



#### **Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report**

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note": (<u>https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/information-notes-learning-notes-briefing-papers-and-reviews/</u>).

It is expected that this report will be a maximum of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)

#### Submission Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Submit to: <u>BCF-Reports@niras.com</u> including your project ref in the subject line

Project reference	29-005
Project title	Safeguarding Rennell Island Livelihoods and Biodiversity from Invasive Species
Country/ies	Fiji & Solomon Islands
Lead Partner	BirdLife International (BLI)
Project partner(s)	Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA)
Darwin Initiative grant value	£415, 193.00
Start/end dates of project	01/06/2022 – 31/03/2025
Reporting period	April 2022 – March 2023 Annual Report 1
Project Leader name	Steve Cranwell
Project website/blog/social media	
Report author(s) and date	Miliana Ravuso, Steve Cranwell, BirdLife International George Tauika, Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association 30 April 2023

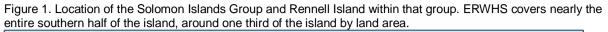
#### **Darwin Initiative Project Information**

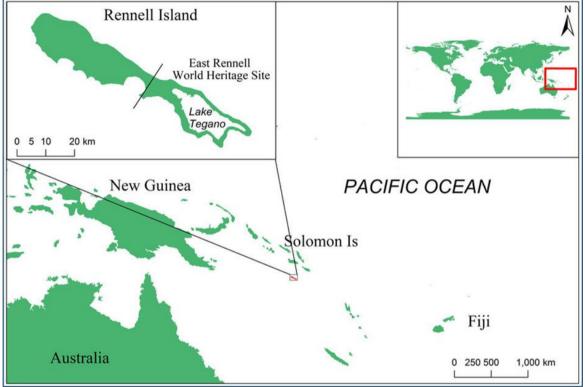
#### 1. Project Summary

East Rennell is the only World Heritage Site (ERWHS) in the Solomon Islands and represents approximately 30% of Rennell Island's habitats with exceptionally high levels of endemism, including 13 birds, 11 bats, 109 plants and 7 land snail species. A prominent feature of the WHS is Lake Tegano, which at 15,000ha is the largest lake in the insular Pacific harbouring numerous endemic species including an endemic snake. In 2013, ERWHS was declared 'in danger' from issues including: lack of Protected Area status; limited livelihood opportunities and low perceived benefit from WHS status risking future logging; inadequate ecological monitoring; and IAS incursions associated with West Rennell mining and logging. The subsistence lifestyles of about 900 people within the four ERWHS villages who depend on food/crop cultivation, fishing, crop sales & small-scale handicraft, continue to be threatened. A 2018 BirdLife-led study confirmed Black rat (Rattus rattus) presence island-wide with associated impact on crop yields. An inability to prevent further IAS introductions was evident, with Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and new invasive plant species identified as having recently established, further threatening biodiversity values and livelihoods, and underlining the urgent need for biosecurity. The significant risks rats pose to the native birds and fauna of ERWHS have been assessed based on known effects elsewhere, with five endemic birds alongside endemic snails considered exceptionally vulnerable and selected as essential indicators for the protection of ERWHS' natural values.

The project will address the biodiversity challenges by demonstrating the effects of Black rats on biodiversity indicators through rodent control plots set up in each of the 4 village forest areas,

and by evaluating these benefits, it will seek to establish island-wide biosecurity. The project is also addressing human & wellbeing challenges, including food security by assessing effects of Black rats on crop production and developing capacity of local communities to continue with rat control management as well as diversifying income-generating opportunities.





Map Source: Monitoring vegetation dynamics in East Rennell Island World Heritage Site using multi-sensor and multi-temporal remote sensing data - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate.

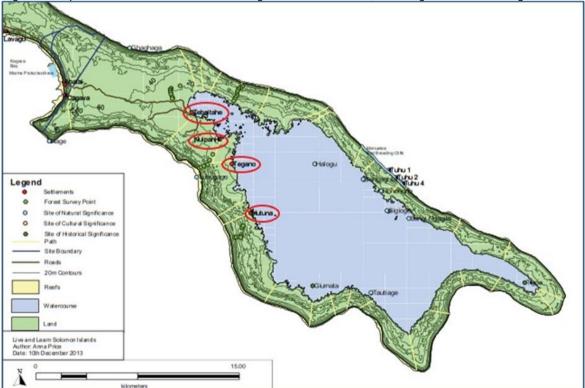


Figure 2. Map of sites of natural and historical significance in ERWHS, including location of 4 villages

Map Source: Draft Management Plan East Rennell, 2014.

#### 2. Project Stakeholders/Partners

BirdLife International began working with the Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA) in 2018, when it undertook an assessment to determine the extent of Black Rats on Rennell Island & <u>explore the removal of threats as a local response to a WHS in danger</u>. The outcome & recommendations from the assessment formed the basis of the current project, which was to develop a community-led and management rodent control program. The LTWHSA has since been working alongside BLI for the development of the project concept note and full proposal. In addition, BLI had been collaborating with various Solomon Island Government (SIG) departments to identify key actions & develop timeframes for the project.

Upon project commencement, a Project Inception Workshop was held in Honiara on 30th & 31st August 2022 (Annex 4.1) where the project workplan was discussed, reviewed & agreed. The project partners from the SIG present at the Project Inception Workshop included the Environment & Conservation Division (ECD) and the GEF6/IUCN Ensuring Resilient Ecosystems & Representative Protected Areas (EREPA) Project Team from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM); the Biosecurity Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livelihood & Biosecurity (MALB); the Ministry of Culture & Tourism (MCT): Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and the Ministry of Forestry & Research. Other key Honiara-based stakeholders that participated in the project planning included Live & Learn Solomon Islands (LLSI), the Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA); the Solomon Islands Handicraft Association (SIHA), Solomon Islands National University (SINU) and the Deputy Premier of the Renbel Province and Chairman of the LTWHSA. The MECDM assisted with organising the Inception Workshop and played a key role in co-facilitating the workshop as the host country. The SIG MECDM Deputy Secretary Technical, Mr Chanel Iroi provided the welcome & opening remarks on behalf of the SIG; this was followed by some introductory remarks by the British Deputy High Commissioner in Honiara, Mr Steve Auld in the absence of Mr Tom Coward, whom BLI had also been working closely with, during the project development stages. The Inception Workshop report will be made available once finalised & agreed by all stakeholders.

The LTWHSA & BLI held Community Project Inception Meetings with the four communities at the ERWHS, between 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (Annex 4.2). The Rodent Control Program was presented, discussed, and agreed. Following this a Project Funding Agreement (PFA) was signed to this effect (Annex 4.3) and a Project Implementation Timetable/Workplan for Year 1 was developed with the LTWHSA (Annex 4.4).

The partnership with the LTWHSA is significant because the LTWHSA is the only staterecognized local organization responsible for the maintenance of the ERWHS. A major challenge though is the remoteness to the site (to Honiara) and the setback to financial & administrative support for the LTWHSA. BLI provided a half day training to the LTWHSA on project management, administration & financial reporting. The LTWHSA has since been working with the BLI team to implement activities according to schedule, despite the challenges. Communication and monitoring of project activities is done via email & telephone, with BLI having made several trips to provide technical guidance and monitoring.

A strong relationship in support of the biosecurity aims has been developed with MALB (through the Director and Permanent Secretary), while it took some time to identify and recruit a local lead for the biosecurity activities, the person appointed has an exceptional biosecurity background and is well placed to lead the Renbel biosecurity response.

A collaborative relationship has been maintained with agencies also working in East Rennell notably, the SI MECDM Environment & Conservation Division through the EREPA project, the Climate Change Division through a climate adaptation & resilience project and with Live and Learn SI through their *Carbon Financed Community Forest Conservation in the Solomon Islands* project and the SI. Collaboration with these agencies focus on identifying & mapping synergies between workplans and sharing updates on progress/challenges.

#### 3. Project Progress

#### 3.1 **Progress in carrying out Project Activities**

A Project Inception Workshop was successfully conducted in Honiara on 30th & 31st August 2022 and was attended by representatives from the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) Ministries & key national & provincial stakeholders.

Similarly, a Project Partner Inception Workshop was held with the LTWHSA, and consultations were also conducted with the four communities at the ERWHS, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2022. The Rodent Control Program was discussed and because this was presented visually (illustrated as a diagram), communities fully understood the objectives of the project and agreed to have further village discussions on the treatment & non-treatment sites.

The LTWHSA appointed its Chairman, Mr. George Tauika to be the National (Local) Project Coordinator for the project and this appointment has been formalised through a Contract (Annex 4.5). The advertisement & recruitment of a Master's student was conducted between August & September 2022 and while it was disappointing that no local (Solomon Island) student met the University criteria, the project has recruited a Fijian student and a Studentship Agreement has been signed.

Approximately one tonne of rodent bait, and bait stations were procured for manufacture in August 2022, these were shipped from New Zealand in November 2022 along with flagging tapes, markers and other equipment for the rodent control program. The shipment took longer than expected to reach Honiara, finally arriving in February 2023. The irregular shipping service between Honiara and Rennell mean the consignment has not yet been delivered and is currently at the SIG Biosecurity depot in Honiara, awaiting the next vessel to Rennell Island.

