



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2021)

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 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DOAF), Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Project leader	Rachel Mulholland
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	30.09.2021 HYR2
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).

Output 1: Creation of a formalised network of fisherfolk

The final draft report on the assessment of fisherfolk capacity and networks in BVI was completed at the end of Year 1. The DOAF are in the process of reviewing this report and discussion have been taking place between CANARI and DOAF this project year on the outputs of this report and next steps under this workstream, including an appropriate timeframe and approach for launching the formalised network of fisherfolk

Output 2: Fisherfolk capacity building in fisheries management

Work under this output is not due to start until Q3 of Year 2.

Output 3: Fisheries evidence report

A literature review was undertaken in Year 1 and an Evidence Summary Report produced Q4 Year 1. An evidence review meeting was held between Cefas and the DOAF in Q1 Year 2 and the DOAF have provided review of and input to the Evidence Summary Report. Draft report chapters for the final fisheries evidence report have been produced. Work now focussing on evidence gap analysis and pulling together the full draft report for Q3 Year 2. Under this work area, following discussion between Cefas and DOAF as part of the literature review, a socio-economic survey is also being produced to gather additional data in this area. An initial draft of this survey proposal has been produced and is currently being reviewed by DOAF.

Output 4: Central GIS fisheries database

The GIS database specification document was produced Q4 Year 1. Since the publication of this document and agreement on the design and structure of the GIS database, work has been progressing on database development. A framework and database structure for storing and analysing fishing data has been established. The database will be hosted on existing infrastructure in the VI government. The processing and analysis of fishing data will also be developed in systems that are compatible with the existing infrastructure. DOAF have provided

Cefas with relevant environmental, administrative and spatial data from the Virgin Islands for input. This database format allows for spatial analysis and fisheries reporting, but the way in which fishing data is collected and loaded into the database is still unknown and is currently being discussed between Cefas and DOAF.

Discussion is ongoing on the purchase and delivery of required hardware and software as part of this output. An inability to travel to country and, therefore, undertake an infrastructure review in person, has complicated the completion of this aspect of the project; however, discussions are taking place remotely to try to understand the number and type of additional licenses if needed as well as the exact number and specifications of laptops and additional virtual machines which will need to be purchased.

Output 5: Government staff capacity building in GIS and data management

An inability to travel to country has so far prevented the delivery of the first GIS training workshop which was due to take place in Q2 Year 2. Discussions are ongoing on potential dates and delivery methods for this workshop with the possibility of a change request being submitted to move this workshop into Year 3.

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.

It was initially expected that the formalised network of fisherfolk could be launched during an in-country workshop, co-facilitated by CANARI and CNFO, by the end of Year 2. However, current travel restrictions for CANARI staff limit this happening by the end of Year 2. The possibility of the launch being held virtually in Year 2 was explored during discussions with CANARI and DOAF, however it was agreed that a virtual format would not be suitable. It was further agreed that greater awareness needs to be raised among fisherfolk about the objectives of the network including validation of the findings from the draft assessment. The latter is expected to encourage buy-in by fisherfolk and facilitate their active participation in upcoming activities in Year 2 and Year 3. CANARI and DOAF are therefore seeking to collaboratively host a series of focus groups with fisherfolk before the end of Q3 Year 2 to:

- Raise awareness about and encourage buy-in and participation of fisherfolk in Component 1 of the Capacity building in fisheries evidence, networks and management in the British Virgin Islands project
- Raise awareness about upcoming training activities to build fisherfolk capacity in sustainable ecosystem-based fisheries management
- Seek validation of the key findings from fisherfolk of the draft "Scoping and capacity needs assessment report to support creation of a formalised network of fisherfolk in the British Virgin Islands".

These focus groups will use a mixed virtual and in-person approach with DOAF staff co-facilitating sessions with fisherfolk in-person and CANARI and CNFO staff co-facilitating virtually.

CANARI is therefore proposing to shift the launch of the formalised network to Year 3 after awareness raising activities have been completed with fisherfolk and when restrictions on travel for CANARI staff are likely to be lifted. This shift will result in an underspend for Year 2.

The project plan this year also included an in-country GIS training workshop. Due to the current restrictions on travel for Cefas staff, and on the hosting of events and large gatherings of people in-country, we have so far been unable to undertake these activities as planned. We are hoping to be able to increase our engagement with stakeholders in the second half of the year, with in-country partners taking the lead on some of this instead of overseas staff. However, we anticipate that we will be unable to deliver the GIS training workshop during the current year. We are currently undertaking an assessment to determine potential alternate methods of delivery and whether a remote training event could be held instead. If this training workshop needs to be significantly delayed, and/or travel restrictions persist into Year 3, this will delay other activities including the second GIS training workshop and separate stakeholder events which would have a knock-on effect on undertaking other planned activities and potentially impact on the achievement of the project outputs. If the workshop needs to be moved into Year 3, this could also result in an underspend in Year 2 and/or a requirement for submission of a change request to Darwin.

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:	No – currently considering change request
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A

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?

No.

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**