



Darwin Initiative Annual Report



Important note: To be completed with reference to the Reporting Guidance Notes for Project Leaders:
it is expected that this report will be about 10 pages in length, excluding annexes

Submission Deadline: 30 April

Darwin Project Information

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| Project Reference | 19026 |
| Project Title | Implementing a Darwin Initiative Biodiversity Action Plan for Ascension Island |
| Host Country/ies | Ascension Island (UK Overseas Territory) |
| Contract Holder Institution | University of Exeter |
| Partner institutions | Ascension Island Government Conservation Department (AIGCD) Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Queen Mary University of London (QMU) Royal Botanical Gardens, (RBG Kew) Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) University of Lund (UoL) |
| Darwin Grant Value | £299,480 |
| Start/end dates of project | 01/07/2012 – 31/12/2014 |
| Reporting period (eg Apr 2013 – Mar 2014) and number (eg Annual Report 1, 2, 3) | 01/05/2013 – 30/04/2014 Annual Report 2 |
| Project Leader name | Dr Annette C. Broderick & Prof. Brendan J. Godley |
| Project website | www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/projects/biodiversity-action-plan/ www.facebook.com/AscensionIslandConservation https://twitter.com/AIGConservation |
| Report author(s) and date | Dr Nicola Weber & Dr Sam Weber, Dr Annette C. Broderick & Prof. Brendan J. Godley (April 2014) |

1. Project Rationale



The Problem: The UK Overseas Territory of Ascension Island is an isolated volcanic peak in the South Atlantic Ocean. The island is small (just 34 sq. miles), yet supports exceptional biodiversity, including at least 55 endemic species of plants, fish and invertebrates. The island also supports the largest green turtle and seabird nesting colonies in the tropical Atlantic. However, as with many oceanic islands, Ascension has a significant invasive species problem.

Priority: The primary aim of this Darwin project, which commenced in July 2012, is to design and implement a **national Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)** for Ascension Island that will integrate information on the spatial distribution of biodiversity and threats and set out clear mitigation measures and targets for sustained progress in the long term. The BAP will comprise of multiple Species Action Plans (SAPs) with defined targets to promote the recovery of populations of endemic and threatened species including actions to increase their protection through legislative changes and the protection of key habitats. Action plans will also be produced and implemented for key invasive species and major habitat types.



Ascension Island has a small, but expanding, government-run Conservation Department. At the start of the project in 2012 there were just three core government-funded and 4 project funded staff, but largely as a result of this project and the highlighted need for increased capacity to meet the targets being agreed on in the BAP, this has doubled to 6 core government-funded staff, 6 project staff and a further 3 have been recruited for the new Darwin Initiative-funded marine sustainability

project that has just commenced. The aim of the BAP project was to increase local capacity to carry out research to further inform the development and implementation of the BAP – an objective that is well on its way to being fulfilled. In addition to research and restoration work, campaigns have been initiated to increase awareness among key stakeholders and the general public as to the importance of the biodiversity of Ascension Island (detailed later in the report).

2. Project Partnerships

The idea for the project was jointly conceived at a meeting between AIGCD and project partners at RBG, Kew in 2011, hence from the outset it has been a highly collaborative one. During this meeting project partners, all of whom have long standing interests and commitments to biodiversity conservation both in Ascension Island and also in the other UK OTs, discussed the aims and objectives of the project and the expertise that they could bring to it. At the time, AIGCD did not have the capacity to put together the grant application and so they approached the team at the University of Exeter (Dr Annette Broderick and Prof. Brendan Godley) with whom they have had strong ties for over 10 years to prepare the proposal in consultation with project partners. The ultimate aim has always been to build capacity within AIGCD and to lay foundations for the work to continue to move forward after completion of the project. However, the relationships with project partners will be sustained long into the future as the targets for the conservation of Ascension's biodiversity are being put together and agreed on by all partners with a framework in the BAP detailing the required partner participation to achieve the targets over the coming years. To this end, coordination of inputs and activities by the various partners is carried out through AIGCD by the DRFs based on Ascension Island and all aspects are overseen by project leads at the University of Exeter via regular email and Skype contacts, written reports and annual visits to Ascension. In terms of specific project outputs, the project partners have signed contracts with the University of Exeter, committing to the following responsibilities:

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (**CEH**), Dr Alan Gray: to lead on training, research and educational activities pertaining to invertebrates and invasive plants, including leading a training workshop on the taxonomy of these species.

Queen Mary University of London (**QMU**), Dr Jeff Duckett: to lead on training, research and educational activities pertaining to lower plant species (bryophytes), including leading a training workshop on these species.

Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew (**RBG Kew**), Dr Colin Clubbe: to lead on training, research and educational activities pertaining to higher plant species, including leading a training workshop in endangered plant culture techniques.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (**RSPB**), Dr Steffen Oppel: to contribute to the training, research and educational activities pertaining to bird species and invasive vertebrates, including contributing towards a training workshop on population monitoring and vertebrate tracking.

University of Lund (**UoL**), Dr Susanne Akesson: contribute their expertise in novel marine vertebrate tracking.

All project partners (and/or other representatives from their organisations), with the exception of Dr Akesson who has just advised on data collection techniques and is assisting with data analysis remotely, have visited Ascension on at least two occasions for 2 – 3 weeks over the course of the project. These visits have been extremely useful for providing training to the AIGCD team (described in more detail below), carrying out new research, discussing in detail targets for the each SAP, and also strengthening relationships. Members of the AIGCD team are in regular email contact with partners with queries relating to routine work and then the DRFs have regular Skype and email conversations relating directly to the BAP project work. At the end of the project it is envisaged that the project partners and other interested stakeholders will form a steering committee to annually review the progress that is being made to achieve targets set out in the BAP and to provide their continued support and expertise.

3. Project Progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Output 1: AICD organisations able to undertake long-term monitoring and management of the biodiversity of Ascension Island.

1.1 Appointment of Darwin Research Fellow

Dr Nicola Weber and Dr Sam Weber were appointed as the Darwin Research Fellows (DRF), sharing the position at the start of the project. AIGCD experienced some reshuffling of personnel in April 2013 and Nicola took on the role of Acting Conservation Manager for the department. Following a successful completion of the 3 month appointment, she was offered the position, which she then accepted. While she is still heavily involved in this project, in particular the organisational side of things, Sam has now taken the lead role in delivering the BAP and co-ordinating the research efforts of the department in line with the priority targets that are being identified by this project.

1.2 Appointment of Darwin Trainees

The first traineeship was taken up in January 2013 by Cameron Stewart, a resident of Ascension Island who was living with his parents and keen to gain experience in practical conservation work during his gap year before going to University. Cameron successfully completed his 6 month contract in June 2013 and then continued to carry out voluntary work with the department until he left the island at the beginning of September 2013. He proved to be an asset to the team, assisting with all aspects of our work as detailed in his articles for the Conservation Quarterly – see below for links. While Cameron's undergraduate degree course does not have an environmental

sciences base, he reports that he benefited greatly from the experience and as such has joined related ecological student societies at University.

The second traineeship was taken up in June 2013 by Kenickie Andrews who came to Ascension Island from St Helena in September 2012 to work with AIGCD as a fieldworker, primarily working on trail clearing in the National Park. During this time he showed great potential and so the team was extremely pleased when he showed interest in staying for another 6 months to gain further experience. As the Darwin Trainee, Kenickie has been heavily involved in the seabird monitoring, including starting training for his BTO ringing licence and has had more responsibility for data input and analysis. As Kenickie did not have close family on Ascension for financial support and so incurred a higher cost of living, it was decided that his salary should be increased to £500 per month (as opposed to the £250 p.m. budgeted for those living with their family) to make the traineeship a viable option. This will not affect the project budget, but will mean that one less Darwin Trainee position can be offered in future. Given the shortage of suitable candidates in previous rounds it was felt that this was an acceptable trade-off to retain a motivated resident of the South Atlantic UKOTS within AIGCD. Indeed, Kenickie justified this decision by showing great commitment and dedication to biodiversity conservation here, so much so that AIG offered him a further 2 year government contract as a Conservation Fieldworker with AIGCD, which he took up in February 2014.