A draft of a community-based Rodent Control Operational and Monitoring Plan has been developed. The Plan includes the outline/setup of the 1km<sup>2</sup> rodent treatment and associated non-treatment (control) plots to be established at each of the 4 ERWHS villages, and indicators for crops (e.g., kumara, taro, yams, papaya) and birds (e.g., Rennell Shrikebill, Rennell Whistler, Rennell Starling) to inform the impact of the rat control. The plan was presented to the four communities at the ERWHS in November 2022 and the local Rangers and Coordinators trained in setting up the plots. In March to April this year, a further fieldtrip led by Mr Steve Cranwell trained the local Coordinator and 4 Rangers in the crop and bird monitoring (at treatment & non-treatment sites) and supported completion of the rat control areas.

The University of the South Pacific Masters student, a Fijian national Mr Viliame Duavakacagi has completed a draft of his student research (Annex 4.6) and is revising his research proposal based on feedback from the technical support team, for submission to the University Academic Unit Research Committee (AURC) in early May. Mr Duavakacagi joined the BLI team in East Rennell in March-April this year, where he met with the Local Coordinator & 4 LTWHSA Local Rangers to develop his research proposal and its implementation.

Discussions with the Director of the SI Biosecurity Division, Mr Francis Tsatsia has been very positive. However, the process to confirm the role to lead the development of the Renbel Province biosecurity planning has been slow, due to various internal processes. A Solomon Islander with biosecurity expertise has been identified and BirdLife will contract the individual directly while the role will be hosted by the Biosecurity Division. This will aid access to local expertise and strengthen ownership including integration of the biosecurity plan into SIG national policy. Contractual arrangements for the position are being finalised and planning for the Biosecurity Workshop will commence, which is currently scheduled for August 2023. Biosecurity activities will follow in Year 2 & 3 of the project.

A Services Agreement has been signed with the Local Consultant on Rennell, Ms. Christina Nasiu who will conduct a LTWHSA capacity needs assessment. The capacity needs assessment had to be rescheduled from Y1Q3 to the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of Y2 due to conflicting village commitments which involved the LTWHSA between November & December 2022. In the meantime, the LTWHSA has been provided training in basic project & financial management and reporting (including acquittals) after the Community Project Inception Workshop in September 2022. Regular one on one discussions via telephone are done with the Local Project Coordinator (LPC), who has been submitting budget requests & acquittals for implementation of activities, since signing of Contract. The LPC maintains a record of all payments & receipts and provides this to BLI either via email or in-person during fieldtrips. Additionally, the LPC & 4 Local Rangers have now almost completed the setup of the four 100ha treatment areas (installation of stations and bait application awaiting arrival of equipment from Honiara), and have conducted the baseline monitoring of birds, and crops for the 4 community sites.

The training was conducted by Dr. Ray Pierce and Steve Cranwell in March-April 23 and the first monitoring reports from the Local Rangers are expected to be in May 2023.

Local Consultant Ms. Christina Nasiu conducted a preliminary visit to the ERWHS women in November – December 22, which confirmed a high level of interest and support. Ms. Nasiu will commence with the series of Savings Club Workshop in May 23, as will the baseline survey for handicraft production.

A review of all existing coordination structures/committees for the ERWHS was done at the Project Inception Workshop in Honiara, in August 22. This was done to minimise duplication & enhance synergies between projects and maintain communication with the SIG MECDM. A Project Steering Committee was agreed to, with the membership consisting of MECDM (to include Climate Change Division representation), MALB, Biosecurity, LTWHSA, SINU, SIHA, Live & Learn, MEHRD, UNESCO, MCT, EREPA Project, Renbel Province, Renbel Province Women Development Desk (Position established under the Prov. Govt). The first PSC meeting is expected to take place in May-June 23.

#### 3.2 **Progress towards Project Outputs**

The project experienced some delays during these 10 months; thus, some activities are slightly behind schedule. Despite these delays, the local Project Coordinator continues to actively monitor progress on the ground, ensuring tasks are done and communication is maintained with the BLI.

A key outcome of the Community Project Inception Workshop in September 2022 Output 1 was the understanding & agreement of the rodent control program by the four ERWHS villages. The BL Team presented the rodent control program in a visual form (diagram) and discussed the communities' role in the setup, monitoring & maintenance of the rodent control program. The team also discussed all non-target (species) mitigation measures with the communities and there were good discussions around this. The communities were satisfied with the explanations and there was a consensus for BirdLife/LTWHSA to develop & make available awareness information, prior to commencement of baiting. This is currently underway. The LTWHSA in collaboration with the 4 Local Rangers were then tasked to identify the respective 1km<sup>2</sup> rodent treatment and associated non-treatment (control) plots within their village forest areas. A Rodent Control Operational and Monitoring Plan has been developed by BLI (Annex 4.7) which includes the setup of the 1km<sup>2</sup> rodent treatment and associated non-treatment (control) plots at each of the 4 ERWHS villages. Guidelines have been developed for the crop (e.g., kumara, taro, yams, papaya) and bird (e.g., Rennell Shrikebill, Rennell Whistler, Rennell Starling) indicators. The Control plan was presented and discussed with the LTWHSA (including the four Local Rangers) & the four villages in November 22, during a fieldtrip led by Mr. Steve Cranwell. During the November fieldtrip, Mr. Cranwell trained the Local Rangers in how to establish the 4 treatment sites and assisted them in getting this underway. Between November & April, the 4 Local Rangers alongside 20 people (5 from each community) completed the cutting & marking of tracks at the 4 treatment sites, in preparation for baiting. The selection of non-treatment sites and the location of gardens and bird monitoring has also been established. During this period, the 4 Local Rangers trained at least 48 people in setting up rodent control plots; 2 groups of six people from each of the ERWHS villages working on a rotational basis. In January 2023, Mr Cranwell & Mrs Miliana Ravuso visited the ERWHS to check the progress of tasks, including marking of bait lines and to train the Rangers in the use of GPS and associated baiting and monitoring data collection. Mr Cranwell revisited the treatment plots with the Local Rangers & ensured all (bait) lines were parallel, clearly marked & that each plot was or close to 1km<sup>2</sup>. At this time the marking of the four treatment plots was approximately 50% complete.

December 22 and January 23 were extremely wet which slowed progress, this was compounded by Tropical Cyclone Judy in late February which caused some damage on Rennell and required additional work to clear limbs and fallen trees, from some bait lines. Between March and April, Dr. Pierce and Mr Cranwell conducted training with the Coordinator and Rangers in crop and bird monitoring methods & data collection. The Local Coordinator has confirmed that GPS marking of the plots is almost complete and that the Local Rangers have begun data collection for forest birds and have started conducting snail searches, as per the respective ERWHS Forest Bird Monitoring & Snail Search Protocols (Annex 4.8). The Rangers have also started with crop monitoring, using the Crop Monitoring Protocol (Annex 4.9).

The progress towards collecting socioeconomic baseline information is slightly behind schedule, however the delay in bait arrival has provided additional time to gather baseline information.

The socioeconomic assessment form has been finalised with the local consultant Christina Nasiu (Annex 4.10) and the survey to collate baselines for crop yields, socioeconomic & wellbeing indicators at the ERWHS communities will take place in May.

The consignment of bait & equipment for the rodent control program arrived in Honiara (from New Zealand) in mid-February 2023, a month behind schedule. There was then a delay with the SI Customs Department failing to provide documentation for payment to be made in order to release the consignment. In mid-March, Steve Cranwell (BLI) led a fieldtrip to Rennell, which also saw him managing the release of the consignment. The shipment is currently at the SI Biosecurity depot in Honiara, and while this means that the baiting of the four treatment plots has not commenced, this has been partially offset by the additional time needed to cut and mark the bait lines across the four 1km<sup>2</sup> rodent treatment areas. However, the delivery of the bait stations (from Honiara) is now needed, and the Local Project Coordinator is carefully monitoring the next available vessel/ship to Rennell Island. The LPC will oversee the transport of bait to Rennell and onto the ERWHS.

The biosecurity planning for Renbel Province is a critical component for managing Output 2 potential & future invasive species incursion & response on the island. Since project development, discussions with the Director of the SI Biosecurity Division, Francis Tsatsia has been extremely encouraging with the Director acknowledging the lack of technical resources & capability within the Division to extend biosecurity plans across all Provinces. This project will deliver that need for the Renbel Province. During the Project Inception Workshop in Honiara in August 2022, the Director together with representatives from the SI Maritime Authority and the Deputy Premier of the Renbel Province identified a preliminary list of biosecurity stakeholders to be engaged for the biosecurity planning process. However, it was agreed that an in-country role was critical to lead to develop & lead the process. Discussions on the role & responsibilities continued with the Director, and a local biosecurity expert (former Deputy Director for Biosecurity) has since been identified. A contract and Terms & Conditions for the role is being finalised with the position anticipated to be in place before the end of May. One of the first tasks for the local biosecurity role is the coordination of the Biosecurity Workshops and the engagement of local stakeholders and convening participants in scoping the biosecurity to guide the development of a draft Renbel Biosecurity Plan.

