

DPLR3\1054

Darwin Plus Local - Final Report (1)

Officer: Linzi Ogden

Section 1 - Darwin Plus Local Project Information (Essential)

Project Reference Number

DPL00077

Project Title

No Response

Overseas Territory(ies)

☒ Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI)

Lead Organisation or Individual

Turks and Caicos Reef Fund

Partner Organisation(s)

N/A

Value of Darwin Plus Local Grant Award

£43,000.00

Project Start Date

01 April 2024

Project End Date

31 March 2025

Project Leader Name

Alizee Zimmermann

Project Website/Twitter/Blog etc.

No Response

Report Author(s)

Report Date

29 July 2025

Project Summary

No Response

Project Outcomes

Unchecked	Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
Unchecked	Climate Change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;
Unchecked	Environmental quality: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
Checked	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.

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?

⦿ 3 - Outcome met expectation

Project outcomes and justification for rating above

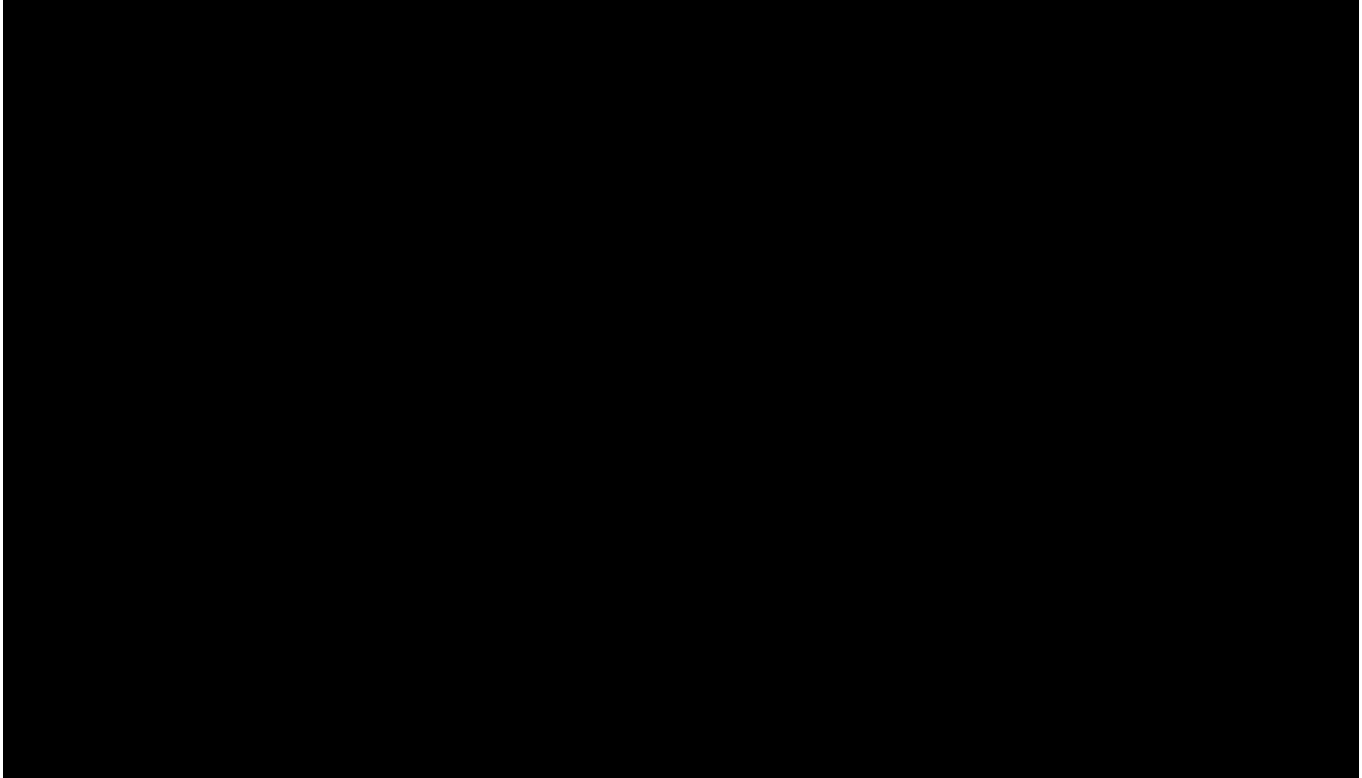
The project successfully restored the Reefsaver vessel, including full engine repair, hull repair, and anti-slip deck painting as well as a full paint job and new name decals. The Reefsaver went from a vessel with constant engine problems, billowing smoke when starting up and paint that was chipping into the ocean to a clean-starting, well-oiled machine that we are proud to use in our conservation work. The vessel is completely changed and ready to continue protecting and preserving the marine environment of the islands.

