

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 2023

Project reference	DARCC001
Project title	Mainstreaming livelihoods, health, poverty, and wellbeing into EDGE species conservation
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nepal, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Malawi, Madagascar, Kenya, and Nigeria.
Lead partner	ZSL
Partner(s)	NA
Project leader	Dr Paul Barnes
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	www.edgeofexistence.org

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).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Over the past six months, our project has made continued progress, and we are on track to complete all the activities within the project period. We appreciate the detailed feedback received from the BCF review of our annual report and have taken steps to ensure that the feedback is incorporated into the project.

Activity 3.4 and 3.5:

- We have confirmed dates for the 2024 Conservation Tools Course. The course, including the new LHPWC module, will occur face-to-face between the 8th of January and the 8th of February at a training facility in the Atlantic Forest, Brazil. We have drafted the training timetable and are beginning to update and prepare the training materials.
- We have begun discussions as a team and with ZSL's M&E specialist (to be reported in the FYR) to explore ways we might improve the feedback and evaluation methods for the course in advance of when we would normally send out pre-confidence surveys.

Activity 3.6:

- We are updating our website, scheduled for completion by December 2023. As part of these updates, we are speaking to our website developer about creating a password-protected area of the website where we can host training content. This password-

protected area will ensure that our training content remains accessible with M&E built into the learning experience.

Activity 3.7:

- We have had further discussions with the EDGE Fellows from the Asia cohort during their two-week visit to ZSL in August and September 2023 about which of their host organisations might be interested in participating in an online webinar. Discussions were positive and several indicated an interest.

Activity 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5:

- We are continuing to support EDGE Fellows from the 2022 Asia cohort with their project delivery.
- Seven of the eight 2023 Africa EDGE Fellows have finalised their project plans, many of whom have incorporated LHPWC issues and the skills and knowledge they gained from their training into their objectives. One example is Ikechukwu Godwin Chinemerem from Nigeria, who has two such objectives expected to diversify livelihood activities, reduce poverty, and promote the enabling conditions required to improve the conservation status of EDGE amphibian species.

Activity 4.3:

- Members of the EDGE team have carried out project visits to four of the eight EDGE Fellows in the 2023 Africa cohort. These visits, conducted in Kenya and Tanzania in June, July, and August 2023, helped the EDGE Fellows to refine their project plans and initiate the implementation of their projects.

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.

None

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance: No

Change request reference if known: NA

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: £ [REDACTED]

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. 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.**

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

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

None

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, 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.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS 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**