

## Darwin Plus: Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note"  
(<https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)

**Submission Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### Darwin Plus Project Information

Project reference	DPLUS136
Project title	Anguilla Shark Conservation: social acceptance, spatial protection and legislative reform
Territory(ies)	Anguilla
Lead partner	Marine Conservation Society
Project partner(s)	Anguilla National Trust (ANT), Fisheries Unit Department of Natural Resources (FMRU-DNaR), University of Exeter (UoE)
Darwin Plus grant value	£371,004
Start/end dates of project	July 2021-March 2024
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2021-Mar 2022) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2)	July 2021-March 2022
Project Leader name	Peter Richardson
Project website/blog/social media	
Report author(s) and date	Louise Soanes, Farah Mukhida, Peter Richardson

### 1. Project summary

Anguilla Shark Conservation (ASC) is a multidisciplinary project that will increase knowledge of Anguilla's shark populations, their habitats and conservation needs, while developing local ownership of conservation interventions through comprehensive community engagement. ASC will conduct Anguilla's first ecological baseline assessment of sharks; integrate fisher knowledge; take account of community perceptions and use all of the above to inform a national shark Species Action Plan (SAP) that considers community values, co-existence, new legislation, and spatial protection of sharks and their habitats.

### 2. Project stakeholders/partners

Stakeholders involved to date in this project include:

**Government of Anguilla – Minister of Natural Resources.** The Minister of Natural Resources was briefed about the purpose and aims of this project at its inception of this project and has since been invited to participate in the deployment of baited remote underwater video stations (BRUVS). Updates about sharks captured on video footage have routinely been shared with the Minister via the WhatsApp platform. The Minister has also posted updates on his WhatsApp status highlighting the work that has been conducted. He continues to be supportive of the activities and overall project output.

**Government of Anguilla agencies (Fisheries-Unit Department of Natural Resources) and Statutory Bodies (Anguilla National Trust)**, as partners in the project, sit on the Project Steering Committee, have led on-the-ground aspects of this project including the development and implementation of the communications and outreach plan, the collection of BRUV data, and have taken part in training workshops. These local agencies will continue to assist with project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, public outreach, for the remainder of the project.

**Local Dive operators** have been engaged in citizen science activities to record and report shark sightings.

**Local fishers** have been engaged through their participation in Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) surveys designed to gain an improved understanding on the ecology, distribution, and value of sharks in Anguilla. In addition, several local fishers now report shark sighting information to local project partners.

The **wider public** have been engaged through Knowledge-Attitude-Performance (KAP) surveys. Project outreach activities have raised local awareness of the project.

See Annex 3 – report entitled “*Gathering local ecological knowledge and understanding community perceptions to inform shark conservation in Anguilla.*”

### **3. Project progress**

#### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities**

##### **Output 1. Development of first ecological and social science baselines regarding sharks in Anguilla.**

**Activity 1.2-1.4 Develop and complete baseline LEK with at least 50 Anguillian fishers/community members to record knowledge and understanding of shark ecology (including species presence/absence, species-specific spatial/temporal distributions, key habitats, and fish catch).**

This activity has been completed (Annex 1 & 3), with 54 individuals (including fishers, charter boat operators, dive operators, hoteliers/restaurateurs, natural resources managers) interviewed to assess their knowledge and understanding of shark ecology. Results of this work were analysed, reported and will be used to inform Community Voice Method interviews.

**Activity 1.5 FMRU–DNaR staff members trained in fish catch landing protocol to monitor landed sharks through bespoke workshop and in-situ & commence fish catch landing data collection at 3 main fishing villages (Sandy Ground, Island Harbour and Cove).**

Following further discussion with project partners, and in recognition of the limited capacity of the FMRU-DNaR to conduct fish landing surveys, it was agreed that shark landing data should be collected on an *ad-hoc* basis by local project staff who are frequently present at local fishing ports (particularly Road Bay and Island Harbour). In addition, any social media (WhatsApp and Facebook) postings related to shark landings are being monitored. Fishers in Anguilla often share photographs of shark landings along with other fishery-related information and this method has been used by FMRU-DNaR to detect illegal fisheries such as the landing of undersized lobster and crayfish. A survey form has been developed to record shark landing data as well as live shark sightings while the local project partners are at-sea and/or working on the offshore cays. All sighting data (with photographs when available) are stored in a cloud-based project folder.

**Activity 1.6 Finalise methodology for shark citizen science programme and initiate with Anguillian dive operators.**

Through consultation with local dive operators, it was agreed that the most effective way for them to report shark sightings is through social media and by WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger in particular. The Anguilla National Trust is the point of contact for dive operators to submit sightings. To date, eleven shark and ray sightings have been reported, with photographs, dates and locations of sightings being recorded in a database. This information will be compiled into a sighting distribution map by the end of the project.

