

Applicant: **Butt, Charlie**
Organisation: **RSPB**
Funding Sought: **£599,185.00**

DPR11S2\1013

Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

Great & Little Tobago Islands are uninhabited National Park islands internationally recognised as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and a Tropical Important Plant Area (Great Tobago only). Their diverse and endemic floral habitats are highly threatened by feral goat grazing and competition from invasive non-native plants. This project will pioneer the combined removal of all feral goats and emergent invasive plants from both islands, enabling their ecosystems to recover, increasing their climate resilience and developing local plant eradication capacity.

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Mr
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GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	RSPB
Phone (Mobile)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
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Section 2 - Title & Summary

Q3. Project Title:

Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. DPR11S1\1123

DPR11S1_1045

Q4. Summary of project

Please provide a brief summary of your project: the problem it is trying to address, its aims, and the key activities you plan to undertake.

Successful Darwin Plus Main projects in Round 11 must demonstrate substantial measurable outcomes in at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus either by the end of the project's implementation or via evidenced mechanisms for post-project delivery.

Preference will be given to discrete projects implementing existing identified environmental solutions on the ground.

The broad themes of Darwin Plus Main are:

- **Biodiversity:** improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
- **Climate change:** responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;
- **Environmental quality:** improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
- **Capability and capacity building:** enhancing the capacity within OTs to support the environment in the short- and long-term.

Please write this summary for a non-technical audience.

Great & Little Tobago Islands are uninhabited National Park islands internationally recognised as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and a Tropical Important Plant Area (Great Tobago only). Their diverse and endemic floral habitats are highly threatened by feral goat grazing and competition from invasive non-native plants. This project will pioneer the combined removal of all feral goats and emergent invasive plants from both islands, enabling their ecosystems to recover, increasing their climate resilience and developing local plant eradication capacity.

Section 3 - UKOT(s), Dates & Budget Summary

Q5. UKOT(s)

Which UK Overseas Territory(ies) will your project be working in?

British Virgin Islands (BVI)

* if you have indicated a territory group with an asterisk, please give detail on which territories you are working on here:

No Response

In addition to the UKOTs you have indicated, will your project directly benefit any other Territories or country(ies)?

No

Q6. Project dates

Start date:

01 April 2023

End date:

30 March 2026

Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):

3 years

Q7. Budget summary

Year:	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total request
Amount:	£253,456.00	£147,654.00	£198,075.00	£599,185.00

Q8. Proportion of Darwin Plus budget expected to be expended in UKOTs (%)



Q9a. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

The RSPB project lead, Charlie Butt, will contribute most of their allocated time to the project as match funding (total value:

██████). As Darwin Plus guidelines prohibit grant funds from being used to purchase arms and ammunition, these costs will be contributed by RSPB (total value: ██████). Finally, RSPB's overheads will also be largely in-kind with a minimal amount claimed against the project. The National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands will be making their boat available to the project which will provide a substantial contribution towards match funding arrangements (██████). Nutshell Productions, the independent film producer, will contribute around ██████ of their overall costs to the project (██████).

Q9b. Total confirmed & unconfirmed matched funding (£) ██████

Q9c. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you fund the project if you don't manage to secure this?

N/A

Section 4 - Problem statement

Q10. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in the UKOTs, relating to at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus.

For example, what are the specific threats to the environment that the project will attempt to address? Why are they relevant, for whom? How did you identify these problems? How will your proposed project help? Please cite the evidence you are using to support your assessment of the problem (references can be listed in your additional attached PDF document).

Great Tobago & Little Tobago National Parks are two uninhabited islands owned and managed by the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI). Great Tobago (85ha) is very significant from a biodiversity perspective, especially for plants and birds. It is classified as an Important Bird Area (IBA) due to its globally important population of magnificent frigatebirds *Fregata magnificens* – the largest colony in the Caribbean - and the island is also a Tropical Important plant Area (TIPA), due to its significant population of globally threatened *Agave missionum* and other species of conservation importance. Neighbouring Little Tobago (22ha) is also a seabird nesting site and likely of floral and reptile significance, but is surrounded by steep cliffs so has received little research attention to date due to its limited accessibility.

Feral goats have been documented worldwide as having devastating impacts on native island flora and fauna (Campbell & Donlan, 2005). They are present on both islands, significantly threatening the biodiversity values and environmental condition of these National Parks, whose wildlife evolved in the absence of mammalian herbivores. A 2014 report 'Vegetation monitoring on Great Tobago, BVI; Kew baseline survey findings and recommendations', highlighted the severity of the issue, stating that "grazing damage was observed on many individuals and no seedling recruitment was observed suggesting that the goats are impacting species ability to reproduce sexually." Intense grazing pressure has also significantly exacerbated erosion, which is now very severe on the steeper slopes. On Great Tobago, the consequent landslides have already destroyed some of the trees hosting the Magnificent Frigatebird colony, and the remaining trees are threatened, jeopardising the survival of the Caribbean's largest colony.

As well as the feral goats, at least four non-native invasive plant species are present and competing with native endemic flora on Great Tobago.

In 2014, DEFRA-funded research analysed over 2,500 islands across all the Territories and concluded that the Tobagos were in the top 70 highest priority for invasive species eradications. An incomplete feral goat eradication attempt in the mid to late-2010s relied on limited local firearm capacity and was ultimately derailed by the catastrophic category 5 hurricane Irma in 2017. The goat populations are now believed to have fully recovered to c.700+ individuals, found right across both these steep islands.

Eradicating the goats will allow the recovery/re-introduction of native plants, protect the forest for key colonies of tree-nesting seabirds, prevent erosion and reduce sedimentation in the marine environment. As removing the goats could

enable the four known invasive plant species on Great Tobago to boom in the absence of grazing pressure, this project will also aim to eradicate all emergent individuals of these invasive species, plus any invasive plant species found on Little Tobago.

The native habitats will therefore be able to thrive free from competition, significantly restoring and improving the biodiversity value and environmental condition of these two National Park islands and providing the first successful example of a feral goat eradication from any BVI Protected Area.

Section 5 - Environmental Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q11. Environmental Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Please detail how your project will contribute to the aims of the national and/or international agreement(s) your project is targeting. What key OT Government priorities and themes will it address and how? You should also consider local, territory specific agreements and action plans here. Letters of support from UKOT Government partners/stakeholders should also make clear reference to the agreements/action plans your project is contributing towards.

Note: No additional significance will be ascribed for projects that report contributions to more than one agreement.

International Agreements:

This project supports UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 to 'protect, restore...terrestrial ecosystems...and halt biodiversity loss', in particular SDG Target 15.8 'to... significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species'. As a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), BVI is committed to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, in this instance Target 9 (to identify, control and/or eradicate invasive alien species), Target 11 (effective management of Protected Areas), and Target 15 (restoration of degraded ecosystems). The CBD Post 2020 framework outlines 2030 Action Targets, which includes Target 5 - '...manage, and where possible control, pathways for the introduction of invasive alien species... and control or eradicate invasive alien species to eliminate or reduce their impacts, including in at least [50%] of priority sites.

