



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



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	DARCC009
Project title	Strengthening conservation and management capacity in Tanzania through collaborative research
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania
Lead partner	Lion Landscapes
Partner(s)	WildCRU (University of Oxford), Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA), Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) Tanzania, Southern Tanzania Elephant Program (STEP)
Project leader	Dr Charlotte Searle
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.lionlandscapes.org/ https://twitter.com/lionlandscapes https://www.instagram.com/lionlandscapes/ https://www.facebook.com/lionlandscapes

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).

Activity 1.1 & 2.4: Training & establishment of large carnivore monitoring teams

In July, members of the Selous-Nyerere and Ruaha-Rungwa large carnivore monitoring teams travelled to Zambia's South Luangwa National Park (NP) to visit the Zambian Carnivore Program. This visit was an opportunity for the team to learn about collaring and focal monitoring of wild dog and lion from an organisation with a large amount of experience in this area.

From August to October, the Selous-Nyerere large carnivore monitoring team established a guide sightings programme in Nyerere NP, set up a camera trap and acoustic survey grid in Nyerere NP, and deployed GPS collars on four lions in Nyerere NP. In September, the Ruaha-Rungwa large carnivore monitoring team distributed devices to the tourism guides participating in the Ruaha NP guide sightings programme. All the data collected will be used to monitor the status and population trends of large carnivores in these critical ecosystems and provide research opportunities for Tanzanian students and conservation practitioners.

Activity 1.2: Analytical training workshops

In June, LL and WildCRU held a Lion Density Analysis & Interpretation Workshop for project participants in Dar es Salaam, in partnership with partner Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS). The workshop was attended by three TAWA ecologists, two TANAPA ecologists, one TAWIRI researcher, one LL research assistant, and one FZS intern. Participants were taught how to estimate lion population density from camera trap data via spatially explicit capture-recapture

modelling. The group then discussed and interpreted the results, and identified management recommendations arising from the findings. The points raised in this discussion will be used to produce a report of conservation implications and recommendations for TANAPA, TAWA, and TAWIRI, and will be published as a scientific paper.

Also in June, project leader Dr Charlotte Searle participated as a speaker and mentor at the Women in Conservation Technology (WiCT) course in Grumeti, Tanzania. Dr Searle presented LL and WildCRU's carnivore population monitoring work in Ruaha-Rungwa and Selous-Nyerere as a case study of how camera traps can be used for conservation and research, led training on the use of camera traps, and took part in a number of group discussions around navigating conservation and academia as a woman.

Activity 1.5 & 3.1: Dissemination of research findings

In June, Dr Charlotte Searle attended the second workshop to revise the Tanzania Lion and Leopard Action Plan. Dr Searle presented information on lion and leopard abundance in Ruaha-Rungwa and Selous-Nyerere, which will be incorporated into national population estimates for both species.

Project participants have collaboratively written a paper on cheetah status in Selous-Nyerere, which has been accepted for publication in the journal *Oryx*. Papers on the population status of lion and leopard in the landscape are also currently being drafted.

The project leader and project participants from TAWA, TANAPA, TAWIRI and LL have secured places to deliver presentations at the upcoming TAWIRI Scientific Conference in December, to present some of the key findings of the collaborative data collection and analysis.

Activity 2.1: MSc and PhD students

MSc student Janeth (F) has drafted her thesis and is currently receiving comments from her supervisors (including Dr Searle). MSc student Singira (M) has completed his examinations, and will soon be embarking on his data collection with LL. PhD student Leonard (M) has begun data collection for his genetic research, as part of the GPS collar deployment in Selous-Nyerere. The project has been joined by Diploma student Nyasatu (F), who was previously a research assistant at LL; Nyasatu has secured a scholarship at WildCRU to publish her research project on caracal in Ruaha-Rungwa with the support of Dr Searle.

Activity 4.2: Selous-Nyerere – Udzungwa corridor assessment

LL and partner STEP (Southern Tanzania Elephant Program) will deploy camera traps in the Kilombero Elephant Corridor (Selous-Nyerere – Udzungwa) in November, to monitor the extent to which elephants, large carnivores, and other mammals utilise the newly-gazetted corridor. This pilot will form the basis of longer-term connectivity monitoring, which will be expanded to include monitoring of birds, reptiles, amphibians, arthropods, and plants.

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.

Although we received our permits to deploy GPS collars on lions and wild dogs in Selous-Nyerere, we have still not received collaring permits for Ruaha-Rungwa for planned lion collaring in MBOMIPA Wildlife Management Area. We have been following up on this matter with TAWIRI, but it is unclear why we have been facing such delays and if and when the necessary permission will be granted. While there is still time for us to try and complete this activity if the permits are granted in the next month or two, if we reach the end of December 2023 without any progress or

clarity we will have to review our planned activities and potentially submit a change request asking to reallocate the budget allocated for this collar deployment to another activity.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: Flagged as a potential issue in assumptions and previous reporting

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance N/A

Change request reference if known: N/A

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?

No

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**