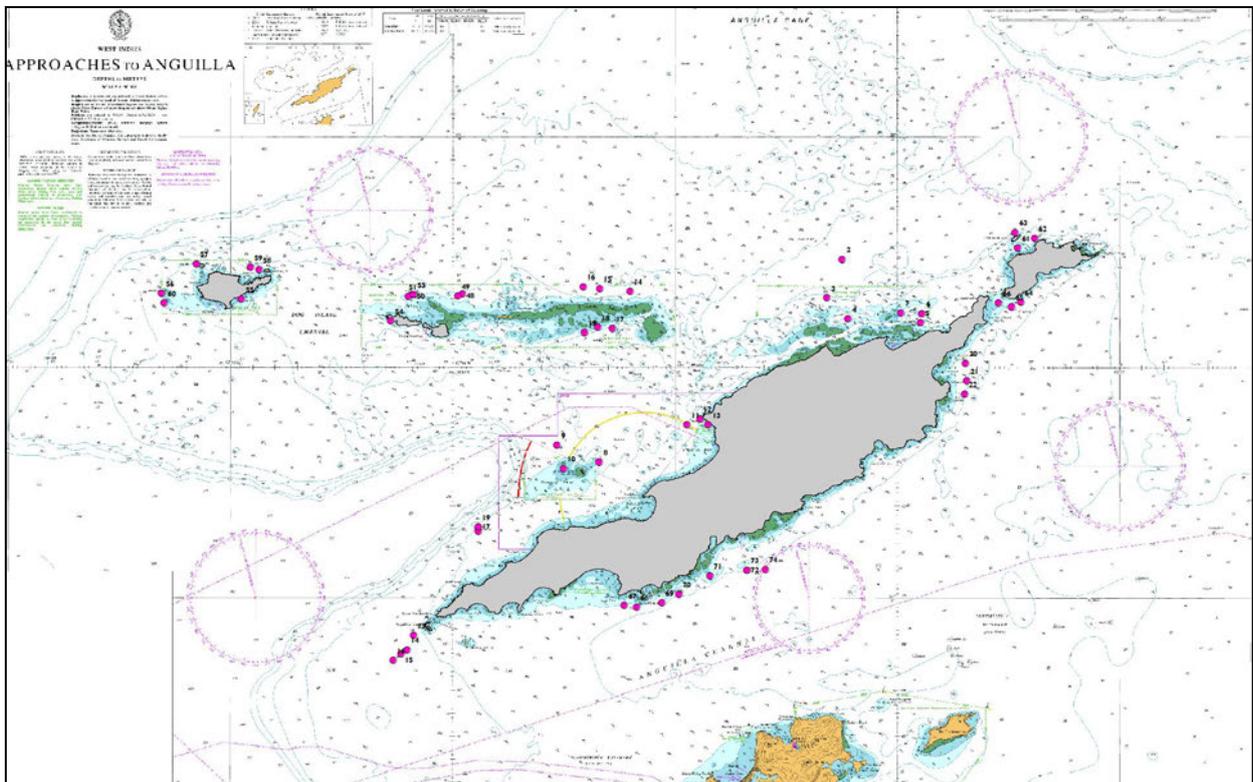
**Activity 1.7 Complete literature review of shark-related scientific studies from within the Caribbean Basin and particularly within the Caribbean sub-region.**

A literature review of shark-related studies from within the Caribbean has been completed (Annex 3).

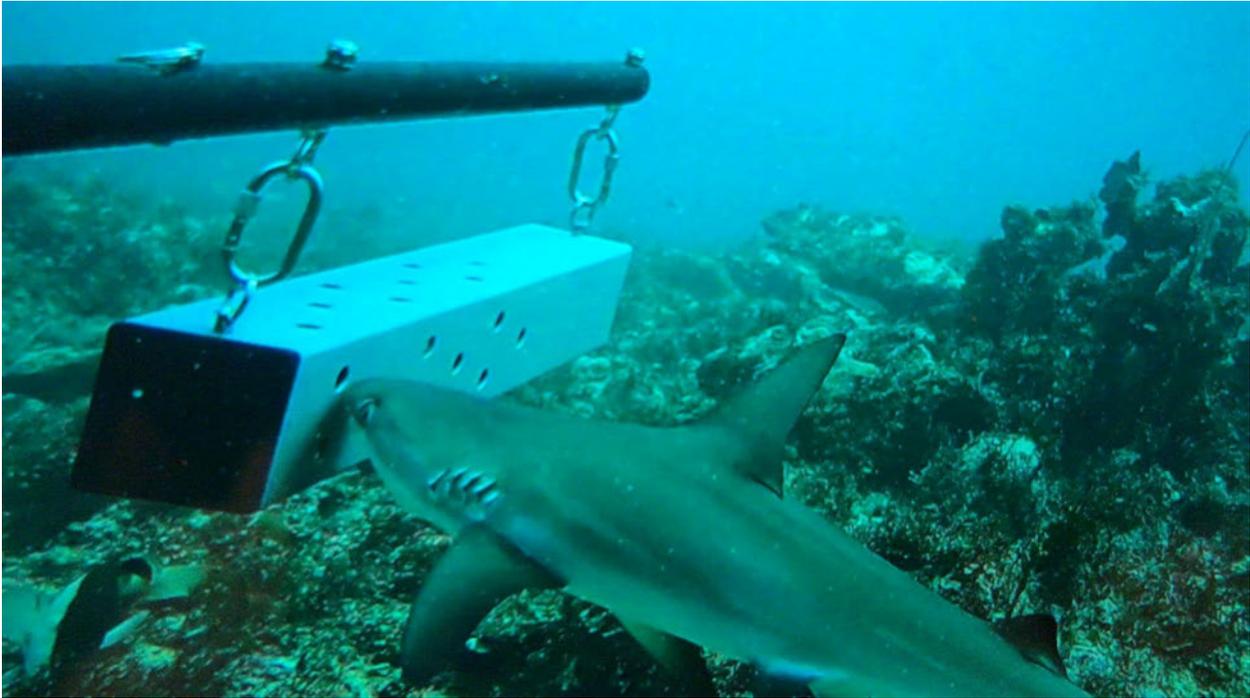
**Activity 1.8-1.9 Develop and formalise BRUVs protocol for baseline data collection and collect baseline scientific data of shark species through the deployment of BRUVs at least 24 sites within Anguilla’s waters over two years.**