UK Government Priorities:

Invasive species removal is a named priority on DEFRA's UKOTs Biodiversity Strategy (2014), with invasive non-native species declared a primary threat to biodiversity in the UKOTs. This project will deliver against the 25-Year Environment Plan (2018) target 'to prevent human induced extinction or loss of known threatened species in England and the Overseas Territories', and strategic priority ii of the Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy (2010) to eradicate or control invasive species that have already become established.

In-Territory Commitments and Priorities

The BVI is a member state of the OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States), and as such is committed to the Revised Treaty of Basseterre (RTB) and the implementation of the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability to minimise environmental vulnerability, improve environmental management and protect the region's natural resources for optimal social and economic benefits. Objective 2 outlines a commitment to 'Minimise the threats to the Eastern Caribbean from invasive alien species... and enhance biosafety and biosecurity.'

The project will also contribute to Goals 1 (to preserve the natural and historical heritage of the British Virgin Islands) and 5 (to improve understanding of the life-supporting processes and other benefits provided by natural ecosystems) of the BVI Protected Area System Plan (2007-2017), the objectives of the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), and the Environmental Charter of the BVI commitment Principle 7, 'to safeguard and restore native species...and control or eradicate invasive species'.

Eradicating goats from the Tobagos has been a goal of the NPTVI for over two decades. The BVI Protected Areas System Plan (2007-2017) identified the Tobagos National Parks as Habitat and Species Management Areas, equivalent to IUCN Category IV. 'These areas serve an important role in the protection and survival of wildlife, where the protection of wildlife habitat is essential to the well-being of nationally or locally-important wild plants or to resident or migratory wild animals, and where specific human manipulation and active intervention are required to ensure maintenance of such habitats'.

Section 6 - Method, Project Stakeholders, Gender, Change Expected, Pathway to Change & Exit Strategy

Q12. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- How have you reflected on and incorporated evidence and lessons learnt from past and present activities and projects in the design of this project?
- The need for this work and a justification of your proposed approach.
- How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).
- How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, etc.).

An EU BEST-funded goat eradication attempt on the Tobagos (2013-2015) removed over 700 goats and reduced the population to c.40 via three hunting trips by specialists from DEFRA's Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA). One local NPTVI staff member was trained to finish off the eradication post-project, but their solo capacity, and the strict regulatory requirement to always have a Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (RVIPF) Officer present, meant insufficient hunting days were achieved before the next breeding season began. NPTVI then aimed to complete the eradication via the small DPLUS043 (2016-2018), but this was interrupted by the category 5 Hurricane Irma in 2017 which destroyed much of NPTVI's equipment and infrastructure.

At NPTVI's request, this goat eradication proposal focuses entirely on utilising external APHA capacity to remove the goats, with double the number of hunting trips scheduled (six) to ensure success and project resilience in the face of potential hurricanes.

The plant monitoring and invasive plant plans are informed by field surveys of Great Tobago's vegetation undertaken by Kew and NPTVI between 2015 and 2019. These surveys identified 3 habitat types which should be monitored post goat eradication. They also identified the four invasive plant species with a high-risk potential. In 2017, five permanent plots (each 100m²) were established using a random stratified approach to cover each vegetation type. The suitability of these will be reviewed in Year 1 to establish whether these are sufficient to provide an effective post-removal monitoring scheme, or modified accordingly. Kew will be a partner on this project to maintain the plant monitoring expertise and continuity. We will also contract Indigena, a specialist invasive plant consultancy who bring lessons learnt from six successful plant eradications on South Georgia, plus Nutshell Productions, an award-winning conservation filmmaker experienced with creating BVI environment films.

Output 1: Native and invasive plant baselines established and recorded

Great Tobago: Re-survey the flora using the established methodology in Years 1 and 3. Fixed point and time-lapse photography will be used to document changes over time.

Little Tobago: NPTVI and Kew conduct the first ever formal vegetation survey, accessing via helicopter. Analysis of aerial imagery will inform a habitat classification which will then be ground-truthed and a species inventory undertaken. A report from this survey will provide the pre-eradication baselines for endemic plants, plant diversity, vegetation coverage and invasive plants, mapping with GIS.

Professional filming will capture the pre-eradication baseline on both islands for post-project education and outreach.

Output 2: Feral goats eradicated from Great and Little Tobago National Parks

The goats will be eradicated by two experienced and professionally qualified UK Government firearms agents from APHA with previous goat-culling experience on these islands. They will visit six times (twice per year), outside of prime hurricane season, always accompanied on the islands by project partner the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (RVIPF) for legal and safety compliance. A helicopter will be used to ensure safe and successful access to Little Tobago.

The goats will be shot at close range using moderated rifles or targeted from high points with clear long-range safe backstops. Strategically placed salt licks will be used to encourage goats to become habituated to shoot sites. 'Judas goats' (i.e., captured, collared and released dominant males who then find and join other goats) may be used in the later stages to locate and kill the last remaining goats, in addition to NPTVI's thermal-imaging drone. In Year 3, NPTVI will re-survey vegetation and photographic monitoring spots for impact assessment and promotional media to other BVI island owners

with feral goats.

Output 3: Eradication of all emergent invasive plants and long-term capacity built to implement biosecurity and soil seedbank strategies.

An invasive plant eradication strategy, annual workplan, spatial management database and biosecurity plan will be developed with support from Indigena by the end of Q2 year one. If any invasive plants are recorded on Little Tobago (none known from previous brief visits), this will be extended to there too. Five NPTVI staff will receive formal training on best practice agrochemical and chainsaw use, plus biosecurity, in year one from the Indigena experts, with refresher 'learning by doing' training occurring alongside Indigena again in year three. These staff will implement the plant eradication workplan via annual visits.

A long-term NPTVI Invasive Plant Seedbank Control Strategy and Biosecurity Plan will aim to maintain the invasive plant populations at 'zero density' post-project, whereby all individuals capable of reproduction are removed and no further seed is added to the seedbank. Ultimately, this will result in their eradication.

Q13. Project Stakeholders

Who are the stakeholders for this project and how have they been consulted (include local or host government support/engagement where relevant)? Briefly describe what support they will provide and how the project will engage with them.

The main stakeholder in this project is the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI), an arms-length agency of the BVI Government and the statutory authority responsible for managing BVI's protected areas. NPTVI asked RSPB to act as the lead on this project due to their capacity constraints but have been fully involved in the development of this project and consultation with all stakeholders. NPTVI's 'home' Government department, the Ministry of Natural Resources & Labour, have also provided a Letter of Support affirming that this project is a priority for the BVI Government.

RVIPF authorise the use of firearms in the BVI, making their consent and approval essential. RVIPF have been involved at both stages of the project's development, are a project partner, and have identified and put forward experienced Police Officers who will oversee the goat-culling operations. APHA have also been engaged since the outset, have previously worked on the Tobagos, are in direct communication with the RVIPF and will provide the specialist skills to undertake the goat eradication.

RSPB and Kew have worked with NPTVI for more than 20 years delivering effective conservation action through a series of joint projects. We have brought in invasive control consultants, Indigena, who have an excellent track record of invasive species control in natural and protected areas, including working alongside Kew in South Georgia, and have been in direct discussions with NPTVI.

Q14. Gender equality

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Explain how your understanding of gender equality within the context your project, and how is it reflected in your plans. Please summarise how your project will contribute to reducing gender inequality. Applicants should, at a minimum, ensure proposals will not increase inequality and are encouraged to design interventions that proactively contribute to increased gender equality.

