



## Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021)

<b>Project reference</b>	DPR8S2\1010
<b>Project title</b>	Initiating monitoring support for the SGSSI-MPA Research and Monitoring Plan
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	South Georgia and The South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI)
<b>Lead organisation</b>	The British Antarctic Survey
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI)
<b>Project leader</b>	Philip Hollyman (original PI – Philip Trathan)
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR3 Second year, midyear report
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	

**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).**

Over the last 6 months the project has progressed in line with the agreed implementation timetable (although delayed by 1 year due to COVID-19, see section 2b) and log frame. A list of potential long-term monitoring sites was developed in consultation with GSGSSI and members of the wider South Georgia scientific community (1.1). This list was finalised and now includes details of each site including priority, the species colonies present and optimal survey months, landing sites and a difficulty rating based on operational restrictions for UAV use (e.g. beyond line of sight operation)(1.2).

The upcoming field season has been planned in consultation with GSGSSI to make the best use of the available field work time in December and January. In advance of the field season, Nathan Fenney and Adrian Fox have completed the required UAV pilot training and undertaken extensive practice flights in advance of their deployment; they have been certified by the appropriate authorities to fly fixed-wing UAVs within UKOTs.

**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.**

One unexpected development which is still unresolved is a potential shortening of our January 2022 field season. This is due to operational requirements for the vessel we are using (MV Pharos SG) to enter dry dock, the dates for this remain uncertain but may curtail fieldwork at the end of January. If the season is cut short it will likely result in us collecting sub optimal data for one of our target species, King Penguins, for which the best survey timeframe would be the last week of January/early February. If this is the case we will still collect as much data as possible, with the knowledge that the timing was sub-optimal. We will then aim to rectify this in our second field season.

**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.**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the fieldwork for this project was delayed by a year from October 2020 – January 2021 to December 2021 – January 2022. These changes should have no lasting impact on the project which will now finish a year later than originally planned.

**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/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

**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?

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](mailto: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**