In October 2021, Dr Matthew Witt from the University of Exeter visited Anguilla to train local partners in the methods of BRUV deployment and BRUV data analysis and to assist in the development of a deployment strategy. During Dr Witt’s visit, 38 BRUV deployments were made at seven sites. Following training, local project partners deployed BRUVs at six additional sites with 21 deployments (Map 1, Figure 1). Further deployments are planned for June 2022.

Through our partnership with FMRU-DNaR we have had the opportunity to use four Blue Abacus BRUV units that were supplied to them by the UK’s Blue Belt Programme. These BRUVs are supplied with custom lightweight frames which not only have saved us time and effort in creating our own frames but, more importantly, the Blue Abacus BRUV design also hold two GoPro cameras thereby allowing a stereo view. This will enable us to add another dimension to our data analysis as we can now measure the length of sharks that we observe in the videos.



Map 1. Locations where BRUVs have been deployed.



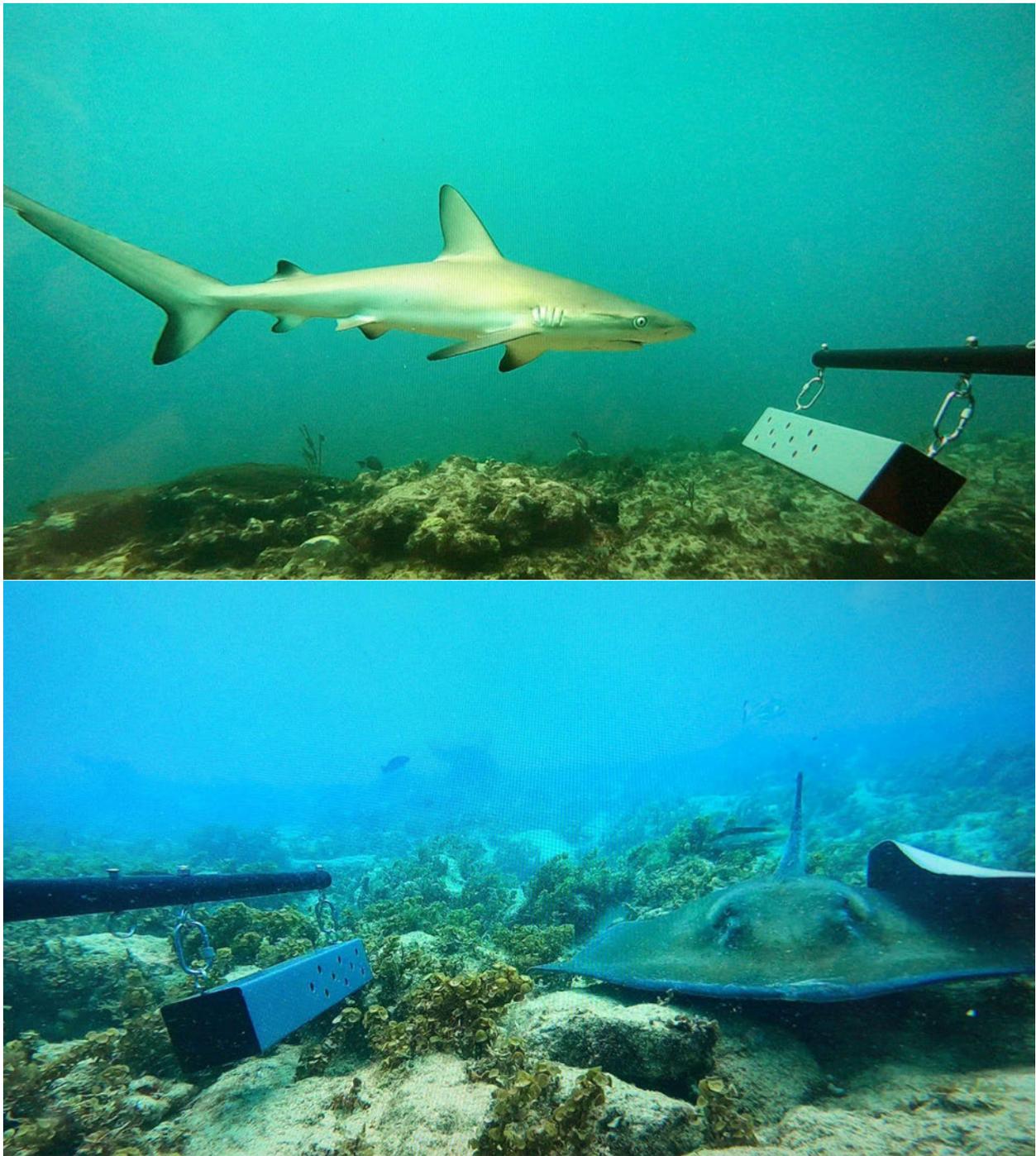


Figure 1. A selection of images captured during the BRUV deployments in October 2021.

**Output 2: Evidence-based shark SAP and supporting legislative amendment recommendations are produced through a participatory process & Output 3: At least two priority interventions prescribed by the SAP are implemented and monitored are both scheduled to take place in Years' 2 and 3 of this project.**

Activities under Outputs 2 and 3 are scheduled for Years 2 and 3 of the project.

**Output 4. Enhanced national capacity to plan, manage, implement, and monitor shark conservation action, supported by improved technical skills and greater public awareness and cooperation.**

**Activity 4.1 Implement first project steering committee meeting and partners sign-off Terms of Reference.**

To date, we have held three project steering meetings (Annex 3), and all project partners have signed their project partnership agreement including the Terms of Reference.

**Activity 4.2. ANT staff and other participating national partners complete self-assessment competencies questionnaire to identify training needs (repeated at project end to measure impact on capacity).**

National partners completed self-assessment competencies questionnaire at the start of the project (Annex 3). The same questionnaire will be completed at project end to measure change/improvement.

**Activity 4.3 Develop and finalise draft communications and public awareness plan for project, guided by the findings of LEK and CVM and create and disseminate communication, outreach and advocacy outputs including newspaper articles, press releases, blogs, docuseries, and social media posts throughout project life-cycle.**

Local project partners have led on the development of a communications and public awareness plan (Annex 3). To date, one public presentation has been hosted by the ANT and FMRU-DNaR. Supporting this presentation, one press release was issued that was aired on two radio stations in Anguilla (Radio Anguilla - [https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=392692845515641](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=392692845515641); KoolFM - [https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=527707168572041](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=527707168572041)) and the presentation was aired on Facebook Live with 232 viewers.

