

DPLR4\1057

Survey of near-pristine, publicly owned tussac islands to support conservation

FI's remote tussac islands are near-pristine terrestrial habitats, harboring significant biodiversity. However, these wildlife refugia's are at risk from a drying climate and increased prevalence of wildfires. Many of these publicly owned treasures have not been systematically surveyed. Therefore, we lack knowledge of what is being protected, or at risk of being lost. We will undertake the first systematic population surveys of prions and petrels at two important national nature reserves, Elephant Jason Island and South Jason Island.

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Survey of near-pristine, publicly owned tussac islands to support conservation

Section 1 - Project Title & Contact Details

Q1. Project Title

Survey of near-pristine, publicly owned tussac islands to support conservation

Q2. Please select whether you are applying as an organisation or as an individual (Guidance section 3 and Guidance Glossary)

Organisation

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Dr
Name	Alastair
Surname	Baylis
Tel (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]

GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute
Phone (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]

Section 2 - Overseas Territory(ies)

Q3. Please state whether the same (or similar) project proposal has previously been submitted to the UK Government for funding, including through Darwin Plus Local, Defra's other Darwin Plus grant schemes or other UK Government funding mechanisms. Failure to do so may result in the application being ineligible.

No

Q4. Overseas Territory (Guidance section 1.3):

Which UK Overseas Territory(ies) will your project be working in? Please note that in case of a non-permanent resident population you need to demonstrate a clear, meaningful, long-term link to the territory.

Falkland Islands (FI)

*** if you have indicated a territory group with an asterisk, please give detail on which territories you are working on here:**

No Response

In addition to the UKOT(s) you have indicated, will your project directly benefit any other UK OT(s) or country(ies)?

No

Section 3 - Project Partners

Q5. Project partners (Guidance section 3.2)

In this section, please give details of all the partners involved (including the Lead Organisation) and provide a summary of their roles.

Project Leader name (Guidance section 3.1): Alastair Baylis

Lead Organisation name (if applying as an organisation; Guidance section 3.1): SAERI

Lead Organisation Website (if applicable): <https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/>

Is the Lead Organisation based in a UKOT where the project is working (Guidance section 3.1)? Yes

List other partners involved and where are they based: Green Hound Limited (Falkland Islands)
Falkland Islands Government (FIG, Falkland Islands)

Summary of roles and responsibilities of each partner in the project:

SAERI aspires to be a world-renowned, environmental research institute. SAERI has significant grant and project management and delivery experience including several Darwin Initiative projects. SAERI is an FI organization that has unparalleled expertise in terrestrial and marine research within the FI, and continues to work closely with government and the rural community on a range of projects. SAERI is responsible for overall project management, including financials, data management, fieldwork and analysis of survey data. SAERI has a breadth and depth of knowledge about FI wildlife and trained UAV pilots.


Green Hound Limited is a small, locally based environmental consultancy who run South Atlantic Detection Dogs (SADD). SADD started by working on the detection dog programme to support the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, using specially trained detection dogs to find rodents on vessels and cargoes, preventing reinvasion of the now rodent-free South Georgia. SADD also uses these skills to support FIG with regular checks of the Falklands rodent-free National Nature Reserves and conducting regular checks on vessels and cargoes headed to rodent-free islands within the Falklands. SADD provide biosecurity detection dogs to the airport, via FIG's department of agriculture and have trained up a feral cat detection dog as well as a burrowing seabird detection dog to support conservation efforts in the South Atlantic. SADD will be responsible for training and deploying the burrowing seabird detection dog during the islands surveys (WP2).

FIG manage Elephant and South Jason Island and will provide site access.


I confirm that all listed partners are aware of this application and have indicated support:

Checked

Attach a Cover Letter for your application (Guidance section 4.2).

 [Cover letter D+local R4 2](#)

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Section 4 - Project Summary & Description

Q6. Project Summary (Guidance section 3.8)

Please provide a brief summary of your project. This may be used in communication activities and/or published online, if your application is successful.