As an invasive species removal project based on an uninhabited island, the practical aspects, impacts and benefits of this project are species-focused and geographically isolated from human populations, and so the outcomes will not significantly impact on people (and therefore nor differently across genders).

No new staff are being recruited for this project, but existing staffing to bring on to the project (e.g., the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) sharp shooters) have been selected based purely on expertise and prior experience on the Tobagos. The National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands is our in-territory partner, where core staff are primarily female, including in highly influential senior positions (Director and Deputy Director). The Deputy Director will lead on the project from the NPTVI side. Two female and three male NPTVI staff will receive the safe agro-chemical / plant eradication training, and the NPTVI field team will include male and female staff of varying ages and ethnicities, ensuring fair access to training. The Kew field team includes one male and one female staff member. Kew has recently been awarded the Bronze level Athena Swan

accreditation, in recognition of Kew's good practices towards the advancement of gender equality.

When filming pre-eradication work to utilise in later promotion and engagement campaigns, both male and female practitioners will be showcased and given equal prominence. The filming itself will be led by a female Director / Producer.

As the lead partner, the RSPB is a UN Global Compact signatory, committing to upholding principles such as to 'eliminate discrimination in employment', which is backed up in practice by RSPB policies like 'Whistleblowing' which provide processes for RSPB and project partner staff to raise concerns and launch investigations into any breaches of such policy.

Q15. Change expected

Detail the expected changes this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended) and the potential to scale the approach. Please describe the changes for the environment and, where relevant, for people in the OTs, and how they are linked.

When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail - number of households should be the largest unit used.

The project will enable an evidenced recovery of two threatened National Parks' landscapes and native biodiversity through the elimination of non-native invasive goats and invasive flora. It will improve local knowledge on biodiversity baselines and build safe and best-practice invasive plant eradication capability. The project will be the first ever island eradication of goats in the BVI PA system, paving the way for a further goat eradication on priority islands such as the Prickly Pears. It will also provide a model and inspiration for wider eradication efforts in the BVI, 8 of whose islands have been identified as in the top 25 most important for invasive species eradications across all the UK Overseas Territories (Dawson et al, 2014). Specifically:

Short-term

- Improved knowledge of the pre-eradication variety, abundance and distribution of native, endemic and invasive flora, allowing for appropriate post-eradication monitoring and management.
- All non-native invasive goats (c. 700+) are removed from both Great Tobago and Little Tobago National Parks, eliminating the primary threat to 107 hectares of protected native habitat and providing the first example of successful goat eradication from any BVI Protected Areas.
- All identified and emergent non-native invasive plants are eradicated from the Tobago Islands.
- Five NPTVI staff and at least three BVI resident labourers upskilled via 'training by doing' in plant eradication best practice and safe protocols through working alongside international invasive plant experts for at least two weeks in both years 1 and 3.
- A long-term invasive plant seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan is formally adopted by the NPTVI, enabling final eradication of the four invasive plant species.

Long-term

- The natural vegetation cover on Great and Little Tobago will increase, improving floristic structure and diversity, allowing the recovery of the depleted forest undergrowth, and the regeneration of native flora.
- Recovered native flora increases the climate resilience of the island and its fauna in the face of extreme weather events.
- Increased seabird nesting success through elimination of feral goat trampling and disturbance.
- Increased vegetation cover will help to reduce erosion and landslides, reducing marine sedimentation and protecting the Caribbean's largest nesting Magnificent frigatebird colony.
- Other BVI island goat eradications, such as uninhabited Prickly Pear National Park plus other privately-owned islands, are enabled via the first clear evidence base of the benefits to BVI islands from ungulate removal and inspired by a professional short film showcasing the stark visual difference before/after feral goats.
- The Caribbean has another exemplar invasive species eradication and island restoration case study to inspire and inform similar future projects.

Potential to scale

- NPTVI staff will be enabled to manage and / or eradicate invasive plant species at their other National Park sites and islands, all the rest of which are believed to have invasive plant species present.

Q16. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline why and how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, longer term, your expected Impact.

Great & Little Tobago will become free from invasive goats and emergent non-native plants, and a long-term biosecurity plan and invasive plant seedbank strategy is locally owned and enacted, ensuring the Tobagos achieve and sustain their full ecological potential.

Feral goats are the only grazing animals present, so vegetation will begin to flourish as early as Year 3 after twice-yearly goat-culling trips start in Year 1. The plant baseline will enable the positive impacts of goat eradication to be determined; the images will enable the project to be an inspiration for habitat restorations in BVI and beyond. A complimentary focus on eradicating all emergent invasive plant species will remove an additional pressure on ecosystem recovery and ensure no 'perverse outcomes' from removing goat grazing pressure. NPTVI will develop long-term capacity to implement future seedbank strategies through dedicated training (e.g., safe agrochemical use) and co-working with world-leading experts Kew and Indigena. Taken together, the eradication of all feral goats and emergent non-native plants will eliminate two key threats to the Tobagos' natural ecosystems, allowing natural habitat recovery. Strengthened local capacity will ensure continuation beyond the life of the project and the potential to replicate in other similarly impacted areas in BVI

Q17. Exit Strategy

How will the project reach a sustainable point and continue to deliver benefits post-funding? Will the activities require funding and support from other sources, or will they be mainstreamed in to "business as usual"? How will the required knowledge and skills remain available to sustain the benefits? If relevant, how will your approach be scaled?

Eradication of invasive non-native species from islands is one of the fastest and most effective ways to achieve observable positive impacts on internationally significant biodiversity. Once an eradication is complete, provided the target species do not return (in this case, primarily goats but also plants), then the positive benefits can be realised very quickly.

We believe the risk of a goat re-introduction is extremely small. Whilst BVI people historically placed goats on islands on purpose for hunting, there are very few hunters these days amongst the wider population and the cacti-filled habitats of these hard-to-access islands mean the Tobagos are not a desirable hunting location- zero hunting currently takes place on Great Tobago (and no one can readily access Little Tobago). Nonetheless, NPTVI will be putting clearer signage up that identifies Great Tobago as a National Park and states that hunting is legally forbidden. Post-project screening of a professionally made film showcasing the visual benefits of feral goat eradication on the vegetation, which are expected to be stark given experiences elsewhere (e.g., Redonda, Antigua and Dog Island, Anguilla), will celebrate the achievement as a BVI environmental success and help build Territory-wide awareness and support for keeping the islands goat-free.