**Activity 4.4 Implement Knowledge-Attitudes-Performance (KAP) surveys with at least 50 community members in parallel with Activity 1.3 (ensuring gender balance and repeated at project end to evaluate project impact).**

KAP surveys were conducted with 164 respondents. Results of the survey have been compiled into a report (Annex 1 & 3)

**Activity 4.5 Plan and undertake training and on-the-job mentoring of ANT staff and other nationals in applied conservation management, and design and implement two separate workshops focusing on CVM and BRUVs.**

Ten local staff (six ANT and four FMRU-DNaR) were trained in BRUV deployment. Nine local staff attended an in-person workshop facilitated by Dr Witt that provided training on the methods used to analyse BRUV data using EventMeasure software. Additional more in-depth training on BRUV data analysis was received by three local staff during two virtual sessions again facilitated by Dr Witt.

**Activity 4.7 Publicise and report on project progress, results, and lessons learned through national and international media and directly to national groups, cross-territory stakeholders, international scientific community, and the Government of Anguilla Executive Council.**

See 4.3 above for progress on this activity. In addition, MCS and local partners have joined the Caribbean Shark Coalition. Formed in 2020, this group is a collection of member experts from NGOs, local communities, intergovernmental organizations and governments, academia, and policy institutes working together to advance the study and conservation of sharks and rays found in the waters of the Greater Caribbean. We have shared information on the project with this group and look forward to further collaborations/knowledge sharing as this project progresses.

## **3.2 Progress towards project Outputs**

### **Output 1. Development of first ecological and social science baselines regarding sharks in Anguilla**

Before the onset of this project there was limited data available on shark diversity, distribution and abundance. Through BRUV deployments, LEK surveys and citizen science initiatives during the first 9 months of this project, we have already significantly increased our understanding of sharks, including those species that are most commonly found in Anguilla's waters (nurse sharks, black-tip and Reef) (Annex 1 & 3) as well as their distribution and associations with different habitat types. We have already conducted wider community KAP surveys that suggest shark meat is not consumed very frequently by the local community and that sharks are valued for their role in ecosystem balance, ecotourism and as food. Interestingly, the majority of respondents indicated that sharks should be protected if their populations are declining and threatened with

extinction, with suggested potential protection measures including the establishment of fishing quotas, size limits and a fishing season. We are planning to further explore the social aspect of this project through the Community Voice Method in May and November 2022.