The third and final traineeship was taken up in January 2014 as a job share by Daniel Moore and Emily Cunningham from the UK. To fit with the needs of AIGCD, the first month of this position provided the trainees with expert training in the monitoring of sea turtles. Over the subsequent 4-5 months they have been coordinating the work of 2 other volunteers on a trial sea turtle internship project. Ascension Island is the second largest rookery in the South Atlantic for the green turtle and due to positive conservation actions, the population is growing rapidly. With the increasing demands of the monitoring, rescue and public awareness work associated with the sea turtle project, AIGCD are keen to recruit additional help. The internship was also supported by FCO funds from the Administrator for the interns' airfare and AIG have provided them with accommodation and utilities in a shared house. This trial internship scheme has proved to be beneficial both for increasing capacity within AIGCD and also for providing useful practical experience for recent University graduates, and so it is hoped that we will be able to maintain it as an annual occurrence. Both Daniel and Emily excelled in their role as Darwin Trainee/ Intern Co-ordinator, which Emily is currently continuing with as Daniel has secured a further 2-year contract with AIGCD on the Darwin Initiative-funded marine sustainability project on Ascension Island that has just commenced.

1.3 Training Workshop 1 - Developing *ex-situ* conservation plant collections

The first part of this workshop was completed in Year 1 (see Annual Report 1 for full details): Marcella Corcoran, a conservation horticulturist from the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) Kew, visited Ascension for 3 weeks (24/01/13 – 15/02/13) to work with the AIGCD. Marcella ran a 5-day workshop for the team on 'Developing *ex-situ* conservation plant collections'. The primary aim of this workshop was to initiate the development of an integrated conservation strategy to develop a genetically diverse *ex-situ* plant collection for Ascension (see also **2.2**).

Marcella made a follow-up visit to Ascension in January 2014 (16/01/14 – 31/01/14) to work with the AIGCD team on growing the native plants (in particular the endemic ferns of Ascension Island) and securing them in *ex-situ* collections as well as beginning to develop a plan for reintroductions into the wild. As part of the workshop, Marcella

repatriated live plant material from RBG Kew's Conservation Biotechnology Unit – 74 containers with *Anogramma ascensionis* (Parsley fern) and five large jars of *Ptisana purpurascens* were repatriated. Marcella guided the team on how to transfer this plant material into either new agar or sterile growing media. The large plants of *P. purpurascens* were weaned out into pots and placed into the nursery. These plants signify new genetic material in cultivation on Ascension Island for this species. An aim for this workshop was to trial spore sowing in many different ways as well as methods for dealing with plants that have been developing on agar so that the AIGCD team can take more of this work on themselves on-island.

It is now two months since this plant propagation workshop took place and all surviving repatriated plant material appears to have finally become acclimatised to its new environment. After some initial loss due to browning and fungus, 90% of the *P. purpurascens* material and 60% of the *A. ascensionis* material is still growing. Almost half of these have now been added to the *ex-situ* collections at the Green Mountain nursery. As soon as we have favourable weather conditions, Assistant Conservation Officer Jolene Sim plans to start restoring some of the *A. ascensionis* material back into the wild, which will more than double the current population.

The DRFs worked with Marcella when she was on-island and also remotely with the rest of Kew's UKOT team in the UK to finalise the targets for the 7 endemic higher plant species that are a priority for conservation actions. Drafts of these SAPs are currently being reviewed by partners.

An account from Marcella on this visit can be found in the *Conservation Quarterly* #45 (www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/library-publications/quarterly-newsletter/).

1.4 Training Workshop 2 - Land crab monitoring techniques

The first part of this workshop was completed in Year 1 (see Annual Report 1 for full details): Between 21/02/13 – 12/03/2013 Dr Richard Hartnoll of Liverpool University visited Ascension Island to host a Darwin Project training workshop in land crab biology and research methods, and to help launch several major research projects within AIGCD's "Operation Land Crab" initiative that are key to the delivery of the Species Action Plan for this species.

The second part of this workshop was completed in Year 2 when Dr Hartnoll made a return visit for the land crab spawning peak in March (20/03/2014 – 04/04/2014). During this time, Richard worked with the AIGCD team to search for land crabs that had been tagged the previous year. Of the 310 crabs that were given microchips in 2013, 42 of them were recaptured during the March and April 2014 spawning peaks. Preliminary data from these individuals suggests that the largest individuals are likely to be more than 40 years old. Richard provided training on techniques for investigating moult patterns in the land crabs and worked with the DRFs to finalise the SAP for this species, detailing the monitoring, research and awareness targets for the coming years and also outlining AIGCD and Dr Hartnoll's (amongst others) involvement in ensuring that these targets are met. During the visit, and as part of the "Operation Land Crab" initiative we organised a guided trip to North East Bay (a land crab spawning hotspot), aimed at Island residents, but with a few visitors too. The evening went well with over 100 people attending, and we received some very positive feedback, with this being the first time that many residents had observed the crabs spawning due to the uncertainty around predicting when it occurs. We were also pleased to see everybody taking

extreme caution when driving away from the beach to ensure that no crabs were killed as a result of the visit.



1.5 Training Workshop 3 – GIS Review and Support

The first part of this workshop was completed in Year 1 (see Annual Report 1 for full details): Alan Mills, a GIS consultant, visited AIGCD between 11/04/2013 – 19/04/2013. His visit aims were to refresh Conservation’s GIS, to ensure that data were up to date and quality controlled, to re-sensitise both Conservation and other partners about the scope and capability of the system currently, and to discuss pathways forward for ensuring that GIS was integrated into the science and outputs for the BAP.

Year 2 has seen 3 separate GIS training workshops on Ascension after the establishment of the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) GIS Hub in the Falklands and a conference held in Gibraltar for the UKOTs to meet and discuss GIS, its applications and use as a decision support tool for environmental and planning studies. Following this, Dr Katie Medcalf, Environment Director of Environment Systems Ltd. and consultant to the SAERI GIS Hub delivered an intensive 3 day training course (02/12/2013 – 04/12/2013) focusing specifically on how to input data into QGIS and make maps. 8 members of AIGCD attended the course which gave them the practical skills to immediately begin working with QGIS and the foundation on which to build through self-teaching from worksheets and guide books. Additionally, AIGCD have received 2 visits from Dr iLaria Marengo, the SAERI GIS Hub manager, where the team have received training on reviewing our current databases and ‘cleaning’ them/ putting them in a more manageable format. Working with iLaria the team has also reviewed methods of best practice for collecting and storing data and discussed a more united data management approach with other South Atlantic UKOTs. SAERI will host a metadata database that contains details of all data available for different projects in the SA OTs, how/ where/ when it was collected and who to contact

to find out more about the data/ collaboration opportunities. With the support of both iLaria and Katie, AIGCD are almost at the stage where we have a complete set of databases for all of our monitoring/ research projects and we are thinking more about how to analyse and report these data to share them in the peer-reviewed literature.

1.6 Training Workshop 4 – Documenting Ascension’s Bryophytes

The first part of this workshop was completed in Year 1 (see Annual Report 1 for full details): Between the 15/04/2013 – 26/04/2013, Dr Jeff Duckett and Dr Silvia Pressel of the Natural History Museum (NHM) and Queen Mary University London visited Ascension Island to lead a Darwin Project training workshop in bryophyte biology, collection and identification for AIGCD staff.

The second part of this workshop is currently being completed in Year 2/3, with a follow-up visit by the NHM team to consolidate training and research projects initiated during Year 1 (24/04/2014 – 06/05/2014). High quality photographs and locations of all known bryophyte species present on Ascension Island are currently being collated and finalised for inclusion in a Darwin Project field guide (Bryophytes of Ascension Island) that will form one of the major outputs of this work programme. With the current timeframe, the field guide should be completed in August 2014 and likely published before the end of this project. We will report fully on this in our Final Project Report, but are pleased with the progress that has been made here with records for almost 70 bryophyte species on Ascension, a number of which are first records of presence on the island and even two discoveries of bryophyte species new to science as part of this project.