<u>Output 3</u> Progress in completing activities to achieve the output is slightly behind schedule, but it will not affect the overall project timeline. While a Services Agreement has been signed with the local consultant Christina Nasiu, scheduling of activities has been difficult due to varying commitments and setbacks in travel arrangements with the LTWHSA.

A LTWHSA Capacity Needs Assessment has been drafted and is currently being finalized by BLI technical support staff. The assessment with the LTWHSA is expected to be conducted in May, together with the ERWHS socioeconomic surveys.

Despite the delay in schedule, the LTWHSA led by its Chairman Mr George Tauika who is the Local Project Coordinator (LPC) has been involved from the beginning of the project and instrumental in making key decisions locally. Local (employment) agreements were developed for the LPC and four Local Rangers, with agreements outlining their key responsibilities and commitments. The local team has been working according to their workplan/implementation timetable and this has greatly increased capacity and the team understand the importance of accountability & commitment.

Mr Tauika has been conducting village meetings to update the villagers and has been leading the Local Rangers in the setup of the rodent control plots. At the beginning of the project, the local team (of Local Coordinator & Rangers) had no knowledge of the rodent control program as there was no practical means to manage rodents on the ground. At present, the Local Coordinator, four Local Rangers and at least 48 other villagers have increased their knowledge and understanding on invasive species, in particular the establishment of rodent control plots to manage rodents at the ERWHS forest areas. They've demonstrated this by setting up & marking out 1km plots within their respective village forest areas.

At the first project meeting with BLI following the Community Project Inception Workshop, a brief project management & finance report training was conducted, where members of the LTWHSA were taken through the Service Agreement clauses, the requirements around project reporting and maintaining financial documents & receipts and submitting acquittals.

This was the main capacity gap highlighted by the LTWHSA and BLI, led by Mrs Miliana Ravuso conducted this refresher training for them.

Output 4 Savings Club Workshops and handicraft assessment will commence in May 23.

<u>Output 5</u> Progress towards Output 5 is positive and on track. Knowledge management activities, including lessons learnt will take place from Y2.

#### 3.3 **Progress towards the Project Outcome**

The Project start-up was delayed, principally because the host country (Solomon Islands) was still recovering post-covid and entry was not possible prior to November 2022. Other challenges include the time taken to mark and cut each of the rat treatment areas a result of the reduced hours people are available/willing to work, but also the difficult terrain, albeit this had been factored into the project calculations. Nonetheless, progress is being made, support for the project is very high and there is still time to fulfil the project objectives. The Covid-19 pandemic greatly affected the maritime industry and until now, the shipping schedules in the Solomon Islands have not normalised. Baiting for the four 1km2 rat-controlled demonstration areas will commence as soon as the bait stations and bait arrives at the ERWHS (by May). Local Rangers, with the support of community members have been trained in the outcome monitoring procedures and have begun collecting this data. Over the life of the project this will provide evidence of the effectiveness of the rat control (for crops and birds), and through the social surveys the benefits to each of the four ER communities. Monitoring methods are outlined in the ERWHS Monitoring Protocols for Endemic Birds, Endemic Snails, and crops (Annex 4.8 & 4.9).

#### 3.4 Monitoring of Assumptions

The key assumption identified (for Y1 of the project) to fulfilling project outcome was the resumption of unrestricted travel with limited quarantine entry conditions. The project has been fortunate that travel has resumed directly between Fiji & the Solomon Islands from November 22. In August 22, the BLI team had to travel via Brisbane, Australia as there were no direct flights yet. Based on guidance & advice received from collaborating SIG agencies as well as the British High Commission in Honiara, it is expected that there will be no disruption or changes to the current travel schedules and all quarantine arrangements have been lifted.

The LTWHSA remain committed and continue to work with the ERWHS communities to maintain momentum and support for the project. Similarly, training & on-going technical advice provided by BLI & Dr. Ray Pierce has enabled the Local Rangers (and community casual workers) to complete marking of bait grid and begin collection of monitoring data. The project was able to successful recruit a qualified Masters student who has now started his research.

The SI Biosecurity Department, the key implementing partner for project output 2 have been engaged from project inception. The Director Biosecurity remains committed to fulfilling project objectives, with a contract being finalized now for a biosecurity role/position to lead the biosecurity development in the Renbel Province.

Capacity developed this far for the LTWHSA has enabled them to lead the setup of the rodent control plots and pass on this knowledge to other community members. Remaining assumptions still hold true.

## 3.5 Impact: Achievement of Positive Impact on Biodiversity and Poverty Reduction

The project is expected to secure the biological and social sustainability of the ERWHS and to ensure it contributes to the fulfilment of the SIG's CBD commitments, and achievement of National Development Strategy objectives. Progress towards achieving project impact is positive. Since project commencement, BLI has developed good partnerships with SIG agencies and stakeholders that are also implementing projects at the ERWHS. The rodent control program, its monitoring and the capacity developed amongst the ERWHS communities will contribute to the ERWHS protected area management planning led by the SIG EREPA project and the long-term development of the carbon financing scheme by Live & Learn SI.

Together, these projects will positively impact the biodiversity at the ERWHS and promote community development and poverty reduction for the ERWHS people.

#### 4. Project Support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

The CBD focal point in the Solomon Islands, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology (MECDM) has been involved in the project since its proposal development stages. The Deputy Director Technical and Undersecretary for the MECDM, Mr Chanel Iroi officially opened the Project Inception Workshop in Honiara in August 2022 and during his remarks reiterated the importance of the project to the SIG's commitment to UNESCO, which was to remove the ERWHS from the List of World Heritage Site in Danger by 2025. In addition, the development (and eventual implementation & management) of the rodent control program is an effective community-based conservation measure that will contribute to the SI NBSAP Strategic Goal C, Target 12 (Post-220 Target 2). Similarly, the continuing capacity development, engagement and participation of community members are contributing towards accomplishment of the SIG Medium Term Strategy 7.

#### 5. Project Support to Poverty Reduction

The project has directly benefited the ERWHS communities thus far. During this reporting period, training has been conducted, and skills in the establishment of rat control and project monitoring has been shared with at least 50 project beneficiaries. This has provided knowledge of bird and biodiversity threats and the different ways (indicators) to monitor them. The recruitment of four Local Rangers will increase household income for the families, similarly for the local casuals who are employed on a rotational basis. Since there is little to no cash economy at the ERWHS, the communities are extremely grateful that the project will provide significant cash flow, which will assist in paying for school fees and purchasing necessary items for children. The socioeconomic assessment and Savings Club Workshops (Y2) will provide tangible data to verify how the project is contributing to poverty reduction.

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board <sup>1</sup> .	BLI has overall management responsibilities for the project, with 80% of the team being women. Mrs Miliana Ravuso is the Project Manager, providing coordination & management support to Steve Cranwell who is the Project (Technical) Leader. They are supported (in the Fiji Office) by Conservation Officer, Ms. Melania Bulimaitoga and Finance Officer Ms. Mere Ledua. The Finance Business Partner, Ms. Alessandra Cappelli provides overarching financial reporting support.
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women <sup>2</sup> .	The project is being implemented in a very patriarchal society, where opportunities for women have been limited or at least mostly restricted to 'traditional roles' such as child rearing, cooking, basket weaving/handicrafts etc. Through the various project activities, BLI and the LTWHSA is actively promoting and seeking the involvement of women in project management/coordination responsibilities locally. The project currently has women involved in the establishment of the rat control grid, with more women to be employed for the project monitoring. The respective Savings Clubs that will be formalised at the ERWHS will predominantly be 100% women, with economic & social development opportunities benefitting everyone in the community. While drastic changes for equality & social inclusion cannot be imposed and/or forced, the project is still building on these activities and outcomes will be realised, further into the project.

#### 6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

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#### 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Project Leader & Project Manager have together made a total of six (6) trips to the ERWHS, since the project started. While regular communication via telephone, zoom and email is maintained; face to face meetings and project site visits are critical to project management, particularly for monitoring and evaluation. This approach is necessary to ensure project implementation is on track, any anomalies are identified and addressed, and it encourages financial transparency and accountability with the local project partner. In developing Service Agreements with Consultants, the specific indicators of achievement from the Project Logframe are shared with the Consultants to facilitate tracking of activities and how these all contribute to project outcome & outputs. The LTWHSA maintains a record of all deliverables as highlighted in its Project Implementation Timetable/Workplan and it is anticipated that these will be shared with key implementing partners as part of PSC meetings.

Monitoring data for the rodent control program, impact on crop and biodiversity and the effects on socioeconomic status/wellbeing of the ERWHS communities will be shared in Y2.