Our indicators for this output speak to the number of BRUV deployments and the number of people we involve/include in the social aspects of this project. These are still relevant indicators as these numbers directly relate to the amount of field data that is collected and the number of people from the wider Anguillian population who have been engaged and who have provided qualitative data to the project. Our final indicator for this output is the publication of a peer-reviewed manuscript – this is an important indicator as it will ultimately highlight the quality and robustness of our data once it is subject to peer-review by experts in this field.

**Output 2. Evidence-based shark SAP and supporting legislative amendment recommendations are produced through a participatory process**

This output will be achieved through project activities undertaken in Year 3 of this project.

**Output 3. At least two priority interventions prescribed by the shark Species Action Plan are implemented and monitored.**

This output will be achieved through project activities undertaken in Year 3 of this project.

**Output 4. Enhanced national capacity to plan, manage, implement and monitor shark conservation action, supported by improved technical skills and greater public awareness and cooperation.**

During the first 9 months of this project, we have already made a significant impact in increasing the general public's awareness of sharks and their importance (for example we have reached 232 individuals through Facebook, 216 through our interviews and questionnaires while 3 fishers and dive operators have directly reported shark sightings to local project staff), Although more difficult to measure, local project staff (as well as the Minister responsible for Nature Resources) have provided updates about project work and findings on their WhatsApp statuses, thereby significantly increasing our social reach. Our communication and public outreach campaign will continue throughout the project with the aim of increasing the general public's support for shark conservation. Sixteen local people have been trained in BRUV deployment and analysis; we have already exceeded our target of 15 trained individuals and we are confident that we will train even more individuals during our next BRUV deployment field season scheduled for June and July 2022.

Our indicators for this output directly relate to the number of people engaged in the project and the amount of capacity built within local agencies and stakeholder groups. These indicators are therefore very relevant to the overall impact of the project and will directly highlight the level to which we achieve this project output.

### **3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome**

**Outcome: National and regional recovery of Anguilla's apex predators (sharks) through comprehensive conservation policies and actions, strong management competencies and more supportive civil society.**

The overall project outcome focuses on the development of a shark species action plan and policies that protect threatened shark species. The first two years of this project focus on baseline data collection that will allow us to make scientifically-informed recommendations to policy makers. Alongside ecological data collection, this project has a strong social science component that is being implemented alongside a communication and outreach campaign. The combination of ecological and social science data, running alongside an education and outreach programme, has previously been successful in Anguilla, whereby ecological and social data informed the GOA on their sea turtle conservation decision in 2020, where the ban on sea turtle harvesting was maintained and was based on both scientific data and public support, despite lobbying by some fishers to lift the ban. We are confident that our approach and the progress we have made to

date in the collection of ecological and social data and our public awareness activities makes the achievement of our overall project outcome very likely.

### **3.4 Monitoring of assumptions**

#### **Assumption 1. Executive Council approves Shark SAP and legislative recommendations and continues to support the effective management of Anguilla's threatened and at-risk shark species.**

We have engaged the Minister of Natural Resources throughout this project from its conception through to our early implementation phases. In addition, our partnerships with Government Agencies (Department of Natural Resources) ensure that higher level government officials will remain updated on and connected to project activities. The local partners ongoing liaison with Government means that while there is still risk associated with this assumption, the team is mitigating this risk as far as is possible.

#### **Assumption 2. National stakeholders continue to be willing to cooperate on shark conservation initiatives.**

To date, we have been encouraged by the level of local interest in the project. Our outreach activities, as stated in our communication action plan, will continue to raise awareness of the importance of this project to the wider community. We expect the Community Voice Method process to further enhance local community participation in the project, and therefore risk associated with this assumption is low.

#### **Assumption 3. National strategy correctly identifies and addresses main threats, capacity needs, and resources to conserve and protect species.**

Our conservation action plan and policy recommendations will be based on sound scientific data and will be informed by local stakeholders. We will also utilise our regional and international networks such as the Caribbean Shark Coalition to learn more about what conservation measures/strategies have been successful elsewhere. The data collection is being implemented to schedule and therefore risk for this assumption is low.

#### **Assumption 4. Major field activities can be rescheduled if extreme weather events affect Anguilla during the project period.**

As Atlantic hurricane season approaches, the impact of a severe hurricane on project activities is always at the forefront of our minds. With the hurricane season beginning in June but peaking in September and October, we have planned our second round of BRUV data collection for June 2022. To date the BRUV deployments have been implemented to schedule, and while careful planning mitigates risk associated with this assumption, the weather in the Caribbean presents notable risk.

#### **Assumption 5. The work is not significantly impacted by further covid-19 restrictions.**

Even with Anguilla's quarantine restrictions in place our baseline BRUV data collection was still able to commence in October 2021, with a scoping visit by Dr Matthew Witt (UoE). At the same time, gathering restrictions and social distancing measures did impact our ability to engage the general public in in-person presentations and events. COVID-19 restrictions have now significantly eased in Anguilla, and the percentage of vaccinated people remains high, thus we do not expect there to be any future lock-downs that will affect project activities and we will reinstate our plans to meet directly with communities and individuals. The Community Voice Method filming was delayed due to UK team member covid infections affecting their busy overseas travel commitments, but we are confident that this element will start early in FY 22/23 as per the agreed December 2021 change request.

