

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

Project Ref No	20-002
Project Title	Strengthening Indian Ocean migratory elasmobranch conservation policy and fisher livelihoods
Country(ies)	Sri Lanka
Lead Organisation	MRAG Ltd
Collaborator(s)	Chris Mees The Manta Trust, WWF-Pakistan, Sri Lankan Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, RFLP, IOTC, BOBLME, BIOT-A, IUCN(SSG), ISSF
Project Leader	Dr Chris Mees
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	HYR1
Project website	Not currently established due to problems experienced with kicking off the project

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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).

Output 1 (fully functioning elasmobranch data collection programme established that is harmonised with regional IOTC reporting requirements and increased strategic and practical capacity of the DFAR to govern its fleet of multiday vessels):

Activities 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 have not yet been initiated due to the problems mentioned below

Output 2 (Improved understanding of elasmobranch fishing by Sri Lankan multiday fleet, including socio-economic drivers of elasmobranch fishing by the multiday fleet and the importance of shark catches to the poor):

Activity 2.1 is currently taking place as far as is currently possible. (i.e., analysis of BIOT arrest reports, catch records, interviews and secondary data)

A review of existing secondary and available primary data has been carried out in the form of a working party paper for the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch, reviewing the status of the illegal fisheries of Chagos and an MSc thesis exploring the wider literature on elasmobranch fishing by Sri Lankan vessels, the socio-economic characteristics of the fishers involved and the drivers of this behaviour. This has included a meta-analysis of secondary data on shark catches across the Indian Ocean and a review of how shark fisheries have developed in Sri Lanka over time. National and local social and economic statistics have been used, along with arrest reports, interviews with captains and interviews with the Senior Fisheries Protection Officers working on patrols in the British Indian Ocean Territory. This was completed at the end of September. An analysis of the biological information collected from BIOT arrest data has also been completed.

2a. 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.

There have been some unexpected developments arising which have prevented this project starting as promptly as planned. These have been discussed in detail with LTS International and DEFRA and efforts are being made to resolve the issues. Nevertheless, this has pushed back the first year timetable so some funds will need to be moved forward to year 2.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

Yes No

3b. If yes, and you wish to request a carry forward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible through the formal Change Request process. However, it would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication now of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carry forward request: £XX

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

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 through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report 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**