



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	DPLUS 112
Project title	Capacity building in fisheries evidence, networks and management (Virgin Islands)
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	British Virgin Islands
Lead organisation	Cefas
Partner(s)	Government of the Virgin Islands, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Project leader	Rachel Mulholland
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	30.09.2020 HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	Twitter: @CefasGovUK @CANARICaribbean

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

The project officially commenced on 1 July 2020. The launch of the project was announced jointly by Cefas, the Government of the Virgin Islands and CANARI through a joint press release which can be found at the following link: <https://canari.org/news/new-317000-project-launched-on-sustainable-fisheries-management-in-the-virgin-islands/>

The project kick-off meeting was held virtually on 8th June 2020. This was attended by Rachel Mulholland, Kerry l'Anson, Karema Randall and Rose Nicholson from Cefas, Theodore James, Tessa Smith and Abbi Christopher from the Government of the Virgin Islands, and Ainka Granderson from CANARI. At this meeting, a schedule for quarterly project progress meetings was agreed and a contacts database for the project was established. Staff members from each organisation were also identified to lead on each individual aspect of the project.

The impact of Covid-19 travel restrictions on the first-year project activities was discussed and, as a result, a change request was submitted to Darwin on 3 July 2020 to move some travel costs over to staff time to allow for some planned in-person stakeholder events to be held virtually. This request was approved.

Progress has been made on finalising the collaboration agreement between all parties and this is in the final stage of approval with the Government of the Virgin Islands.

Progress has also been made on planning for some of the individual aspects of the project. A meeting was held on 16th June 2020 on the GIS database workstream. This was attended by Rachel Mulholland, Kerry l'Anson, Roi Martinez and Rose Nicholson from Cefas and Troy Dawson from the Government of the Virgin Islands GIS team. This meeting covered the hardware and software requirements for future deployment of the GIS database within existing infrastructure, access for Cefas project staff to government data and servers, and GIS software licence requirements. A further meeting is planned for October 2020 to discuss the specific infrastructure, data storage and connectivity requirements to agree details for the purchase of the required IT hardware and software.

In preparation for starting on the GIS database development, Cefas project staff have created a preliminary database model, based on the UK GeoFISH model. The statistical reporting grid used for fisheries in the Virgin Islands has been integrated into this model. Cefas project staff are currently matching data structures from the landings sampling and fisherfolk self-reporting outputs from Darwin Project DPLUS067 with those of the preliminary GIS database.

Research has started on the Evidence Report aspect of the project and Cefas project staff are currently preparing a draft document plan for agreement with the Government of the Virgin Islands.

CANARI and the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) met in August 2020 to discuss and refine the approach and next steps for the assessment of fisherfolk capacity and networks in the Virgin Islands to support establishment of a formalised fisherfolk network across the territory based on inputs from the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The desk review and scoping will be initiated in October 2020 by CANARI and CNFO to develop a fisheries profile and identify fisherfolk leaders, existing local fisherfolk organisations and other informal networks and key partners from government, civil society and the private sector to engage in establishing the network and strengthening fisherfolk capacity.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

N/A

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The project plan for this year included a full project staff kick-off meeting in-country as well as other in-country stakeholder engagement events with fisherfolk. Due to the current restrictions on travel and on the hosting of events and large gatherings of people, we have so far been unable to undertake these activities as planned. After reassessing the project requirements, it was agreed to investigate ways that the stakeholder engagement events could be delivered through virtual platforms and a change request was made to Darwin to move some travel costs to staff time (which was approved) in order to accommodate this.

The in-country project meeting has been delayed to later in year 1 and we are currently looking into whether it is likely that this will be able to go ahead this year.

We currently consider that there will be no major budget or timetable impacts on year 1 activities or deliverables due to the Covid-19 restrictions. If Covid-19 disruption continues into year 2 of the project there will be delays in other activities including several in-country training workshops and stakeholder events. This would have a knock-on effect on undertaking other planned activities and potentially impact on the achievement of the project outputs.

2c. 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
Formal change request submitted:	Yes – submitted in July 2020.
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

N/A

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 can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**