#### **Assumption 6. BRUV equipment perform as stated and do not suffer from equipment failure / loss.**

We have been fortunate with our BRUV work in that we have been able to use additional Blue Abacas stereo BRUVS (provided to FMRU-DNaR through the UK's Blue Belt Programme). To date, these BRUVs have worked well and we have not experienced any problems. If we did encounter any future problems, we also have our own project-funded BRUV designs to use in addition to/or instead of the Blue Abacus models. Through FMRU-DNaR's relationship with the Blue Abacus team, we also have direct access to individuals who help troubleshoot any problems that may arise with their BRUV frames. Given the experience of the University project team member in BRUV deployment, and the training he has delivered in Anguilla, the risk associated with this assumption is low.

#### **Assumption 7. Inshore, offshore and sports fishers are willing to attend shark by-catch reduction workshops.**

In the lead-up to these slated workshops, we will focus community outreach activities on these stakeholder groups to encourage their support and interest in attending the workshops. To date, fisher participation in the project has been encouraging (e.g. LEK surveys) and we expect this to be enhanced with the Community Voice Method element of the project, therefore the risk associated with this assumption is low.

#### **Assumption 8. Trained expertise remains in Anguilla.**

This project has already involved and trained 16 Anguillian residents, including both ANT and FMRU-DNaR staff, interns, and volunteers. We are confident that by the end of this project we will not only have increased local capacity and understanding but also that skills and knowledge are sufficiently widespread that even should individuals leave any of the organisations or Anguilla, institutional knowledge and capacity remains. Therefore risk associated with this assumption is low.

### **4. Project support to environmental and/or climate outcomes in the UKOTs**

The primary purpose of this project is design and implement effective shark conservation action through a multi-disciplinary, practical, evidence-based approach. This project directly supports Anguilla's ability to achieve strategic long-term outcomes for marine species and habitats, delivering commitments made by the Government of Anguilla under national strategies, policies, and legislation as well as by contributing to a number of different multilateral environmental agreements and agendas.

So far through this work, we have been able to increase our knowledge about Anguilla's marine biodiversity and particularly the diversity, distribution, and socio-economic value of elasmobranchs. This project has therefore already contributed to:

- The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which calls for the gathering of data on "activities that have significant adverse impact on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity."
- The National Environmental Management Strategy, which calls for the "meaningful participation of civil society in decision making" and promoting environmental awareness and understanding.
- The Biodiversity and Heritage Conservation Act and Anguilla Fisheries Development Plan, by collecting critical data to inform the development and implementation of evidence-based actions for both threatened and exploited shark species.
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 17), by strengthening partnerships through collaborative initiatives amongst national stakeholders (FMRU-DNaR, ANT), international non-governmental agencies (MCS, Caribbean Shark Coalition), and academia (UoE).
- The Aichi Targets, by raising awareness of the value of biodiversity (Target 1), taking into account traditional/local knowledge (Target 18), and using science and technology to better understand, develop, and implement conservation interventions (Target 19).

- The Food and Agriculture Organisation’s International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks, by conducting assessments of shark stocks, identifying and assessing threats to shark populations, and involving stakeholders in research and education initiatives.

We expect that this project will make further contributions to national and international priorities as we use the data we have collected and the relationships that we fostered to create a long-term species action plan for Anguilla’s elasmobranchs.

## **5. OPTIONAL: Consideration of gender equality issues**

Day to day management of the project is handled by mixed gender team comprised of MCS Project Leader Mr Peter Richardson, ANT Project Leader Ms Farah Mukhida, Project Coordinator Dr Louise Soanes, FMRU-DNaR, Steering Committee Members Mr Jason Daniels and Mr Vincent Webster, and UoE Project Partner Dr Matt Witt. Additional members of the project implementation team include Ms Emily Bunce (MCS), Mr Devon Carter (ANT), Ms Kafi Gumbs (FMRU-DNaR), Ms Cheryl Hall (MCS), Ms Clarissa Lloyd (ANT), Mrs Sue Ranger (MCS), Mr Amdeep Sanghera (MCS), and Ms Sophia Pinheiro Vergara (MCS).

To date, the project team has directly engaged with 232 individuals (48% female, 52% male) through surveys, interviews, and training. Overall, we believe females are well represented in this project, as decision makers as well as beneficiaries of the training and learning opportunities. Ethnicity and age are equally well-represented based on Anguilla’s population demographics. We will continue work towards equal representation (in gender in particular) through our Community Voice Method and additional training in BRUV deployment and data collection both of which are scheduled for Year 2.