#### 8. Lessons Learnt

#### Administrative Aspects

The social/community structure on Rennell is quite informal & unofficial, so people are naturally very relaxed, easy going and casual. There is a chiefly structure (East Rennell Council of Chiefs) and a Provincial administrative body (Renbel Provincial Government), however majority of the administrators & leaders spend most of their time in Honiara & this is also where bulk of the resources & support are centred. This leaves most, if not all of the management & coordination of all actions at the ERWHS to the LTWHSA. While this may be a positive thing in general, this also means that planned activities sometimes don't take place on schedule, dates & times for implementing activities often change, or cancelled at the last minute, for e.g., Rangers weekly activities are cancelled if there's a church meeting in the village, similarly a BLI planned trip can be cancelled if there's a church gathering in the village. This causes a delay in project activities & constant rescheduling of activities, trips, etc. LTWHSA/BLI try to be inclusive as possible and include religious leaders in the project, as they are influential in the communities and very easily mobilize congregation members in the respective communities. To support timely delivery of activities, BLI develops a workplan with the LPC who reviews this alongside risks, each month with the Rangers and BLI. Activities are planned with as much lead in time as possible to enable logistics to be accommodated.

#### Technical Aspects

The startup, bait line preparation and equipment shipping delays mean commencement of the baiting/rat control will be later than scheduled (in workplan). This will reduce the length of time the rat control is active (within the project term) and equally the monitoring informing the impact and benefits. However, at least 18 months of control and monitoring are expected and will provide meaningful results. Other activities/deliverables are at this stage unaffected.

#### Financial Aspects

BLI and the LTWHSA will need to strengthen coordination of fieldtrips to & from Honiara, so reports and acquittals can be completed efficiently in a manner that's workable for all.

As with any local community, disagreements & issues arise when funds are involved and, in this case, there have been issues on the recruitment of some Local Rangers. LTWHSA has had to replace 2 Local Rangers within this short period, and this is expected to continue throughout the term of the project. While this isn't a huge issue, BLI has ensured that normal community nomination procedures take place and communities are satisfied with whoever they nominate as this can determine whether they will support & participate in the project.

#### Project Cycles and Local Capacity Constraints

2022 saw commencement of two new projects for East Rennell, the Darwin project and the SIG GEF6 EREPA project, in addition to an existing one with Live and Learn SI. While this increase in support is helpful to addressing the needs of these communities, it is also challenging with extremely limited local capacity available.

A local counterpart is essential to delivering a project's objectives and to maintain a connection with, and the support of local communities, BLI identified these capacity constraints from its engagement since 2018 and sought to manage this by developing projects with the LTWHSA and specifically the Chairman. In recruiting the Local Project Coordinator (LPC), the opportunity was made available across East Rennell, but it was apparent only one person would be suitable. and this was the LTWHSA Chairman who was formally engaged at the Project commencement. The EREPA project started some months later (after the Darwin project) but were unable to find a Local Project Coordinator, which led to an offer being made and accepted by the Darwin Local Project Coordinator. While the reasons for the decisions by both the SIG and the LTWHSA Chairman/Darwin Project Coordinator were understood albeit exercised in an undesirable if not unprofessional manner, it does highlight the difficulty with supporting substantive concurrent projects in small communities. In resolving this BLI is working closely with EREPA in sharing the LTWHSA Chairman's time to support both projects but is also working with the LPC to identify someone from within the ERWHS communities who can at least provide a support role and be mentored to develop their capability in fulfilment of the LPC functions. This will provide a backstop in the event the LPC cannot continue in both projects and in the absence of this capability it will be difficult for the Darwin project to succeed.

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

This is a new project, and this is the first Annual Report.

#### 10. Risk Management

There have been no new risks identified and/or encountered since project commencement.

#### 11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

The main lesson learnt during these initial few months of the project is the need to regularly review the timetable of activities and reschedule wisely based on the situation on the ground, and in collaboration with the LTWHSA.

#### 12. Sustainability and Legacy

BLI has established good partnerships and relationship with all the agencies working at the ERWHS, including and most importantly the SIG MECDM. In doing so, the profile of IAS management, particularly rodent control and biosecurity for Rennell Island has increased during this first year of the project. BLI has met several times with the Director of Biosecurity, as a result the position of a Renbel Biosecurity Coordinator/Officer has been created and will sit within the Biosecurity Division ensuring a sustained biosecurity presence for the Renbel Province. Similarly, BLI has met with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Biosecurity (MALB) who will ensure biosecurity planning is supported to ensure there are no new IAS incursions on Rennell and the safeguard of ERWHS biodiversity.

#### **13.** Darwin Initiative Identity

The project was highlighted on the <u>BirdLife International</u> website as part of a series of projects supported by the UK Government's Darwin Initiative. While this is not the first Darwin Initiative project to be implemented by BLI in the Pacific, it is the first for the Solomon Islands. All key implementing partners, including the SIG have a clear understanding and appreciation of the UK Government's support through the Darwin Initiative. The Deputy British High Commissioner for Solomon Islands provided a brief background on the origin of the Darwin Initiative fund, including the coverage and magnitude of its funding. The BLI will work more closely with the LTWHSA to ensure there is more visibility on the project and the support from Darwin Initiative, on the LTWHSA Facebook account.

#### 14. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?		No
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months		No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal Yes		
point? Marcela Bellettini		

Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No	
What proportion (and number) of project staff training on Safeguarding?	have received formal	Past: 0% [and number] Planned: 0% [and

number] Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.

No, the project has not experienced any challenges on Safeguarding during this past reporting period.

Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so, please specify.

The use of rodenticide bait was identified to pose a potential human health risk and general risk to ongoing project support, through the potential loss of cats and dogs. To mitigate this, BLI has made it clear from the outset that these risks exist, and certain actions have been identified to prevent adverse effects. The first action was for Rangers & communities to clearly identify and agree on the treatment sites/plots based on these risks. Once this was done, marking of treatment sites/plots began.

mmediately prior to commencing the baiting, the Coordinator and Rangers will conduct a consultation with the communities to inform them of the risks, where and when the baiting will occur, the actions they need to take and when the baiting will commence. Warning signage at each of the four treatment sites will provide information about the risks and where the plots are. Once baiting begins, no harvesting of crabs or other wildlife from within the treatment areas will be done and children must be prohibited from these areas. Dispensing bait from bait stations will reduce non-target access and exposure, and sustaining the control will also reduce the likelihood of significant increases in rats/number of rats exposed to rodenticides at any one time (and accordingly, increasing a risk of secondary exposure). The nurse in Tegano village will be given nformation about anticoagulant symptoms and treatment.

#### 15. Project Expenditure

#### Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)

BLI is currently finalising acquittals and awaiting final reports from our (new) online financial accounting software. Thus, the below 2022/23 are indicative figures (DRAFT).

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	_	022/23 Frant 2)	2022/23 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)					
Consultancy costs					
Overhead Costs					
Travel and subsistence					
Operating Costs					
Capital items (see below)					
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	)				
Others (see below)					
TOTAL		£129, 298			

## Table 2: Project mobilising of matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)

	Matched funding secured to date	Total matched funding expected by end of project
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project.		
Total additional finance mobilised by new activities building on evidence, best practices and project (£)		

# 16. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section.

BLI in collaboration with the LTWHSA will provide a press release on the project in the next quarter, as there will be significant achievements to highlight then, by way of the rodent control setup and monitoring; baiting; the training of local ERWHS communities in support of this; and the benefits the project is (already) generating, including employment of local rangers, involvement of women and disadvantaged group in the project. BLI has a good collection of images and video so far and we will share this independently of the report.

File Type (Image / Video/ Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption, country and credit	Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

### Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2022-2023

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
(ERWHS) is secured and co	nability of East Rennell World Heritage Site ontributes to fulfilment of Solomon Islands' CBD ment of National Development Strategy objectives.	Project impact will be realised by EOP.	
Outcome Evidence base and enabling conditions for sustained IAS/rodent control in 4 ERWHS communities and Province-wide biosecurity established, contributing to food security, livelihood resilience, endemic biodiversity protection and	0.1 Damage to 5 indicator crops (Kumara, Taro, Yams, Papaya, Coconuts) by black rats quantified from Y2 and, by EOP, showing a 70% decrease, compared to baselines set at project inception, in 4 rat-controlled demonstration areas, compared to 4 areas with no rat control, contributing to food and/or livelihood security and improved wellbeing.	Baseline monitoring for crops started in March 2023.	
national/regional IAS responses.	0.2 Impacts of black rats on 7 ERWHS indicator species (Rennell Whistler, Rennell Starling, Rennell Shrikebill, Rennell Parrot, Rennell Fantail, Bronze Ground-Dove and endemic snails) quantified to inform a revised ERWHS Management Plan and environmental monitoring program by Y3Q3	Baseline monitoring for indicator birds and endemic snails started in March 2023.	
	0.3 Renbel Province Biosecurity Plan and IAS control protocols developed with local and national stakeholders by end of Y2 and 15 Renbel communities (c.3000 people, aged 15+) have capacity to implement it by EOP.		Biosecurity planning to commence once Biosecurity Coordinator role is in place. Biosecurity workshop scheduled for Aug-Sept 2023.
	0.4 By EOP, National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) for the Solomon Islands is in place, and Project Case Study shared through established Pacific-wide Invasives networks.		On track to be achieved by EOP.

