

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	DPLUS175
Project title	Enhancing monitoring and prevention of invasive non-native species across UKOTs
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia (on Cyprus), St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, Turks and Caicos Islands
Lead partner	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Partner(s)	Joint Services Health Unit (JSHU)
Project leader	Helen Roy
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.ceh.ac.uk/our-science/projects/enhancing-monitoring-and-prevention-invasive-non-native-species-across-ukots

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).

WP1. On-line open Non-Native Species (NNS) databases developed for all UKOTs with CyDAS as a prototype system

1.1 Baseline information

Information collation is almost complete for St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Anguilla and Gibraltar. Work is ongoing for the other UKOTs but there are a number of notable collaborations that are contributing to this task:

- The Cyprus dataset has been updated by Jakovos Demetriou (Darwin Plus Fellowship DPLUS124) and Kelly Martinou (Project Partner on DPLUS175).
- Information for BAT is being compiled by collaborators within BAS and following the 1.5-day workshop (10-11 October 2023) with BAT experts, it was agreed that DPLUS175 could most usefully provide support by sharing metadata and guidance to ensure interoperability of the data systems.
- Synergies have been identified with DPLUS125: Protecting Anguilla’s biodiversity by building capacity in invasive plant management at Department of Natural Resources (DNaR). The project teams have met and are discussing ways to ensure interoperability of the data systems and also to consider holding a joint workshop across the projects. We will ensure that we seek approval from Darwin Plus for any changes to the work plan.

- The Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species <https://griis.org/> is compiling checklists for many islands including the UKOTs. Therefore, Shyama Pagad (project lead for GRIIS) has been collaborating with DPLUS175 to ensure that there is not duplication of this task.
- DPLUS151 (PI Helen Roy) has datasets that include some non-native species and we are maximising the synergies between the projects.

We are planning to co-develop an approach to assessing impacts of invasive alien species more robustly with experts on Anguilla (change request submitted to Darwin Plus outlining this activity).

1.2 Collaborative development of an approach to derive a relevant biodiversity indicator for INNS on each UKOT

The mini workshop with local experts on Montserrat and the workshops with local experts on Anguilla, Gibraltar and British Antarctic Territory have been informative (summaries of workshops appended). Simple statistics from the database (e.g. total number of INNS across different taxonomic groups) have been identified as the most suitable approach to summarising the information. Participants across all the UKOT workshops completed so far have noted the need for additional background information on priority INNS in the form of factsheets and resources for public engagement. These resources are being co-developed by the project team and UKOT local experts.

1.3 Documented approaches to quantifying impacts, including on natural capital and ecosystem services

Discussions at the workshops have focussed on using simple approaches to categorise the impacts of INNS but with recognition that EICAT could be applied for priority INNS. Additionally, local experts on Montserrat, Anguilla and St Helena have noted the need to consider cultural impacts. A change request has been submitted to co-develop an approach for assessing cultural impacts.

1.4 One workshop with each of the UKOTs

Meetings have been held with all UKOTs (Annex 1) other than Ascension Island and SGGSI, and e-mail exchanges have taken place for these two UKOTs.

In-person workshops have been held with St Helena (although noting this was during a visit for a project funded through the Non-Native Species Secretariat and the project team is planning a further visit – probably January 2024 – is being planned), Anguilla, Montserrat, Gibraltar and British Antarctic Territory. The feedback from the workshops has been excellent and informed the delivery of activities across the project.

In-person workshops are planned for St Helena, Anguilla, Montserrat and Cyprus in Y2Q4 (subject to approval through change request). Plans will be made to meet with BIOT experts in London in Y2Q4 or Y3. An opportunity has been identified to co-align a workshop with DPLUS125 for all Caribbean UKOTs in Y3 and discussions are ongoing to consider the detail prior to submission of a further change request. An in-person workshop on the Falkland Islands is also planned for Y3.

On-line workshops will be planned for Pitcairn and Tristan da Cunha in Y3.

Information for the Ascension Islands and South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands will be collated by the project team because local experts have time constraints that will limit their involvement.