## **6. Monitoring and evaluation**

The monitoring and evaluation plan is being implemented as described in our proposal. MCS has been responsible for overall management of the M&E process, with input provided directly by lead partner agency ANT and more specifically Ms Farah Mukhida and Dr Louise Soanes as local Project Co-Lead and Project Coordinator, respectively. Continuous M&E has been undertaken on at least a monthly basis through regular email correspondence and Zoom meetings to ensure that the project is on schedule that milestones are being met.

Quarterly Project Steering Committee meetings, attended by all four collaborating organisations have also been held during which updates on project activity progress is reported, achievements discussed, and potential delays in meeting deadlines identified and alternatives examined. Project Steering Committee meetings are recorded and minuted, with meeting reports shared with all Committee members. Both MCS and ANT share responsibility for keeping records of activities, outputs and the indicators in the project logframe; a Project Action Tracker is a live document that is updated regularly and available to all project partners, as well as a project Risk Register.

The MCS Director of Programmes reviews quarterly financial reports with the ANT Project Co-Lead, as well as the Action Tracker and Risk Register, with financial claims delivered to MCS Finance and signed off by the MCS Director of Finance. ANT have included project indicators into their annual financial and performance reports to the Government of Anguilla.

The data (ecological, LEK, KAP) that we have collected in Year 1 serves as the baseline for monitoring and measuring project impact on both shark management as well as stakeholder awareness and engagement. This data will guide our work in Year 2 as we continue to collect shark ecological data, conduct additional socioeconomic surveys using the community voice method, and refine and implement our public awareness strategy. All data is collected is inputted into a database managed in Anguilla by ANT staff.

## 7. Lessons learnt

Although this project is being led and facilitated by MCS, the project is being undertaken in Anguilla and MCS is working closely with all project partners to ensure that all planned project activities are implemented. Project implementation has gone well and is a reflection of not only our long-standing history and relationship with Anguilla-based partners (which dates back to the early 2000s), but also the time invested in developing the project concept and understanding the strengths, capacity, and requirements of each project partner. Clear, open, and supportive communications have continued throughout Year 1 of the project allowing for adaptive project planning and management.

Shark research in Anguilla is new. There is little baseline scientific data and most information about people's perceptions and encounters have been anecdotal. This project is allowing us to fill substantial gaps to inform elasmobranch management and to address any public concerns or fears about sharks within Anguilla's nearshore waters. Both the LEK and KAP surveys provided important insight into how people relate to sharks and, interestingly and encouragingly, even without an in-depth understanding, there is a general recognition that at risk species, regardless of any underlying fears, should be managed and protected to ensure their survival.

When we first developed this project, we were unaware of the BRUV work that would be undertaken through the Blue Abacus project. The timing of the two project, however, is fortuitous as the equipment sourced by FMRU-DNaR as part of their relationship with Blue Abacus and the training they received in BRUV assembly and deployment has been beneficial to this project. Using their BRUVS frames, we have been able to collect data that we otherwise would not (e.g. measurement which provides insight into age). We have also been able to add to FMRU-DNaR's benthic monitoring programme by identifying fish species of interest observed during our recordings which can be added to their database. The additional training that UoE has provided, especially in strategizing where to deploy, for how long to deploy, and data analysis and management has been critical, especially since data analysis and management for the Blue Abacus project has been outsourced to CEFAS. By joining up projects and on-going work programmes, we are in a position to assist one another, to fill in training and capacity needs gaps, share lessons learned, and put all of our work into a larger context.

The most significant issue that we faced during the first nine months of this project has been the global COVID-19 pandemic. Navigating travel restrictions as well as local gathering restrictions through the waves of COVID-19 infections and the establishment of new variants has been challenging. Individuals have been wary about in-person interviews, increasing opportunities for exposure, and in participating in larger gatherings and meetings. In response, we have had to adjust the way we worked. For LEK surveys, we identified and reached out to individuals before interviewing them and conducted all interviews outside. For KAP surveys, we decided that circulating the questionnaire using an on-line platform (Google Forms) which was shared on local listservs, email distribution lists, and social media (WhatsApp) was particularly effective and limited local staff exposure during a time when case numbers were rising. While we had to postpone our community meetings due to gathering size restrictions, with the easing of mandates and restrictions, we are already planning for these activities during Dr Witt's next visit to Anguilla in June and July 2022 to assist with a third round of BRUV deployment and to conduct additional in-person training in data management.

The results of all of this valuable work will feed into the development of a conservation action plan which is still on-track to be completed in Year 3 of the project.

There is nothing substantial we would have changed in Year 1.

