

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

Project Ref No: 18-016

Project Title: Darwin Initiative to Enhance an Established Marine Protected Area System, Cayman Islands

Country(ies): Cayman Islands

UK Organisation: School of Ocean Sciences Bangor University, Wales (SOS)

Collaborator(s): Department Of the Environment Cayman Islands Government (DOE) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Project Leader: Dr John R Turner

Report date: October 31

Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)

Project website: to be established

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

Activities 1.1 -2.4 set for Q1 and Q2 have all been addressed as follows:

1.1 Steering Group Meeting 1 with project partners, introduction of new personnel and establish Darwin project in DOE (Q1). *Completed in Grand Cayman. Also general DOE staff meeting held at which project was presented to all DOE staff by Gina Ebanks-Petrie (DOE Director), John Turner (PL- SOS Bangor), Croy McCoy (Darwin Fellow, DOE) and James Byrne (TNC) and involvement encouraged. Ministerial representatives present.*

1.2 Stakeholder meeting Marine Conservation Board with Watersports Association to introduce project and plans and incorporate involvement, participation and feedback (Q1). *Completed in Grand Cayman (Tim Austin, Director Research DOE), Turner, McCoy.*

1.3 Link with Darwin 14051 and via review of BAP and GIS Marine habitat maps (Cayman) (Q1) *Completed with DOE project 14051 personnel in Grand Cayman (Ebanks-Petrie, Austin, McCoy, M. Cottam, J. Olynik, and Turner –SOS Bangor and with Byrne –TNC).*

1.4 Assess existing long term data sets and 1970s-1980s photographic images from Ogden (Q1). *Data collated but only briefly analysed to date (McCoy DOE, Gall-SOS Bangor).*

1.5 Initial Ecological gap Analysis assessment (Marine Conservation Workshop 1) (Q1). *Completed, including additional reef resilience course and workshop at The Nature Conservancy, Key Largo, Florida (for Austin, McCoy, & GIS tools workshop for Olynik).*

1.6 Steering Group Meeting 2: To finalise research study objectives and methodologies (Q1). *Completed in Grand Cayman (Ebanks-Petrie, Austin, McCoy, Olynik, Cottam, Turner, Byrne)*

2.1 Reef resilience video & photo surveys at 55 permanent sites – all islands, specifically to compare with July 2009 pilot and to assess recovery from October 2009 bleaching event, includes in field training. Involvement of Bangor MSc students.(Q2). *Surveys completed (McCoy, Gibb – DOE & , Pisani- SOS Bangor, + Campbell & Barton) Reported in MSc theses by Jessica Campbell (SOS Bangor) and Adam Barton (St Andrews Universities).*

2.2 Fish biomass survey within and outside MPA at selected sites all islands (to compare with Jan – April 09 pilot), includes in field training. (Q2) *(Survey completed McCoy, Gibb, Blumenthal, (DOE) Pisani (SOS Bangor).*

2.3 ½ year report to Darwin Initiative and interim Report on benefits of MPA (Q3) *Half year report herein. Interim report on benefits under preparation.*

2.4 Stakeholder meeting Marine Conservation Board with Watersports Association to promote results illustrating benefits of current MPA , and to identify threats (Q2) . *Completed in Grand Cayman (Tim Austin Director Research DOE), Turner, McCoy in combination with 1.2.*

In addition: Governor of Cayman Islands is hosting reception with Prime Minister and other Ministers at Governors Residence 26th October. Presentations by Governor, Ebanks Petrie (DOE) and Turner (PL -SOS Bangor) , followed by media day.

New research component being developed with Dr Andrew Baker's laboratory, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami on Connectivity between Islands, deep and shallow reefs & protected sites.

Research papers accepted for presentation:

Dromard, C.R., McCoy, C., Turner, J. R. *Evaluation of marine protected area's performances: the case of Little Cayman and Cayman Brac, Cayman Islands.* GCFI San Juan, Puerto Rico 1st -6th November 2010.

Turner, J.R., McCoy, C., Dromard, C., Pisani, N., Gall, S., Henshall, B., Campbell, J., Barton, A. *Established Marine Protected Areas enhance the resilience of Caymanian coral reefs.* ISRS Symposium Reefs in a Changing Environment, 13-17th December 2010, Wageningen, Netherlands.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments 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.

The Darwin Project Support Officer post was specified in July and has been advertised during August, receiving 76 applications. The shortlist was drawn up during September and candidates are currently being invited for interview, and we expect to have the person in post in Bangor by 1st December and then out to Cayman for 1st January. This process has taken much longer than planned, partly due to problems encountered in drawing up job specification for approval within pay band structure, and secondly because of the large number of applicants and withdrawal of one of the best short listed candidates. In the interim, a temporary post was filled by Natasha Pisani to undertake field surveys in June-August (3 months salary). 2 further temporary posts will be filled during November and December, one to assist with data analysis, Geographical Information System, underwater photographic image databasing, and to assist with web site development in Bangor, and another to undertake algal biomass underwater surveys in Cayman with Croy McCoy, thereby keeping the project outputs, and especially field surveys on target while the longer term post is appointed. As a result, we do not anticipate a significant underspend by the end of the financial year, although one will show for the end of the second quarter.

The HD underwater video system has been purchased, and the digital still camera system is ordered (£4807).

Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The above situation has been explained to Eilidh Young, who has agreed with our strategy of using salary payments to cover field assistants to maintain the flow of field research and data analysis during the interim period until a permanent appointment has been made. The post will be from period of appointment to March 2013, and hence will be less than the 3 years originally stated as a result of salary payments to interim temporary Research Assistants.

Discussed with LTS: Yes, in October 2010 (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance n/a

3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No

If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carryforward request: £

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

NO

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**