This project achieved the objectives it set out to on schedule and within budget. Thanks to the renovations we now have a fully functional and efficient working vessel. This has significantly increased the Turks and Caicos Reef Fund's operational capacity to maintain moorings and we have been visiting each geographical site once a week for preventative rather than reactive maintenance. Having a reliable vessel has also helped our capacity to respond to coral disease outbreaks and other marine disturbances. Since the boat's renovation we have responded to several disturbances including anchor strikes and rescued and relocated hundreds of corals using the Reefsaver. We have conducted coral nursery maintenance more regularly and have already increased our

nursery with a couple extra ladders.

All in all we are grateful for the project and can confirm that we were able to complete the work set out in our application. The Reefsaver will hopefully continue to service our conservation work for years to come.

Supporting Evidence - file(s) upload



Supporting Evidence - links to published document/online materials

You can view the PowerPoint slideshow of pictures from during the renovation and after by clicking this Google Drive link:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1RBuDnRcKYpjCiS16_Mtff9lww9PblZmr/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117847700813872702400&rtpof=true&sd=true

There are several videos in the powerpoint showing some of the coral rescue we did using the renovated boat.

Project Challenges

Key challenges included delays in sourcing replacement parts for the engine and delays in shipping as well as weather-related delays in painting and sealing the hull. We hired the only Yanmar dealer and mechanics on island to do the engine work and we were somewhat restricted by their capacity as well as the timing between getting the hull repair and then engine overhaul. Managing the mechanics working on the engine and the labourers working on the hull was challenging but they did a fantastic job in the end. To meet the challenges of getting coordinated efforts from multiple workers on a Caribbean island, we stayed in constant communication and spent a lot of time following up and making sure messages were relayed between the different workers. Even then we found out things were happening that we didn't know, like the engine being replaced before the engine hatch had a chance to be thoroughly cleaned out. More on that below in the Lessons Learned section.

Lessons Learned

The key lessons learned were with regards to procurement and shipping. We learned that getting specific engine components for an older engine can be difficult and procurement should begin as early as possible. Building in contingency time for weather proved necessary as well since we had to have the body of the boat completed before the engine would be reinstalled.

We also learned that working with multiple companies for labour meant that we needed to spend more time making sure that communication was happening and timelines were being met. For example, after the hull work and paint job were done, the mechanics loaded the engine back into the engine hatch without getting the entire hatch pressure washed and cleaned. Had we known the paint job was done and we could access the vessel we would have made sure to have the hatch fully cleaned out before the rebuilt engine was installed. This was a frustrating turn of events as it meant that there were old oil stains in the bottom of the hatch with our newly rebuilt engine and we wanted a fresh slate so that we could see if and when any issues popped up in the future.

A recommendation to others doing similar projects would be to micro-manage more. When hiring multiple skilled workers to do jobs that come together to produce your final vision, it's important to check in and make sure that things are going right each step of the way.

Section 3 - Project Finance (Essential)

Project Expenditure

Project Spend (indicative)	Total Grant (£)	Total actual Darwin Plus Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff Costs				
Consultancy Costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and Subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital Items				

Others			
Total	43,000.00	41,276.57	-4.01%

Please provide a short narrative summary on project finances.

The grant award of £43,000 was fully expended on engine replacement, hull repair, safety equipment, and deck improvements. Variances were due to cost reductions in labour and consultancy from our supporters as well as exchange rate fluctuations, but these did not impact deliverables. No additional co-financing was secured.

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

Group A Indicator Results

The renovation of the Reefsaver has given TC Reef Fund the ability to get back on the water, safely and get our work done. Other organizations and researchers benefit as well as we work with numerous other local stakeholders including our government agency by installing moorings in the National Parks.