NPTVI has statutory responsibility for the management of all BVI Protected Areas and has a core management team who will be able to mainstream the Great Tobago invasive plant seedbank eradication follow-up into their business-as-usual management programme. For this reason, five NPTVI staff are being trained by Kew and Indigena to maximise the likelihood of the expertise being retained in the event of staff turnover down the line. If invasive plants are discovered on Little Tobago, RSPB will commit to working with NPTVI to secure the necessary helicopter time to allow seedbank eradication to happen on that island post-project as well.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

No Response

Section 7 - Risk Management

Q18. Risk Management

Please outline the 6 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the [Risk Guidance](#). This should include at least one Fiduciary, one Safeguarding, and one

Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register using the [Risk Register Template](#) provided, and be prepared to submit this when requested if they are recommended for funding. Do not attach this to your application.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Inherent Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
<p>Fiduciary (Financial) Parks Trust limited capacity hinders ability to manage, coordinate and disburse project funds.</p>	Major	Possible	Possible	The RSPB will take the lead on the project's financial reporting, providing the relevant experience and expertise. Project budget is allocated to a Senior Finance Officer who has led the financial reporting on several Darwin Plus projects in order to provide financial support to the Trust	Minor
<p>Safeguarding Use of firearms with live ammunition on uninhabited island; risks around stray bullets, danger to human life (project staff, tourists, citizens).</p>	Severe	Unlikely	Major	APHA officers are professional UK Government Firearms Specialists with clear risk mitigation protocols, experienced at working safely on the Tobagos. Only shots that have ground in the background will be taken (to absorb the bullet). RVIPF oversee all shooting, enhancing safety and legally closing surrounding waters to passing boat traffic.	Moderate
<p>Delivery Chain There is considerable tightly co-ordinated partner/contractor travel from the UK and New Zealand, which if cancelled/rescheduled at short notice would impact project timelines/NPTVI support.</p>	Moderate	Possible	Major	Trips will take place outside of the main hurricane season to minimise the potential for disruption or cancellation, in visit windows clearly specified by NPTVI. Flights are regular, so will be easy to secure. Covid restrictions will be regularly checked.	Minor
<p>Risk 4 Strong hurricane and / or sea conditions limits access, hampers operations and / or prevents fieldwork or shooting from taking place.</p>	Moderate	Possible	Major	Learning from the previous eradication attempts, we have increased the number of shooting trips from one to two trips per year for three years, leaving enough trips for eradication success. All island visits are planned outside of hurricane season and in periods of traditionally calmer seas.	Moderate

Risk 5 Community or animal rights group may protest the goat cull as unnecessary/cruel and try to stop implementation. This could also threaten any future BVI island eradications if they lack public support.	Major	Likely	Major	NPTVI have already ensured they have the legal authority and both Government and RVIPF support. NPTVI will learn from brief 2013 experience and limit all communications about goat-culling until the eradication is complete. Subsequent communication materials, including professional film, will highlight ecological benefits.	Moderate
Risk 6 Following 'competitive release' from goat predation, non-native species could rapidly increase, undermining the rationale of the project and the effectiveness of native vegetation recovery.	Severe	Possible	Major	Indigena are an internationally renowned expert plant eradication organisation. In Yr1 work will remove all emergent non-native plants. Indigena will train 5 NPTVI staff in invasive plant control, return in Yr3 to ensure success / adapt protocols as required, plus develop a long-term invasive plant strategy for post-project delivery.	Moderate

Section 8 - Implementation Timetable


Q19. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities

Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the Word template as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project.

[Implementation Timetable Template](#)

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and fill/shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out.

 [Tobagos BCF Implementation Timetable](#)

 17/10/2022

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 pdf 129.69 KB

Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Q20. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan

Describe how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Plus projects will need to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an

approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E. For more information, see [Finance Guidance](#).

A Steering Group (SG) will be established at project commencement by the Project Manager, with coordinating support from the part-time Project Officer, comprising at least one senior staff from each of the project partners / contractors, focussed on assessing progress against logframe indicators. The committee will meet at the start of the project and Q4 of Year 1, and twice yearly in years 2 and 3. The project lead and part-time project officers' time allocated to M&E represents about 66 days of the project and represents just under 10% of the budget (aligning with the Darwin Plus Finance Guidelines which recommend M&E costs of between 5-10% of the project value).

As with the current, successful RSPB-led Darwin Plus projects in the Caribbean, RSPB will establish a SharePoint page to keep all project materials, ensuring accessibility to all involved organisations. This will include an M&E plan setup to review progress against the logframe indicators and activities.

The second and third annual project meetings will include an internal evaluation of the project covering technical and financial aspects. Senior staff from participating organisations who are not involved in day-to-day delivery of the project will be invited to semi-independently assess project progress.

Project management communications will include emails, Teams calls and in-country meetings with project partners. Key actions and meeting notes will be kept.

Key monitoring areas and responsibilities:

Output 1 – Sara Barrios of Kew will take primary responsibility for Output 1, establishing native plant baselines whilst Nutshell will lead on the production of pre-eradication baseline film footage, in order to document the islands' recovery.

Output 2 – APHA Firearms Specialists will lead on the goat cull and associated monitoring of the population down to zero, whilst Kew and NPTVI will together monitor changes in the composition and abundance of native flora. Kew and NPTVI will jointly lead on tracking and recording the positive impacts on the habitat and floristic composition and will document their findings.

Output 3 – NPTVI and Indigena will lead on the monitoring and delivery of emergent invasive plant species removal. NPTVI staff will receive training and self-report on the impact of that training. Consultation on the biosecurity plan and its suitability will take place with review by wider RSPB biosecurity policy expertise and will be shared with independent expert partners such as the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat (GBNNS) for comment. A technical advisory group on establishing biosecurity will be established comprised of an expert RSPB staff member, one from NPTVI and one from outside the core project partnership (from GBNNS).

Annual reports and findings will feed into the annual planning cycle, learnings informing action on the ground.

Total project budget for M&E in GBP (this may include Staff, Travel and Subsistence costs)



Percentage of total project budget set aside for M&E (%)



Number of days planned for M&E



Section 10 - Logical Framework

Q21. Logical Framework (logframe)





Darwin Plus projects will be required to monitor and report against their progress towards their Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

[Stage 2 Logframe Template](#)

The **logframe template** (N.B. there is a different template for Stage 1 and Stage 2) needs to be downloaded from Flexi-Grant, completed and uploaded as a PDF

within your Flexi-Grant application – **please do not edit the logframe template structure (other than adding additional Outputs if needed) as this may make your application ineligible.** On the application form, you will be asked to copy the Impact, Outcome and Output statements and activities - these should be the same as in your uploaded logframe.

Please upload your logframe as a PDF document.

-  [Tobagos Stage 2 Logframe FINAL](#)
-  17/10/2022
-  22:36:39
-  pdf 74.25 KB

Impact:

Natural habitats and endemic flora flourish in two National Parks in the absence of feral goats and invasive plants, providing a model for further habitat recovery operations throughout the BVI.

Outcome:

Great & Little Tobago are free from feral goats and emergent non-native plants, and a long-term biosecurity plan and invasive plant seedbank strategy is locally owned and enacted.

Project Outputs

Output 1:

Native plant baselines established, invasive plant surveys updated, and pre-eradication visual materials collected for a 'before/after' eradication communications package.

Output 2:

Great and Little Tobago National Parks become free from feral goats and the initial consequent impacts on native habitats are recorded

Output 3:

Eradication of all emergent invasive plants achieved and long-term capacity-built to implement biosecurity and seedbank strategies.

Output 4:

No Response

Output 5:

No Response

Do you require more Output fields?

It is advised to have fewer than 6 Outputs since this level of detail can be provided at the Activity level.

