

# DPLR1\1079

Darwin Plus Local - Final Report (1)

Officer: Jessica Magnus

## Section 1 - Darwin Plus Local Project Information (Essential)

### Project Reference Number

DPL00003

### Q1. Project Title

No Response

### Overseas Territory(ies)

Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI)

### Lead Organisation or Individual

Department of Environment & Coastal Resources

### Partner Organisation(s)

Department of Education, Ministry of Education, Turks and Caicos Islands

### Value of Darwin Plus Local Grant Award

£16,500.00

### Project Start Date

01 April 2023

### Project End Date

31 March 2024

### Project Leader Name

Amy Avenant

### Project Website/Twitter/Blog etc.

www.gov.tc/decr

### Report Author(s)

Amy Avenant

### Report Date

16 April 2024

### Project Summary

No Response

### Project Outcomes

Checked	<b>Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;</b>
Checked	<b>Climate Change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;</b>
Checked	<b>Environmental quality: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;</b>
Checked	<b>Capability and capacity building: enhancing the capacity within OTs, including through community engagement and awareness, to support the environment in the short- and long-term.</b>

## Section 2 - Project Outcomes (Essential)

On a scale of 1 (high – outcome substantially exceeded ) to 5 (low – outcome substantially did not meet expectation ), how successful do you think your project has been?

2 - Outcome moderately exceeded

### Project outcomes and justification for rating above

We have seen an increased concern, by schools, for the state of the environment at large - but most importantly, schools that have participated have shown a marked improvement in engagement with their school's natural environment. As this is the first year of the project, we had been pragmatic about our expectations, and after assessment (which as of end April are still being undertaken) we are seeing an encouraging change in attitude, awareness and concern by students and teachers alike.

Success indicators have been met. Schools have either been assessed or still undergoing assessment and thus far all schools have verified various levels of achievement of the above KPIs through record-keeping of the following:

- Sufficient documentation (records, images, videos, etc.): Progress has regularly been shared via a dedicated group chat, as well as through reporting of the chosen theme's progression at each school.
- Longevity (the program is one of continual reduction of the schools' environmental impact): Schools are excited to continue with their projects and more schools have expressed interest in signing for the 2024/2025 school year.
- Saturation (number of students impacted by the program): We had a total of 15 schools sign up to the program, which is estimated to impact approximately 5,500 students Territory-wide.

We have thus seen an improvement in all four outcomes, namely:

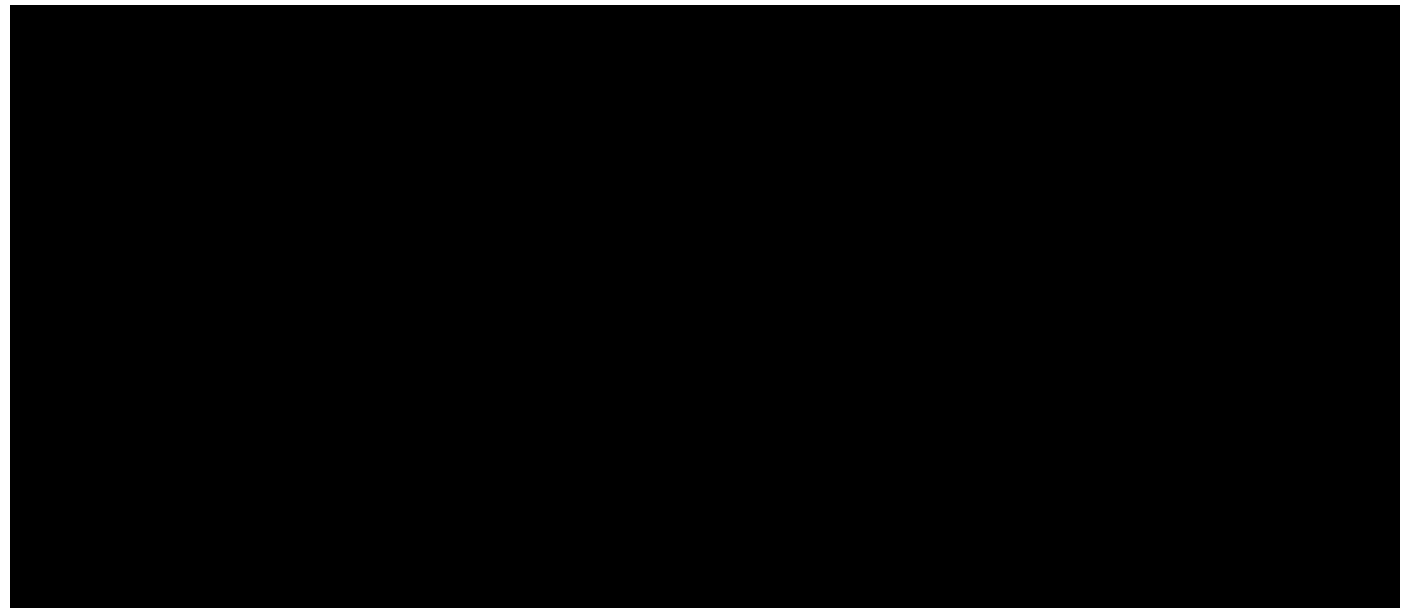
Biodiversity: Improvement of school grounds through planting of vegetation; efforts to encourage the return of native birds, insects and reptiles.

