

## Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

*Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.*

**Submission Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

<b>Project reference</b>	DPLUS 112
<b>Project title</b>	Capacity building in fisheries evidence, networks and management (Virgin Islands)
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	British Virgin Islands
<b>Lead partner</b>	Cefas
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Government of the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DOAF), Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
<b>Project leader</b>	Leila Fonseca
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	31.10.2022 HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	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 VI 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**

CANARI has a planned workshop under this output which is due to take place in Q3 of Year 2 (November 2022).

**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 is now focussing on evidence gap analysis and pulling together the full draft report for Q3 Year 2.

Travel restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic meant that information for the fisheries evidence report had to be collected remotely. Once restrictions had been lifted, Cefas scientists visited the VI at the end of September 2022, along with representatives from CANARI, CNFO and DOAF. Meeting with fisherfolk took place on the four main islands: Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Jost Van Dyke and Anegada. The visit allowed Cefas to ground truth remotely collected data by visiting landing sites, catch sale sites, seeing the types of fishing vessels, and fishing gears

used in the VI. Also, information was gathered on fishing practices and encounters with Abandoned, Lost and otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) around the Virgin Islands.

#### **Output 4: Central GIS fisheries database**

The GIS database specification document was produced in Q4 of 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 currently being discussed between Cefas and DOAF.

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

As per change request number 4 in March 2022, £[REDACTED] was transferred to DOAF to purchase desktop computers and ArcGIS licences. A training visit is in progress (24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October) in the VI. Building on the training that has already taken place in March this year, the focus is on use of the GeoFISH spatial database. A 3<sup>rd</sup> visit by Cefas GIS scientists is planned for January 2023 to finalise implementation.

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.**

CANARI and other partners were unable to travel due to Covid restrictions which were lifted in July 2022. The delay in planned activities hindered the planning, and general engagement required to deliver effective training, a formalised network, and learning exchanges for the fisherfolk. Cefas is looking to request a six-month extension. The extension will allow time for a formalised network of fisherfolk to be established; for capacity building and training of fisherfolk; for learning exchanges; and also report printing, auditing and the last in-country visit at the end of the project. Funding that would have been spent on these tasks needs to be moved from FY 2022/23 (Project Year 3) to FY 2023/24 (Project Year 4).

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: N/A

Formal Change Request submitted: No - as per 2.

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

**4a. 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: £

**4b. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget 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.**

**5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

N/A

**If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response 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 NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**