	0.5 From Y2Q1, and annually thereafter, the LTWHSA is undertaking monitoring and reporting on ERWHS environmental indicators and site condition in accordance with the ERWHS Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan, informing participatory development, implementation and fundraising for updated LTWHSA Strategic Plan by mid-Y3.	Monitoring results to be made available at the end of Y2Q1.
	0.6 Four ERWHS Women's Savings Clubs established & members registered with the Solomon Islands Handicraft Association (SIHA) by end of Y2, with increased monthly income from handicraft sales of minimum 25% recorded at village level and saving and equitable benefit sharing structures established in coordination with LTWHSA by EOP, as a contribution to sustaining the ERWHS (to be decided by Club members	Savings Club Workshop to commence in Y2Q1.
Output 1. Impact on agricultural yields and at-risk endemic biodiversity of a model for community-based rodent control in 4 ERWHS villages quantified, and community-level value of control understood.	1.1 Community-based rodent control programme, including 5 indicator crops (Kumara, Taro, Yams, Papaya, Coconuts) and 7 indicator species (snails, Rennell Whistler, Rennell Starling, Rennell Shrikebill, Rennell Parrot, Rennell Fantail, Bronze Ground-Dove) for IAS impact assessment study, developed with the participation and agreement of the four ERWHS villages, by Y1Q2.	1.1 Visual illustration of community-based rodent control program presented to ERWHS communities at Project Inception in Sept 22. Program further discussed, developed & agreed by LTWHSA & the ERWHS communities by Nov 22 (Y1Q3) and a Rodent Control Operational Plan is now available outlining all indicator crops and biodiversity species for assessing IAS impact.
	1.2 One 1km <sup>2</sup> rat treatment and an associated non-treatment ('control') plot, established at each of the four ERWHS villages with biodiversity baselines collated, and baselines for crop yields, socio-economic and wellbeing indicators at participating household level, collated Y1Q4.	1.2 One 1km <sup>2</sup> rat treatment & associated non-treatment plots established at each of the four ERWHS villages by end of April (Y2Q1). Assessment form for collating baselines for crop yields, socio-economic and wellbeing indicators at household level finalised & information will be collated by end of May (Y2Q1).
	1.3 Four rangers & minimum 40 ERWHS village members have technical capacity for rodent control implementation and associated crop and biodiversity impact monitoring by end of Y2.	1.3 Four rangers & at least 20 ERWHS village members have increased understanding of rodent control program. Capacity for rodent control implementation & monitoring will be further enhanced, once baiting has begun and results are being collated (end of Y2).

	1.4 Results from community-based monitoring of indicator species and agricultural crops informing Master's research analysis from Y1Q4.	1.4 Master's research developed & Ma fieldtrip in March 2023	aster's student participated in ERHWS
	1.5 Final dissertation/case study documenting the results of the application of the ERWHS rodent control model published by Y3Q4.		
	1.6 Results shared with ERWHS communities and integrated by LTWHSA into ERWHS Management Plan, with mechanism in place for oversight of ongoing rodent control, by EOP.	1.6 To be shared/completed by EOP.	
supported community consultation non-treatment locations, verify mo	tion Workshop (virtual July). LTWHSA and partner n - present control program, confirm treatment and nitoring indicators (externally assisted Nov), source th crop production and rat effects ensuring gender d Nov).	Completed	
Aug); Recruit Master's Student (v	nal Project Coordinator appointment (virtual Jul- virtual Jul-Aug); 4 LTWHSA Rangers and confirm support ensuring gender & social equity (virtual	Completed	
Activity 1.3. Procurement and program.	delivery of equipment & supplies for rodent control	Completed	
Monitoring Plan; Rangers (4), Coo (training and on-ground op establ	peer-reviewed Rodent Control Operational & ordinator (1) and community members (40) trained ished in Jan-Feb 2023) and technically supported monitoring at treatment & non-treatment sites and for each of the 4 ERWHS sites.	Completed	
1.5. BirdLife to analyse and project stakeholders.	report biodiversity and socio-economic results to		On track to be achieved by EOP.
	1.6. USP Master's student research implemented, field data collected, and results inform agriculture and biodiversity case studies and learning.		Field data collection will begin as soon as baiting commences (June 2023).
Output2.RennellIsland2.1Stakeholders critical to the development and implementation of the Renbel Province Biosecurity Plan identified and engaged by Y1Q4.		2.1 Preliminary analysis of biosecurity sta of stakeholders for biosecurity planning Biosecurity Coordinator position is in pla	has been rescheduled to Y2Q1, once

Solomon Islands Government; and Province-wide awareness and capacity developed to monitor and respond to IAS incursions.	2.2 Renbel biosecurity plan (incorporating response to existing threats, e.g., Black rat and Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, & future IAS incursions) drafted with stakeholder input, supported remotely and through 6 community biosecurity planning workshops, by end of Y2Q2.	Still on track to be delivered by Y2Q2.	
	2.3 SI Government endorsement of Renbel Biosecurity Plan secured by end of Y2Q2.	Due to the delay in establishing the Bio now be achieved by the end of Y2Q4.	security position/role, this indicator will
	2.4 150 people from 15 Rennell and Bellona communities &, at least, 30 Renbel Provincial officials, biosecurity, environment & other state & commercial mining, logging, maritime & airways sector representatives have the knowledge & capacity to implement the Renbel Biosecurity Plan by end of Y2Q3.	ona One of the main tasks for the Biosecurity Coordinator once in positi coordinating biosecurity consultations & implementation of the E Workshop. This is tentatively planned for August – September 2023, so is on track to be delivered by Y2Q3.	
	2.5 By EOP, reports of new IAS sightings & response to incursions on Rennell Island have increased, against 2010-2020 baseline and Biosecurity SI records verify no new IAS established on Rennell from Y2Q3 to EOP		
biosecurity planning process. Ag	osecurity stakeholders identified and engaged in gree on plan scope and timelines; draft Renbel ough stakeholder consultation and finalised &		This will be led and implemented by the Biosecurity Coordinator (Y2Q1).
Activity 2.2. Biosecurity training we SIG, commercial mining, logging,	orkshops held with Rennell & Bellona communities, maritime and airways sectors.		Planned for Aug-Sept 2023.
Activity 2.3. Biosecurity communications plan (linked to 5.2) developed, and posters, transportation advisory and broadcasting information, IAS identification services & popular communications produced in support of IAS identification, detection & response procedures for ERWHS and Renbel Province.			To be developed at the Biosecurity workshop, for production by end of Y2.
Activity 2.4. Biosecurity surveillance, identification, reporting and response procedures actioned by stakeholders (in accordance with Renbel Biosecurity Plan), compliance monitored, and the effectiveness of the biosecurity process evaluated, informing a model for replication.			Still on track to be realised by EOP.
Output 3.3.1Institutional and individual member capacity needs of the LTWHSA identified and Capacity Development Plan/training plan developed collaboratively with LTWHSA and		Led by local consultant Christina Nasiu a	and has been reschedule for Y2Q1.

Association (LTWHSA) to fulfil its role as local ERWHS management authority and inform/access benefits from the	L&L, ensuring gender equity in line with new LTWHSA gender resolution, by Y1Q3.		
Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programme being developed for East Rennell (under complementary L&L project).	3.2 LTWHSA Strategic Plan updated by end of Y2 and under implementation by EOP, in collaboration with project partners L&L and key stakeholders, including concurrent IUCN-led EREPA project seeking ERWHS PA designation.	implementation by EOP, in is on track to be achieved by end of Y2. roject partners L&L and key iding concurrent IUCN-led	
	3.3 By Y3Q3, 100% of LTWHSA Committee has completed the training agreed under the Capacity Development Plan (3.1), expected to include governance, project and financial management and fundraising, and has capacity to share training with newly elected committee members.	Still on track to be delivered by Y3Q3.	
	3.4 ERWHS environmental monitoring plan developed, four rangers and coordinator trained, and annual monitoring completed by end of Y1, and annually thereafter to EOP.	Four rangers & Local Project Coordinate monitoring and will continue until EOP.	r has started bird & biodiversity
	3.5 LTWHSA reporting the condition of ERWHS, including progress toward removing the site from the 'in Danger List' to the SI govt (Min Education) representative to UNESCO annually from Y2Q3.	Still on track for Y2Q3.	
	community participatory workshop to assess ntify existing training and resource materials that		Local Consultant Christina Nasiu has scheduled this activity to take place in May 2023.
Activity 3.2.Develop LTWHSA Capacity Development Plan, targets and outcomes and implement priorities (including project and financial management and grant development).			Conducted with Activity 3.1
Activity 3.3 LTWHSA environmental monitoring plan developed, Rangers (4), Coordinator (1), SI Live & Learn personnel trained and collecting monitoring indicators and reporting results annually to SIG. Finalise Plan with inputs from rat trials.			Plan will be finalised once rodent control has started.
Activity 3.4 Evaluate LTWHSA ca evaluation model.	Activity 3.4 Evaluate LTWHSA capacity development using 'Kirkpatrick' type		On track for Y3.

