



**BIODIVERSITY  
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



## **Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects** **Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus**

### **Half Year Report**

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

**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 2024**

**Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.**

**Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.**

<b>Project reference</b>	DARCC038
<b>Project title</b>	Strengthening Mexican civil society leaders in implementing nature-based solutions
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	México (Northwest and western regions)
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	FONNOR
<b>Partner(s)</b>	
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>María José Mesén Arias</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>October 31, 2024 (HYR2)</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<i>The project does not have a website, but information about the project can be found at <a href="https://www.fonnor.org/project/responsa-aprender-y-adaptar-para-solucionar/">https://www.fonnor.org/project/responsa-aprender-y-adaptar-para-solucionar/</a></i> <i>Also the project has a Learning Management System platform where organisations have access to learning material. Access is restricted at the moment: <a href="https://plataforma.fonnor.org/login/?lang=es_mx">https://plataforma.fonnor.org/login/?lang=es_mx</a>, but in this <a href="#">document</a> we have included some screenshots.</i>

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**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of 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 last 6 months all of the activities planned were carried out according to the implementation timetable.

- 9 webinars
- 1 in-person workshop held in La Paz, Baja California Sur with the attendance of 29 participants from the Civil Society Organisations (CSO).
- 6 CSO received one-on-one mentoring on fundraising strategies.
- 2 follow up virtual sessions were held to review the progress of the organisations in strengthening their projects on NbS topics.

Out of 16 CSO, the result obtained were the following:

- 6 CSO were able to adjust their project to achieve a “Strong” status
- 9 CSO were able to adjust their project to achieve an “Adequate” status
- 1 CSO obtained a “Partial” status

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

- In order to carry out the activities as scheduled, webinars were held every two weeks, which represented a heavy workload for the participants since, due to the topics, some of the sessions lasted up to 3 hours. Although it didn't represent an issue to achieve the outcome and outputs.
- In terms of topics, we identified that organisations needed training on communication and storytelling in order to present their NbS projects properly according to different audiences.
- The fundraising and NbS consultants donated working hours. Plus, we were able to carry out the in-person event in a less expensive venue. This resulted in a carry over from our budget which allowed to strengthen the activities to achieve the project's objective.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes

Change Request reference if known: *Two Change Request were submitted and agreed in full (We couldn't locate the reference so the dates of acceptance are provided: January 4<sup>th</sup> 20204 and September 25<sup>th</sup> 2024.)*

**4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)**

**Actual spend:**

**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 2025)?**

Yes ☐ No ☒

**4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project 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?**

N/A

**6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report.** If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

N/A

## Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024)	
Have you <b>responded to any additional feedback</b> (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your <b>risk register</b> ?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024)	
Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review</b> ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	Yes
For All Projects	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCFs-Report@niras.com">BCFs-Report@niras.com</a> .	Yes
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	Yes
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project</b> ?	Yes

Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.
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Yes
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