Climate Change: A greater understanding of fossil fuel as a source of energy, and its impacts - improved energy conservation and waste reduction.

Environmental Quality: Cleaner school grounds through waste management action and awareness campaigns as designed by participating schools.

Capability & Capacity building: Through regular engagement with the schools, specialists were able to impart their knowledge with teachers and students and we have witnessed a greater confidence in the implementation of school and community engagement on their chosen themes.

### Supporting Evidence - file(s) upload



### Supporting Evidence - links to published document/online materials



Please reach out to us should there be difficulty accessing this information.

### Project Challenges

Initially students did not feel confident to take the lead on their projects. We tackled this by giving each school personal attention through focused visits to allow for a comprehensive Q&A and understanding of their goals. Funds for starting projects were also an unexpected challenge, but through the support of DPL we were able to provide each school with a small grant to kick-start their projects.

A minority of schools found it challenging to engage the entire student body, but we encouraged the 'green ambassadors' to continue and rally the support of the faculty. This was well received, but not always completely successful as at some schools it seemed to be challenging to garner ownership. Having said that, as the project is continuous, we are excited to see improvement and further buy-in, in year two.

We would have liked to see all schools across the Islands participate, but only had sign-up of 50%. We believe that as year 1 of the project comes to a close, and success of the project is publicized, that more schools will show interest in participating.

### Lessons Learned

i) Collaboration with the Dept. of Education was critical on this project. The DOE were able to successfully rally, engage and support schools as well as garner support for support of the project, by schools. The DECR have access to knowledgeable individuals and experts on each of the topics and together we were able to pool human resources to support students in the best possible way.

ii) Fortunately we did not experience any major challenges. We would have liked a greater participation, but believe that consistency of the program is imperative to its continued success.

iii) We would hold the private sector partners to account. At the inception of the program we solicited the expertise of the private sector, applicable to each theme, however they waived on their support. Much of the final part of the project (assessment phase) has fallen squarely on the shoulders of the DOE and the DECR.

iv) Engage and brief all stakeholders regularly and consistently. This indicates that the project is important and serious. Furthermore, a grant to get schools going on their projects is essentially as it sets an even playing field, and gives the school some freedom to think creatively in solving the challenges that they face under their chosen theme.

## Section 3 - Project Finance (Essential)

### Project Expenditure

Project Spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual Darwin Plus Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
<b>Staff Costs</b>				
<b>Consultancy Costs</b>				
<b>Overhead Costs</b>				
<b>Travel and Subsistence</b>				
<b>Operating Costs</b>				
<b>Capital Items</b>				
<b>Others</b>				
<b>Total</b>	16,500.00	14,747.00	1,753	

### Please provide a short narrative summary on project finances.

As this was the first year of the project, we operated on a well-researched estimate of what may be required in terms of expenditure. As such, we are pleased to have had a small amount in surplus that we will put towards a grant for the most outstanding school project (after the assessment).