Activity 3.5. Conduct LTWHS/ LTWHSA Strategic Plan.	A strategic planning workshop and develop		Rescheduled for Y2Q1 by Local Consultant Christina Nasiu
Output 4. Long-term sustainability of rodent control outcomes supported through livelihood development and increased capacity of LTWHSA to access	4.1 10 women/ERWHS village invited to join a Women's Savings Club established with support from L&L in each ERWHS village, and baseline handicraft sales/income at village levels collated, and production targets agreed, by end of Y1.	Initial community meetings have been c Nasiu and ERWHS have shown great ir Savings Club workshop is now schedule	nterest.
and coordinate community-level benefit sharing from PES and external funding sources.	4.2 Minimum 50 men & women (max 80) from ERWHS villages trained by SIHA in handicraft skills, production & marketing by end of Y1.	Has been rescheduled together with 4.1	
	<ul> <li>4.3 Income from handicraft sales accruing collectively to each village Women's Club (4.1) and to individuals trained increased by minimum 25% (monthly) against baseline by EOP.</li> </ul>	On track for EOP.	
	4.4 By end of Y3, LTWHSA has submitted (supported via the project) a minimum of two small-scale funding applications for bait supply to sustain rodent control beyond project end, and until PES income becomes available.	On track for EOP.	
	4.5 LTWHSA actively engaging in development of PES scheme for East Rennell, from end of Y2 and have the capacity to administer the scheme and coordinate community-level benefit sharing by EOP.	On track for EOP.	
Activity 4.1 Conduct baseline surv development needs ensuring gene	ey of handicraft production and assess der equity.		Rescheduled for Y2Q1.
Activity 4.2 Establish Women's Savings Clubs, develop benefit sharing agreements, including production targets, and conduct handicraft workshops at the ERWHS.			Rescheduled for Y2Q1.
Activity 4.3. Analyse & report on handicraft income and contribution to social and environmental outcomes for the ERWHS vs baseline.			On track to be achieved by EOP.
Activity 4.4. LTWHSA submit at le	ast 2 grant applications with BirdLife assistance.		On track to be achieved by EOP.

Activity 4.5. LTWHSA contribute to and development of a PES busine	o identifying ERWHS landownership agreement		
Output 5. Knowledge at national level and amongst Pacific Islands' IAS management authorities on mitigation methods to reduce the impact of IAS, specifically Black rats, on livelihoods, expanded, through dissemination of Rennell Island Case Studies to SI Government stakeholders and via regional and global networks.	5.1. Communications Plan developed Y1Q4 identifying outreach for rat control, biosecurity, and livelihood interests for the project including the dissemination of associated control and biosecurity guidelines and models with an implementation timetable through to EOP.	Rescheduled for Y2Q1.	
5.2. By Y2Q4, Master's research study results presented to SINU and USP students and faculty.         5.3. By EOP, learning from ER rat control trials & Renbel Province biosecurity response integrated into SI National policies (NISSAP, NBSAP).		Draft research completed and will be su Research Committee. Final research av	
		On track for EOP.	
	5.4. By EOP, case study on impacts/results of community control of introduced rodents on biodiversity and agriculture values at ERWHS presented to SI Biosecurity Division, Environment & Conservation Division, UNESCO Desk.	On track for EOP.	
	5.5. By EOP, Biosecurity Model; Rennell Rat Control Case Study and Rat Control Best Practice Guidelines for Subsistence Farming Communities is being applied at sites in Fiji, French Polynesia, Palau, the Cook Islands and Samoa and the project knowledge resources disseminated to (amongst others) SPREP, Pacific Invasive Battlers, Pacific Invasive Partnership (PIP), BirdLife Partnership, and USP.	On track for EOP.	
Activity 5.1. Establish Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting with project partners and convene 6-monthly meetings to review progress, recommend adjustments and share results.			Terms of Reference (TOR) will be finalised & shared with stakeholders in May 2023 with 1 <sup>st</sup> PSC meeting to be held immediately after.

Activity 5.2. Communications plan developed for the dissemination of rodent control case studies, biosecurity model and associated knowledge products to national, regional and global audiences.	To be developed by Y2Q1.
Activity 5.3. Scoping, documentation and dissemination of Biosecurity Model; Rennell Rat Control Case Study (agriculture and biodiversity) and Rat Control Best Practice Guidelines for subsistence farming communities.	On track for EOP.
Activity 5.4. Results from the ER rat control, research, Renbel biosecurity, capacity building and outcomes for women contribute to national policies (NISSAP, climate adaptation plan and NBSAP) and are shared through Solomon Island forums including SINU (and USP) lectures; Regionally, PILN network, PRISMSS and other information sharing networks including the BirdLife Partnership.	On track for EOP.

#### Means of Verification **Project Summarv SMART Indicators** Important Assumptions Impact: The biological and social sustainability of East Rennell World Heritage Site (ERWHS) is secured and contributes to fulfilment of Solomon Islands' CBD commitments, and achievement of National Development Strategy objectives. 0.1 Damage to 5 indicator crops (Kumara, 0.1 Rodent Control Plan (for confirmation Outcome: In assessing the impact of rat control on Taro, Yams, Papaya, Coconuts) by of indicators); Agricultural monitoring crop yields, the effect of weather conditions data and reports (baseline, and black rats quantified from Y2 and, by is accounted for by recording these and EOP, showing a 70% decrease, quarterly Y2 & Y3); household other agricultural production variables (such Evidence base and enabling compared to baselines set at project livelihood impacts (in terms of income as use of fertilisers) in the rat control study. conditions for sustained IAS/rodent in and/or subsistence crop benefits) and control in 4 ERWHS communities inception, 4 rat-controlled demonstration areas, compared to 4 associated household and Province-wide biosecurity wellbeing surveys (baseline, mid-term and established, contributing to food areas with no rat control, contributing to Drawing on Pacific experience, the EOP). security, livelihood resilience, food and/or livelihood security and combination of size of treatment area, endemic biodiversity protection and improved wellbeina. spacing of bait stations and monthly bait 0.2 Biological monitoring data against national/regional IAS responses. replenishment can be expected to sustain a baselines for selected indicator suppressed rat population at low/potentially 0.2 Impacts of black rats on 7 ERWHS species as identified by biodiversity non-detectable levels, with impact from rats impact study (Post-graduate/Masters indicator species (Rennell Whistler, immigrating into the area, expected to be Rennell Starling, Rennell Shrikebill, Student-led). IAS impact on contained within a 50-100m buffer. Rennell Parrot, Rennell Fantail, Bronze & biodiversity management Ground-Dove and endemic snails) recommendations documented and quantified to inform a revised ERWHS shared with SI Environment & Reduction in damage to crops will result in Management Plan and environmental Conservation Division, for integration higher yields which will translate into either into Protected Area (PA) management monitoring program Y3Q3. by higher cash income from sales of 'surplus' planning processes, and revised and/or reduction in proportion of household ERWHS Management Plan. 0.3 Renbel Province Biosecurity Plan and expenditure on non-home-grown food Monitoring Plan incorporated into IAS control protocols developed with (dependent on household choice) and updated ERWHS Management Plan. local and national stakeholders by end potentially an increase in discretionary time of Y2 and 15 Renbel communities owing to the greater crop return on time 0.3 SI Biosecurity Planning Workshop invested in cultivation - contributing to (c.3000 people, aged 15+) have Reports (Y2) & Biosecurity Divisioncapacity to implement it by EOP. sense of wellbeing. Community endorsed Renbel Biosecurity Plan. assessment of the value of these benefits Community biosecurity training from rat control, supports investment in 0.4 By EOP, National Invasive Species workshop (x3) reports; use/siting of sustained control in critical areas. Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) for IAS response quidelines (posters & the Solomon Islands is in place, and leaflets) by communities for IAS Project Case Study shared through surveillance & incursion reporting Each plot (treatment & control) will hold established Pacific-wide Invasives (from end of Y2); IAS reports to Renbel virgin and regenerating forest and networks. Provincial Office. subsistence gardens, enabling assessment of rat control impact on biodiversity and

#### Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

	0.5 From Y2Q1, and annually thereafter, the LTWHSA is undertaking monitoring and reporting on ERWHS environmental indicators and site condition in accordance with the ERWHS Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan, informing participatory development, implementation and fundraising for updated LTWHSA Strategic Plan by mid-Y3.	<ul> <li>0.4 SI NISSAP, available at least as an advanced draft, if not fully published. Documented case studies on impacts of rodents on biodiversity &amp; agriculture in the ERWHS. Documented model of community-supported biosecurity. Meeting reports, presentations of Case Study and model at Pacific Invasives Partnership &amp; other regional IAS networks (see Output 5).</li> <li>0.5 Environmental Monitoring and</li> </ul>	livelihood interests, and comparative analysis of yields and bird breeding over 2- year period. These outcome indicators will provide an overall measure of rat control effectiveness, with concurrent measurement of rat activity (tracking, chew) helping to inform future management through corelation of rat activity and outcomes.
	0.6 Four ERWHS Women's Savings Clubs established & members registered with the Solomon Islands Handicraft Association (SIHA) by end of Y2, with increased monthly income from handicraft sales of minimum 25% recorded at village level and saving and equitable benefit sharing structures established in coordination with LTWHSA by EOP, as a contribution to sustaining the ERWHS (to be decided by Club members).	<ul> <li>Management Plans for ERWHS; environmental monitoring and project reports submitted by LTWHSA. LTWHSA Strategic Plan; reports of Plan development workshops; LTWSHA meeting minutes and progress reports; fundraising plan and submitted funding applications.</li> <li>0.6 Women's Club policy documents; reports on income from handicrafts completed for each village Club at project inception (baseline) and annually to EOP.</li> </ul>	National and regional air travel resumes unrestricted from latest Nov-2022, and quarantine entry conditions to the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Australia, do not exceed 7 days for each country from that time. While COVID situation remains uncertain, these assumptions are based on guidance/advice received from relevant in-country authorities and partners.
Outputs: 1. Impact on agricultural yields and at-risk endemic biodiversity of a model for community-based rodent control in 4 ERWHS villages quantified, and community-level value of control understood.	<ul> <li>1.7 Community-based rodent control programme, including 5 indicator crops (Kumara, Taro, Yams, Papaya, Coconuts) and 7 indicator species (snails, Rennell Whistler, Rennell Starling, Rennell Shrikebill, Rennell Parrot, Rennell Fantail, Bronze Ground-Dove) for IAS impact assessment study, developed with the participation and agreement of the four ERWHS villages, by Y1Q2.</li> <li>1.8 One 1km<sup>2</sup> rat treatment and an associated non-treatment ('control') plot, established at each of the four ERWHS villages with biodiversity baselines collated, and baselines for crop yields,</li> </ul>	<ol> <li>1.1 Rodent Control Operational and Monitoring Plan; Community Consultation Meeting(s) records/minutes.</li> <li>1.2 Map of treatment and non-treatment sites. Baseline and quarterly reports &amp; monitoring template for crop yield and biodiversity indicators. Household income and wellbeing survey report including baseline.</li> <li>1.3 Training workshop report; Monthly monitoring data received (by BLI) from Y2Q1.</li> </ol>	LTWHSA continues to maintain the support of the four ERWHS communities for implementation of the rodent control over project timeframe. LTWHSA committee members, including women and youth representatives, are drawn from the villages, whose members have requested support to address rat impacts. Shipping and transportation networks to Rennell remain operational, enabling access to materials and supplies, in line with project implementation timetable. The training, and ongoing technical assistance, to Rangers is sufficient for the collection of monitoring data to the standards required and accessible for

	<ul> <li>socio-economic and wellbeing indicators at participating household level, collated Y1Q4.</li> <li>1.9 Four rangers &amp; minimum 40 ERWHS village members have technical capacity for rodent control implementation and associated crop and biodiversity impact monitoring by end of Y2.</li> <li>1.10 Results from community-based monitoring of indicator species and agricultural crops informing Master's research analysis from Y1Q4.</li> <li>1.11 Final dissertation/case study documenting the results of the application of the ERWHS rodent control model published by Y3Q4.</li> <li>1.12 Results shared with ERWHS communities and integrated by LTWHSA into ERWHS Management Plan, with mechanism in place for oversight of ongoing rodent control, by EOP.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>1.4 Quarterly data analysis and 6-monthly reporting, for species &amp; agricultural crop indicators.</li> <li>1.5 Postgraduate dissertation on IAS impacts on biodiversity peer-reviewed &amp; approved.</li> </ul>	analysis. The training will be led by BirdLife and Eco-Oceania, both with considerable experience of building capacity in IAS control across Pacific communities. Two to five nests of each indicator bird species can be monitored within each research plot to assess rat impacts. The plots will be selected and agreed with villagers, based on mix of habitat suitable for indicator species. That a suitable and interested Master's Student can be selected in line with the project implementation timetable and demonstrates robust research skills in carrying out the fieldwork and data analysis. Project partners, SINU and USP are confident of the attractiveness of the opportunity and availability of candidates, and, alongside BirdLife and Eco-Oceania, will provide regular support/guidance to ensure the validity of research results.
2. Rennell Island Biosecurity Plan, identifying all high-risk IAS pathways, completed, and adopted by Solomon Islands Government; and Province-wide awareness and capacity developed to monitor and respond to IAS incursions.	<ul> <li>2.6 Stakeholders critical to the development and implementation of the Renbel Province Biosecurity Plan identified and engaged by Y1Q4.</li> <li>2.7 Renbel biosecurity plan (incorporating response to existing threats, e.g., Black rat and Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, &amp; future IAS incursions) drafted with stakeholder input, supported remotely and through 6 community biosecurity planning workshops, by end of Y2Q2.</li> <li>2.8 SI Government endorsement of Renbel Biosecurity Plan secured by end of Y2Q2.</li> <li>2.9 150 people from 15 Rennell and Bellona communities &amp;, at least, 30 Renbel Provincial officials, biosecurity,</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>2.1 Stakeholder Analysis Report/List; Stakeholder contacts established (email group); and document outlining scope of Renbel Biosecurity Plan circulated and agreed.</li> <li>2.2 Reports from biosecurity planning workshops; draft Renbel Biosecurity Plan; documented stakeholder feedback on the, Plan.</li> <li>2.3 Final government-endorsed Renbel Province Biosecurity Plan; formal record of Biosecurity Plan; formal record of Biosecurity Plan approval by SIG; meeting records.</li> <li>2.4 Biosecurity training materials (IAS identification, surveillance, reporting and response procedures); training workshop reports &amp; pre-post training</li> </ul>	SI Government continue to support the project and the integration of biosecurity measures needed to protect biodiversity and quality of life (from IAS) on Rennell and Bellona Islands and in scaling up the model developed and associated lessons to other Provinces in the SI. Biosecurity Solomon Islands (BSI), the mandated government authority for IAS management, has expressed strong support for the project and welcomed its contribution, alongside BirdLife expertise, in drawing up the NISSAP. Rennell commercial sector (logging, mining, and shipping companies) remain supportive of engaging in biosecurity for the island and

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	<ul> <li>environment &amp; other state &amp; commercial mining, logging, maritime &amp; airways sector representatives have the knowledge &amp; capacity to implement the Renbel Biosecurity Plan by end of Y2Q3.</li> <li>2.10 By EOP, reports of new IAS sightings &amp; response to incursions on Rennell Island have increased, against 2010-2020 baseline and Biosecurity SI records verify no new IAS established on Rennell from Y2Q3 to EOP.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>surveys; Guidelines shared on managing harmful threats established on Rennell e.g. CRB, and Black rats; Renbel Province biosecurity awareness &amp; communications plan; biosecurity information and awareness materials including entry point biosecurity signs, posters, media articles and transportation service passenger information.</li> <li>2.5 Records of (new) IAS sightings for Renbel reported to LTWHSA, Renbel Provincial office and SI Biosecurity (as relevant). Biosecurity SI records of incursion responses from Y2Q3.</li> </ul>	implement the procedures developed and agreed with them. Domestic shipping is state run, with biosecurity responsibilities mandated by the BSI, providing confidence in compliance. Earlier conversations with the principal logging enterprise at the time of the IAS survey, indicated that they were supportive at that time, but more generally and tangibly, SIG/BSI's jurisdiction over the biosecurity measures will support monitoring and compliance.
3. Increased capacity of Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA) to fulfil its role as local ERWHS management authority and inform/access benefits from the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programme being developed for East Rennell ( <i>under</i> <i>complementary L&amp;L project</i> ).	<ul> <li>3.1 Institutional and individual member capacity needs of the LTWHSA identified and Capacity Development Plan/training plan developed collaboratively with LTWHSA and L&amp;L, ensuring gender equity in line with new LTWHSA gender resolution, by Y1Q3.</li> <li>3.2 LTWHSA Strategic Plan updated by end of Y2 and under implementation by EOP, in collaboration with project partners L&amp;L and key stakeholders, including concurrent IUCN-led EREPA project seeking ERWHS PA designation.</li> <li>3.3 By Y3Q3, 100% of LTWHSA Committee has completed the training agreed under the Capacity Development Plan (3.1), expected to include governance, project and financial management and fundraising, and has capacity to share training with newly elected committee members.</li> <li>3.4 ERWHS environmental monitoring plan developed, four rangers and coordinator trained, and annual monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>3.1 Capacity Needs Assessment report; Capacity Development Plan; LTWHSA meeting and Plan development workshop reports.</li> <li>3.2 LTWHSA Strategic Plan; Plan development workshop report.</li> <li>3.3 Training workshop reports; Training Evaluation Forms; quarterly project financial &amp; technical progress reports submitted by LTWHSA; funding plan for ERWHS.</li> <li>3.4 ERWHS Monitoring Plan/Protocols (document) and Monitoring Reports submitted by LTWHSA rangers.</li> <li>3.5 LTWHSA condition reports to SIG.</li> </ul>	The institutional and individual knowledge and capacity built by the project will be sustained and continue to be utilised in support of ERWHS management. People on the LTWHSA are from the local communities and are well placed to cascade the knowledge gained from the project, reinforced by the rat control, biosecurity, governance, and other reference materials developed. Monitoring and condition reporting in line with plan developed under the project, will be sustained beyond the EOP. The SI Government make an annual financial contribution to the ERWHS in accordance with the strategic plan. Condition monitoring and reporting is one of these priorities and the capacity to sustain this is further strengthened by the development of a PES scheme for ERWHS (L&L project) – providing a direct link between community income and monitoring.