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

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

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.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.
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.

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.
Unchecked	DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.
Unchecked	DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.

Group D Indicator Results

Although not a specific number, having the vessel operational means that we can access all 5 of the different mooring areas spanning over 30 miles of dive sites. Each week we maintain a different area so that all 5 geographic areas have been visited every 5 weeks.

Section 5 - Project Partnerships, Wider Impacts and Contributions

Project Partnerships

The project was led by the Turks and Caicos Reef Fund. We received support with body work and paint from South Bank Marina and Caribbean Marine and Diesel were the mechanics involved in the engine refurbishment.

The project was a straightforward renovation, but the results are so much more than a newly functional vessel. The real results can be seen in our increased presence on the water, improved reef protection for tourism operators through the installation of moorings, increased coral monitoring, nursery work and disturbance intervention. We've also been able to increase our community and volunteer involvement, continuing our SCUBA training programs and getting community members directly involved in marine and coral reef conservation.

Wider Impacts and Decision Making

N/A

Sustainability and Legacy

The Reefsaver will continue to serve as TCRF's primary workboat for mooring installation, coral nursery maintenance, coral reef monitoring, disease intervention and community outreach. Ongoing operational costs are covered through TCRF's existing donor base, ensuring long-term impact beyond the Darwin grant period.

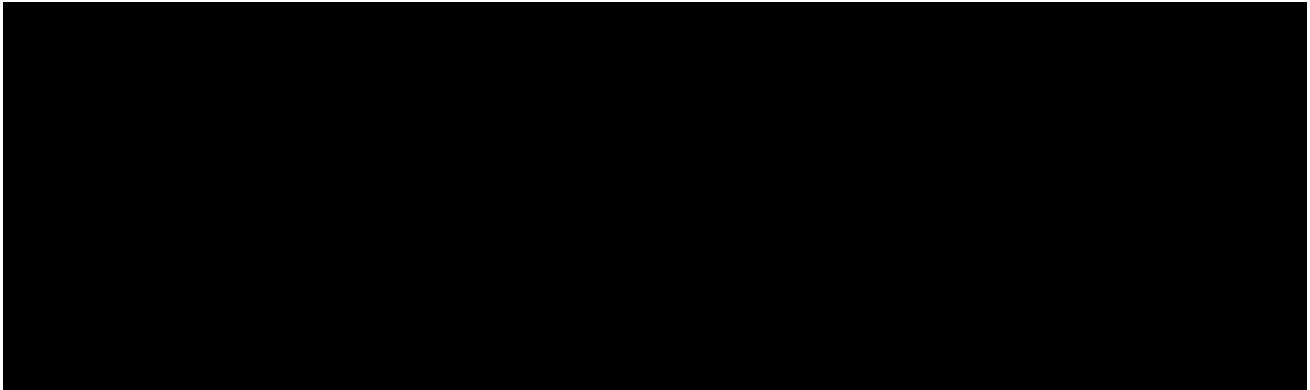
Section 6 - Communications & Publicity

Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements

The project was highlighted in TCRF's community updates and on social media, showcasing the vessel restoration process. Before-and-after photos of the vessel have been shared with stakeholders.

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.



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

20241015 150145.jpg - The Reefsaver after final decals are added and paint job is complete - South Bank Marina and Shipyard - Photo Credit: Alizee Zimmermann

20250308 105750.jpg - Volunteer Sakile gets ready to giant stride off the back of the Reefsaver to help with mooring maintenance - West Caicos - photo credit: Alizee Zimmermann

p1020114.jpg - Volunteer divers getting ready to jump in - West Caicos - photo credit: Alizee Zimmermann

20250319_085142.jpg - Captain Eric enjoying a smooth ride on the renovated Reefsaver - Caicos Banks - photo credit: Alizee Zimmermann

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:

@tcreef_fund

@southbankmarina

Facebook: @TCREEF

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/turks-and-caicos-reef-fund-inc/>

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	Alizee Zimmermann
Role within Darwin Plus Project	Project Lead
Email	
Phone	
Do you need further sections to provide additional contact details?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No