



**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 2025**

**Please note all projects that were active before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 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>	DARCC060
<b>Project title</b>	Strengthening climate change capacity for effective management of Madagascar's PAs
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Madagascar
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	MEDD (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development), FAPBM (Fondation pour les Aires Protégées et la Biodiversité de Madagascar)
<b>Project Leader</b>	Andrianantenaina Hanitra Nomentsoa
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	31st October 2025 - HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	

**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 monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) 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.

Details of the progress made toward each output are provided below:

**Output 1.** Empower PA co-managers to take effective environmental action through improved technical and operational knowledge and skills.

- 1.1. From April to September 2025, 49 Protected Area (PA) managers were trained on the basic concepts of climate change, climate risk analysis, and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA). This was carried out through two training sessions: one in Antananarivo (June 18-19, 2025) and the other in Mahajanga (August 5-6, 2025). To date, a total of 104 (out of 120 targeted) PA managers has been trained on these themes.
- 1.2. Following the post-training assessment, it was observed that all participants reported a good level of knowledge on the competences taught (the objective being that at least 70% achieve this level). Specifically, 17% of participants reported a good level of competences on the themes covered, while 83% indicated a high level of competences and that they could train others.
- 1.3. For local communities, 80 people were trained on introduction to climate change over the past six months through two training sessions: one in Ambatondrazaka (July 16-17, 2025) and the other in Mahajanga (August 7-8, 2025). To date, 171 people (out of 200 targeted) has been trained on this theme.
- 1.4. A training session on climate finance and andragogical facilitation techniques was organised for the 20 new trainers from 07 to 11 April 2025.
- 1.5. The training content is systematically updated for each session to align with participants' profiles and learning needs.

**Output 2.** Increase uptake of best practice on PA management including climate change adaptation and mitigation measures through peer exchange.

- 2.1. One exchange visit has been organised in the south-eastern part of Madagascar, in Ranomafana National Park. The main themes addressed during this exchange visit were "Restoration of cleared, burned areas and an immersion in the community-based ecotourism site implemented by VOI Ambatolahy".
- 2.2. 22 people took part in this exchange visit (4 from PA organisations and 18 from local community associations). To date, 183 (out of 220) persons participated in the exchange visits.

**Output 3.** Fund small projects to tackle the impacts of climate change through adaptation or mitigation measures.

A call for projects has been launched the 03<sup>rd</sup> June 2025. 25 proposals were received. The selection process has started on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025 and the 2 best projects has been identified. The Grant Agreement is currently being developed, and the projects are expected to start in November.

On September 30, a Project Advisory Committee meeting was held to review key project achievements, identify challenges faced, and provide recommendations for the final six months of implementation.

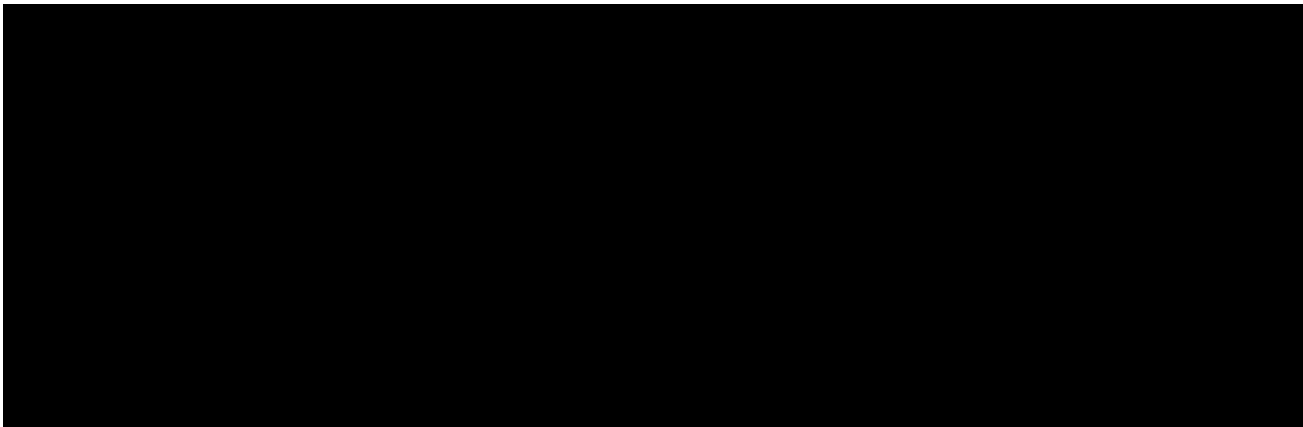
**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

During the follow-up mission for the community project implemented by Madagasikara Voakajy in Mangabe, a field visit was planned for 11-13 June 2025, to assess the activities outlined in the project. However, this visit had to be canceled due to an attack by bandits in the target village. The incidence was immediately reported to the supervisory team in Antananarivo, and a precautionary decision was taken to suspend the mission and return to Antananarivo, pending further information and security updates from Madagasikara Voakajy.

There were no significant impacts on the project activities or budget, as the follow-up mission was successfully carried for 14-16 July 2025. The temporary postponement did not affect the timetable or the achievement of planned outputs.

<b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b>	
Discussed with NIRAS:	No (N/A)
Formal Change Request submitted:	No (N/A)
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No (N/A)
Change Request reference if known: <i>If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome</i>	

<b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)</b> Actual spend: £ <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">XXXXXXXXXX</span>
<b>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 2026)?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: £
<b>4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.  <b>If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible, and not later than 31<sup>st</sup> December. 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.</b>  <b>NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.</b>
<b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b>  Suspicions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to <a href="mailto:fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk">fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk</a>
No.
<b>6. Project risk management</b>  <b>6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.</b>
Not applicable.



**7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.**

**The only comment in the review for us to address in the HYR is: “The project will need to ensure that the risk register is more clear with risk of SEAH separated from financial exploitation.”**

We have reviewed our risk framework and split the row which has both financial exploitation and SEAH risks within it into two separate risks, as well as reviewing the risk framework generally. It is attached to the project report email.

## Checklist for submission

Have you responded to **feedback from your latest Annual Report Review**? You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate.

Have you reported against the most **up to date information for your project**?

Have you **clearly highlighted any confidential information** within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?

Include your **project reference** in the subject line of submission email.

Submit to [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com)

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