4. Long-term sustainability of rodent control outcomes supported through livelihood development and increased capacity of LTWHSA to access and coordinate community- level benefit sharing from PES and external funding sources.	<ul> <li>completed by end of Y1, and annually thereafter to EOP.</li> <li>3.5 LTWHSA reporting the condition of ERWHS, including progress toward removing the site from the 'in Danger List' to the SI govt (Min Education) representative to UNESCO annually from Y2Q3.</li> <li>4.6 10 women/ERWHS village invited to join a Women's Savings Club established with support from L&amp;L in each ERWHS village, and baseline handicraft sales/income at village levels collated, and production targets agreed, by end of Y1.</li> <li>4.7 Minimum 50 men &amp; women (max 80) from ERWHS villages trained by SIHA in handicraft skills, production &amp; marketing by end of Y1.</li> <li>4.8 Income from handicraft sales accruing collectively to each village Women's Club (4.1) and to individuals trained increased by minimum 25% (monthly) against baseline by EOP.</li> <li>4.9 By end of Y3, LTWHSA has submitted (supported via the project) a minimum of two small-scale funding applications for bait supply to sustain rodent control beyond project end, and until PES income becomes available.</li> <li>4.10 LTWHSA actively engaging in development of PES scheme for East Rennell, from end of Y2 and have the capacity to administer the scheme and coordinate community-level benefit sharing by EOP.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>4.1 Formal agreement documents &amp; policies for the operation of the four Women's Clubs; records of membership; meetings reports documenting agreed production target; baseline income report.</li> <li>4.2 Records of SIHA training materials; reports and evaluations from training workshops led by SIHA.</li> <li>4.3 Survey and record of sales and income (at combined village level) at project outset (baseline), annually and EOP.</li> <li>4.4 Fundraising proposals.</li> <li>4.5 Workshop/work planning reports by L&amp;L SI; reports from PES planning workshops; documented community consultation responses.</li> </ul>	the benefits from the rodent control and IAS management program sufficiently to sustain rat control & biosecurity. The need for the rat control has been identified, and support requested, by these communities. Capacity building and support for short-term fundraising to sustain the controls (alongside any community investment agreed – entirely at their discretion - from increased handicraft and crop sales) pending availability of PES finance, will help
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			airstrip on Rennell and SI's hosting of South
			Pacific Games in 2023.
5. Knowledge at national level and amongst Pacific Islands' IAS management authorities on mitigation methods to reduce the impact of IAS, specifically Black rats, on livelihoods, expanded, through dissemination of Rennell Island Case Studies to SI Government stakeholders and via regional and global networks.	<ul> <li>5.1. Communications Plan developed Y1Q4 identifying outreach for rat control, biosecurity, and livelihood interests for the project including the dissemination of associated control and biosecurity guidelines and models with an implementation timetable through to EOP.</li> <li>5.2. By Y2Q4, Master's research study results presented to SINU and USP students and faculty.</li> <li>5.3. By EOP, learning from ER rat control trials &amp; Renbel Province biosecurity response integrated into SI National policies (NISSAP, NBSAP).</li> <li>5.4. By EOP, case study on impacts/results of community control of introduced rodents on biodiversity and agriculture values at ERWHS presented to SI Biosecurity Division, Environment &amp; Conservation Division, UNESCO Desk.</li> <li>5.5. By EOP, Biosecurity Model; Rennell Rat Control Case Study and Rat Control Best Practice Guidelines for Subsistence Farming Communities is being applied at sites in Fiji, French Polynesia, Palau, the Cook Islands and Samoa and the project knowledge resources disseminated to (amongst others) SPREP, Pacific Invasive Battlers, Pacific Invasive Partnership (PIP), BirdLife Partnership, and USP.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>5.1. Communications Plan; Published case study; communications materials (including printed documents; presentation visuals; video).</li> <li>5.2. Presentation materials; report of lectures; University schedules.</li> <li>5.3. NBSAP Implementation Plan and NISSAP contain Renbel and ERWHS IAS and biodiversity conservation priorities.</li> <li>5.4. Presentation materials; meeting reports; national stakeholder feedback indicating how results will be used.</li> <li>5.5. Steering Committee, meeting, and workshop reports; presentation materials and schedules; documented responses.</li> </ul>	Renbel Biosecurity Model in other provinces. The NISSAP is completed and recognises biosecurity priorities for RenBel and nationally. Financing is in place for developing a NISSAP (GEF) and the process has commenced. Government agencies also

Activities (each activity is r	numbered according to the output the	hat it will contribute towards, for	example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are c	contributing to Output 1).	
treatment locations,	ption Workshop (virtual July). LTWHS verify monitoring indicators (externally				
<b>1.2.</b> Formalise National F community support	ernally assisted Nov). Project Coordinator appointment (virtua ensuring gender & social equity (virtua	al Aug).	(virtual Jul-Aug); 4 LTWHSA Ra	angers and confirm process	s for selecting
<b>1.4.</b> Prepare expert peer (training and on-gro	elivery of equipment & supplies for rod -reviewed Rodent Control Operational und op established in Jan-Feb 2023)	& Monitoring Plan (bring forward to and technically supported in the im			
1.5. BirdLife to analyse a	nd shared monthly for each of the 4 EF and report biodiversity and socio-econo nt research implemented, field data co	omic results to project stakeholders		s and learning.	
	security stakeholders identified and e stakeholder consultation and finalised		cess. Agree on plan scope and	timelines; draft Renbel Bio	security Plan
<ul><li>2.2. Biosecurity training</li><li>2.3. Biosecurity communication</li></ul>	workshops held with Rennell & Bellona nications plan (linked to 5.2) develope oduced in support of IAS identification,	a communities, SIG, commercial mi d, and posters, transportation advis	ory and broadcasting informatic	on, IAS identification servic	ces & popular
2.4. Biosecurity surveilla	ance, identification, reporting and res effectiveness of the biosecurity proces	ponse procedures actioned by sta	keholders (in accordance with		, compliance
<b>3.2.</b> Develop LTWHSA C <b>3.3.</b> LTWHA environmer	t community participatory workshop to Capacity Development Plan, targets an Ital monitoring plan developed, Range SIG. Finalise Plan with inputs from rat t	d outcomes and implement prioritie rs (4), Coordinator (1), SI Live & Lea	s (including project and financia	al management and grant d	levelopment).
3.4. Evaluate LTWHSA	capacity development using 'Kirkpatric strategic planning workshop and development	k' type evaluation model.			
<b>4.2.</b> Establish Women's <b>4.3.</b> Analyse & report on	urvey of handicraft production and ass Savings Clubs, develop benefit sharin handicraft income and contribution to	g agreements, including production social and environmental outcomes	targets, and conduct handicraft	t workshops at the ERWHS	S.
	least 2 grant applications with BirdLife to identifying ERWHS landownership		PES business model.		
results.	eering Committee (PSC) Meeting with		, , , , ,		nts and share
and global audience					nal, regional
	ation and dissemination of Biosecurit stence farming communities.	ty Model; Rennell Rat Control Cas	e Study (agriculture and biodi	iversity) and Rat Control I	Best Practice
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5.4. Results from the ER rat control, research, Renbel biosecurity, capacity building and outcomes for women contribute to national policies (NISSAP, climate adaptation plan and NBSAP) and are shared through Solomon Island forums including SINU (and USP) lectures; Regionally, PILN network, PRISMSS and other information sharing networks including the BirdLife Partnership.

#### **Annex 3: Standard Indicators**

#### Table 1Project Standard Indicators

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with DI Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	Four rangers and minimum 40 ERWHS village members have technical capacity for rodent control implementation and associated crop and biodiversity impact monitoring by end of Y2.	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completed structured and relevant training.	People	Men, Women Indigenous people Local communities	48			48	Minimum of 40

#### Table 2Publications

Title	<b>Type</b> (e.g., journals, manual, CDs)	<b>Detail</b> (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g., weblink or publisher if not available online)

#### **Checklist for submission**

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e., Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue</b> <b>guidance text</b> before submission?	Yes
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to <u>BCF-Reports@niras.com</u> putting the project number in the Subject line.	Yes
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with <u>BCF-</u> <u>Reports@niras.com</u> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	No
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Yes
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	No
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 16)?	Yes
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors?	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	