Instead of purchasing individual items for each school, it was more economical for schools to receive a grant in the form of a gift card to a general hardware store, to purchase required equipment. This left sufficient funding for the

printing and distribution of a comprehensive guidebook that will assist faculty for years to come, concerning the project. We also were able to purchase prizes and flags to be issued to participating schools to indicate that they are a 'green school'.

## Section 4 - Contribution of Project to Darwin Plus Programme Objectives

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Please select up to **one** indicator that applies within **each group/indicator list (A, B, C, D)** and report your results for that indicator in the text box underneath. If you do not have relevant results to report for any of the indicators in a particular group, you can leave them blank.

Please also submit some form of evidence (above) to demonstrate any results you list below, where possible.

### Group A: Capability and Capacity - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-A01: Number of people from key national and local stakeholder groups completing structured and relevant training.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-A02: Number of secondments or placements completed by individuals of key local and national stakeholders.</b>
Checked	<b>DPLUS-A03: Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.</b>
Checked	<b>DPLUS-A04: Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-A05: Number of trainers trained reporting to have delivered further training by the end of the project.</b>

### Group A Indicator Results

15 schools from across the islands established green projects under one of four environmental themes.

### Group B: Policies, Practices and Management- Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-B01: Number of new/improved habitat management plans available and endorsed.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-B02: Number of new/improved species management plans available and endorsed.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-B03: Number of new/improved community management plans available and endorsed.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-B04: Number of new/improved sustainable enterprises/ community benefits management plans available and endorsed.</b>
Checked	<b>DPLUS-B05: Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-B06: Number of Local Stakeholders and Local Communities (people) with strengthened (recognised/clarified) tenure and/or rights.</b>

### Group B Indicator Results

Approximately 5,500 school students and faculty around the Territory have been empowered to take action for their local environment. A key KPI for the project is to gauge community involvement outside of the schools (yet to be assessed).

### Group C: Evidence and Best Practices - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Checked	<b>DPLUS-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-C05: Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.</b>

### Group C Indicator Results

Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed: 01

### Group D: Sustainable Benefits to People, Biodiversity and Climate - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-D01 Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.</b>
Checked	<b>DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.</b>

### Group D Indicator Results

Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved: approx. 5,500

## Section 5 - Project Partnerships, Wider Impacts and Contributions

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### Project Partnerships

Project leads on this were TCI Government Departments: Department of Environment & Coastal Resources (DECR) and the Department of Education (DOE).

#### Role of DECR:

- Lead on themes: Biodiversity, Water Conservation
- Provide capacity building and access to information to schools under these themes
- Secure funding
- Develop Greening our Schools Handbook
- Engage private sector to assist with knowledge sharing
- Assist with procurement of grant vouchers and prizes
- Visit schools to promote the initiative
- Visit schools to undertake mid-year progress assessments
- Visit schools to undertake final assessments

#### Role of DOE:

- Coordinate leads for themes Electricity Conservation, Waste Management
- Provide access to these leads for capacity building and access to information to schools
- Review and edit Greening our Schools Handbook
- Engage private sector to assist with knowledge sharing
- Assist with procurement of grant vouchers and prizes

- Arrange school visits and visit schools to promote initiative
- Collate progress information as and when supplied by the schools
- Coordinate assessment visits with DECR and other (informal) partners
- Visit schools to undertake mid-year progress assessments
- Visit schools to undertake final assessments

The DOE and the DECR worked effectively together to achieve what was proposed. The private sector were unfortunately not as supportive in terms of time and expertise as was hoped, but we believe that as the project gains traction so will the support of the wider community.

