

# DPLR1\1081

Darwin Plus Local - Final Report (1)

Officer: Linzi Ogden

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

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### Project Reference Number

DPL00035

### Q1. Project Title

*No Response*

### Overseas Territory(ies)

St Helena, Ascension, and Tristan de Cunha

### Lead Organisation or Individual

Agriculture Department Tristan da Cunha

### Partner Organisation(s)

N/A

### Value of Darwin Plus Local Grant Award

£49,917.60

### Project Start Date

17 April 2023

### Project End Date

29 March 2024

### Project Leader Name

Mr Neil Swain (Head of Agriculture Department)

### Project Website/Twitter/Blog etc.

*No Response*

### Report Author(s)

## Report Date

29 July 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>
Unchecked	<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

#### i) Actual Changes Achieved

The Grass Restoration Project has led to substantial improvements in the quality and usability of grassland on Tristan da Cunha. The removal of rocks has significantly increased the area available for grazing, which has had a direct positive impact on the livestock. The cleared land now offers more space and safer conditions for cattle and sheep, reducing the risk of injury and improving overall access to forage.

One of the most visible changes is the initial growth of grass in areas that were reseeded. Despite facing adverse weather conditions, particularly during the winter months, the project has seen early signs of grass germination, indicating successful seeding efforts. The strategic disposal of rocks into gullies has also contributed to preventing soil erosion, promoting sustainable land management.

Overall, the project has enhanced the visual appearance of the grasslands, making them cleaner and more accessible. This not only benefits the livestock but also contributes to the broader environmental health of the region by employing environmentally friendly methods for clearing and restoring the land.

## ii) Achievement of Original Objectives and Outcomes

The project has successfully met its primary objectives. These include enhancing grassland quality, improving livestock grazing, and promoting sustainable land management.

### 1. Enhance Grassland Quality:

o Objective Met: Rocks were successfully removed, increasing the grazing area. Grass seeds were planted in the cleared areas, and despite the harsh winter conditions, initial growth was observed. This indicates successful enhancement of grassland quality.

### 2. Improve Livestock Grazing:

o Objective Met: The increased grazing space and safer, clearer land has directly benefited livestock. Cattle and sheep now have more accessible forage, which supports better grazing conditions and potentially improves the health and productivity of the animals.


### 3. Sustainable Land Management:


o Objective Met: The project used environmentally friendly methods for rock removal and disposed of rocks in a way that prevents future erosion. This approach ensures that the land management practices are sustainable and contribute to the long-term health of the grasslands.


## Supporting Evidence - file(s) upload

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 [Grass Restoration Project](#)

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 docx 4.55 MB

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

The above document shows progress with before and after photos of the grass restoration project, as well as details on how the teams were allocated to ensure efficient results. Since the project has now ended, the agriculture department has adapted to new responsibilities, allowing for a more flexible and efficient allocation of resources and ongoing progress to increase grazing areas.

## Project Challenges

The project encountered both anticipated and unexpected challenges. The adverse weather and the need to balance other agricultural duties were expected somewhat anticipated, while the project leader's medical leave was an unexpected issue. In response to these problems, the project team demonstrated adaptability and resilience:

- They maximised productivity during favourable weather conditions.
- Prioritised essential activities when the team was incomplete
- Balanced project activities with other agricultural duties through careful scheduling.
- Ensured continuity by delegating supervision to the Deputy Head during the project leader's absence.

These actions ensured that despite the challenges, the project continued to make progress and achieved its primary objectives. The adaptability and strategic planning of the team were crucial in overcoming these obstacles and ensuring the success of the Grass Restoration Project.

## Lessons Learned

### i) What Worked Well

#### Rock Removal and Disposal:

Success: Using a Tele-Handler with a bucket, along with manual extraction, was effective.

Reason: This approach efficiently removed both large and small rocks, increasing cleared grazing land.

**Team Adaptability:**

Success: The team adapted well to challenges like adverse weather and the project leader’s medical leave.  
Reason: Flexible scheduling and task prioritisation allowed continued progress despite obstacles.

ii) What Did Not Work Well

**Winter Conditions Slowing Germination:**

Issue: Harsh winter weather slowed grass seed germination.  
Reason: The timing of seeding did not fully account for severe local winter conditions.

**Incomplete Team and Balancing Responsibilities:**

Issue: Occasional team shortages and balancing other agricultural duties led to pauses.  
Reason: Limited manpower and competing responsibilities affected project continuity and pace. Additionally, a lack of dedicated administrative support increased the burden on the project team but soon was resolved.

iii) What We Would Do Differently

**Optimize Seeding Schedule:** Plan seeding to avoid harsh winter months for better germination rates.

**Implement Contingency Plans:** Develop plans to manage key personnel absences, ensuring continuity and minimizing disruptions.

**Diversify Grass Seed Varieties:** Experiment with different seed varieties more resilient to local conditions for better germination success.

iv) Recommendations to Others Doing Similar Projects

**Thorough Planning and Flexibility:** Create a detailed project plan with flexibility for unexpected challenges, like adverse weather or other departmental duties.

**Documentation and Reporting:** Regularly document progress and challenges to inform future phases and share lessons learned with other projects.

## Section 3 - Project Finance (Essential)

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### 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>				

Overhead Costs			
Travel and Subsistence			
Operating Costs			
Capital Items			
Others			
<b>Total</b>	49,917.60	46,605.20	-

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

i) Any difference between the planned and actual expenses and reason(s) for this.

Yes, there was a difference between the planned and actual expenses. During the project, some workers were absent due to personal reasons, which required hiring additional personnel to fill their positions. Additionally, some staff left the department, and new employees were hired. Initially, financial assistance support was not indicated, but later a member of the finance team was recruited to help out.

ii) If co-financing was secured for the project, what was this spent on.

Co-financing was secured from the Tristan da Cunha government, which agreed to cover 50% of the fuel costs.

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

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>
Checked	<b>DPLUS-A02: Number of secondments or placements completed by individuals of key local and national stakeholders.</b>
Unchecked	<b>DPLUS-A03: Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.</b>
Unchecked	<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

4 people from local stakeholder groups completed structured and relevant training.

## 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>
Unchecked	<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

N/A

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

Unchecked **DPLUS-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-C05: Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.**

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## Group C Indicator Results

N/A

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

Checked **DPLUS-D01 Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.**

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Unchecked **DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.**

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## Group D Indicator Results

Approximately 2 hectares of grazing land has been cleared as a result of this project.

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

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### Project Partnerships

N/A

### Wider Impacts and Decision Making

N/A

### Sustainability and Legacy

N/A

## Section 6 - Communications & Publicity

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## Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements


N/A


### 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.

 [Grass Restoration](#)

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

Team clearing stone from one of the sites increasing grassland for livestock - Tristan da Cunha

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

No, I have no project photos for reasons of sensitivity.

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.

N/A

## 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

Mr Neil Swain

Role within Darwin Plus Project

Project Leader

Email

Phone

Do you need further sections to provide additional contact details?

No