No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

- 1.1 Carry out desk-based research and review of existing studies and grey literature
- 1.2 1-day refresher training for NPTVI staff in plant identification and survey techniques, led by Kew, plus follow-up 'learning by doing'
- 1.3 Field surveys on Great and Little Tobago to establish native, threatened plant baseline data and set up ongoing

monitoring

1.4 Kew to provide equipment and training to NPTVI to support gathering of photo footage

1.5 Nutshell captures pre-eradication film footage of Great and Little Tobagos plus NPTVI conservationists

2.1 Finalise arrangements for international transport of firearms and ammunition

2.2 Six field visits to Great Tobago and Little Tobago to complete goat eradication work

2.3 Review fixed point photographs and survey data

2.4 Production of vegetation monitoring report

3.1. Source and arrange delivery of necessary plant management equipment (herbicides, sprayers etc)

3.2 Indigena deliver plant management training to NPTVI staff

3.3 NPTVI and Indigena co-develop emergent plant eradication strategy, workplan, spatial management database and biosecurity plan

3.4 NPTVI staff deliver plant eradication workplan with Indigena support

3.5 Field surveys to confirm absence of non-native plants on Great and Little Tobago

3.6 Write long term seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan

Section 11 - Budget and Funding

Q22. Budget

Please complete the template below which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.

[Budget form for projects over £100k](#)

Please ensure you include any co-financing figures in the Budget spreadsheet to clarify the full budget required to deliver this project.


NB: Please state all costs by financial year (1 April to 31 March) and in GBP. Darwin Plus cannot agree any increase in grants once awarded.

Please upload the Lead Partner's financial accounts at the certification page at the end of the application form.

Please upload your completed Darwin Plus Budget Form Excel spreadsheet using the field below.

 [Darwin Tobagos Budget BCF Format FINAL](#)

 17/10/2022

 22:39:24

 xlsx 100.11 KB

Q23. Funding

Q23a. Is this a new initiative or a development of existing work?

New Initiative

Please provide details:

There was a goat eradication attempt on the Tobagos in the 2010s. This project is independent of this, but it aims to complete the work previously attempted. An EU BEST-funded goat eradication project on the Tobagos (2013-2015) removed over 700 goats and reduced the population to c.40 via three hunting trips by specialists from DEFRA's Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA). One local NPTVI staff member was trained to finish off the eradication post-project, but their solo capacity, and the strict regulatory requirement to always have a Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (RVIPF) Officers

present, meant insufficient hunting days were achieved before the next breeding season began and populations recovered. NPTVI then aimed to complete the eradication via the small DPLUS043 (2016-2018), but this was interrupted after the devastating 2017 hurricane Irma, which allowed the goats to reproduce, and the population increased again. All lessons learnt in these previous eradication attempts, including firearm restrictions, adequate time, appropriate methodology, equipment and risk mitigation, are reflected in this project to ensure success this time around.

Q23b. Are you aware of any other individuals/organisations/projects carrying out or applying for funding for similar work?

No

Q24. Balance of budget spend

Defra are keen to see as much Darwin Plus funding as possible directly benefiting OT communities and economies. While it is appreciated that this is not always possible every effort should be made for funds to remain in-Territory.

Explain the thinking behind your budget in terms of where Darwin Plus funds will be spent. What benefits will the Territory/ies see from your budget? What level of the award do you expect will be spent locally? Please explain the decisions behind any Darwin Plus funding that will not be spent locally and how those costs are important for the project.

The project will leave a positive legacy for nature and for the people of the British Virgin Islands through helping return the Tobagos to their natural ecological state and showcasing the impact of a successful invasive eradication project. Approximately █████ of the BCF budget will be spent in-territory. Expenditure will be on covering NPTVI related costs (Overheads), local accommodation, subsistence and local travel, supporting and developing in-territory capacity. Most of the non-local expenditure will be in covering project staff time, staff that will be directly supporting the project, including providing specialist training to NPTVI staff to develop in-territory skills and knowledge. RSPB will support with administration and project management, Kew with local and remote technical support and APHA will provide Firearms Specialists to conduct the operations, as requested by NPTVI. RSPB and Kew have a long history of working with NPTVI and although some these funds will not be spent locally, the investment is seen by NPTVI as a valuable and necessary component of the smooth running of the project (see cover letter).

Q25. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin Plus funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

The emphasis of the project is on people-powered delivery, be it the culling of feral goats or the removal – often by hand – of non-native plants. The same goes for the survey and pre-and post-monitoring. Given this emphasis, there is not a great need for purchase of many or expensive capital items. The main capital items to be purchased are two digital cameras for use by NPTVI and Kew for the purpose of vegetation monitoring. When the project finishes, the items will remain with NPTVI. A drone will be purchased to assist with filming and helping to inform vegetation surveying efforts. The cameras and drone will then continue to be used by NPTVI to inform future monitoring/conservation efforts on Tobagos post-monitoring, as well as on other NPTVI projects in the future. The total cost of capital items represents less than 1% of the overall project budget.

Q26. Value for Money

Please describe why you consider your application to be good value for money including justification of why the measures you will adopt will secure value for money.

Invasive species are a primary threat to island biodiversity, and their removal is amongst the most cost-effective long-term conservation investments possible, normally requiring little follow-on funding bar biosecurity implementation. Despite high initial costs, the returns are substantial. Ecosystems can fully restore, and the effects are in perpetuity. There are

significant expenses when working in the BVI, and the project will support six visits by professional UK Government sharpshooters over three years to provide as much assurance as possible that the eradication goal is met. However, the result will be sustainable feral goat eradications over 107ha of challenging terrain / two National Park islands, a first for the BVI Protected Area network and in clear fulfilment of the Darwin guidelines' top priority of 'implementing existing identified environmental solutions on the ground'. All known emergent invasive plants will also be removed.

The project brings together the most experienced team possible, with partners bringing both world-leading eradications expertise and / or prior experience of working on the Tobagos. The project will have a catalytic effect across the wider Virgins Islands, which has the largest proportion of top 25 priority island eradications of any UK Territory and needs a galvanising conservation success to advance this agenda.

There is generous match funding from the RSPB and project partners (████ of budget), with partners contributing time, equipment and expertise. NPTVI owns a vessel suitable for field work which represents a significant cost-saving, and the costly but legally necessary processes with the RVIPF are all in place.

Section 12 - Safeguarding and Ethics

Q27. Outputs of the project and Open Access

All outputs from Darwin Plus projects should be made available on-line and free to users whenever possible. Please outline how you will achieve this and detail any specific costs you are seeking from Darwin Plus to fund this.

The RSPB is an evidence-based organisation. Open access to data is standard policy. All project data and other relevant outputs will be freely available, and in digital form wherever possible, via the new RSPB UKOTs and Darwin websites, and relevant partner channels.

Detailed reports with geo-referenced maps of native plants will be produced by Kew and NPTVI and retained by both partners post project. NPTVI uses GIS as part of its conservation management. All datasets created under this project will be added to the NPTVI GIS system. As a member of the Virgin Islands Government National GIS Committee, NPTVI also shares conservation data with the BVI National GIS database.

Fixed point and time-lapse photography and professional filming will capture the baseline on island prior to goat eradication to highlight the post-project impact and net environmental benefits to local communities, telling the tale of the islands that are otherwise little known due to their geographical isolation and relative inaccessibility.

This project will produce a long-term Invasive Plant Seedbank Control Strategy and Biosecurity Plan for both islands. Once complete, the work will be made available for peer review and dissemination by the Caribbean Centre for Biosecurity Studies.

