

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

Project Ref No	DPLUS003
Project Title	Biodiversity Action Planning in the Falkland Islands
Country(ies)	Falkland Islands
Lead Organisation	Falklands Conservation
Collaborator(s)	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Falkland Islands Government Environmental Planning Department
Project Leader	<i>Dr Andrew Stanworth</i>
Report date	
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR 2</i>
Project website	<i>http://www.falklandsconservation.com/projects/action-planning</i>

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).

Activity 1.2 Existing tasks analysed and rigorous guidelines produced on which tasks should be made the highest priority (prioritisation guidelines); also the identification of generic tasks which can be aggregated across plans

According to the timeframe, this Activity should have already been completed in Year 1. A review in Year 1 of the project analysed the existing tasks. The Activity was delayed waiting on a workshop in June 2014, gaining stakeholder feedback regarding areas to be included in a standardised prioritisation system. Draft prioritisation criteria have been subsequently developed, and are waiting on more stakeholder feedback. These will provide every action with a numerical score. The digital system (see Activity 2.1) will allow identification of generic tasks through “tagging” actions with multiple indicators. Further work relating to this Activity is still needed, however this will be completed within the project, albeit behind the timeframe.

Activity 1.3 Comprehensive Action Plans complete (except for striated caracara, which will be an Output of the Darwin raptor project) and Activity 1.4 Basic Action Plans complete

Species and habitats have been categorised as requiring Comprehensive or Basic Action Plans due to the perceived level of threat to them.

In the last 6 months, standard submission templates for habitat and species Action Plans have been developed further and guidance for utilising these produced, in consultation with Falkland Islands Government Environmental Planning Department (FIG EPD). 27 species and habitats requiring comprehensive plans were identified in the Falkland Islands Biodiversity Strategy 2008-2018 (FIBS); mainland tussac, whitegrass-fachine acid grassland, fachine scrub, boxwood scrub, zebra trout, 22 threatened plants. Collation of data on descriptions and distribution for all these action plans has been completed, and other data required for producing them has begun.

In addition, collation of data has begun for the 20 basic action plans also identified within the FIBS; Californian club-rush stands, mountain bluegrass, flightless steamer duck, Gentoo penguin, Magellanic penguin, Falkland fritillary, ruddy-headed goose, 13 endemic plants.

We are working with Rebecca Upson (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew), a member of our Steering

Group, in producing the 22 threatened plants and 13 endemic plants species Action Plans. The majority of data has been collated by project staff, and the draft Action Plans will be sent in October 2014 to Rebecca for her to complete the writing of actions. Rebecca will provide us with feedback on the new submission template and guidance. This will be completed within the next two quarters beyond what the original aims were in the project.

The submission template and guidance will be trialled by the Darwin raptor project to produce a striated caracara species Action Plan.

In the next two quarters, we are on track to identify experts for the remaining action plans, produce appropriate actions and finalise all the above action plans (potentially except for striated caracara).

Activity 2.1 A digital system devised that enables all biodiversity action tasks to be brought together, prioritised and result in realistic work plans. This would provide the framework for Activity 3.

After consultation with JNCC regarding the BARS system and its suitability for the project, we are now working with CSS (IT consultant) to design a simpler digital system, a database with a website front end. This will hold all future actions in a standardised way, produce some performance metrics and be linked to a map. Their proposal has been accepted, and the first review of functionality will be in mid-October 2014. We will input a prioritisation score, allowing action prioritisation.

Activity 2.2 The tool to be tested with key users, and modified if need be

We are working in collaboration with Ascension Islands Government Conservation Department on the functionality of the digital system. There are several planned review points through the development. There has been, and will continue to be, consultation with FIG EPD throughout design process regarding useful functionality.

Activity 3.1 All biodiversity action from all plans listed and put together in one place; there will need to be consideration given as to whether the Environmental Monitoring Strategy (a proposed Activity of the Biodiversity Strategy, and a subset of all action) needs to be a separate document

All historical action was listed through a review process in Year 1 of the project. The digital system (Activity 2.1) will allow all new action to be listed and put together in one place electronically, able to be accessed through a website. Regarding the Environmental Monitoring Strategy, at this stage, actions relating to Environmental Monitoring will be able to be “tagged” as such in the digital system, enabling the subset of action to be easily identified in the future if required.

Activity 3.3 Guidelines produced for inclusion of new species/habitats into the action plan process, and for removal of species/habitats; and for the addition/removal of tasks to the master list

Guidelines are in existence for the selection of species and habitats requiring action plans. A proposed framework for action planning and responsibilities is in development with FIG EPD, including set time limits for action review (addition / removal of tasks). This Activity has begun ahead of the implementation timetable.

Activity 3.4 Methodology promulgated to other OTs

Dr Andrew Stanworth attended a JNCC workshop for South Atlantic Overseas Territories in Ascension in June 2014, where he presented findings of the project to date and was involved in discussions regarding the project’s methodology. He also presented an overview of the project to the Overseas Territories Research and Training Group in September 2014 through a conference call. This Activity has continued ahead of the implementation timetable.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Roll-forward of funds in the consultancy and travel budgets from 2013-14 to 2014-15 financial year, due to under-spend through delays in responses from IT consultants (since changed to another company) and from a delayed trip.

All activities and outputs are still on track, as funds have been rolled forward and can now be used in this FY.

Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: **yes, in June 2014**

Formal change request submitted: **yes, in June 2014**

Received confirmation of change acceptance **yes, in July 2014**

3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

No

If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carryforward request: £

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**