1.7 Training Workshop 5 – Vertebrate Tracking

Over the 2 years of the project, the AIGCD team have received a great deal of training on vertebrate tracking techniques, although due to the nature of the work, much of this has been ‘on the job’ learning as opposed to a dedicated workshop.

Seabird tracking: the AIGCD seabird team and DRFs have received training in the field from members of the RSPB: Dr Pete Mayhew, Dr Steffen Oppel, Dr Mark Bolton and Dr Julia Summerfield, and can now competently attach GPS logging and satellite-linked transmitting devices to the tail feathers of large seabirds. The team have now deployed these devices on the Ascension frigatebird and masked boobies and this work is on-going as the team can now deploy these devices without external supervision. Additionally, Dr Jim Reynolds and the Army Ornithological team have provided training on the attachment and removal of geolocators to the legs of sooty terns and a further session will be held during their next visit in May 2014. The DRFs and AIG Seabird Scientist have also received remote training from the University of Exeter team and Dr Steffen Oppel at the RSPB on the visualisation of the tracking data and also how to analyse it in R e.g. to identify areas where foraging activity may be concentrated. Once analysed a paper(s) will be prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. See also **2.4**.

Sea turtle tracking: Prior to this project, the DRFs had worked with the University of Exeter team and received training from them on the attachment of tracking devices to sea turtles. Thus, over the course of this project, the DRFs provided training for other members of the AIGCD team, attaching satellite-linked GPS transmitters to both hawksbill and green turtles.

Output 2: Greatly enhanced knowledge of key biodiversity elements in Ascension Island

2.1 Full Inventory of Animal and Plant Species for Ascension Island

This target has been achieved in terms of compiling all known records into databases for the terrestrial vertebrate species, endemic and native higher plants, bryophytes (lower plants), terrestrial invertebrates, fish, marine invertebrates and algae. As mentioned in 1.5 these databases are held with AIGCD, but also in SAERI's metadata database, so information on their content is freely available. Once we are happy that they are complete then these will be made publicly available. Additionally, with the help of a volunteer we have created a natural history library that contains a copy of all peer-reviewed journal articles and some of the grey literature detailing Ascension Island's biodiversity. We are using the reference management software 'Zotero' to manage the bibliographic data and related PDFs and link this to the AIGCD website so that the public can see the papers that we have available should they wish to contact us for copies. Species lists for some taxa (in particular for bryophyte, invertebrate and marine species) are unlikely to be exhaustive due to incomplete sampling coverage and a lack of on-island taxonomic expertise. However, as part of this project and two others that have ran alongside it (OTEP funded: An Ecosystem Approach to Plant Conservation on Ascension Island and Darwin Initiative Scoping Award: Assessing Ascension Island's Shallow Marine Biodiversity), we have begun to address this. A large number of specimens have been collected and are currently with different specialist taxonomists around the world - a number of the samples (in particular for the marine species) are believed to be first records of their presence at Ascension Island and a few others are believed to be endemic species (see **Table 2** for the description of 2 new endemic moths).

Herbarium cabinets and display units to house higher plant, bryophyte and invertebrate reference collections have been set up in the AIGCD building and work is progressing rapidly to fill them with specimens. This was also helped by a very welcome donation brought over by Marcella Corcoran from Kew's herbarium comprising of around 60 herbarium sheets from Phil Lamdon's Ascension collection. Presently we have just over 180 species of higher plants within the herbarium,



including endemics, natives and also invasives on the Island as reference collections. Additionally, collections of bryophytes have recently begun and we have 3 species of hornwort, 21 liverworts and 52 mosses in the herbarium. In addition, a digital flora of the island's species is also being collated in the form of a database comprising of botanical descriptions, location and habitat, herbarium collection number and images. These will act as an identification and reference guide for future plant research.

2.2 Development of *ex-situ* Plant Conservation Techniques

Significant progress has been made towards achieving this output after the successful workshops led by Marcella Corcoran from the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew (see 1.3). The primary aim of these workshops was to initiate the development of an integrated conservation strategy to develop a genetically diverse *ex-situ* plant collection for Ascension. Since then, Assistant Conservation Officer Jolene Sim has taken

responsibility for the management of the nurseries that grow the endemic plants and their re-introduction into the wild.



A new record keeping and labelling system has been put into place that assigns every plant that passes through the nursery with a unique identification code that will remain with it through to reintroduction into the wild. Documenting where the plants/seeds/spores are collected and ensuring that they are returned to the same area is an important step in ensuring that the different populations remain genetically diverse. AIGCD has strong links with Kew Gardens – the lead partners for

this output. Additionally, AIG recognise the importance of the nursery work for protecting Ascension’s endemic plant species and AIGCD recently had a Capital Bid for £17,000 approved for the improvement and maintenance of the shade house facilities.

During the project, a seed bank has been set up on-island with seed constantly being added to it and also some being removed and sent to the Millennium Seed Bank in the UK. The seeds will hopefully remain viable for years and can be used for any future conservation or research work, or if species numbers in the wild are severely reduced and an emergency batch of seeds are needed for propagation.

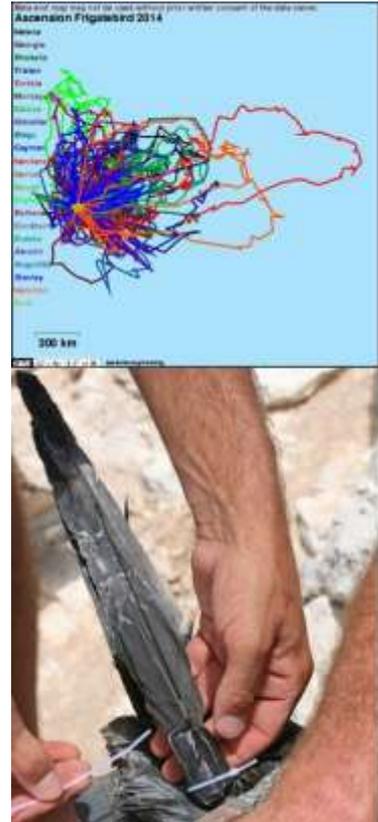
2.3 Design of a More Sustainable Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy

Due to the considerable biodiversity on Ascension Island and the limited resources available for staff costs on an island of just 800 people (of whom no body is a permanent resident as there is no right of abode), developing a sustainable programme of biodiversity monitoring will always be challenging. With this in mind, a guiding principle of the BAP agreed with stakeholders at the outset was to ensure that monitoring targets are prioritised and achievable within the existing capabilities of AIGCD. Alternatively, SAPs should include targets that can help increase capacity for monitoring in specific areas. For example, one target of the green turtle SAP that was the first to be completed was to develop an international internship program that could help to deliver the proposed monitoring targets without putting undue strain on existing work programmes. With financial assistance from the Darwin Initiative (see 1.2) and FCO we were able to run the first trial of this internship scheme this year (the 2014 turtle nesting season), recruiting two project leaders and two interns. The program has proved to be a great success and has allowed other areas of AIGCD’s work to advance with staff having time freed up, while providing a good learning experience for four recent graduates. It is anticipated that AIG will be able to financially support this scheme next year to allow it to continue. In addition, training in database design and management and enhancements to AIGCD’s database management system through Darwin Project workshops (see 1.5) have made it faster and easier to enter, catalogue and map biodiversity monitoring data.

2.4 More Detailed Knowledge of the At-Sea Habitat Use of Key Marine Species in Relation to Fishing Effort

Excellent progress has been made in documenting the habitat use of seabirds around Ascension Island, with tracking projects initiated for 3 priority species: masked boobies, sooty terns and the endemic Ascension frigatebird. In a collaborative effort involving the RSPB, the University of Exeter, the University of Lund and AIGCD, 64 GPS loggers and 25 satellite-linked transmitters have been deployed on frigatebirds and 42 GPS loggers deployed on masked boobies. To date, 33 GPS loggers have been successfully recovered from frigatebirds. Meanwhile, the satellite-linked transmitters continue to upload positional data to an openly accessible online forum

(http://www.seaturtle.org/tracking/?project_id=809) which has generated significant local and international interest in the project. In addition to planned project activities, a further collaboration has been developed with researchers from the University of Birmingham and the Army Ornithological Society tracking the migrations of the sooty terns which breed at Ascension Island. The Darwin Project funded 10 geolocator tags (with a matched contribution from collaborators) which were deployed in December 2012 and August 2013 and efforts are ongoing to retrieve these from the birds as they return to the Island to nest – the AOS will be visiting 14/05/2014 – 23/05/2014 to assist with this and also to provide ringing training to the AIGCD team.