WP 2 INNS monitoring and surveillance scoping report and outline design of relevant initiative

2.1 One workshop with each of the clusters of UKOTs using consensus methods to prioritise approaches including citizen science opportunities

The workshops outlined in WP1 have delivered priority approaches for monitoring in Anguilla, Montserrat, Gibraltar and British Antarctic Territory.

2.2 Collaborative development of at least one relevant monitoring initiative

For all UKOTs iNaturalist is considered to have potential for enhancing INNS information and will be promoted by the local experts. Additional information on priority INNS has been identified as a need and the co-development of resources is underway for engaging multiple stakeholders in recording INNS.

2.3 At least 3 to 10 users (depending on UKOT) registered within 3 months of launch of on-line recording

The number of records received through iNaturalist will be used to evaluate the number of users and INNS information. There has been considerable enthusiasm for iNaturalist across the UKOTs and a webinar early in 2023 will provide further information on expanding use.

WP3 Predictive modelling tools and outputs available to inform biosecurity specifically arrival and spread of INNS including during extreme weather events

Given the lack of available climate data at appropriate scales the project team are developing an approach to co-develop conceptual models. Priority INNS have been agreed through the workshops described in WP1 and these will be the focus going forward. Previous studies led by the project team used approaches to score the probability of spread of INNS within UKOTs (St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Anguilla and Turks and Caicos Islands) and this approach will be extended to include extreme climate events.

Progress on activities outlined through the measurable indicators 3.1-3.4 through Y2Q3 and Y2Q4.

WP4 On-line resources and published research outputs produced and shared with UKOT communities through collaboratively and inclusively developed dissemination materials

4.1 Journal article providing descriptive summary of INNS on UKOTS by Y2

The article will be delayed to Y3 to enable further data to be collated.

4.2 Demonstration and training workshops (one per UKOT with two to 15 participants per UKOT) on maintaining on-line databases and data flow

The databases have been discussed with all participating UKOTs and the training (including opportunities for local experts to provide feedback and suggestions on the structure) have been completed for St Helena, Anguilla, Montserrat, Gibraltar and British Antarctic Territory.

Opportunities to collaborate with Selene Gough (Darwin Fellow

<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DPLUS194/>) have been extremely beneficial in increasing information availability and engagement with the data systems on St Helena.

Ongoing collaborations with Darwin Fellows on Cyprus including Jakovos Demetriou

<https://darwinplus.org.uk/project/DPLUS200/> have enabled further developments of the CyDAS data system and knowledge sharing with other UKOTs. Indeed, presentations and discussions on CyDAS from Jakovos Demetriou (Darwin Fellow

<https://darwinplus.org.uk/project/DPLUS200/>) and Kelly Martinou (Project Partner) have been very well-received by collaborators across UKOTs.

4.3 Final virtual webinar with all UKOTs to deliver priority training on INNS data flow

Planned for Y3 but an additional webinar will be held in Y2Q4 to update all UKOTs on progress so far. A newsletter has also been circulated to all UKOTs

([INNS Information Portal Newsletter Aug2023.pdf \(ceh.ac.uk\)](#)).

4.4 Three popular articles and three information sheets

Two popular articles have been published following the workshops on [Anguilla](#) and [Gibraltar](#).

Information sheets are being prepared for priority INNS on Anguilla, Gibraltar and British

Antarctic Territory. The information sheets for Anguilla (Green Iguana and Little Fire Ant) will have applicability for all the Caribbean UKOTs.

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.

Information for the Ascension Islands and South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands will be collated by the project team because local experts have time constraints that will limit their involvement.

A revised workshop schedule has been submitted as a change request to increase the number of in person activities through the project.

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 just submitted

Change request reference if known: DPLUS175 CR-template-October 23 Roy 4

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 x 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?

We are hoping to have two workshops in the final year:

Cross Caribbean workshop perhaps convened with DPLUS125 – this is under discussion with the DPLUS125 project team and would be subject to approval from Darwin Plus

Falkland Islands – workshop yet to be organised

We have submitted a change request for the workplan and will submit a further change request for the financial implications.

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**