FI's remote tussac islands are near-pristine terrestrial habitats, harboring significant biodiversity. However, these wildlife refugia's are at risk from a drying climate and increased prevalence of wildfires. Many of these publicly owned treasures have not been systematically surveyed. Therefore, we lack knowledge of what is being

protected, or at risk of being lost. We will undertake the first systematic population surveys of prions and petrels at two important national nature reserves, Elephant Jason Island and South Jason Island.

Q7a. Description (Guidance section 2.1 and 6)

Please provide a description of your project, including:

- the overall objective
- the current situation and the problem the project is trying to address
- what success will look like and how you will measure it.

Please be as specific as possible when describing the project, using quantified data and evidence where available. You may wish to consider: what are the specific threats to the environment that the project will attempt to address, and what should we know about these threats? What does your successful project look like? And how will you demonstrate whether and how your project has been successful?

Objective: First detailed prion and petrel surveys, and 3D mapping of near-pristine, publicly owned National Nature Reserves, to enable informed conservation and disaster response strategies. This objective will be delivered via four Work Packages:

- Work Package (WP) 1: Undertake the first systematic population census of petrels and prions at two key National Nature Reserves – Elephant and South Jason Islands (see appendices). These are publicly owned national treasures, which are remote, little studied and near pristine. The survey will involve circular plots of 2 m radius spaced at 75 m intervals on a regular grid, and placed randomly over the island. If not accessible, the plot will be taken at the nearest accessible location. A 2 m cord tied to a cane will delimit the outer circumference of the plot, and burrows identified within the plot. Burrow abundance will be recorded by species, with checks of occupancy based on manual (hand down burrow) and via indication from bird detection dog. To model abundance and density over the entire island, we will use Generalized Additive Mixed models, combining burrow density and remotely sensed environmental covariates available for the whole island (e.g., aspect, slope, Normalized Vegetation Index). The breeding population (breeding pairs) will be estimated by multiplying total burrow abundance by the proportion of burrows occupied.
- WP2: Employ specially trained detection dogs and evaluate the effectiveness and feasibility of detection dogs – a potential game changer for FI burrowing seabird surveys. The detection dog will be used to help identify nesting sites and improve the accuracy of burrow occupancy estimates. The dog will be able to cover a larger area, more quickly and thoroughly than researchers. The dog is on-island and has already undergone significant training in anticipation of burrowing seabird surveys. The success of the survey is not reliant on the success of the detection dog, but it will greatly enhance the survey and allow us to design more efficient surveys in future.
- WP3: Create fine-scale 3D maps using drones to serve as a baseline (e.g., monitoring change, identifying locations of natural fire breaks, terrain, access etc.).
- WP4: Based on WP1-3, develop a framework for the systematic survey of other remote tussac islands.

Current situation

Elephant and South Jason Islands are publicly owned National Nature Reserves and Key Biodiversity Areas. While both have experienced fire in living memory and Elephant Jason was briefly grazed in the 1960s, they are considered to be the largest near-pristine tussac islands. They are of particular interest because of the mix of rocky ridges and tussac, which is prion and petrel habitat. While both have had brief visits, there have been no systematic prion and petrel surveys – seabirds that face significant threats, including habitat loss. A recent wildfire at Bird Island (West Falkland) was a graphic reminder that FI is drying, and risks to peat rich tussac islands are evolving and arguably escalating. The fire made national news, and assets were mobilized to combat the fire because we knew what was at-risk - some 1,500,000 thin-billed prion burrows. However, many other near-pristine tussac islands, which are also potentially important prion and petrel habitat, have not been systematically surveyed, and population size of burrowing prions and petrels are unknown. Documenting ecological assets on public land is an urgent priority. Understanding tussac islands, and their importance as

seabird habitat, will enable more informed decisions, both in terms of conservation and disaster response. Ultimately, knowledge of what is being protected, will facilitate more effective strategies to protect these unique national treasures.

Success





Project findings reported through public presentations and technical reports submitted to FI Environment Committee.

Q7b. Long-term sustainability (Guidance section 2.1 and 6)

Please describe the long-term benefits of the project and the change it will bring about. How will the outcomes of the project be sustained after the funding is finished?