Q28. Safeguarding

Projects funded through Darwin Plus must fully protect vulnerable people all of the time, wherever they work. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.

Please confirm the Lead Partner has the following policies in place and that these can be available on request:

Please upload the lead partner's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF on the certification page.

We have a safeguarding policy, which includes a statement of our commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse

Checked

We have attached a copy of our safeguarding policy to this application (file upload on certification page)	Checked
We keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and how they were dealt with	Checked
We have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures to use when allegations and complaints are made, and have clear processes in place for when a disclosure is made	Checked
We share our safeguarding policy with all partners	Checked
We have a whistle-blowing policy which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised	Checked
We have a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours - inside and outside the work place - and make clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards	Checked

Please outline how you will implement your safeguarding policies in practice and ensure that all partners apply the same standards as the Lead Partner.

The RSPB has clear safeguarding policies and procedures which apply to our international work and includes appropriate training for all our staff members working internationally. All RSPB workforce and representatives must act in accordance with this policy without exception. An internal Global Safeguarding Subgroup meets quarterly and oversees and advises on our international safeguarding work. This group includes staff with extensive safeguarding experience as well as representation from staff posted overseas working with partners and local communities.

We have a strong commitment to work closely with all our partners to ensure they adhere to good safeguarding practices, and any subcontractors must adhere to safeguarding requirements. Sub-grants will include our standard Annex outlining the obligations of partners to safeguarding and how they report, record and mitigate any incidents. We will work closely with partners on safeguarding issues and can provide safeguarding advice for partners and are currently in the process of developing a Safeguarding Good Practise Guide for our key international partners which will assist them in strengthening their current policies and procedures. All RSPB workforce and other representatives/project partners are obliged to report any safeguarding concerns following the required RSPB procedure.

Q29. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting the key ethical principles, as outlined in the guidance. Additionally, are there any human rights and/or international humanitarian law risks in relation to your project? If there are, have you carried out an assessment of the impact of those risks, and of measures that may be taken in order to mitigate them? Any risk assessment and mitigation of human rights and/or international humanitarian law risks should be included in the Question 18 on Risk Management.

As a species-focused project on an uninhabited island, the human rights/humanitarian law risks are low. NPTVI is familiar with, and adheres to, the legal and ethical obligations of the British Virgin Islands, including Section 9 of the 2007 constitution.

The RSPB is the lead partner in project delivery at the request of NPTVI. However, using their local knowledge and in-territory relationships, NPTVI have co-led in the project design, bringing unparalleled experience and expertise, ensuring that project design follows best practise and is contextually appropriate.

The health and safety of all project staff is a priority and will be informed by the relevant employing partner's health and safety guidelines. The RSPB will ensure compliance by following its own guidelines and policies (e.g., safety handling equipment, Safeguarding, Modern Slavery, Whistleblowing), and will assume responsibility of monitoring and upholding them across all partner activities on the project.

The Royal Virgin Islands Police Force will oversee the APHA shooting operations to ensure the culling is performed in a safe manner that complies with BVI gun and ammunition laws/health and safety protocols.

Credibility of evidence and research is protected by the experience of project partners and consultants. NPTVI will lead on developing plant baseline-surveys, supported by Kew, world-leading experts in protecting and understanding plants. The invasive plants eradication strategy/biosecurity plan will be developed with support from Indigena, who have worked successfully with the South Georgia Government and twice been commissioned as their expert invasive plant eradication delivery body via competitive tender.

Section 13 - Project Staff

Q30. Project staff

Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Please provide 1-page CVs or job description, further information on who is considered core staff can be found in the [Finance Guidance](#).

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Charlie Butt	Project Leader	10	Checked
Wendy Cain	Finance Support	10	Checked
Project Officer	Project Officer	60	Checked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked


Do you require more fields?

Yes


Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Nancy Pascoe	Deputy Director, Conservation	15	Checked
Cassander Titley O Neal	Executive Director	5	Checked
Site warden	Field staff	20	Checked
Ray Ridley	Firearms Specialist	12	Checked
Jeffrey Sandon	Firearms Specialist	12	Checked
Sara Barrios	Conservation Partnerships Coordinator	20	Checked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	0	Unchecked


Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

Ensure the file is named clearly, consistent with the named individual and role above.

 [Combined CVs Darwin Tobagos](#)

 17/10/2022

 21:54:26

 pdf 1.91 MB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

Yes

Section 14 - Project Partners

Q31. Project partners

Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Partner – i.e. the partner who will administer the grant and coordinate the delivery of the project), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far and planned.

This section should demonstrate the capability and capacity of the Project Partners to successfully deliver the project. Please provide Letters of Support for all project partners or explain why this has not been included.

The partners listed here should correspond to the Delivery Chain Risk Map (within the Risk Register template) which you will be asked to submit if your project is recommended for funding.

Lead partner name: RSPB

Is the Lead Partner based in a UKOT where the project is working? No

Please explain why this project is led from outside the UKOT NPTVI asked RSPB to lead due to capacity constraints. RSPB has a longstanding partnership with and have co-created the project with NPTVI, who have been involved in every project development discussion. RSPB also has experience from managing over 200 nature reserves in ungulate control and invasive plant management best practice.

Website address: <https://www.rspb.org.uk>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The RSPB is a UK-based membership-based organisation with over a million members. It is the largest conservation NGO in the UK and has a considerable track record of successful high-profile projects, many funded by the Darwin initiative. The RSPB has supported long-term conservation initiatives in the Caribbean most recently through the recent project 'Restoring and Safeguarding wetlands of the Caribbean UKOTs' (DPLUS098), which covers the Turks and Caicos, Anguilla and Montserrat and the current projects 'East Caicos Wilderness Area: Protecting the Caribbean's largest uninhabited island' (DPLUS181). The RSPB Caribbean Territories Programme Manager will have strategic oversight of and accountability for the overall project, particularly M&E, with the part-time Project Officer supporting M&E, administration and providing partner support. RSPB will take responsibility for all aspects of project administration. RSPB is the project lead, responsible for overall management and co-ordination, communications, financial management, sub-contracting Indigena & Nutshell productions, monitoring and evaluation. RSPB will also provide technical input from our considerable expertise working on biosecurity and in undertaking successful island restorations.

Allocated budget (proportion or value):



Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)

Yes

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

Have you provided a cover letter to address your Stage 1 feedback?

Yes

Do you have partners involved in the Project?

Yes

1. Partner Name:

National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI)

Website address:

<https://www.bvinp.org>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI) was established 52 years ago and is the local organisation dedicated to national parks management and conservation in the British Virgin Islands. The Trust, together with government partners, manages protected areas spanning habitats as diverse as seabird islands with unique floristic composition – such as the Tobagos -, marine habitats, and forested parks at altitude spanning a terrestrial footprint of 153.67km²

NPTVI is the in-territory partner and responsible for all National Parks in the BVI, including the Tobago Islands. NPTVI will have primary responsibility for co-ordinating local action and developing the plant baseline for Little Tobago and re-establishing a baseline for Great Tobago. The Executive Director will have in-territory accountability, whilst the Deputy Director will manage local efforts and coordinate with partners. NPTVI Wardens will undertake survey work whilst labourers will be recruited temporarily to support the invasive species removal work. Five NPTVI staff will benefit from capacity building around invasive plant management.

