

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 2022

Project reference	DPLUS067
Project title	Regional collaboration to achieve sustainable Caribbean fisheries management
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Anguilla, British Virgin Islands (BVI), Turks and Caicos (TCI)
Lead partner	Cefas
Partner(s)	Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources (DFMR) in Anguilla; Conservation and Fisheries Department (CFD) in BVI; and Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR) in TCI.
Project leader	Rosana Ourens
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR6
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.cefas.co.uk/impact/case-studies/regional-collaboration-to-achieve-sustainable-fisheries-in-the-caribbean/

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 is nearing completion. The activities that should have been completed by the first half of the financial year 2022-2023 are the following:

OUTPUT 1. Data collection:

Design and testing of a phone app for the fishermen to report catch data (in progress).

The app has been updated to work with the latest software for Android and iOS. However, the UKOTs have not yet engaged with the process of deploying the back-end of their respective servers which is preventing the app from going live. See section 2a for more details.

OUTPUT 4. Capacity building:

Course on stock assessment, combined with UK-based knowledge exchange activities (completed). Two members from the Governments of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, and Turks & Caicos attended a one-week course imparted by Rosana Ourens and Samantha Stott at the Cefas Laboratory in the UK from 11-15 July 2022. Participants learned basic concepts of fisheries science, assessment methods used in data-limited stocks (and used by Cefas to assess their stocks) and R programming language.

There was also time for a break from the course to learn about Cefas' work on fisheries science. Scientists from different groups across Cefas presented their work. Participants had a guided tour of the otolith lab and fish room which encompassed the main pillars on fisheries science and highlighted how they are linked: from data collection and data curation to stock assessment and fisheries advice. This also instigated a Q&A session so the UKOT's could interact face-to-face, increasing their knowledge.

The visit was also paramount in building relationships across the organisations, particularly with BVI, where Cefas partners with them on other Darwin projects.

The visitors concluded the trip was very productive and they were taking home new skills to analyse fisheries data and conduct simple stock assessments. They also completed an anonymous online form to evaluate the course which was highly scored.

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.

It was agreed that a phone app would be designed for the fishers to report catch data in the three UKOTs. The app was especially relevant for BVI where many years of logbook data was lost during the Hurricane Irma in 2017 because the information was not digitalised. The app has been designed and is ready to go live. However, Anguilla and BVI have not engaged with the process of deploying the back-end on their respective servers. It is not immediately clear what has caused this delay, but it seems that BVI and Anguilla have decided not to go ahead with the app due to the required infrastructure not being in place. The code used to create the app will be sent to the UKOT's so they will be able to install this in the future.

The Fisheries Department of the TCI (DECR) has shown their interest in the app on many occasions. However, the heads of the Department changed recently, and the new director is concerned about the costs of maintaining the app in the future (i.e., costs associated with upgrading the app to work with the newest software). The goal of this activity was to test a new method to collect catch data, and the app is expected to work for at least one year at no cost to DECR. This would give DECR enough time to decide if the app is suitable and if they wish to continue using it. DECR said that they would make a decision by May/June 2022 but, to date, Cefas has not had confirmation. If there is no confirmation, Cefas will send the code used to create the app so they will be able to install it in the future at their own cost.

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:

No

Formal Change Request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A
Change request reference if known:	

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?

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. 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**