Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DPLUS114
Project title	Tropical Important Plant Areas and Important Plant Species of TCI
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI)
Lead Organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
Partner(s)	Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR), Government of TCI
Project leader	Dr Stuart Cable
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	31 October 2024; HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	Twitter: @KewUKOTs #KewTCI Turks and Caicos Islands Important Plant Areas | Kew Tropical Important Plant Areas of the Turks and Caicos (arcgis.com)

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1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable.

The project is on track to completely achieve its objectives.

Output 1: Tropical Important Plant Areas (TIPAs) Geographic Information System (GIS) established:

1.1: Compile existing TCI data into project GIS: completed in Y1-2.

1.2: Incorporate field data into project GIS: completed in Y1-2.

Output 2: Capacity building to enable DECR to identify TIPAs:

2.1 & 2.2: Training of DECR staff in TIPAs methodology, field data collection and survey techniques delivered by Kew specialists: training completed in Y1-2. Bryan Naqqi (BNM) and Junel Blaise (JB), DECR, visited Kew in August 2024 for taxonomic research, horticultural training and TIPAs delimitation, enhancing their skills and experience. Also, Dodly Prosper, DECR, commenced the MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation with Kew and Queen Mary University London, sponsored by Chevening.

Output 3: Data and sample collection to inform species threat assessments and phylogenomics

3.1: Field surveys to gather data and ground-truth vegetation maps: completed Y1-2.

3.2: Undertake 20 species threat assessments: IUCN Red Listing work continued with all 60 national priority species completed and many non-priority species drafted.

3.3: Phylogenomics for 6 plant species completed: due to delays with obtaining CITES permits we are still undertaking the phylogenomics work. The *Encyclia* orchids have been sequenced by NeoGen and we are expecting the data soon. BNM has just visited FairChild Botanical Garden and Herbarium in Florida to obtain more material to help resolve the taxonomy.

Output 4: A network of Tropical Important Plant Areas (TIPAs) identified for TCI

4.1 & 4.2: Network of TIPAs identified and published by YR3 Q4: in August we held a 'Data Crunch' workshop at Kew to provisionally identify TIPAs, with BNM and JB in attendance and DP online. 20 potential TIPAs were identified, work is ongoing to refine the boundaries, and a TIPAs workshop is being planned for January 2025 to validate the TIPAs with stakeholders and Government.

Output 5: Important Plants and Tropical Important Plant Areas of the TCI guide and interpretation produced for local use

5.1: TCI TIPAs Guide: work has started with an outline, detailed descriptions of the TIPAs and a technical chapter on methodology.

5.2: TCI TIPAs Interpretation: work has started on panels for each TIPA, with potential designs and compilation of content, including maps, descriptions and images (alongside the TIPAs Guide).

Output 6: Monitoring and Evaluation and project reporting

6.1 Produce Monitoring and Evaluation Plan: the M&E plan was devised in Y1, and is being updated and discussed at 3-6 monthly Steering Group meetings.

6.2: Produce quarterly progress reports: monthly project team meetings monitor progress with minutes and action points, and a summary is reviewed by the Steering Group (next planned end November 2024).

6.3: Produce half-year and annual reports: Y3HYR1 produced (this document).

6.4: Undertake Steering Group meetings and produce minutes: Q1 Steering Group meeting held on 29 August 2024.

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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.

There have been no significant problems to report that could affect the achievement of our objectives.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:	No
Formal Change Request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No
Change Request reference if known: N/A	

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend: £ ▮▮▮▮▮

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2025)?

Yes ☐ **No** ☒   Estimated underspend: £

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project if necessary. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**   **NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.**
5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?
None

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.
The review was very positive (Outcome 1 and reporting 1) and no changes were advised.

Checklist for submission

For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to **feedback from your latest Annual Report Review?** You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	Yes
For All Projects	
Include your **project reference** in the subject line of submission email.	Yes
Submit to **BCFs-Report@niras.com**.	
Have you **clearly highlighted any confidential information** within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	Yes
Have you reported against the most **up to date information for your project?**	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes