



**BIODIVERSITY  
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



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

### Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

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 2025**

Please note all projects that were active before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.

<b>Project reference</b>	<i>DPLUS120</i>
<b>Project title</b>	Spatial segregation and bycatch risk of seabirds at South Georgia
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	South Georgia
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	British Antarctic Survey
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Birdlife International
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Victoria Warwick-Evans</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>HYR6</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	Project website: <a href="https://www.bas.ac.uk/project/spatial-segregation-of-seabirds-at-south-georgia/">https://www.bas.ac.uk/project/spatial-segregation-of-seabirds-at-south-georgia/</a> News stories: <a href="https://www.bas.ac.uk/media-post/tracking-of-vulnerable-seabirds-reveals-difference-in-foraging-patterns/">https://www.bas.ac.uk/media-post/tracking-of-vulnerable-seabirds-reveals-difference-in-foraging-patterns/</a> <a href="https://www.acap.aq/latest-news/british-antarctic-survey-study-shows-significant-differences-in-feeding-patterns-across-white-chinned-petrel-colonies-in-south-atlantic">https://www.acap.aq/latest-news/british-antarctic-survey-study-shows-significant-differences-in-feeding-patterns-across-white-chinned-petrel-colonies-in-south-atlantic</a> <a href="https://acap.aq/latest-news/go-where-you-know-wandering-albatrosses-from-bird-and-prion-islands-in-the-south-atlantic-spatially-segregate-at-sea">https://acap.aq/latest-news/go-where-you-know-wandering-albatrosses-from-bird-and-prion-islands-in-the-south-atlantic-spatially-segregate-at-sea</a>

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

The project has progressed over the last six months in the following ways:

- The paper describing spatial segregation and overlap of wandering albatrosses with fisheries during the breeding season has been published in *Conservation Biology* (IF 5.2).
- The paper describing spatial segregation and overlap of wandering albatrosses with fisheries during the non-breeding season is in the second round of review at *Conservation Biology* and we anticipate that this will be accepted shortly.
- A first draft of the paper describing the year-round distribution and overlap with fisheries of white-chinned petrels is with co-authors and will be submitted within the next month.
- We are discussing how to best disseminate the results at the relevant Regional Fisheries Management Meetings with our project partners at Birdlife International/RSPB, and have a meeting scheduled for early November.
- The results of the published paper were presented at a seminar given at the University of Liverpool and a public talk to the Peterborough Bird Club, with the funding from Darwin Plus clearly acknowledged on the slides.
- We completed the BAS Environmental Impact Assessment, AWERB and RAP applications for fieldwork this coming season (see next bullet).
- We liaised with the field teams, and plans are in place for any remaining GLS devices to be retrieved from northern and southern giant petrels, and wandering albatrosses at KEP, Maiviken, Harpon, Prion Island and Bird Island, as appropriate

**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 problems or unexpected developments in the last 6 months and the project is on track to achieve all of its objectives. However, we were not able to spend some of the budget for international travel and publishing costs and have submitted a change request form to move these to the next FY (██████).

**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:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No

Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

**Guidance for Section 4:** The information you provide in this section will be used by Defra to review the financial status of projects. This review will identify projects at random for spot checks on financial management and will include requests for evidence of the actual spend information provided below. Please ensure the figures you provide are as accurate as possible and that you have the evidence to support it. You do not need to provide it now.

**4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)**

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 2026)?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ Estimated underspend: ██████████ (██████)

**4c. If you expect an 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, and not later than 31<sup>st</sup> December. 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 BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

Suspensions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to [fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk](mailto:fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk)

No

**6. Project risk management**

**6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.**

Not Applicable

**7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.**

Feedback from our annual report requested information on our SEAH training.

I can confirm that the team at BAS have completed our mandatory training 'UKRI\_UL\_Sexual Harassment Training' and the team at Birdlife international have completed their mandatory course "Sexual Harassment Awareness". This means 100% of our team have completed the relevant training. This training includes information on what SEAH is and how staff can prevent SEAH. We have added this to our risk register which we have attached.

Our project was assessed as "Not Yet Sensitive" against the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) criteria and we were asked to provide additional information demonstrating how the project is meeting the minimum GESI Sensitive criteria.

We are a very small team and the project is very research focussed with no local community engagement (it is based at South Georgia where there is no local community), thus it is challenging to demonstrate that we are GESI sensitive. Nevertheless, we have undertaken a GESI analysis to try to demonstrate that our project is empowering.

#### GESI ANALYSIS

1: Rights: The project team are based in the UK where laws, policies and frameworks are very progressive and support a GESI framework. Furthermore, the British Antarctic Survey is committed to creating a workplace that is fair and inclusive and welcomes diversity, with a strong commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (<https://www.bas.ac.uk/jobs/working-for-bas/our-cultural-values-equality-and-diversity/>). Since 2014, BAS has been a member of the Athena Swan Charter and is proud to hold an Athena Swan Bronze Award. Our project partners at Birdlife International are equally committed to social inclusion. One of the core values of Birdlife international is 'diverse by nature' ([https://www.birdlife.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/#:~:text=At%20BirdLife%20International%2C%20we%20harness%20collective%20power,our%20core%20values%20is%20'Diverse%20by%20Nature'](https://www.birdlife.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/#:~:text=At%20BirdLife%20International%2C%20we%20harness%20collective%20power,our%20core%20values%20is%20'Diverse%20by%20Nature'.).) with gender and social inclusion a major consideration during the recruitment process.

2. Attitudes, customs and beliefs: all project staff have similar attitudes including respect for one another. The attitudes of all of the project team ensure that people feel confident and comfortable speaking freely and participating meaningfully.

3. Environment: all members of the project team are vulnerable to the same environmental stressors and these do not impact women more than men.

4. Roles and responsibilities: the PI is a junior female scientist, and the main co-I is a senior male scientist. This has enabled the senior scientist to support and mentor the junior scientist throughout the project. Indeed, the mentoring and guidance provided by the senior scientist has empowered the female scientist and provided her with skills and the confidence to lead Antarctic fieldwork.

In addition, the PI became pregnant and was unable to undertake fieldwork after the first field season. The male co-I was able to do the fieldwork in the following 2 seasons, whilst allowing the PI to maintain a lead on the rest of the project. Following maternity leave, the PI has maintained her leading status, whilst working part time, with full support of the male Co-I. As such, there have been no barriers to accessing different roles as a result of gender or social group.

5: Representation: The composition of the team was decided during discussions between the PI and the main co-I as the co-I helped the PI to develop the project. No one was recruited specifically for the project, the team members were already in positions where this could become part of their job criteria. As such we were not able to account for gender or barriers to particular social groups when developing the team. However, both BAS and Birdlife are progressive organisations and the rest of the project team remains gender balanced. In addition to the female PI and the male co-I at BAS, the project team involves 3 members of staff at Birdlife International- a senior female team lead, a senior male team lead and a more junior female representative.

6. Resources: There is no variability in access to resources and services across the project team.

## Checklist for submission

Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review</b> ? You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate.	
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project</b> ?	
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a>	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	