

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

Project Ref No	DPLUS015
Project Title	Strategic management of invasive alien plants on South Georgia
Country(ies)	South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands
UK Organisation	
Collaborator(s)	Kew Gardens
Project Leader	Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, Jennifer Lee
Report date	October 2014
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR1
Project website	N/A

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).

Although the official start date for the project was only 1st September 2014, there has already been considerable activity.

The main project milestone that has been achieved is finalisation of the agreement of the partnership between Kew and GSGSSI (output 4.1). This agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of each organisation and arrangements for the transfer and use of data (output 5.1).

Planning for the coming seasons work on South Georgia is also well underway. In preparation for formulating detailed work plans, existing data has been reviewed (output 3.3) and priority actions have been identified.

In parallel with the above, orders have been placed for consumables such as herbicides, PPE and field supplies. Transport and accommodation for staff has now also been booked.

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.

When the project was envisaged, it was intended that Andy Black, an experienced biologist with 10 years experience working on South Georgia, would take up the project officer role. However, unfortunately, Andy had to withdraw from the project and so the project management team (GSGSSI, RBG Kew, and Kelvin Floyd) undertook to recruit a replacement.

The post attracted 42 applications from a range of highly suitable candidates. Four were selected for interview and the post was ultimately offered to Bradley Myer. Bradley is based in New Zealand where he has worked in non-native plant control for 15 years. He comes with considerable project management experience and an aptitude for working in remote environments. It is not expected that this change will effect any of the project outcomes or overall budget although there will be slightly elevated transport costs as the project funds need to cover flights to and from New Zealand.

Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?	
LTS were informed (phone call) that Andy Black would not be able to be involved in the project and we were advised that as he was not a named project partner, it was not necessary to formally apply to recruit an alternative.	
Discussed with LTS: yes, in May 2014	
Formal change request submitted: no	
Received confirmation of change acceptance	n/a

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: n/a

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

Most of the costs associated with this project are salaries for seasonal staff. One major difficulty producing budget forecasts is uncertainty related to the timing and availability of berths on ships between the Falklands and South Georgia. Although some berths are available on the GSGSSI patrol ship, requests are made for berths on military vessels and cruise ships that may cancel at short notice.

Estimates for spending are based on the best information available at the time but due to circumstances outside our control, may end up being under or over what was initially allocated. If this is the case, every effort will be made to bring the total project spend back to within the original budget.

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**