Progress on relating habitat use of marine vertebrates to fishing effort has unfortunately been hindered by the resolution of available Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data. Until now, the collation of VMS data has been handled by an external consultant contracted by St Helena Government. Unfortunately, when these data were requested by the Darwin Project team it became apparent that the resolution was too low (polling rate of once per day) for the planned spatial analyses to be carried out. However, as a result of these findings, the project team has been able to make strong recommendations to AIG to address this issue with some urgency. Senior management have adopted these recommendations with plans to manage VMS data internally within Ascension Island Government in the near future as part of a larger scale project to review and revise both the commercial and inshore fisheries licencing regimes with a Fisheries Director employed by AIG and a marine science team based in AIGCD through a Darwin Initiative grant.

2.5 Species Action Plans for 20 Key Species

With the template for the SAPs fully agreed on by all involved in the project in Year 1, and a large amount of the training and research work for the project having been initiated, and in a number of cases completed, the focus for the DRF is currently on populating the SAPs and having them approved by project partners and ultimately the Administrator of the Island. Over half of the SAPs have been populated and drafts are currently being exchanged with partners until everybody is happy with the content. As soon as each SAP has been approved by the Administrator, it will be uploaded onto the project website, with an introduction/ foreword by the project team and Administrator being uploaded when the BAP is completed towards the end of this year. Having

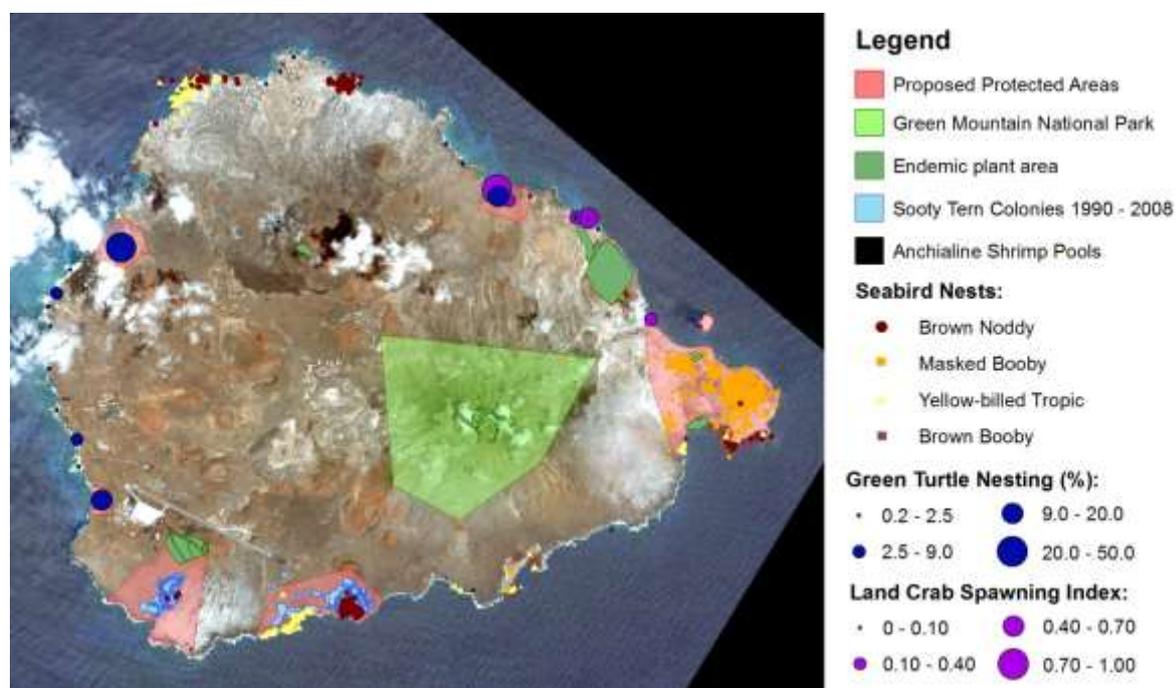
already initiated and met some of the priority targets identified for a number of species during training workshops and improved routine monitoring work, the DRFs have a good understanding of what can realistically be achieved on Ascension and the timelines for these targets. The DRFs will hopefully continue to be based with the AIGCD after the project has been completed – Nicola as Head of Department and Sam hopefully leading on the research and ensuring that BAP targets are met. As the DRFs have integrated into the island's community and have a good relationship with project partners who will monitor the progress of the BAP through a steering committee, the continuity should provide a good foundation for the continued success of this project for the conservation of Ascension's biodiversity.

2.6 Interim Report on Legislative Change

In the Annual Report for Year 1, we reported that the Marine Protection Ordinance, 2013 had been approved and a draft policy had been submitted to the Island Council proposing a number of improvements to the Wild Life Protection Ordinance. It was decided to combine these into one, comprehensive Ordinance covering both marine and terrestrial species and we are pleased to report that the Wildlife Protection Ordinance, 2013 was enacted on the 18th October 2013. This new Ordinance replaces the now repealed Wild Life (Protection) (Ascension) Ordinance, 1944 that was outdated and in urgent need of modernising. For example, under the previous legislation, several common, introduced species, some of which were having negative effects on the Island's native biodiversity, were given protected status. However, with the enactment of the new Ordinance, these anomalies have been corrected and many of our rare endemic plants, fish and invertebrates (amongst others) have been afforded legal protection for the first time. Additionally, the Wildlife Protection Ordinance has an important marine conservation element, introducing powers to establish closed seasons, quotas, no-take zones and/or prohibited means for extracting marine resources, subject to the necessary research being undertaken to enable informed decision-making. The Ordinance can be downloaded from the website: www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/projects/bap/. We are currently working with people on-island to make the public aware of this new piece of legislation and the rules within it, how it could affect them, and its importance for safeguarding the native biodiversity of Ascension Island.

As reported previously, a draft policy was prepared and submitted to the Island Council entitled 'Expanding Ascension's Protected Areas Network' which recommends the designation of 6 new protected areas under the National Protected Areas Ordinance, 2003 to include all key biodiversity sites on the island (currently there is only 1). When the DRFs presented this policy to the Council, it appeared to be well received and supported. However, the Governor dissolved the Island Council in September 2013 and elections took place for a new Council that was in place in November 2013. The new Council has been very receptive of this work (and biodiversity matters in general) and significant progress is currently being made on implementing legislation to improve Ascension's network of protected areas. We have received support from AIG higher management and the Island Council and the policy itself was passed in principle at the start of 2014, with each proposed area being assessed on an individual case basis. We are currently working with the newly created Biodiversity and Fisheries Committee of the Island Council (on which a member of the Conservation Department sits) to develop regulations for the different areas and on which the general public will be consulted. Improving the protected areas network on Ascension Island is relatively straightforward compared to the obstacles faced by many of the other Overseas Territories. Most of Ascension's key biodiversity sites are small, well-defined areas, which are already in public ownership and which can be protected with minimal impact on the lives of island residents. In many cases, the measures needed to protect these sites are simply

backing up widely respected local guidelines in law. Moreover, the National Protected Areas Ordinance (2003) already provides the legal framework under which protected area designations can be established thus limiting the amount of new legislation required. The draft policy proposes the expansion of the island's protected areas network to include all of the most celebrated sites for wildlife. Specifically, we propose that the major green turtle nesting beaches – Long Beach, Pan Am Beach and North East Bay – along with the principle seabird nesting sites of Boatswain Bird Island, the Letterbox Peninsula, Mars Bay and the Wideawake Fairs (already recognised internationally as Important Bird Areas, but not under local legislation) should be afforded protection under the National Protected Areas Ordinance.



