is successful

No

SECTION B: DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Please provide a detailed project description using the six (6) section headings below. Please write in plain language, limiting the use of jargon and acronyms.

1. Statement of the research problem(s)

(maximum 400 words)

The next 20 to 30 years are a crucial period for many of the world's most vulnerable animal species. The widespread, and seemingly neverending process of turning forest into farmland in developing countries throughout the world is having a grave, massive impact on the indigenous animal life. As humanity's population continues to grow and spread, what can be done to raise awareness of, and respect for, indigenous animals?

Through examining the issues facing the Philippine tarsier population, it is hoped that a greater sense of the pressing need to conserve their populations can be imparted upon target audiences. These shy, nocturnal, territorial, little primates need quiet forests to forage for food and live their lives. Unfortunately, human encroachment has caused their populations to dwindle since the 1960's. There are still a few islands left in South Asia with wild tarsier populations. In The Philippines, these islands include parts of Mindanao, Bohol,

Leyte, Samar, and other islands.

There are some recognized conservation efforts that are ongoing in The Philippines. One organization with significant tarsier conservation programs in The Philippines, The Philippine Tarsier Organization, based in Bohol, has an internationally recognized profile for their work. Conservation work is also carried out to a certain extent by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources within the Philippine federal government. This project proposes to make contact with individuals from within both organizations, as well as other international researchers, with the intent to interview them for a final product of an informational digital video piece.

Having traveled enough through the Mozambican countryside and seen firsthand the constant, daily destruction of kilometers upon kilometers of forestland by villagers through the use of the "slash and burn" technique to clear the land for human use (agricultural or residential), and seen firsthand what is going on with the elephant population in rural northern Mozambique, as a result, I have a very bleak, very clear understanding of the magnitude and speed of the destruction of primary elephant habitat and indigenous animal populations going on in that particular country. It is as a direct result of those experiences in Africa that this proposal regarding The Philippine tarsier is being put forth.

While there is a large amount of understanding and empathy for the financial success of local landholders in countries with forests sustaining endangered creatures, the feeling is, that, to a certain extent, these people can defend themselves. As humans compete with animals for natural resources, who speaks for the tarsiers, defenseless against this systemic destruction of habitat?

2. Literature review – a concise and current review of scholarly research or important information relating to your research topic
(maximum 600 words)

1. Arboleda, I. (2008). *Tarsius syrichta*. In: IUCN 2008. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Retrieved 1 January 2009.

The IUCN is included at the top of this literature review because it is the authoritative list and classification site of which animals species are considered threatened, endangered, near extinct, extinct, etc.

2. "Efforts on to save tarsier existence", Business World, January 29, 1998.

This article is included in this literature review mainly because it discusses the Philippine Tarsier Foundation, the most well-known and well respected tarsier conservation foundation in The Philippines.

3. "Philippine tarsier known to commit suicide in captivity", Philippine Inquirer May 31, 1999

This news article discusses, amongst other issues, possible reasons why tarsiers have never been able to be kept or bred in captivity, including their extreme sensitivity to sounds.

4. "Tiny primate uses 'private channel to talk'". Al Jazeera, 2012-02-08.

This news article goes a bit more in depth about tarsiers' ability to hear as well as communicate at very high frequencies inaudible to the human ear, and most other animals' hearing.

5. "The Philippine Tarsier", IJsselstein, Friday, 18 May 2001

This news article discusses various basic facts about the different tarsiers within the Philippines. It lists the different types of tarsiers found on the different islands within the Philippines, in addition to discussing the controversy surrounding classification of these tarsiers, and whether each of these different types is in fact a separate species.

6. Querijero, D. A., (2005-04-24). "RP tarsier: A new star of the biodiversity world".

This news article covers general facts about the Philippine tarsier, including the issues occurring when people attempt to keep tarsiers in captivity, or as pets. It also discusses some of the general locations within the Philippines where tarsiers still exist in the wild.

7. Home ranges, spatial movements and habitat associations of the Philippine tarsier (*Tarsius syrichta*) in Corella, Bohol", I. Neri-Arboleda, P. Stott, N. P. Arboleda, *Journal of Zoology*, Volume 257, Issue 3, pages 387–402, July 2002

This scientific article describes, amongst other things, the population density of tarsiers in the wild, in their natural habitat. A single female's home range, for example, is over two hectares of land, which is a lot of land for a single tarsier. This fact alone presents a challenge to tarsier conservation simply because so much land is needed to maintain a relatively small number of tarsiers.

8. "Tarsier Primate—The Littlest Alien", Pure Nature Specials, AlliantContent, Feb 13, 2013.

This video comes the closest in tone and approach to the proposed project. It gives an entire overview and history of the tarsier in the Philippines, and discusses conservation issues. This proposed project is different to that in that the tarsier on other Philippine islands will be highlighted.

