



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

Project reference	DPLUS137
Project title	Transforming Anguilla's Marine Parks: institutionalising sustainable collaborative management solutions
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Anguilla
Lead organisation	Fisheries and Marine Resources Unit-Department of Natural Resources (FMRU-DNR)
Partner(s)	Anguilla National Trust (ANT)
Project leader	Ms Kafi Gumbs (co-lead) Ms Farah Mukhida (co-lead)
Report date and number (e.g. HRY1)	HRY1
Project website/blog/social media	

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).

Output 1. Marine park values (ecological, socio-economic) are established to inform sustainable management frameworks and to monitor and evaluate management impacts

Activity 1.1 Conduct marine ecosystem assessments (species, habitat) within Anguilla's six marine parks using FMRU-DNR's Anguilla Monitoring Programme protocols and compare to 2006 baseline assessments

Between 13 and 17 September, benthic assessments at Shoal Bay-Island Harbour Marine Park, Sandy Island, and Little Bay have been completed, following the FMRU's Anguilla Marine Monitoring Programme protocols. A different approach was used at Sombrero Island Nature Reserve Marine Park due to the depth of the water, sea conditions, and safety concerns. For this Marine Park, a combination of underwater surveys was conducted using SCUBA as well as towed underwater video cameras were towed. Results of all surveys are now being analysed. Surveys at Dog Island and Prickly Pear Marine Parks will be completed before the end of March 2021.

Activity 1.2 Conduct vessel and visitor carrying capacity study using visitor questionnaires, monitoring visitor boat numbers, and assessing critical factors

We are currently developing visitor questionnaires to determine perceptions regarding perceived carrying capacities for Shoal Bay-Island Harbour Marine Park, Little Bay Marine Park, and Sandy Island Marine Park. These sites represent the marine parks that are actively and routinely visited by charter boats (from Anguilla and elsewhere). The results of the carrying capacity surveys will inform where and how many moorings should be installed within the Marine Park boundaries. The number of moorings has already been established for the Prickly Pear cays (through DPLUS060) and therefore this assessment is not necessary for that site.

The questionnaires and assessments will be completed during the tourism high season which is scheduled to begin in November 2021, when more boats are on the water and more visitors are on-island. We note, however, that the questionnaire will be conducted with both visitors to as well as residents of Anguilla who spend time at the marine parks.

Activity 1.3 Conduct socio-economic assessments to inform management plans and the sustainable financing mechanism

We are currently developing a willingness to pay questionnaire which will form part of the socio-economic assessment. The questionnaire will outline various site-relevant/specific activities with respondents being asked to identify the amount that they would be willing to engage in those activities. Willingness to pay surveys will focus on Shoal Bay-Island Harbour Marine Park, Little Bay Marine Park, Sandy Island Marine Park, and Prickly Pear Marine Park (as Dog Island Marine Park and Sombrero Island Nature Reserve Marine Park receive few visitors).

Similar to the carrying capacity surveys, the willingness to pay questionnaire is scheduled for this coming November when the tourism high season will begin.

A socio-economic assessment of Sombrero Island Nature Reserve Marine Park has been completed.

Output 2. Effective and sustainable co-management structures and tools are in place for the integrated management of Anguilla's marine parks

Activity 2.2 Review management plans for Prickly Pear Marine Park, Little Bay Marine Park, Sombrero Island Marine Park Nature Reserve

The Prickly Pear Marine Park management plan was reviewed. The Minister responsible for natural resources was contacted about moving the management plan through the Government of Anguilla Executive Council for formal endorsement. A follow-up meeting with the Minister will be held and a request will be made for the Committee to meet with Executive Council to formally present the management plan.

The Little Bay Marine Park management plan was reviewed and an implementation schedule was established. The plan is now being finalised as a document that can be disseminated to the public and the Government of Anguilla (for formal endorsement).

The Sombrero Island Nature Reserve Marine Park management plan is still in development with the Marine Park Management Planning Committee agreeing that a phased approach to the site's management will likely be required, with management interventions being applied and monitored on the land (Sombrero Island) but additional research being conducted to assess its value as a Marine Park and, if necessary, its boundaries. At the moment, while the Regulations of the Marine Park Act indicate that the waters and the island itself should be protected, the boundaries identified within the legislation do not actually include any land. The boundaries clearly need to change but there is no consensus on what those boundaries should be. All Management Planning Committee members, however, agree that additional research is required and that the decision on the site's boundaries should be evidence-based.

Since the beginning of the project, the Marine Park Management Planning Committee has met five times.

Activity 2.9 Enforcement Marine Park legislation and regulations

Marine Park enforcement activities have been conducted at Little Bay Marine Park, Prickly Pear Cays Marine Park, Dog Island Marine Park, and Sombrero Island Nature Reserve Marine Park. No major marine park regulations infractions have so far been recorded or reported.

Output 3. National capacity to plan, manage, and monitor marine parks is raised, supported by enhanced technical skills and greater public awareness and cooperation

Activity 3.1 FMRU-DNR, ANT staff and other participating nationals complete self-assessment competencies questionnaires to identify training needs

Self-assessment competencies questionnaires were completed by FMRU and ANT. The results of those questionnaires are currently being assessed to inform agency-specific and joint agency training development.

Activity 3.2 Develop and implement an advocacy and public awareness campaign

A public awareness campaign strategy was developed. The strategy outlines activities that take advantage of all media types (visual, radio, print, social) as well as face-to-face engagement opportunities.

Activity 3.4 Publicise and report on project progress and results through national and international media

Since launching this project, we have disseminated one press release announcing the funding award (July 2021).

We have partnered with Anguilla-based not-for-profit organisation Sustainable Anguilla (July 2021) during which 28 young people were taken on site visits to two of Anguilla's marine parks (Dog Island and Prickly Pear) during which information about the role and value of Anguilla's marine parks as well as the need to protect and enhance the species and habitats on which those species depend.

A presentation about Anguilla's marine parks and this project was conducted as a part of Fauna & Flora's Marine Working Group's session *Marine conservation in the Eastern Caribbean: progress and challenges* (September 2021, 25 attendees).

The Project Steering Committee have met twice since the launch of the project.

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.

No notable problems or unexpected developments have been encountered over the last three months.

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.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the Anguilla tourism industry to not be as active as it usually is. Visitor numbers are not as high and while the high season (November 2021-January 2022) should still see visitors, not as many as other years is expected. While this may affect the number of people that we may be able to approach to complete carrying capacity and willingness to pay surveys, there should be enough visitors on island and we should be able to complete the work on schedule. We are also currently discussing survey dissemination options and the best mechanisms to reach as many visitors as possible with the Department of Statistics.

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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance 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?

There are no other issues that we would like to raise.

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**