The Trust has a strong record of delivery and partnership working, such as the current project current DPLUS084 'Identifying and conserving resilient habitats in the British Virgin Islands', also being undertaken with Kew.

Allocated budget (proportion or value):

£ [REDACTED]

Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)

Yes

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

2. Partner Name:

APHA

Website address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

In the UK, APHA is responsible for identifying and controlling endemic and exotic diseases and pests in animals, plants and bees, and surveillance of new and emerging pests and diseases.

RSPB, NPTVI and APHA worked together on a previous attempt to eradicate goats from Great Tobago in 2013. All three partners have learned from this unsuccessful attempt. For instance, it only comprised of 6 allocated days of shooting resulting in 156 animals killed, whereas this project has allocated 12 days per year for 3 years. One of the constraints with the regime was limited access to the armoury, with firearms locked in a safe at the police station. Whilst firearms regulations have strengthened since 2013, RVIPF will be a partner and will accompany APHA on all shooting trips to ensure legal compliance and H&S.

The two staff involved in the previous effort, Ray Ridley and Jeff Sandon, will be deployed as per the previous effort albeit with increased effort, and concentrating on the optimal time of year (June/July) to ensure success.

Allocated budget (proportion or value): ██████████

Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure) No

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

3. Partner Name: RVIPF

Website address: <http://www.bvi.gov.vg/departments/royal-virgin-islands-police-force-0>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

BVI Government has invested in tackling crime through the provision of stronger anti-firearms laws, and by providing skilled firearms officers familiar with the health and safety issues surrounding the use of firearms.

Previous attempted eradications (without RVIPF as partners) were hampered by access to firearms at the appropriate time, partly due to lack of availability of staff. This project, for the first time, sees RVIPF as a formal partner, with a specific role in supporting APHA with their work in eradicating goats from the Tobago Islands.

Three constables and one sergeant have been allocated to the project by RVIPF. Whilst they have been named and introduced to the project managers in the preparation of this application, by police standard practice they have not been named in this application.

RVIPF Inspector of Police, in direct communication with lead partner informed us that each officer is highly trained in the use of firearms and collectively are presently and actively assigned to RVIPF Armed Response Team. One of their most competent firearm instructors will lead the project team, whilst individually, each officer is a master in their area of expertise, that of an Armed Firearm Officer (AFO).

Allocated budget (proportion or value): ██████████

Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure) No

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes

4. Partner Name: Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Website address: <https://www.kew.org/>

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (Kew) have a long and significant track record, globally and particularly in the British Virgin Islands.

Their flagship initiative is the identification of Tropical Important Plant Areas around the world, and they have been very active in the BVI, due to pre-existing work identifying hotspots of endemism and important sites for regionally significant and threatened plants such as those identified on the Tobago Islands.

Kew have a partnership-focussed ethos in how they work in the OTs. As such, Kew has a decades-long track record of working with the primary in-territory partner, NPTVI, as well as working with the RSPB on a previous successful EU BEST project, which had an emphasis on setting up vegetation plot monitoring on the Tobagos, although this effort was somewhat thwarted by the record-breaking hurricanes of 2017, Irma and Maria.

Sara Barrios, Conservation Partnerships Coordinator, co-authored the 2021 peer-reviewed paper 'Tropical Important Plant Areas, plant species richness and conservation in the British Virgin Islands', having already spent time undertaking scientific work with NPTVI on TIPA identification.

Sara will lead on plant survey work and identification, helping to determine the pre-eradication baseline and produce the technical report summarising the findings.

Allocated budget (proportion or value):

██████████

Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)

Yes

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes

5. Partner Name:

No Response

Website address:

No Response

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project):

No Response

Allocated budget (proportion or value):

£0.00

Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)

Yes
 No

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?

Yes
 No

6. Partner Name: *No Response*

Website address: *No Response*

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capacity to engage with the project): *No Response*

Allocated budget (proportion or value): £0.00





Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure) Yes No





Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation? Yes No





If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

No Response

Please provide a cover letter responding to feedback received at Stage 1 if applicable and a combined PDF of all letters of support.

 [DPR11S2 1013 Letter of response to reviewer comments](#)
 18/10/2022
 10:23:19
 pdf 228.19 KB

 [RSPB Cover Letter Tobagos Restoration](#)
 17/10/2022
 22:55:31
 pdf 149.29 KB

 [Letters of Support](#)
 17/10/2022
 22:20:39
 pdf 1.53 MB

Section 15 - Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Q32. Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Has your organisation been awarded Darwin Plus, Darwin Initiative or Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

Yes

If yes, please provide details of the most recent awards (up to 6 examples).

Reference No	Project Leader	Title
--------------	----------------	-------

DPLUS181	Charlie Butt	East Caicos Wilderness Area: Protecting the Caribbean's largest uninhabited island
DPLUS121	Sarah Havery	Strengthening biosecurity to protect Turks and Caicos' Iguana Islands
DPLUS102	Andy Schofield	Saving Tristan's only native trees and its associated unique bunting
DPLUS098	Charlie Butt	Restoring and safeguarding wetlands of the Caribbean UKOTs
DPLUS095	Jonathan Hall	Strengthening biosecurity for remote Territory communities and their World Heritage
DPLUS076	Cleo Small	Reducing South Georgia albatross mortality in High Seas tuna fisheries

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts?

If yes, please upload these on the certification page. Note that this is not required from Government Agencies.

Yes

Section 16 - Certification

Certification

On behalf of the

Trustees

of

RSPB

I apply for a grant of

[REDACTED]

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for project key project personnel, a cover letter, letters of support, a budget, logframe, Safeguarding Policy and project implementation timetable.
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report are also enclosed.

Checked


Name

Jonathan Hall

Position in the organisation

Head of UKOTs





Signature (please upload e-signature)





 JH Sig
 17/10/2022
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Date





17 October 2022

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.

 [RSPB Audited Accounts 2021-22](#)
 17/10/2022
 22:28:03
 pdf 697.12 KB

 [RSPB Audited Accounts 2020-21](#)
 17/10/2022
 22:28:01
 pdf 1.45 MB

Please upload the Lead Partner's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF

 [RSPB Safeguarding Policy \(July 2022\)](#)
 17/10/2022
 22:28:07
 pdf 956.1 KB

Section 17 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance, including the "Darwin Plus Guidance", "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance", "Risk Guidance" and "Financial Guidance".	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked
I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April - 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have attached my completed logframe and timeline as a PDF using the templates provided.	Checked
I have included a 1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff identified at Question 30, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have included a letter of support from the lead partner and main partner organisation(s), including relevant OT Governments, identified at Question 31, or an explanation of why not.	Checked

I have included a cover letter from the Lead Partner, outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant.	Checked
I have included a copy of the Lead Partner's safeguarding policy, which covers the criteria listed in Question 28.	Checked
I have included a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts for the Lead Partner, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Plus website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Plus website.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

	Activity	No. of months	Year 1 (23/24)				Year 2 (24/25)				Year 3 (25/26)			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Output 1	Native plant baselines established, invasive plant surveys updated, and pre-eradication visual materials collected for a 'before/after' eradication communications package.													
1.1	Carry out desk-based research and review of existing studies and grey literature	1												
1.2	1-day refresher training for NPTVI staff in plant identification and survey techniques, led by Kew, plus follow-up 'learning by doing'	1												
1.3	Field surveys on Great and Little Tobago to collect key plant baseline data and set up ongoing monitoring	1												
1.4	Kew to provide equipment and training to support gathering of photo footage	1												
1.5	1.5 Nutshell captures pre-eradication film footage of Great and Little Tobagos plus NPTVI conservationists	1												
Output 2	Great and Little Tobago National Parks become free from feral goats and the initial consequent impacts on native habitats are recorded.													