3. Goals of the research – anticipated outcomes including potential problem solutions, or contribution to knowledge or understanding of issues
(maximum 400 words)

The goals of this RIF creative project are to further an awareness of the population loss of the Philippine tarsier, to build a further public appreciation for individual conservation efforts of the Philippine tarsier, and to explore the issues surrounding the struggle for the natural land resources that make up the Philippine tarsier's natural habitat. The target audience for this RIF grant is an English speaking audience, and the anticipated outcome of the research is a documentary style, short digital video (probably approx. 10 to 15 minutes long).

The public needs positive role models in the form of individuals making a difference at the grassroots/local level, and that information needs to be disseminated. The goal, then is to create a beautiful, informative, intelligent look at the issue, people, places, surrounding the Philippine tarsier: to compile that into a digital video, and to disseminate that openly and freely on the internet in various locations (i.e., youtube, vimeo, and various social media sites).

One more specific goal, then, is to make an effort to focus on the tarsiers located on the other Philippine

islands, rather than exclusively on the tarsier population in Bohol, which has been studied and photo and video-documented quite a bit already. The other locations may turn out to be more remote, which will of course present some additional logistical challenges which will have to be accounted for. The aim is to create more of a photo and video record of these for an international audience, as it appears that no such visual recordings exist on the internet in the public domain currently for free viewing with regards to tarsiers on the other islands. In that way this project is anticipated to add new knowledge to the existing public domain.

There are several anticipated challenges to creating a finalized video. Equipment and logistical issues in the field would be several. When in production on location on an independent, documentary-style piece, with a crew of one, sound and lighting are almost always an issue. This will require a constant attention to detail in terms of the shooting locations, and a need to acquire quality sound during the shoots, as studio overdubbing, etc. will not be possible for the most part, due to logistical issues, budget, and time constraints involved with this project.

Of course another issue is simply getting the high quality footage of tarsiers in their natural environment, as they will be hard to locate, and hard to shoot. Also, close human interaction with the tarsiers needs to be limited to approximately 5 minutes per tarsier per day, (due to the stress this causes the animals), so it is anticipated that shooting will take place over a period of time. Bad weather may definitely have an effect on the shooting schedule, as well.

4. Research methodology – anticipated methods to be used in your research process, including main research questions, data gathering, documentation or analysis planned
(maximum 400 words)

This proposal will require a lot of research done from Dubai in advance of field work, through email, internet, the telephone, etc, in order to connect with the appropriate Philippino and other international experts. Then, this project will require either two shorter trips to the Philippines, or one longer one, depending on several logistical factors. It is anticipated that the first field work will be carried out on the island of Bohol, with Carlito Pizarra, if possible. He is a local expert on tarsiers, and considered a Philippine national treasure for his role in the conservation of tarsiers on Bohol. From there, the proposal is to go further afield, probably to locations on either Siargao, or Samar, or both.

This digital video is anticipated to contain at least one, and hopefully more than one, face to face interview with local conservators within known and locally and internationally accepted initiatives and organizations. It is also anticipated to contain first hand footage of tarsiers, as well as footage exploring issues/activities that

stress/endorse their population—ie, footage of land clearing, and other footage. The video will aim for a balanced view of the stated problem, with an eye on possible future solutions.

There is already a very well-done video on the internet discussing all the general information concerning the Philippine tarsier and its habitat loss on Bohol, it is mentioned in more detail in the literature review. So, again, this project will be geared more specifically towards the issues as they apply to the tarsiers on other Philippine islands, probably Siargao and/or Samar.

It is anticipated that two to four research assistants will be employed, the expectation is for two to three Filipinos to act as guides and/or translators where needed while on location.

5. Research schedule and deliverables – what are the major phases of your research anticipated, and what do you realistically plan to accomplish at what stage

February 2014

Human subjects ethics committee review/pass. Begin researching various Philippine and international experts, via internet.

March 2014

Providing ethics committee pass, then begin contacting various Philippine and international experts, via email and telephone.

April 2014

Begin planning first field work itinerary in full detail, taking into account local and international contacts that have been established, and their schedules.

July-August 2014

First field work conducted on location. Philippino assistants hired and signed contracts with them handled. Raw digital video human interview(s), tarsier, and other footage in the field taken.

September-November 2014

Continue any needed follow up coorrespondence. ZU research assistant hired and contract signed. Finalize a rough cut of the video, seek third party feedback on it. Plan final field location shoot if needed.

December 2014

Final on location video footage taken if needed. Final video editing handled. The deliverable, which is the finalized digital video, is disseminated online as per proposal. All paperwork in and finalized by end of December. Any follow up contacts with international and Philippino collaborators handled.

6. Budget narrative – describe and justify your main budget items. An itemized budget spreadsheet will also be attached to this proposal

Budget Narrative

It is anticipated that the majority of the research proposal budget will be spent on international travel for the purpose of conducting primary interviews, and gathering necessary raw digital video footage.

International travel DXB-The Philippines roundtrip, 1 trip at 17,500, or broken into 2 trips if necessary. Remote locations, as well as locations not serviced by the ZU travel office are anticipated, as well, the expectation is that there will be a need to rent a 4 wheel drive vehicle to reach remote rural forest locations. As well, there may be a need to purchase misc. expedition equipment, ie a tent, etc.