- Data management and storage: Surveys and 3D models will provide baseline information for National Nature Reserves. This information will be managed and stored through the FIG Data Portal, and be freely available.
- Data generated by the project will be used to inform and adapt management strategies for National Nature Reserves (e.g., habitat mapping), and disaster response, such as wildfires.
- Through public engagement (e.g., SAERI newsletter, website, local media) the project will increase awareness about the importance of these remote tussac islands, and reinforce stewardship of our public lands.
- The trial and use of detection dogs (which are already on-island and already trained) has the potential to significantly enhance capacity and capability in the implementation of seabird surveys, streamlining survey design and improving accuracy of population estimates – as is evident through overseas studies.
- Project will be used to develop a framework, with standard protocols, for the systematic survey of other tussac islands.

(Optional) Please upload any additional and supporting materials or files (such as maps of project sites, etc) below. Maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF:

-
-  [Prion survey](#)
 -  24/06/2024
 -  13:16:03
 -  pdf 156.08 KB

Section 5 - Project Outcome(s)

Q8. Project Outcome(s) (Guidance section 1.2)

Successful Darwin Plus Local projects must demonstrate measurable outcomes in at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus with a clear focus on biodiversity and the natural environment, either by the end of the project or soon after through a credible plan.

Please note: Any proposals including research or monitoring are required to demonstrate a clear link to tangible outcomes for conservation of biodiversity and the natural environment. Please explain how any new research will be applied to drive environmental outcomes on the ground.

Please confirm that your project has a clear focus on biodiversity and the natural environment.

Checked **Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;**

Please tick which additional theme(s) of Darwin Plus your project contributes to (if relevant):

Checked **Climate change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;**

Checked **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.**

Please justify your selection. Please use quantitative information where possible here.

Environmental outcomes on the ground requires an understanding of the biodiversity that exists and risks to biodiversity. Our project will undertake surveys of two national treasures – remote and near-pristine publicly owned tussac islands. In doing so, our project relates to all Darwin themes by providing an understanding of ecological assets on these islands, and baseline data (survey results, 3D map) that can be used to inform management and conservation. The project will build capacity locally by trialing dogs to help detect burrows, and increase awareness of the value of tussac islands through public engagement.





Section 6 - Workplan

Q9. Workplan (Guidance section 2.2)

Please provide anticipated dates for the start and end of your planned project here. Please use the Darwin Plus Local Project Workplan (available at: <https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/>) to provide a list of the individual activities you have planned for this project, a brief description of what each activity entails, and the months in which the activities will be carried out. If the project involves only one activity (e.g. a purchase), please still provide project start and end dates (noting estimated times for procurement). Please note that your project must start after 1 October 2024 and be completed by 31 March 2025.

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 3 months):
01 November 2024	31 March 2025	5 months

Please upload the completed Darwin Plus Local Project Workplan with your proposed project activities here

 [r4-dplus-local Workplan](#)
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 pdf 114.59 KB

Section 7 - Costs

Q10. Costs (Guidance section 2.2 and please read the Finance Guidance)

Please provide a breakdown of costs to be funded through Darwin Plus Local (in GBP).

Are you seeking any matched funding for this project?

No

Budget line	Explanation	Cost in GBP
Staff costs:	x1 seabird field lead x1 UAV pilot	£ [REDACTED]
Consultancy costs:	Green Hound dog handlers (x2) - includes fieldwork plus pre-fieldwork training and preparation. x1 seabird field assistant	£ [REDACTED]
Overhead costs:	Required for project support, logistics, vehicle use.	£ [REDACTED]
Travel & subsistence costs:	Boat charter (5 days) ([REDACTED]) Field travel to reach West Falkland (point of departure) ([REDACTED])	£ [REDACTED]
Operating costs:	Field consumables (food, fuel, consumables)	£ [REDACTED]
Capital equipment:	K9 lifejacket ([REDACTED]) K9 working jacket ([REDACTED]) Mini freezer for samples ([REDACTED])	£ [REDACTED]
Other Costs	M&E ([REDACTED]) Toys ([REDACTED]) Dog food ([REDACTED]) Dog ([REDACTED])	£ [REDACTED]
Total:		43,300.00

This section provides more information on the budget to help evaluators understand how you will use the funds you are requesting. You do not need to list all costs, but please list and detail costs of more than £1,000 per item below, under the appropriate budget line.