Working with the Crown Counsel, we have also finalised a revised Research Permit application that visiting researchers are required to submit and have approved before they are granted an entry permit to Ascension Island. The form asks for details including, an outline of the proposed research, how its outcomes are likely to enhance environmental management on Ascension Island (in particular in relation to BAP targets), whether it involves the capture, harming or killing of a Protected Species as defined under the Wildlife Protection Ordinance and/or whether a CITES permit is also required and a commitment to providing AIGCD with access to the original datasets collected during the research. A similar permit has also recently been developed by St Helena and will work to ensure that priority environmental research is carried out that will directly benefit the Territory and leaving a lasting legacy in terms of databases and/or practical conservation actions. The Research Permit is available on the AIGCD website: www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/get-involved/research-permit/

2.7 Design of a BAP with Associated Workplan

See 2.5.

2.8 AIG Adopts BAP

All project activities continue to fully supported by senior management in AIG, so we are confident that this target will be met. This has been demonstrated during the drawing up and enactment of the new Wildlife Protection Ordinance and the support of the Protected Areas legislation, neither of which would have been possible without the assistance given by the Crown Counsel and the Administrator. AIG fully understands the importance of having a BAP in place and the targets will be incorporated into the existing annual progress reporting and auditing mechanisms for AIGCD. Additionally, the creation of the Biodiversity and Fisheries Committee of the Island Council has been a significant step forward with regard to legislation, but also for making our work and motives more transparent and for engaging the community.

Output 3: Greatly enhanced public awareness of the importance of, and threats faced by the biodiversity of Ascension Island including enhanced legislation.

3.1 Active Engagement Between Community School and Biodiversity Professionals

AIGCD has strong ties with the school on the Island – Two Boats School, which provides education for children aged 3-16. In the summer holidays AIGCD run 5 days of conservation-themed activities for those children that are interested in attending ('Ascension Explorers'), which makes them more aware of Ascension's unique biodiversity and the what they can do to help protect it. Additionally, AIGCD regularly lead or assist with school field trips to areas of biological, and also historical, interest and cover a range of topics from animal and plant life cycles to population size monitoring.

AIGCD engages the youth groups on the island – Brownies, Cubs etc. and also tries to actively encourage the public to get involved with our work e.g. 'Turtle Tours' that have a £5 charge for visitors are offered free of charge to island residents. As many people have seen the turtles we don't always get a large uptake on these tours by residents, however when different activities are planned e.g. the land crab spawning trip (see 1.4) we were extremely pleased by the turn out of over 100 people – the majority of which were 'locals'. Plans are in place for an extended stall at the annual community event – Ascension Day Fair 2014, where we will have educational material but also interactive displays and games. There will be information about this project (and also the new Darwin Initiative funded marine project) on display, with the Darwin logo.

3.2 Design and Population of a Detailed and Vibrant Biodiversity Website

At the request of Ascension Island Government, the AIGCD website has been integrated into the new government website and can be accessed here: <http://www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/>. The website was developed with a design company in the UK, The Communications Group, and provides up-to-date information on Ascension's flora and fauna and the projects that are being carried out by AIGCD. There are also a number of pages dedicated to the Darwin Initiative project and ultimately the BAP will be hosted here (www.ascension-island.gov.ac/government/conservation/projects/bap/). By making the BAP a dynamic document that can be continually updated as targets are met and new targets are added we aim to ensure that the BAP is used as the definitive guide and co-ordinating document for conservation work on Ascension Island in future.

A Facebook webpage in the name of Ascension Island Conservation Department (www.facebook.com/AscensionIslandConservation) was created in February 2013 and is the main venue for announcements, updates and photo sharing relating both to the

Darwin Initiative project and other work that the Conservation Department carries out. The paper has a weekly reach of over 1000 people, with more than 600 'likes'. We have also established a strong presence on the social networking site Twitter (@AIGConservation).

3.3 Active Media Campaign Throughout the Project

At the outset of the project we began our media campaign as we hope to continue with articles and interviews about the aims and objectives of the project in both the local (Ascension Island) and the international (UK) media. The following article resulted from a press release (http://www.exeter.ac.uk/news/featurednews/title_194691_en.html) detailing the funding award:

West Briton: *Tremough scientists head off to South Atlantic* (5th April 2012)
BBC Radio Cornwall interview (14th March 2012)

We have had over 20 articles relating to project activities in the local weekly newspaper, The Islander, which can be viewed online (<http://www.the-islander.org.ac/>). This is read by the majority of island residents and so is a good method for disseminating project news locally, and also biodiversity information in generally.

After some interest in the remote tracking aspects of the project, a press release was issued by the University of Exeter detailing the real time tracking of the Island's endemic frigatebird (http://www.exeter.ac.uk/news/featurednews/title_275981_en.html), which was taken up by a number of online media (see Supplementary Material). Additionally, DRF, Nicola Weber wrote an article related to this on the popular science blog The Conversation: <http://theconversation.com/frigatebirds-return-shows-even-severe-losses-can-be-reversed-22337>

Following the awarding of the Fauna and Flora International (FFI) Flagships Species Award, FFI made an announcement on their website where 'Operation Land Crab' was given a prominent mention (<http://www.fauna-flora.org/news/flagship-species-fund-supports-eight-conservation-icons-in-2013/>).

3.4 Production of Highly Accessible Darwin Newsletter

The Darwin Newsletter has been integrated into the existing AIG Conservation publication, "Conservation Quarterly", where it has been allocated a designated section with appropriate branding (Darwin logos etc.). PDFs of the newsletter can be downloaded from the internet (<http://www.conservation-ascension-island.gov.ac/conservation-quarterly>) and the link is also emailed to all on the AIG client database (biodiversity professionals and all other interested members of the public, island residents and visitors, who have expressed an interest in receiving the publication), and advertised on our social media sites. News of the Darwin Project both from DRFs and project partners has featured in the last nine editions of the Conservation Quarterly:

Broderick, A. & Godley, B. (2012) New Darwin Initiative Project. *Conservation Quarterly*, 37, pp. 10.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2012) Implementing a Darwin Initiative Biodiversity Action Plan for Ascension Island. *Conservation Quarterly*, 38, pp. 11.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2012) Implementing a Darwin Initiative Biodiversity Action Plan for Ascension Island 2. *Conservation Quarterly*, 39, pp. 6-8.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2012) Darwin Initiative Project Update - Legislation. *Conservation Quarterly*, 40, pp. 5-7.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2013) Darwin Initiative Project Update – Workshops, Bird Tracking and Grant Success. *Conservation Quarterly*, 41, pp. 4-6.

Corcoran, M., Thomas, V. & Williams, C. (2013) Workshop for developing ex-situ conservation collections for plants on Ascension Island. *Conservation Quarterly*, 41, pp. 7-13.

Stewart, C. (2013) Views from the Darwin Trainee. *Conservation Quarterly*, 41, pp. 14.

Oppel, S. (2013) RSPB visits Ascension Island Conservation. *Conservation Quarterly*, 41, pp. 15-16.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2013) Darwin Initiative Project Update – Record numbers of nesting turtles, new land crab findings and important invasive rat study. *Conservation Quarterly*, 42, pp. 3-7

Mills, A. (2013) Locations, Libraries and Land Crabs. *Conservation Quarterly*, 42, pp. 8-9.

Stewart, C. (2013) Views from the Darwin Trainee. *Conservation Quarterly*, 42, pp. 10.

Pressel, S. & Duckett, J. (2013) Bryological Blitz 2013. *Conservation Quarterly*, 42, pp. 14-18.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2013) Darwin Initiative Project Update: Enactment of the Wildlife Protection Ordinance and more. *Conservation Quarterly*, 43, pp. 2-6.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2013) Darwin Initiative Project Update. *Conservation Quarterly*, 44, pp. 2-4.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2013) A Boost for Marine Conservation on Ascension Island. *Conservation Quarterly*, 44, pp. 6-7.

Andrews, K. (2013) Thoughts from the Darwin Trainee. *Conservation Quarterly*, 44, p. 8

Cunningham, E. & Moore, D. (2013) Marine Turtle Conservation Internships. *Conservation Quarterly*, 44, pp. 9-10.

Weber, N. & Weber, S. (2014) Darwin Initiative Project Update. *Conservation Quarterly*, 45, pp. 2-5.

