

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: 31st October 2023

Project reference	DPLUS 130
Project title	Sustainable sargassum management in Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat
Lead partner	The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Partner(s)	Department of Natural Resources – Anguilla Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration – BVI Department of Environment – Montserrat Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West Indies (CERMES) Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission
Project leader	Yasa Belmar
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	October 31, 2023 (HYR2)
Project website/blog/social media	https://canari.org/darwin-sargassum-ots/

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).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Output 1 – Strengthening the evidence base for decision-making

No activities were scheduled under Output 1 for the period. Stakeholders continued to utilise the participatory sargassum research and monitoring framework developed in Year 2.

Output 2 – Mobilising knowledge for action

The project was featured on [an episode of the Sargassum Podcast](#). This episode raised awareness of how drones are being used to monitor and map the impacts of sargassum influxes in Montserrat.

Media interviews were also conducted in each OT during in-person training workshops. These interviews helped to raise awareness of best practices for sustainable sargassum management. CANARI is following up to get copies of the media clips and these will be included as relevant in the next reporting period.

Planning has begun for awareness-raising activities on best practices and innovations for managing sargassum influxes in each OT to be undertaken during Q3 and Q4.

Output 3 – Improving sargassum management

2-day training of trainers workshops were held in each OT on best practices for sargassum collection, removal and use and rehabilitation of affected areas. The Anguilla workshop was held from May 4-5, 2023 (see Appendix 1), Montserrat from May 23-24, 2023 (see Appendix 2) and the Virgin Islands from May 30-31, 2023 (see Appendix 3). In total, 67 people participated in the workshops.

OT stakeholders participated in the 5th virtual meeting of the Regional Sargassum Action Learning Network (ALN) with other government, civil society, private sector, academic and technical/intergovernmental agency stakeholders working in the Eastern Caribbean region to support knowledge exchange, learning and partnerships to improve management and adaptation to sargassum influxes. The topic of this meeting was “Viable Options for Sargassum Removal and Use in the Caribbean”. Twenty-three persons participated in this meeting. See the report of the 5th ALN meeting at Appendix 4.

The appendices to this report can be accessed as follows via this Dropbox links:

Appendix 1: [Report on Anguilla Workshop](#)

Appendix 2: [Report on Montserrat Workshop](#)

Appendix 3: [Report on the Virgin Islands Workshop](#)

Appendix 4: [Presentations and recordings of the 5th ALN meeting](#)

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.

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

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

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

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 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. 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.**

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?

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, 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.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS 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. 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**