Details of staff costs over £1,000 (if relevant)

Alastair Baylis - SAERI - Project lead. Includes 2.5 weeks of fieldwork, and report time.

Jack Ingledew-Gale - SAERI - includes 2.5 weeks of fieldwork, and report time.

Details of overhead costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

SAERI overhead costs have been levied at [REDACTED] of staff costs. Overheads are an essential part of project operations - providing office space, internet, heating, vehicle use, logistic support and financial support.

Details of travel and subsistence costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

Boat charter required to reach islands, which is [REDACTED] per day.

Details of operating costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

We have requested £[REDACTED] to cover field consumables. The largest component is food at £[REDACTED] (£[REDACTED] per day, multiplied by 5 people, multiplied by 17 days).

Details of capital equipment costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

NA

Details of consultancy costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

Naomi Cordiero - Green Hound LTD - includes 2.5 weeks of fieldwork, and report time.
Steve Brown - Green Hound LTD - includes 2.5 weeks of fieldwork, and report time.
Seabird assistant - TBC but recruited locally.

Details of other costs over £1,000 (if relevant)

No Response

If your project budget was prepared in another currency and converted to GBP, please provide the exchange rate, its source, and the date it was accessed:

Other currency:	Exchange rate:	Source of this exchange rate:	Date exchange rate accessed:
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Darwin Plus Local has been created to build capacity and contribute to local economies in-territory.

What % of the total will be spent in the OTs? [REDACTED]

If less than 80% of the total project spend is to be spent within the OT(s), please explain why.

No Response

Section 8 - Local and National Priorities

Q11. Local and national priorities

Please explain how this project aligns with local and national priorities? You may wish to consider the project in the context of national environmental laws, objectives, strategies, territory specific agreements, action plans or policies.

International

- FIGs commitment to CBD through: Article 7 (Identification and Monitoring), Article 8 (In-situ conservation), Article 12 (Research and Training) and Article 17 (Exchange of Information) and 18 (Technical and Scientific Cooperation).
- ACAP, specifically via enhancing petrel population monitoring.

- UK '25 Year Environment Plan' Indicator K4: Extent and condition of terrestrial and marine protected areas in the UKOTs.

National


- FI Environment Strategy 2021-2040: several key objectives and actions, including those that relate to "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Integrity" and "Science and Innovation".
- FI Biodiversity Framework 2016-2030: cross-cutting challenge "lack of information".
- 'The Islands Plan 2022-26' and key Environment objectives related to biodiversity.


Will the project take place on Government owned land or water or involve biocontrol, invasive alien species control or eradication?


Yes

Please attach evidence that you have Government support for this project i.e. a Letter of Support. Applications which indicate that they do not take place on Government land or water, but which propose work that appears to the reviewers would be difficult/impossible to carry out without working on government land or waters may be ineligible if no Letter of Support is provided.

 [Letter of Support Survey Islands Local](#)

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Section 9 - Project Risks

Q12. Project Risks

Please demonstrate your consideration of any risks involved in this project and how you intend to manage them. Please note the importance of health and safety and environmental risk assessment in the design of your project. If there is any possibility that your project may have negative impacts on the environment or human health, it is important that you provide a comprehensive analysis of potential environmental and human health risks, and the prevention measures you will take to ensure the work does not cause harm.

Depending on your project, you may wish to consider:

- Biosecurity risks – particularly for projects involving external equipment.
- Safeguarding risks – particularly for projects involving vulnerable groups such as children, older people or people with disabilities.

