

Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects

Half Year Report

(due 31st October 2021)

Project reference	DPLUS150
Project title	Ecosystem sensitivity and climate vulnerability for MSP in the BVI
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	BVI
Lead organisation	NOC
Partner(s)	Joint Nature Conservation Committee Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (BVI Gov)
Project leader	James Strong
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	None

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).

The award letter was issued by the Darwin Initiative at the end of July. As the Darwin Initiative are a new funder for NOC, due diligence delayed acceptance of the award until early September. Additional contractual arrangements with our partners (JNCC) and subcontractors (Wood Plc) have further delayed the start of the project. Despite this, significant progress has been made within the project. Important events have included:

- Kick-off meeting for all partners (20th August)
- Shortlisting, but not finalisation, of the 1) human activities and 2) agreed structure for the 'Pressures/ Activities matrix' for BVI (1.1 and 1.3)
- Initial literature search on cumulative impact assessment tools suitable for the BVI (3.1)
- Two lead-partner meetings to resolve specific issues within 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.

The delay in receiving the award letter and the prolonged project setup timescale within NOC has delayed the real start of the project by between 2-3 months. This was further compounded by the difficulties of generating partner agreements for all within the project. However, these issues are now resolved and as initial setup delays, will not reoccur again within the project.

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 project leader has just returned from a bout of fieldwork in the Caribbean for another project. The restrictions imposed by a state of emergency within Antigua (curfews etc.), a lack of accommodation, places to eat, hire cars and vessels available for work at sea made the fieldwork extremely challenging. Based on these experiences, the project lead will not be recommending in-country visits to partners within the next 3 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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance NA

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?

This report only covers a matter of 2-3 weeks of actual work on the project. Despite this, we are confident that we will be able to meet the deadlines within the log frame.

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**