Weber, N., Weber, S., Cunningham, E. & Moore, D. (2014) Marine Turtle Update. *Conservation Quarterly*, 45, pp. 6-9.

Corcoran, M. (2014) Horticultural Visit. *Conservation Quarterly*, 45, pp. 12-16.

3.5 Series of Public Meetings

Early on in the project the DRFs held a meeting with democratically-elected public representatives on the Island Council to discuss the need for improved environmental governance on Ascension Island. The meeting included a brief presentation by the DRFs followed by a question and answer session. One positive outcome of the meeting was a proposal to establish a dedicated conservation committee within the Island Council to discuss future planned legislative reforms and other environmental issues. The Biodiversity and Fisheries Committee was established in 2014 and comprises of 3 Island Council Members (Cllr. Caroline Yon MBE, Cllr. Kitty George, Cllr. Samantha Arms-Lawrence) and DRF Dr Sam Weber. Wherever possible, public participation has also been incorporated within Darwin Project training workshops. The “Afternoon with a Kew Gardner” event held in Green Mountain National Park was well attended by the public, and included tours of the native plant nursery, lectures on home composting, demonstrations of native fern propagation and a ‘grow-your-own’ lesson for children, as was the “Operation Land Crab” visit to North East Bay. In addition to public meetings on-island, the DRFs have also delivered 10 seminars on the natural history and

conservation work on Ascension Island to visiting cruise ships from Europe and North America reaching an estimated audience of more than 5000 people.

Output 4: Reporting

4.1 6-Monthly Reports to Darwin

Both reports submitted on time.

4.2 Annual Reports to Darwin

Our report for Year 1 received a positive review, mentioning the considerable progress that the project had made on all four outcomes and its integration with AIGCD and the local and international community. We are grateful to the reviewer for taking the time to evaluate our report and for offering helpful advice. S/He did not ask for a response from us on any specific points but did give two points for consideration. Firstly, to provide an explanation in this Annual Report of the roles and responsibilities of the partner institutions and an explanation of how and by whom coordination of inputs and activities is carried out – see Section 2. Secondly, for a greater measure of output, which has been more easily incorporated into this report with the changed layout.

Second Annual Report submitted on time.

4.3 Final Report to Darwin

We anticipate that this will also be submitted on time.

3.2 Progress towards project outputs

As we near the end of this project we feel that it is well on its way to achieving its stated purposes and outcomes. Almost all of the standard measures (3.3) have been met, or greatly exceed, and the written work for the BAP is well underway, with relationships between partners demonstrably strong. With the increased capacity in the Department, largely a result of this project, a number of new initiatives and work programs have been initiated. Although we expect around 8 peer-reviewed papers to be published by the end of the project, a number more will be submitted next year after the completion of data collection that has begun during the project.

3.3 Standard Measures

We have made excellent progress against standard reporting measures. Of the 27 standard output criteria, 24 (89%) targets have already been reached or far exceeded and of the 3 remaining targets, all are greater than 50% complete.

3.4 Progress towards the project Purpose/Outcome

See 3.2 – there is no foreseeable reason why the main objective of the project, to design and implement a BAP for Ascension Island, will not be achieved. Frameworks for all of the SAPs are in place and have generally been agreed upon by all partners. Over the coming months, final drafts will be circulated and the whole BAP will be online by the end of the project. Due to increased capacity in the Department a number of the research and monitoring targets have already been met. At the start of the project in 2012 there were just three core government-funded and 4 project funded staff, but largely as a result of this project and the highlighted need for increased capacity to meet the targets being agreed on in the BAP, this has doubled to 6 core government-funded staff, 6 project staff and a further 3 have been recruited for the new Darwin Initiative-funded marine sustainability project that has just commenced.

3.5 Goal/ Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

The overarching goal of the project was to improve capabilities applied to the sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity on Ascension Island through the on-island government Conservation Department and their relationship with overseas partners who can share their expertise to help achieve this. As detailed in the report and highlighted in the logframe, this project has helped to significantly increase on-island capabilities and to strengthen the relationships with partners and stakeholders, so that under the guidance of the BAP, AIGCD can make a significant contribution to safeguarding Ascension Island's unique biodiversity.

4. Project support to the Conventions (CBD, CMS and/or CITES)

This project is greatly helping the UK Overseas Territory, Ascension Island to meet its obligations under all three of the major biodiversity Conventions. With regard to the CBD, the development of a national biodiversity plan, the overarching aim of this project, is Target 17 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Additionally, work being carried out as part of the project is helping us to meet a number of other targets including: Target 6, management of fish and invertebrate stocks – we have put the framework in place for this through enabling legislation in the Wildlife Protection Ordinance for the Administrator to implement closed seasons and areas. We have already been successful in making it illegal to take spiny lobster in berry under this legislation, and the DRFs are Project Leaders on the recently funded Darwin Initiative marine sustainability project for Ascension Island. SAPs are being created for the main invasive species on the Island that pose a threat to the native biodiversity – Target 9. The project has made significant progress to meeting Target 11 - 18% of our terrestrial area will be protected with local legislation when the protected areas legislation is finalised. It has also prompted discussions on-island and with stakeholders about the development of significant marine protected areas and progress on this is anticipated to be made through the new marine sustainability project. Endemic plant species on Ascension have been a major concern for conservationist, but this project has successfully improved our *ex-situ* plant collections and reintroduction procedures, as well as developed an on-island seed bank, working towards an improvement of their conservation status (Targets 12 & 13).

With regard to the CMS, Ascension has 2 migratory species that routinely pass through our territory – the green turtle: Ascension hosts the second largest breeding population in the Atlantic; and the hawksbill turtle that is thought to use Ascension's waters as a developmental ground. Both of these species are protected in our waters and on land when breeding under local legislation – the Wildlife Protection Ordinance, 2013. In addition, there are a number of migratory fish, such as tuna, and cetaceans, such as the humpback whale that pass through our waters, although comparatively less is known about them. The new marine project will help to fill these knowledge gaps so that they can also be afforded suitable legal protection if deemed necessary. The DRFs are currently working with the Solicitor General to tighten our legislation with regard to CITES and again it is the turtle species that this would apply to.

5. Project support to poverty alleviation

As Ascension Island has no resident population and relies on communications and military for income generation, biodiversity does not currently contribute a great deal to the economy or standard of living. However, biodiversity is important for quality of life on the island and is used recreationally by many islanders for hiking, diving, fishing, bird-watching etc.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons

As discussed previously, significant progress has been made towards meeting the main project outcomes – the development of a BAP for Ascension Island and increased local capacity to be able to implement this. The work has been facilitated by the DRFs on-island and progress has been overseen by Project Leads at the University of Exeter and the other overseas partners. As the Standard Measures have continually been met ahead of schedule, there have been no reasons for concern or significant changes needed to be made to the plan. As the outcome is a simple and tangible one – the creation of a BAP and a stronger local Department that is greater in size – both in terms of staff and resources and greater in skills through training, it has been comparatively simple to monitor the progress and to ensure that the project is on track to meet its goals.

7. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

See 4.2

8. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

NA

9. Sustainability

The DRFs have become well established in the island community and good relationships with the project partners and other on-island and international stakeholders. One of the DRFs is now on a core-government funded contract, managing the AIGCD and it is hoped that funding for the other DRF will be found at the end of the project. Thus with continuity in the expanded department, it will be easy to monitor the progress of the project. This will continue to be overseen by project partners on a steering committee who can review the progress that is being made with the BAP targets in their areas of expertise and make suggestions for future work/support grant applications for continued funding.

10. Darwin Identity

Throughout the project, every effort has been made to publicise the Darwin Initiative. All equipment that has been purchased using some funding from the project has been given a Darwin logo sticker. Additionally, all publicity material that has been created e.g. leaflets and postcards bear the logo as do our articles in the local newspaper. This has often promoted questions from co-workers within the government and also the public about what the Darwin Initiative is, with a large majority of the Island's population



now being familiar with it through project activities. The Darwin BAP project has a clear identity on the island, but is also recognised as being responsible for bringing together the different research projects within the department, coordinating efforts between

AIGCD and stakeholders both on-island and internationally and for bringing about the growth of the Department, both in terms of team members and also the renovation of existing facilities. The project has helped us to secure additional small grants, both from the AIG's Capital Fund and also international NGOs such as Flora and Fauna International. The project has had more of a terrestrial base than a marine, but the increased capacity in the Department has enabled AIGCD to secure a Darwin Plus award to establish a Marine and Fisheries Unit within the Department and to extend the on-going work to the sea.



