



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	DPLUS103
Project title	Saint Helena Climate Change and Drought Warning Network
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	St Helena
Lead organisation	St Helena Government (Environment Natural Resources and Planning Directorate)
Partner(s)	Connect Saint Helena, Saint Helena Research Institute, Arcium, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, UK Met Office
Project leader	<i>Darren Duncan</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	<i>HYR 2020</i>
Project website/blog/social media	<i>Under construction</i>

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).

Due to Covid-19, project grants were awarded in mid-May 2020. The project team have completed the following tasks between May and September 2020:

- Submitted grant award clarifications to Darwin Plus on 11th June 2020.
- Attended Darwin project management webinars hosted by LTSI in June.
- Revised the programme and budget to reflect the global pandemic and a more realistic delivery of Year 1 and Year 2 tasks. The most recent budget change was approved by DEFRA on 3rd August 2020.
- Completion of 3 iterations of the project Logframe with the support of LTSI. The revised logframe was accepted on 24th September 2020.
- Forwarded contracts to project partners for signing in September 2020.
- Revised the Terms of Reference for the Water Resource Monitoring Technician role and completed all recruitment paperwork. Job adverts will be posted in October 2020.
- Completed the field equipment procurement process at the end of September. Equipment will take up to 3 months to arrive on island, with the estimated time of arrival being December 2020.
- Started compiling desk assessment data sets for review.
- Applied for and have been granted a project research permit from the Saint Helena Research Institute.
- Additional funding. We have been working with our network of island and international partners to integrate our project outputs into a proposed 3 year cloud forest restoration project in Saint Helena. The restoration areas would include water catchments being studied as part of DPLUS103. The design of the restoration project includes costs for

extending DPLUS103 activities by an additional year and collecting additional geological, soil and hydrological data. The restoration project would run in parallel to DPLUS103 during Year 2 and 3. If the funding application is successful, this will enable the Darwin Plus team to employ the Water Resource Monitoring Technician for a further 12 months and support the collection of additional data to reduce the impacts of a later start to field work in 2020/21.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

At this time, most project problems/unexpected developments have been related to Covid-19. We have identified a cost reduction in the Water Resource Monitoring Technician role, as the original grant request was greater than the actual costs of recruiting a local member of staff. We will have identified the underspend by the end of October 2020, once SHG and Connect Saint Helena have confirmed all recruitment costs.

Note: it is the intention of the project that the Water Resource Monitoring Technician role will transfer to SHG at the end of the project as a permanent post funded by SHG. Both SHG and Connect are working on ensuring parity of organisation salary scales, so that the role transfers without a significant change in salary.

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Key issues we have encountered are related to the later announcement of grant awards in 2020 and Covid-19 restrictions on international travel between the UK and Saint Helena (due to South Africa closing international borders).

Our response has been to work with LTSI and Defra to re-base the project budget and programme in Year 1 and Year 2. The logframe has also been updated to reflect feedback from the grant award committee.

The residual impacts are delays getting field monitoring equipment to the island (expected December 2020) and uncertainty of a date when international travel can re-commence between the UK, South Africa and St Helena. We have been talking to LTSI on a regular basis concerning the budget and programme and will need to review them again in December 2020 to assess the viability of international fieldwork planned for 2021. This will potentially impact on the geophysics work programme for Year 2 in 2021 as we need to hire the equipment in Q4 of Year 1.

2c. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS:	Yes
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Formal change request submitted:	Yes
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Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes
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3a. 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: £

3b. 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 rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget 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.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

The logframe has been a challenge this time due to changes in requirements to ensure parity with other Darwin Initiative logframe requirements. We have found some of the nomenclature used to be confusing and would welcome a review of the logframe design so that it is clearer for project teams.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review 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 LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**