Risk	Mitigation
Detection dog and risks of harm to wildlife	Burrowing seabird detection dog has been trained following the methods deployed by NZ Conservation Dogs Programme (world leaders in this area). Dog will always be on lead and has been assessed by an independent third party as safe to work around wildlife.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)	HPAI is a risk in 2024/25 - but it is unlikely to impact our planned survey. Both islands are remote and rarely visited, and therefore there will be no restriction on travel to these islands. If we find evidence of HPAI, we will mitigate by avoiding areas where HPAI is suspected. Our budget allows for the purchase of Personnel Protective Equipment.
Biosecurity risks - introducing invasive flora or fauna	All clothing and footwear will be checked thoroughly before landing on remote islands, and disinfected using Virkon. No poultry products and eggs, will be brought ashore. All food will be transported in clear plastic tubs. Equipment not in clear tubs will be unpacked and inspected prior to landing.

Do you require more fields?

No

Section 10 - Terms & Conditions

Q12. Terms and conditions (Guidance section 3.10)

By applying for Darwin Plus Local you are adhering in full to the grant Terms and Conditions in full (available at: [Darwin Plus website](#) and as referenced in the Guidance at section 3.10). For information, the Terms and Conditions include requirements for all applicants to (amongst other requirements as per the full Terms and Conditions):

- Uphold a zero tolerance for inaction approach to tackling sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- Where appropriate, make all reasonable and adequate efforts to address gender inequality and other power imbalances.
- Notify all cases of fraud and theft (whether proven or suspected) relating to the project to the Grant Administrator as soon as they identified.

Please indicate you have read, and understood, and will adhere to the Terms and Conditions.

Checked

Supporting documents list (please have these ready to attach with application)

- Cover Letter of no more than two A4 pages. (Guidance section: 4.2 has information on what this cover letter should include).
- If the project takes place on public land or water or is addressing invasive alien species, a Letter of support from OT Government.
- Project Workplan in the template provided for Darwin Plus Local (available at: <https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/>).
- Map and additional information (optional) maximum five additional pages.

If your application is successful

If your project application is successful, the Fund Administrator (NIRAS) will ask you to provide some financial evidence for due diligence checks before you receive your project grant. (Please see section 3.3 of the Darwin Plus Local Finance Guidance). Please be ready to provide this evidence promptly.

- **Financial evidence for organisations:** Year-end financial statements, the latest management accounts or audited accounts (if you have these).
- **Financial evidence for individuals:** Proof of identity such as a passport, ID card or driving licence and solvency (such as bank statements) and a police check.

Section 11 - Certification





Certification

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the statements made in this application are true and the information provided is correct.

Checked

I have the authority to submit an application on behalf of my organisation.

Checked

Name:	Alastair Baylis
Position in the organisation: (if applicable)	SAERI
Signature (please upload e-signature)	 Xerox Scan (48)  24/06/2024  14:44:30  pdf 106.33 KB
Date:	24 June 2024

Section 12 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance documents, including the “Darwin Plus Local Guidance” and the “Darwin Plus Local Finance Guidance”.	Checked
If my proposed project takes place on public lands or water or is addressing alien invasive species, I have uploaded a Letter of Support from Government.	Checked
I have uploaded a cover letter that details the information requested in the guidance (Guidance section 4.2 has information on what this cover letter should include).	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund (found at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/) for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for my project that fit this Round.	Checked

I have provided my summary budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP in the application form.	Checked
I have uploaded my project workplan using the specific template provided (available at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/).	Checked
I have uploaded all supplementary documents if I have any.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
The application has been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Plus website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Plus website.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under Darwin Plus. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share project news. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Unchecked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising Darwin Plus including project details (usually title, lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).

Project Title: Survey of near-pristine, publicly owned tussac islands to support conservation

Darwin Plus Local

Provide a **Project Implementation Timetable** that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the following table as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project. Round 4 is for a **maximum of 6 months** with activities starting from 1 October 2024. All activities must be completed by 31 March 2025.

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and shade only the months in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

Activity #	Description (max 25 words)	No. of months	UK Financial Year 2024/25					
			Calendar Year 2024			Calendar Year 2025		
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
WP1	Survey Elephant and South Jason Island	1						
WP1	Report survey findings on seabird population size	2						
WP2	Report survey findings on burrow detector dog	1						
WP3	Provide a 3D map of islands	1						
WP4	Develop a framework for the systematic survey of other remote tussac islands	1.5						