

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2009)

Project Ref. No.	EIDP023
Project Title	Enabling the people of Tristan da Cunha to implement the CBD in the Marine Environment
Country(ies)	UK, Tristan da Cunha, South Africa
UK Organisation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Collaborator(s)	Tristan da Cunha Conservation Department and the University of Cape Town
Project Leader	<i>Sarah Sanders/Clare Stringer</i>
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Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>Half yearly report 3</i>
Project website	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

Following the postponement of our final visit to Tristan, originally scheduled for January-March 2009, because of unforeseen events on Tristan (destruction of the fish factory, and building work on the harbour), progress on plans and outputs has continued only intermittently because the contractor has needed to pursue other work. However, the project is on track to complete the agreed workplans and outputs by April 2010.

Comments on the annual report were addressed with the reviewer in May/June 2009. Plans for the dive training for Tristanians were amended in discussion with Darwin, and their training course has commenced in Cape Town. Preparations are in hand for the next visit to Tristan in 2010, when the main tasks will be training in marine recording for the Darwin team, including monitoring for introduced species at the rig site and elsewhere.

1. Knowledge of the marine environment on Tristan is enhanced

- Specimens of additional important groups of organisms (sponges, algae) from the diving surveys are being identified by expert taxonomists.
- A paper by Dr Horia Galea on the hydroids of Tristan has been submitted for publication. A collection of his identified specimens will be lodged in the Natural History Museum, London.
- A poster on the possible effects of introduced mussels on the Tristan Islands has been produced as one of a series on the effects of 'aliens'.
- Reports on the subtidal surveys of Nightingale and Inaccessible islands are being finalised, and will include the results of identifications by experts. Information from all sources is being compiled into a summary report.

2. Technical capacity to survey the marine environment is strengthened on Tristan

- Three Darwin team members are currently being trained to PADI Open Water standard in Cape Town
- A Seasearch Observer course has been arranged for The Tristan Conservation Officer