## 8. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Not applicable – however the funding offer stated: *We have identified that the Anguilla National Trust appears on several different applications we hope to fund. Please ensure you have talked to them about their support to your project. We have asked them to explain how they would resource their commitments.*

Anguilla National Trust responded with a detailed table describing staff allocation and this statement:

## *Darwin Plus projects: Anguilla National Trust staffing*

*The Anguilla National Trust (ANT) currently has a staff complement of seven full-time and one part-time staff members. In addition, over the last seven months, we have hosted two Anguillian interns, including Marlene Horsford, a recent University of Reading Bachelor of Environmental Management graduate and Shamar Haskins assigned to us by the Government of Anguilla Youth Exposure programme which matches underemployed young people with employers.*

*We note that the ANT is currently in our final year of four other DPLUS projects (DPLUS086, 091, 097, and 098), to which existing staff are already assigned on a full- or part time basis. All of these projects will be completed by 30 March 2022, with the majority of outstanding field activities to have been completed by the end of September.*

*To ensure that we meet commitments on existing and newly-funded DPLUS projects, we propose the following staffing allocation (Table 1), with some amendments made to what was propose in the applications. This re-assigning of staff will be necessary as some individuals would be over-committed. While changes in staffing are proposed, the overall staffing budget remains the same.*

*Having already trained two interns (Marlene Horsford – already listed on projects, and Shamar Gaskins), we will employ them on these projects. As our other DPLUS projects will be completed by 30 March 2022, ANT staff (currently employed on those projects) will be reassigned to DPLUS1028, 1029, and 1030.*

*The ANT is fortunate to have an extensive network of dedicated volunteers/daily wage workers who have been assisting us with project and programme implementation for over 12 years, including most recently a mouse eradication on Sombrero Island. We have already been in discussion with several of these individuals who have expressed interest in working with the ANT.*

*In addition to individual volunteers (30 active volunteers involved in more than one ANT project or programme), we also have close working relationships with civil society organisations, including many local youth organisations (for example, Albenia Lake Hodge Comprehensive School Environmental Club and biology classes, community/village councils, National Youth Ambassador Corps) with members keen to contribute and learn. If we find that more field staff is required, the ANT will source additional personnel, using our operational funds to hire daily workers as necessary.*

*In order to ensure that the ANT can provide the required necessary support activities across the projects will be closely coordinated and monitored. Regular meetings (or check-ins via e-mail) with lead partners and weekly Monday morning in-house staff meetings to plan project activities and monitor progress will be held.*

## **9. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere**

Not applicable – describe minor covid related delays described above, this project is being implemented as scheduled with currently no perceived future obstacles.

## **10. Sustainability and legacy**

In this first year the project team have promoted the project as discussed, as well as having conducted the LEK and KAP study, all of which has raised the profile of the project within certain stakeholder groups, including local fishing, diving and catering communities. We anticipate that this outreach will benefit the CVM aspects of the project, with some participants having been involved in the earlier surveys, and when engagement will require more focus through one-to-one filmed interviews, island-wide screenings and deliberative workshops. The current legislation should provide for protection of any shark and ray species identified through the BRUV work and considered endangered. However, legislation alone is not enough to ensure ecological sustainability.

We also anticipate that the project's CVM process will contribute significantly to the project legacy by actively engaging community groups in focussed discussions around fishery management, specifically shark and ray fishing, and that those communities already with vested interests in these resources will feel inspired to maintain their engagement as a result of the outcomes of the process.

## 11. Darwin identity

The Darwin Plus initiative has been mentioned in all publicity surrounding this project as the project funder including the press release and social media posts (e.g. see <https://bit.ly/3wC3Bd1> and <https://bit.ly/3wThYtJ>). Darwin Plus has funded several projects in Anguilla and therefore Darwin is known amongst Government and conservation stakeholders in Anguilla, as well as some fishing stakeholders.

## 12. Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery

The only significant impact on this project related to Covid-19 was the slight delay in conducting the Community Voice Method social science component of this study. We have had to push this into Q1Y2. This, however, will not affect overall project activities, outputs, or outcomes.

See above for a description of lessons learned from operating during the pandemic.

## 13. Safeguarding

Please tick this box if any safeguarding violations have occurred during this financial year.

MCS, as lead organisation, has comprehensive policies committed to safeguarding, including zero-tolerance on bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and protection of whistle-blowers, as well as codes of conduct that clearly establish expectations of staff behaviour.

While there have been no safeguarding violations with regards to the project, any issues arising from this project going forward will be handled initially by our Designated Safeguarding Officers and MCS's Dr Chris Tuckett as Director of Programmes and following our procedures. Where necessary, SMT will liaise with the governing bodies of partner organisations to address and resolve any concerns. In addition, MCS online safeguarding and E&D training modules will be made available to partner organisations.

#### 14. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022)

Project spend (indicative) in this financial year	2021/22 D+ Grant (£)	2021/22 Total actual D+ Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs	████████	████████	██████	Exchange rate fluctuation
Consultancy costs	██████	██████	██████	
Overhead Costs	████████	████████	██████	
Travel and subsistence	████████	████████	██████	Bid over-estimated Yr. 1 T&S
Operating Costs	████████	████████	██████	Bid over-estimated Yr 1 operating costs
Capital items	████████	████████	██████	Dive gear not purchased
Others (Please specify)	████████	████████	██████	Slight underspend
<b>TOTAL</b>	████████	████████		

#### 15. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

Not applicable

## Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	Y
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk">Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	Y
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk">Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	NA
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Y
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	NA
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Y
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Y
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	