

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

Project reference	DPLUS127
Project title	Improving reef resilience through sustainable fishery management on Diego Garcia
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT)
Lead organisation	Zoological Society of London
Partner(s)	Bangor University and University of Guam
Project leader	Dr David Curnick
Report date and number	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	N/A

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 started on the 1st of August and therefore limited progress has been undertaken within this reporting period (August-September). Referring to our scheduled activities in the implementation timetable for the project, we have:

1.1 Review and analyse existing MWR logbook data and protocols.

These data are currently being reviewed by Dr David Curnick and, as per the implementation table, this activity continues into Y1Q4.

1.2 Update and co-develop logbook data entry protocols with key MWR fishery and marina staff.

Dr Curnick has worked with the BIOT Environment Officer and Chief Science Advisor to review and update the logbook data entry requirements. This has included a new requirement to report the number of fish landed alongside the total weight of fish caught. The team have also provided comments and input on an updated fisheries regulation leaflet. BIOTA are leading the production and publication of this leaflet and other educational materials, which are due to be disseminated in Q1 of 2022 and after our initial baseline surveys and participatory mapping activities.

1.3 Review analyse, and report on existing creel survey data.

These data were not made available to the project during the reporting period and therefore no progress was made on this activity during August or October. However, these data were provided in October 2021 and, as per the implementation table, will be analysed during Y1Q4.

1.4 Participatory mapping approach designed and implemented for each fishery; and 3.2 Develop and conduct focus group sessions to assess awareness and perceptions of existing regulations, and relevant behaviours.

Dr Claire Collins is leading these activities but joined the project slightly later than planned (October 1st) as she completed a previous contract. However, work is already under way to design the participatory mapping approach and focus group sessions. As per the implementation table, this activity continues into Y1Q4. At the time of writing (although outside of this reporting period), this has included calls with the BIOT Environment Officer and Blue Belt representatives at the Marine Management Organisation to co-develop our approach. This will

then be trialled and implemented ahead of and during the planned expedition to Diego Garcia in January 2022.

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.

Changes to diving safety requirements delayed the submission of the expedition request form. However, we are in regular contact with the BIOT Administration and this delay should not impact the timing of our first expedition in Q1 of 2022.

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.

Not within this reporting period.

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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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**