11. Project Expenditure

Table 1 project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014)

| Project spend since last annual report | 2013/14 Grant (£) | 2013/14 Total actual Darwin Costs (£) | Variance % | Comments (please explain significant variances) |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---|
| Staff costs (see below) | | | <10 | |
| Consultancy costs | | | | |
| Overhead Costs | | | <10 | |
| Travel and subsistence | | | <10 | |
| Operating Costs | | | <10 | |
| Capital items (see below) | | | <10 | |
| Others (see below) | | | <10 | |
| TOTAL | 134,074.59 | 134,074 | | |

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year 2013-2014

| Project summary | Measurable Indicators | Progress and Achievements May 2013 - April 2014 | Actions required/planned for next period |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Goal: To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The conservation of biological diversity, ⇒ The sustainable use of its components, and ⇒ The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources <p>Ascension Island's biodiversity is adequately conserved and is providing sustained and equitable benefits to local communities and beyond.</p> | | | |
| <p>Purpose: Improved capabilities applied to the sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity of Ascension Island (and St Helena, Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha).</p> | <p>Biodiversity Action Plan is formally accepted by Ascension Island Government.</p> <p>BAP is being implemented by Ascension Island Government and other Island stakeholders.</p> | <p>A template for the BAP has agreed upon by all project partners and work is now focussing on populating the templates for each species/ habitat. A greater than anticipated amount of training has been carried out to improve capacity within the Department.</p> <p>The project has the full support of AIG and other Island Stakeholders.</p> | <p>Continue with training and on-going monitoring and research programmes.</p> <p>Finalise and publish all SAPs and HAPs – BAP will then be complete.</p> |
| <p>Output 1. AICD organisations able to undertake long-term monitoring & management of the biodiversity of Ascension Island.</p> | <p>Appointment of Darwin Fellow</p> <p>Appointment of Darwin Trainees</p> <p>Minimum of 10 staff from UK OT partner organisations trained in key biodiversity assessment techniques.</p> | <p>Progress good (all targets met for this year) and indicators appropriate – see Annex 3 Standard Measures.</p> | |
| Activity 1.1. Appointment of Darwin Research Fellow (DRF) | | Completed | |
| Activity 1.2. Appointment of Darwin Trainees | | All trainees have been appointed – the first 2 successfully completed their placements and the last internship is currently underway. | |
| Activity 1.3. Training Workshop 1 | | Completed in Year 1 with follow-up workshop completed in Year 2. | |
| Activity 1.4. Training Workshop 2 | | Completed in Year 1 with follow-up workshop completed in Year 2. | |
| Activity 1.5. Training Workshop 3 | | Completed in Year 1 with follow-up workshop completed in Year 2. | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Activity 1.6. Training Workshop 4 | | Completed in Year 1 with follow-up workshop planned for end of Year 2. |
| Activity 1.7. Training Workshop 5 | | Completed. |
| Output 2. Greatly enhanced knowledge of key biodiversity elements in Ascension Island | Habitat map Population assessments of key species aka Species Action Plans (min 20; 5 for each 6 mo.) Computer databases (min 4) Peer reviewed papers (min 3) Reference collections (min 3) Habitat map Biological databases Scientific papers Conference presentations (min 2) Biodiversity Action Plan (July 2014) | Progress good and indicators appropriate – see Annex 3 Standard Measures. |
| Activity 2.1. A full inventory of plant and species for Ascension Island | | All terrestrial vertebrates, native and endemic higher plants are documented. Invertebrate, bryophyte, marine and invasive species databases on-going. |
| Activity 2.2. Development of <i>ex situ</i> plant conservation techniques | | Significant progress. |
| Activity 2.3. Design of a more sustainable biodiversity monitoring strategy | | On-going. |
| Activity 2.4. A more detailed knowledge of the at-sea habitat use of key marine species in relation to fishing effort | | Significant progress. |
| Activity 2.5. Species Action Plans for 20 key species | | On-going. |
| Activity 2.6. Interim report on legislative change | | Significant progress. |
| Activity 2.7. Design of a BAP with associated workplan | | On-going. |
| Activity 2.8. AIG adopts BAP | | On-going. |
| Output 3. Greatly enhanced public awareness of the importance of, and threats faced by the biodiversity of Ascension Island including enhanced legislation. | Website Newsletters (min 9) Press releases (min 5) Public meetings (min 5) Interim report on legislative Change | Progress good and indicators appropriate – see Annex 3 Standard Measures. |
| Activity 3.1. Active engagement between community school and biodiversity professionals. | | On-going. |
| Activity 3.2. Design and population of a detailed and vibrant biodiversity website. | | Website completed and regularly updated as well as pages on social media (Facebook and Twitter). |

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|---|--|
| Activity 3.3. Active media campaign throughout the project (5 Press releases) | Good progress. |
| Activity 3.4. Production of highly accessible Darwin Newsletter (9 issues) | Target met. |
| Activity 3.5. Series of public meetings (at least 5) | Good progress. |
| Output 4. Reporting | |
| 4.1 6 monthly reports to Darwin | First report submitted on time. |
| 4.2 Annual reports to Darwin | Both have been submitted. |
| 4.3 Final report to Darwin | Anticipated that this report will also be submitted on time. |

Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

| Project summary | Measurable Indicators | Means of verification | Important Assumptions |
|---|---|---|--|
| Goal: Effective contribution in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), as well as related targets set by countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources. | | | |
| Sub-Goal: Ascension Island's biodiversity is adequately conserved and is providing sustained and equitable benefits to local communities and beyond. | Ongoing monitoring of key biodiversity elements demonstrates positive trends within 5 years of project completion. | Data from AI Conservation Dept. | |
| Purpose: Improved capabilities applied to the sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity of Ascension Island (and St Helena, Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha). | Biodiversity Action Plan is formally accepted by Ascension Island Government. BAP is being implemented by Ascension Island Government and other island stakeholders | Biodiversity Action Plan completed Biodiversity Action plan endorsed. Quarterly reports from AI Conservation Department | Ascension Island government retains commitment to biodiversity conservation. |
| Outputs: 1. AICD organisations able to undertake long-term monitoring & management of the biodiversity of Ascension Island. | Appointment of Darwin Fellow Appointment of Darwin Trainees Minimum of 10 staff from UK OT partner organisations trained in key biodiversity assessment techniques | Field reports Participation in field activities Workshop reports Correspondence Biological databases | A high proportion of participants continue current employment. |
| 2. Greatly enhanced knowledge of key biodiversity elements in Ascension Island | Habitat map Population assessments of key species aka Species Action Plans (min 20; 5 for each 6 mo.) Computer databases (min 4) Peer reviewed papers (min 3) Reference collections (min 3) | Habitat map Biological databases Scientific papers | |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| | Conference presentations (min 2) Biodiversity Action Plan (July 14) | | |
| 3. Greatly enhanced public awareness of the importance of, and threats faced by the biodiversity of Ascension Island including enhanced legislation. | Website Newsletters (min 9) Press releases (min 5) Public meetings (min 5) Interim report on legislative change | Web hits Circulation of Darwin Newsletter Media outputs | |
| <p>Activities (details in workplan)</p> <p>Capacity building</p> <p>1.1 Appointment of Darwin Research Fellow</p> <p>1.2 Appointment of Darwin Trainees</p> <p>1.3 Training of staff and trainees in taxonomy including workshop</p> <p>1.4 Training of staff and trainees in population monitoring including workshop</p> <p>1.5 Training of staff and trainees in endangered plant culture techniques including workshop</p> <p>1.6 Training of staff and trainees in GIS including workshop</p> <p>1.7 Training of staff and trainees in Vertebrate tracking</p> <p>Field research</p> <p>2.1 A full inventory of animal and plant species for Ascension Island</p> <p>2.2 Development of <i>ex-situ</i> plant conservation techniques</p> <p>2.3 Design of a more sustainable biodiversity monitoring strategy</p> <p>2.4 A more detailed knowledge of the at-sea habitat use of key marine species in relation to fishing effort.</p> <p>2.5 Species Action Plans for 20 key species</p> <p>2.6 Interim report on legislative change</p> <p>2.7 Design of a BAP with associated workplan</p> <p>2.8 Ascension Island Government adopts plan</p> <p>Awareness raising</p> <p>3.1 Active engagement between school, other community groups and biodiversity professionals (20 class and field activities)</p> <p>3.2 Design and population of a detailed and vibrant biodiversity website</p> <p>3.3 Active media campaign throughout the project (5 press releases)</p> <p>3.4 Production of highly accessible Darwin Newsletter (9 issues)</p> <p>3.5 Series of public meetings (at least 5)</p> <p>Reporting</p> <p>4.1 6 monthly reports to Darwin</p> <p>4.2 Annual reports to Darwin</p> <p>4.3 Final report to Darwin</p> | | | |

Annex 3 Standard Measures

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

| Code No. | Description | Year 1 Total | Year 2 Total | Year 3 Total | Year 4 Total | Total to date | Total planned during the project (% of target reached) |
|-------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|--|
| Established codes | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Number of people to receive at least one year of training Darwin Trainees (see section 3.1: 1.2) | 0.5 | 1.5 | | | 2 | 2 (100%) |
| 6A | Number of people to receive other forms of education/ training AIGCD Staff (see sections 3.1: 1.3 – 1.7) | 16 | 6 (with additional training for the other 16) | | | 22 | 8 (275%) |
| 7 | Number of training materials to be produced for use by host country | 4 | 4 | | | 8 | 2 (400%) |
| 8 | Number of weeks to be spent by UK project staff on project work in the host country | 33 | 15 | | | 48 | 40 (120%) |
| 9 | Number of species/habitat management plans to be produced for Governments, public authorities, or other implementing agencies in the host country | 1 | 10 (in final draft format) | | | 11 | 21 (20 SAP, 1 BAP) (52%) |
| 11A | Number of papers to be published in peer reviewed journals See Table 2 | 0 | 5 | | | 5 | 3 (167%) |
| 11B | Number of papers to be submitted to peer reviewed journals See Table 2 | 1 | 6 | | | 6 | 3 (200%) |
| 12A | Number of computer based databases to be established and handed over to host country | 1 | 3 | | | 4 | 4 (100%) |
| 12B | Number of computer based databases to be enhanced and handed over to host country | 1 | 5 | | | 6 | 2 (300%) |
| 13A | Number of species reference collections to be established and handed over to host | 0 | 3 | | | 3 | 3 (100%) |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---------|----------------|
| | country | | | | | | |
| 14A | Number of conferences/seminars/workshops to be organised to present/disseminate findings | 4 | 3 | | | 7 | 5 (140%) |
| 14B | Number of conferences/seminars/workshops attended at which findings from Darwin project work will be presented/disseminate | 1 | 3 | | | 4 | 2 (200%) |
| 15A | Number of national press releases in host country | 4 | 2 | | | 6 | 5 (120%) |
| 15B | Number of local press releases in host country | 4 | 10 | | | 14 | 5 (280%) |
| 15C | Number of national press releases in UK | 2 | 3 | | | 3 | 2 (150%) |
| 15D | Number of local press releases in UK | 2 | 0 | | | 2 | 2 (100%) |
| 16A | Number of newsletters to be produced | 4 | 5 | | | 9 | 9 (100%) |
| 16B | Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the host country | 200 | 200 (same people) | | | 200 | 200 (100%) |
| 16C | Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the UK | 500 | 600 | | | 600 | 500 (120%) |
| 17A | Number of dissemination networks to be established | 0 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 (100%) |
| 19A | Number of national radio interviews/features in host country | 1 | 4 | | | 5 | 4 (125%) |
| 19C | Number of local interviews/features in host country | 1 | 0 | | | 1 | 1 (100%) |
| 19D | Number of local radio interviews/features in the UK | 1 | 0 | | | 1 | 1 (100%) |
| 20 | Estimated value (£'s) of physical assets to be handed over to host countries | £22,450 | £41,050 | | | £63,500 | £63,500 (100%) |
| 21 | Number of permanent education/training/research facilities or organisations to be established and then continued after Darwin funding has ceased | 0 | 1 (Marine & Fisheries Research Unit) | | | 1 | 1 (100%) |
| 22 | Number of permanent field plots to be established during the project and continued after Darwin funding has | 25 | 50 | | | 75 | 100 (75%) |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|----------|----------|--|--|----------|----------------|
| | ceased | | | | | | |
| 23 | Value of resources raised from other sources for project work | £135,000 | £133,000 | | | £268,000 | £375,000 (71%) |

Table 2 Publications

| Type (eg journals, manual, CDs) | Detail (title, author, year) | Publishers (name, city) | Available from (eg contact address, website) | Cost £ |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------|
| Journal | The genus <i>Erechthias</i> Meyrick of Ascension Island, including discovery of a new brachypterous species (Lepidoptera, Tineidae). Davis & Mendel, 2013 | ZooKeys | Open Access | NA |
| Journal | Telemetry as a tool for improving estimates of marine turtle abundance. Weber, Weber, Godley, Ellick, Witt & Broderick, 2013 | Biological Conservation | Seaturtle.org | NA |
| Journal | Numerical dispersal simulations and genetics help explain the origin of hawksbill sea turtles in Ascension Island. Putman, Abreu-Grobis, Broderick, Ciofi, Formia, Godley, Stroud, Pelembe, Verley, Williams, 2014 | Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology | Seaturtle.org | NA |
| Journal | Rescue, ecology and conservation of a rediscovered island endemic fern (<i>Anogramma ascensionis</i>): <i>ex situ</i> methodologies and a road map for species reintroduction and habitat restoration. Baker, Lambdon, Jones, Pellicer, Stroud, Renshaw, Nissalo, Corcoran, Clubbe & Sarasan, 2014 | Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society | AIGCD | NA |
| Journal | Return to the land; the stages of terrestrial recruitment in land crabs. Hartnoll, Regnier-McKellar, Weber & Weber, In Press | Crustaceana | AIGCD | NA |
| Journal | Recovery of the South Atlantic's largest green turtle nesting population. Weber, Weber, Godley, Ellick, Avery, Williams, Sim, Broderick. In Review | Biodiversity and Conservation | AIGCD | NA |

Annex 4 Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

This may include outputs of the project, but need not necessarily include all project documentation. For example, the abstract of a conference would be adequate, as would be a summary of a thesis rather than the full document. If we feel that reviewing the full document would be useful, we will contact you again to ask for it to be submitted.

It is important, however, that you include enough evidence of project achievement to allow reassurance that the project is continuing to work towards its objectives. Evidence can be provided in many formats (photos, copies of presentations/press releases/press cuttings, publications, minutes of meetings, reports, questionnaires, reports etc) and you should ensure you include some of these materials to support the annual report text.

Wildlife Protection Ordinance, 2013 – can be downloaded here: <http://www.ascension-island.gov.ac/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/ORD-6-2013-Wildlife-Protection-Ordinance-Asc.pdf>

AA17

Assented to in Her Majesty's name and on Her Majesty's behalf this 18th day of October, 2013.

Mark Capes
Governor



**ASCENSION
NO. 6 OF 2013**

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Enacted..... | 18 th October 2013 |
| Date of Commencement..... | 18 th October 2013 |
| Published in the Gazette..... | 18 th October 2013 |

AN ORDINANCE

to protect and preserve the wildlife and habitat of Ascension.

Enacted by the Governor of Ascension after consultation with the Island Council of Ascension.

Citation

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Wildlife Protection Ordinance, 2013.

Checklist for submission

| | Check |
|---|-------|
| Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line. | x |
| Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line. | x |
| Have you included means of verification? You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report. | x |
| Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. | x |
| Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors | x |
| Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully? | x |
| Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report. | |