

## 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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

<b>Project reference</b>	DARCC003
<b>Project title</b>	Build capacity and capability to regulate hunting and protect biodiversity
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Sao Tomé e Príncipe
<b>Lead partner</b>	BirdLife International
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Forest and Biodiversity Directorate of Sao Tomé and Príncipe (DFB), Plataforma de Turismo Responsável e Sustentável (PTRS), Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes Research Unit of the Faculty of Sciences, University of Lisbon (CE3C), Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources – InBIO Associate Laboratory (CIBIO)
<b>Project leader</b>	Marion Tafani
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR1
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	BirdLife - Sao Tomé Office social media pages where news from the project are shared: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/umSingularTesouroaProteger">https://www.facebook.com/umSingularTesouroaProteger</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/obo_ovyo/">https://www.instagram.com/obo_ovyo/</a>

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

The project started in July 2022, with the administrative and contracting process to ensure engagement of partners. The project implementation plan was developed with all partners and project supervisor and translated in Portuguese, language of the host country.

Focal points were assigned to each implementation partner, to ensure continuous engagement of the institutions. For the Forest and Biodiversity Directorate of Sao Tomé and Príncipe (STP), agent Edjairo Cardoso was selected. For PTRS, Sidney Varela, part of the Obô Guardians team, was designated at project start. For CIBIO, Dr. Vanessa Mata, leader of a research project on invasive species distribution and diet in Sao Tomé, and for CE3C Dr. Ricardo Lima with more than 10 years' experience working on STP birds and biodiversity; are the main implementers. Individual meetings with main partners were performed by project leader in July and August to review the implementation plan and define specific workplans. In addition, the risk framework of the project was built.

A brief of the project was prepared and translated into Portuguese to share with all partners and collaborators. On August 26<sup>th</sup>, a hybrid meeting (online and in-person at BirdLife International STP office) officially launched the project in the presence of at least 1 representative of each partner (7 participants) responsible for the direct implementation of the project, to review and discuss the objectives of year 1 and start its implementation.

Since July and project launch, as part of the output 1 of the project, the following activities were performed:

- 1) Identification of “Agents of Change”: A list of names and contacts of 37 potential agents of change was compiled by the PTRS with the help of all project partners. It was agreed that the group of agents of change should be representative of the 6 districts of the island of Sao Tomé; and therefore, it should include between 2 to 3 people per district. Target audience was pre-identified as a selection of current or ex-hunters, community leaders and representatives of civil society. At this stage, the list exceeds our objective of 15 agents, and the project team is working on the selection process, which will include the direct engagement (during Q3/Oct-Dec 2022) and training (Q4/Jan-Mar 2023) of the pre-selected agents; to allow for further refining the selection, and ensure all selected agents are able to efficiently engage and raise awareness of the community and co-lead participative meetings with other hunters.
- 2) The main guidelines for the training programme were developed by the scientific section of the project team (BirdLife International, CE3C, CIBIO, Mariana Carvalho [consultant]). In particular, the draft/outline training program for the “Agents of Change,” was produced. This first training session is planned in Q4/Jan-March 2023, year 1. The 5-day training course will combine classroom and field components. Experimental learning, role-play and games will be used to facilitate the appropriation and for agents of change to become confident trainers during consultations of hunters and communities, planned in year 2. All training materials and contents will be produced during Q3/Oct-Dec 2022.

*The following activities took place in October 2022 but are provided here as an indication of progress, given that national elections reduced activities in September 2022. They will be formerly reported in the next report.*

- 3) Launch of a series of workshops at the institutional level. It is critical for local authorities to own and endorse the messages to be transmitted during the project, so a series of workshops were initiated with the aim initiate awareness raising and discuss about hunting regulation and management of introduced mammals in STP. The conservation and management of fauna species in oceanic islands are framed by common aspects around the world. On one hand, typically, these islands have high levels of endemic and threatened species, with high conservation value and that constitute a unique heritage. On the other hand, they are also home to several invasive alien species, with demonstrated negative impacts on native fauna and flora, in particular endemic species. The responsible institutions thus face the double challenge of preserving and valuing unique species with the integrated and sustainable management of animals that are often culturally well regarded and commonly used as resources by human populations.

With this in mind, on October 12<sup>th</sup>, BirdLife International led the first high-level workshop to discuss challenges and solutions associated with the integrated management of endemic and native species with invasive species in other island contexts, namely through hunting activity. Three presentations were led by representatives from other oceanic islands, namely: Veronica Santamaria, Tourism Director of Galapagos National Park; Tiago Rodrigues, Regional Directorate of Forest Resources of the Azores, Isabel Fortes, ONG Biosfera in Cape Verde and Pedro Gerales from the Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA). These were followed by a discussion with Santomean institutions, to consolidate the project guidelines. The workshop was attended by 20 participants (12 in-person, and 8 online; incl. 8 women), comprising 4 technicians and the Director of the Forest & Biodiversity Directorate, 1 representative of the Environment Directorate and the Director of Sao Tomé Obô Natural Park, and lasted for 4 hours. While the conclusions of the workshop will be further discussed in the next report, it is interesting to note that local authorities emphasized the need for a national communication campaign to valorise STP natural patrimony and raise awareness on hunting and invasive species management.

The project team will dedicate Q3/Oct-Dec 2022 to developing the training content and materials for the training of the agents of changes and institutions, which will be reviewed and validated with local authorities in a second Workshop. Local partners will work on engaging the potential agents of change, refining the selection for the training. Complementarily, the team is working on the possibility of a short exchange program for local partners, between Q3 and Q4/Jan-Mar 2023,

in Portugal, to participate in hunting and invasive species management activities led by BirdLife partners.

At the beginning of Q4/Jan-Mar 2023, all international project partners will travel and meet in STP to undertake the first 5-day training course developed respectively for institutions and selected agents of change. This will be the opportunity to start engaging hunters and develop a need and alternative livelihood assessment survey during year 2.

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

The project started in July 2022, but its implementation was limited by a series of long holiday period (July-August) and the political campaigns for the national legislative elections of Sao Tomé and Príncipe in September (September 25<sup>th</sup>). These events restricted the participation of Sao Tomean institutions, and local communities during Q1/Jul-Sept 2022. Given that the opposition party won the elections, a change of government is planned for November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, including probable changes of directors of most institutions. Thus, the calendar of activities was adjusted to start the training of agents of changes and institutions in year 1, Q4/Jan-Mar 2023; however, this will not impact the delivery of the project. Most field activities will also start from January (year 1, Q4/Jan-Mar 2023). Budget lines of year 1 were therefore slightly reviewed to reflect those changes and ensure that the objectives of the project are met; in particular to reduce allocated budget for foreign experts to travel to STP and organise a training in Portugal for the local partners instead, which will be highly beneficial to project implementation and the long-term capacity building of partners.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes/No

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

Change request reference if known: N/A

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

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £

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

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

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

We would like to make some budget revisions that shall not amend the total year 1 budget, but that likely will exceed 10% of one or more line items. We will discuss these with LTS NIRAS staff and submit relevant change requests as soon as they are finalised.

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

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

Please send your **completed report by email** to [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto: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**