## Wider Impacts and Decision Making

It has highlighted the need for comprehensive curriculum development as it pertains to the Environment and environmental impacts and issues being faced locally and globally. Although concrete changes are yet to be made, we do hope to mandate the initiative and require every school to have a Greening our Schools community project.

## Sustainability and Legacy

Although funding has closed, this project will continue on into the next school year, with existing and new schools participating in the initiative. We hope to secure more funding, as Greening our Schools gains traction across all the islands.

## Section 6 - Communications & Publicity

### Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements

GREENING OUR SCHOOLS – Let's Think Green!  
 Amy Avenant, DECR Environmental Outreach Coordinator  
 Elisann Delancy, Department of Education Curriculum Development Officer

Climate Change. These two words cause much anxiety for today's global population, particularly our youth. This generation is the most informed yet, with access to technology like none before them. This means they are aware of global affairs and concerns, particularly climate change's impact on local and international communities. However, providing hope for our young people in the face of an imminent global environmental disaster is often challenging. As 2050 (the predicted tipping of the environmental scales) hurtles towards us, and we are faced with irreparable damage to our natural environment, the onus is on us – the adults – to find a solution to global warming and climate change; and quickly.

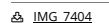
One such way is involving our young people in being part of the solutions instead of perpetuating the problem! The Department of Education (DoE) recognised the importance of fostering a 'green' culture, through youth engagement, as our island communities are some of the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As a result, the Department's Curriculum Development Unit has partnered with the DECR's Outreach and Education Unit to 'green' school campuses nationwide through the 'Greening Our Schools' Programme.

The programme is an exciting and innovative initiative, encouraging sustainable approaches and environmental management on school campuses. It requires schools to develop practical and creative ways to reduce their carbon footprint, increase or conserve biodiversity and sustainably use their natural resources. In addition, the program aims to develop energy and environmentally literate citizens through service projects, leadership and activism. Greening Our Schools addresses four 'problem' areas, namely, waste management; electricity conservation; water conservation; and biodiversity, aiming to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of a school – which hopefully will rub off onto their community, and carry right through to adulthood!

Introducing critical-thinking skills and applying creative and scientific thinking will foster ingenuity and green consciousness among the generation who may require it the most! Supported by the Turks and Caicos National Trust's charismatic mascot, Rocky the Iguana, the Departments have visited schools, educating teachers and students alike about their role in the fight against climate change, and the benefits of being awarded the coveted 'Green Ribbon' award bestowed upon the school with the most outstanding performance-enhancing sustainability practices.

### Photo, video or graphic to be used for publicity and communications.

Please upload at least one relevant and engaging image, video or graphic that you consent to be used alongside the above text in Defra, JNCC or NIRAS communications material.

 IMG 7404  
 29/04/2024  
 16:57:40  
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 29/04/2024  
 16:57:40  
 jpg 312.09 KB

### Photo, video, and/or graphic captions and credits.

IMG 7404: Greening Our Schools Mascot 'Rocky the Iguana' visits Wesley Methodist School on Providenciales to get students excited about thinking green!

8322f6e3: Elisann Delancy, Department of Education (L), Rocky the Iguana (C), Amy Avenant, Department of Environment & Coastal Resources (R)

### I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat, Administrator, and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Yes, I agree for the BCFs Secretariat and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Please list any accounts that you would like tagged in online posts here. This can include project pages, partners' pages or individuals' accounts for any of the following platforms: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

Instagram: @DECR\_TCI ; @TCNationalTrust\_ ; @MinistryofTourismTCI

Facebook: @DECR TCI

## Section 7 - Darwin Plus Contacts

Please tick here to confirm that you have read and acknowledge the BCF's Privacy Notice on how contact details will be used and stored and that you have sought agreement from anyone that you are sharing personal details with us on their behalf.

I confirm I have read the Privacy Notice and have consent to share the following contact details

### Project Contact Details

Project Contact Name	Amy Avenant
Role within Darwin Plus Project	Project Lead
Email	[REDACTED]
Phone	[REDACTED]
Do you need further sections to provide additional contact details?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No