



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2021)

Project reference	DPLUS110
Project title	Recognise, protect, restore: driving sound stewardship of Falklands peat wetlands
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Falkland Islands
Lead organisation	Falkland Conservation
Partner(s)	UKCEH, FI Government, British Forces South Atlantic Islands
Project leader	Andrew Stanworth
Report date and number	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	falklandsconservation.com

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).

1.3 Fieldwork plans developed by Y1Q3 and Q4, and Y2Q1, Q2 and Q3.

Planning for 2021/22 survey season following methods developed & trialed in previous quarter. Pit fall traps swapped for vac sampling. Surveys starting at Long Mountain (West Falkland) on Rincorn Ridge Farm. Working with Hugue and Marie-Paul re: multi-island survey visits. Olly from FITV expects to join both island trips to continue the ‘peat story’ through lifetime of project. Survey sites attached:

1.5 Survey data analysed: Y2Q1 and Q2, Y3Q1 and Q2, YR4 Q1 and Q2.

Bird survey protocols adapted from Falklands and South Georgia methods taking a 100m stretch with sample point as the centre i.e. 50m either side. If habitat is not large enough take centre of habitat as start point & transect follows 50m either side recording if species is within or outside the habitat.

Attached data collected to date and sample data for main project. The main project will gather vegetation, soil, invertebrate and vertebrate data.

2.1 Protocols for stakeholders including land managers to identify and assess the condition of peat-wetland habitats (to include at least all 5 nationally 'Vulnerable' peat-wetland habitats) developed and trialed (years 2 and 3 and YR4 Q1).

The previous 2 quarters has involved work with 6 landowners covering 7 farms (Fitzroy, Elephant Beach Farm, Cape Dolphin, Springpoint, Dunbar, The Murrel and Rincorn Ridge) in addition to farms already visited. Soil samples taken & processed for moisture, bulk density, carbon & pH from CD, EBF & Fitzroy. Habitats identified & access permissions granted for 2021/22 survey season. Boat chartered for island visits for 2021/22 survey season. Presentations at Farmers Week & Peaty Pals resulted in 12 new landowners offering access to holdings along with several new volunteers.

Presentations, articles and media:

- Farmer’s week presentation covering project aims 9th July 2021
- Falklands Conservation newsletter article – overview of farmer’s week

- 'Peaty Pals' presentation (informal gathering covering peatlands/restoration) 3rd August - revised version of Farmers Week presentation.
- Filming with owners of Saoirse yacht (project volunteers) to explain DPLUS110. Film shown in presentation at Narrows Bar 4th August 2021
- Final FITV film on project broadcast & support for next 2 years established
- FI Radio interview covering project aired on 06/08/2021
- MOD Sanctuary magazine article submitted on 30/09/2021 following work at MPC
- Darwin magazine article covering project

Timelapse cameras to be set at Middle Island (completed), Motley Island (completed), Long Mountain (deployed), Cape Dolphin (deployed), Cape Pembroke (deployed), The Murrel, Saddle Island, North Island, New Island, Kidney Island to capture plant growth, marine mammals & seabirds in peat habitats.

3.3 A minimum of 3 field trips for young people during which children (significant numbers of both girls and boys) and educators learn to recognise at least three native plant habitats and their associated fauna. From Y1Q4.

Worked with Watch Group (FC youth group) covering project habitats, conservation and restoration:

- Bleaker Island for tussac planting & habitat ID hosted by owners Nick, Phyll and Mike Rendall.
- Frin's seed bombs with Scout Group as part of DPLUS110 experiment on germination.
- Watch group to Middle Island for tussac planting coincided with planting/restoration funded by Georgia Seafoods Ltd. WG explored DPLUS110 habitats before joining main group for seed bomb dispersal (boxwood) & tussac planting.
- Produced video of WG as they engage with election process covering env issues incl. peatlands

4.3 Steering Group identified. Project Officer provides Progress Updates for discussion with Steering Group (project partners and key stakeholders (to include RBG Kew and Environment Officer at Falkland Islands Government) biannually from Y1Q3. This advisory group provides feedback as part of M&E process.

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.

N/A

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.

None in previous 6 months

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:	Not in previous 6 months
Formal change request submitted:	Not in previous 6 months
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Not in previous 6 months

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year? 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?

N/A

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**