

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2022

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| Project reference | 28-002 |
| Project title | Pioneering sustainable grazing for plants and livelihoods in Cape Verde |
| Country(ies)/territory(ies) | Cape Verde |
| Lead partner | Fauna & Flora International |
| Partner(s) | Biflores, Municipality of Brava, Community Association of Fajã d'Água, National Agricultural Research and Development Institute (INIDA) |
| Project leader | Sara Calçada |
| Report date and number (e.g. HYR1) | HYR2 |
| Project website/blog/social media | www.fauna-flora.org |

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

Output 1 – Site-based sustainable grazing management delivering immediate conservation and wellbeing benefits and informing an island-wide grazing management plan

The **steering group** is now in place, with representation from the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture (MAA), the Municipality of Brava, Biflores and FFI. One workshop has taken place during this reporting period, with participatory review of the project plan and outline of the proposed pilot grazing management plan.

In addition to regular communications between farmers and the Biflores' Agronomy Project Manager, there have been two meetings (June and September) between FFI project members, Biflores, and five farmers, three of whom form part of the project's pilot site, in Fajã D'Água.

Sustainable grazing management plan - An outline of the pilot grazing management plan has been designed and agreed by the now established steering group. Given the delays in project delivery (as described in Section 2), development of the pilot grazing management plan is being done alongside the trial plots, and is thus already taking the whole island into consideration, not just the pilot site Fajã D'Água.

Livestock veterinary care is being coordinated with the veterinarian at the MAA, who has contacts with our proposed veterinary consultant. We have also become aware of a past government initiative that trained local farmers in livestock husbandry care, so we will ensure our efforts build on these, giving them continuity, and that the volunteers have access to resources needed.

Outreach – In June, there was an Agronomy Fair in Brava, where Biflores (and FFI) had a stall, with information on grazing practices, endemic plants (identification, importance) and fodder species and production. During the fair Biflores' Agronomy Project Manager also gave practical demonstrations on the production of mineral blocks for goats, hydroponic growing systems, and fodder growth and production techniques.

Output 2 – Scientific evidence available to inform decision-making for island-wide grazing management planning and conservation strategies.

Three **trial plots** are active, two of them with newly built enclosures for goats to prevent permanent free grazing. In each of the trial plots, we have established parcels dedicated to livestock fodder production (fresh and dry), as well as some growing plants for human consumption.

Mapping of vegetation cover is ongoing, using high-res satellite and drone imagery. Goat grazing patterns and distribution is being collected using GPS collars, which will be overlaid with the vegetation maps and surveys throughout the year.

There have also been regular surveys of associated metrics such as water run-off and soil erosion at the pilot site Fajã D'Água.

Production of seedlings of endemic plants species in nurseries and botanic gardens continues, along with research of ideal conditions for planting in the wild, after the removal of invasive species. Whilst transect surveys to map the distribution and abundance of endemic plants were on hold for a few months, due to the temporary absence of the Terrestrial Project Manager, these have now resumed, and will inform the vegetation cover maps.

Output 3 – Brava-wide grazing management plan available and used to inform sustainable grazing management practices on other islands

One workshop has taken place during this reporting period, with participatory review of the project plan and outline of the proposed pilot grazing management plan. The workshop was attended by representatives from the MAA, the Municipality of Brava, Biflores and FFI. Other stakeholders have also been directly engaged through the Agronomy Fair (June), and two site visits to the trial plots (June, September) by Biflores and FFI, although Biflores' Agronomy Project Manager also visits the trial plots on a weekly basis. (Please see Output 1, and Section 2.)

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.

In the last six months, there has been a change in leadership at the main implementing partner, Biflores. The organisation's director, who was the main point of contact for the project leader and dealt with operations and administration in-country, departed in May. This put an additional strain on Biflores and FFI's teams, requiring nearly daily communication between both, to ensure project delivery and engagement remained on track. Although a new director has been in post since September, the project team has kept more regular and open communication, not relying on Biflores' director or FFI's project leader.

Leadership at Brava's delegation for the Ministry for Environment and Agriculture (MAA), the main government partner, has also changed in the past 6 months, which further delayed the establishment and progress of a steering committee for the project.

Whilst coordination and communication between all key project stakeholders is currently very good, this has contributed to the further delay in developing a pilot sustainable grazing management plan, and may consequently result in a delay of a final management plan to be approved by the MAA before the end of the project.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

4a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

In light of the information described above, and in response to feedback from NIRAS-LTS after our last Annual Report, we are finalising a Change Request to be submitted promptly, addressing potential issues with the timeframe for our final outputs. We do not however expect these will translate into a re-budget between FY, or significant changes in project approach.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**