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

	Activity	No. of months	Year 1 (23/24)				Year 2 (24/25)				Year 3 (25/26)			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2.1	Finalise arrangements for international transport of firearms and ammunition.	0.5	■	■										
2.2	Six field visits to Great Tobago and Little Tobago to complete goat eradication work.	1		■		■		■		■		■		
2.3	Field surveys to continue vegetation monitoring on Great and Little Tobago.	1		■				■				■		
Output 3	Eradication of all emergent invasive plants achieved and long-term capacity-built to implement biosecurity and seedbank strategies.													
3.1	Source and arrange delivery of necessary plant management equipment (herbicides, sprayers etc)	2	■	■										
3.2	Indigena deliver plant management training to NPTVI staff	0.5		■							■			
3.3	NPTVI and Indigena co-develop emergent plant eradication strategy, workplan, spatial management database and biosecurity plan	6	■	■	■									
3.4	NPTVI staff deliver plant eradication workplan with Indigena support	1		■				■		■		■	■	

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

	Activity	No. of months	Year 1 (23/24)				Year 2 (24/25)				Year 3 (25/26)			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3.5	Field surveys to confirm absence of non-native plants on Great and Little Tobago	2												
3.6	Write long term seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan	12												

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

Project Summary	SMART Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Impact: (Max 30 words) Natural habitats and endemic flora flourish in two National Parks in the absence of feral goats and invasive plants, providing a model for further habitat recovery operations throughout the BVI.</p>			
<p>Outcome: (Max 30 words) Great & Little Tobago are free from feral goats and emergent non-native plants, and a long-term biosecurity plan and invasive plant seedbank strategy is locally owned and enacted.</p>	<p>0.1 By end of Yr3, the first ever successful removal of non-native feral goats from a BVI National Park is documented, following a successful eradication attempt on Great and Little Tobagos</p> <p>0.2 End of project surveys confirm the complete absence of non-native invasive plants by Yr3</p> <p>0.3 A Biosecurity Plan and an Invasive Plant Seedbank Control Strategy for Great and Little Tobago is formally adopted by the NPTVI, being implemented from end of project onwards</p> <p>0.4 Extent of vegetation cover in each National Park increases by at least 10% against a Yr1 baseline by end of project</p>	<p>0.1 Feral goat post-eradication monitoring report; article in local newspaper documenting successful outcome</p> <p>0.2 Time-lapse photographs of the non-native plants taken in Yr1 and end of Yr 3; survey reports</p> <p>0.3 Copy of biosecurity plan and invasive plant seedbank control strategy.</p> <p>0.4 Vegetation monitoring reports; fixed point photographs; vegetation monitoring plots.</p>	<p>Grazing pressure by hundreds of feral goats is a major driver of biodiversity loss and native plant community change, and at least some of these changes are reversible if the goats are removed.</p> <p>A goal of invasive plant eradication is not possible within the three-year timeframe of the project due to the unknown size, distribution and longevity of these species' seedbank in the soil. The primary objective is therefore to reduce and then maintain invasive plant populations at 'zero density', whereby all individuals capable of reproduction are removed and no further seed is added to the seedbank. Ultimately this will result in eradication but determining when exactly that has happened is very difficult.</p>

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

<p>Outputs:</p> <p>1. Native plant baselines established, invasive plant surveys updated, and pre-eradication visual materials collected for a 'before/after' eradication communications package.</p>	<p>1.1 Pre-eradication baseline of endemic plants, plant diversity, vegetation coverage and invasive plants on Great Tobago re-established by end of Yr 1</p> <p>1.2 A first baseline of endemic plants, plant diversity and vegetation coverage is established for Little Tobago by end of Yr 1, along with confirmation of the suspected absence of invasive plants.</p> <p>1.3 Photographic and film footage (on-the-ground and aerial) secured of both islands' pre-eradication ecosystems and local conservationists in action in Year 1.</p>	<p>1.1 Monitoring report, fixed point photographs, vegetation monitoring plots</p> <p>1.2 Monitoring report, fixed point photographs, vegetation monitoring plots</p> <p>1.3 Fixed point and time-lapse photography; hard drive with film footage and sound recordings.</p>	<p>The protocols for vegetation monitoring plots in Great Tobago National Park, developed under a 2015 EU BEST II partnership project between the RSPB, Kew and NPTVI, can be utilised.</p> <p>The vegetation change and recovery will be significant and a professionally made film showing before/after footage would be a showcase for NPTVI's National Park management and a significant inspiration to other island owners in the BVI who also have unmanaged feral goats.</p>
<p>2. Great and Little Tobago National Parks become free from feral goats and the initial consequent impacts on native habitats are recorded.</p>	<p>2.1 Tobago Islands are completely free from invasive goats by the end of Q2 in Year 3</p> <p>2.2 Vegetation monitoring survey reviews changes in fixed point photographs, vegetation monitoring plots and overall island vegetation by end of Yr 3.</p>	<p>2.1 APHA trip reports (x6), Yr 3 monitoring reports.</p> <p>2.2 Fixed point photographs, Vegetation monitoring report</p>	<p>Adverse weather conditions do not affect sea conditions and prevent sharp shooters from accessing the island. This will be mitigated by operating May-August, when sea conditions are calmest, and avoiding the core hurricane season (Sept-Oct). Further mitigation by planning for 2 island visits per year over 3 years (double as many as previous attempt). Finally, by</p>

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

			<p>using a helicopter to access Little Tobago.</p> <p>Goats are missed by shooters; mitigated by use of thermal drone, judas goats, salt licks and expert shooters from APHA.</p> <p>Firearms cannot be accessed at the times needed for the shooting. Mitigated by pre-project via dialogue between APHA and the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force, plus the police joining the project as a formal partner.</p>
<p>3. Eradication of all emergent invasive plants achieved and long-term capacity-built to implement biosecurity and seedbank strategies.</p>	<p>3.1 Five NPTVI staff (3 male/ 2 female) receive training on safe agrochemical use, safe chainsaw use, biosecurity and use of a specialist weed management app by end of Q2 in Yr 1, plus refresher training in Yrs 2 and 3.</p> <p>3.2 Emergent plant eradication strategy, annual work plan, spatial management database and biosecurity plan developed by end of Q2 in Yr 1.</p> <p>3.3 Five NPTVI staff and at least three further BVI resident labourers receive 'training by doing' on plant eradication best practice through working</p>	<p>3.1 Training visit reports, staff pre-/post-training self-assessment questionnaires.</p> <p>3.2 Copy of eradication strategy, annual work plan, spatial database and biosecurity plan.</p> <p>3.3. Staff self-assessment questionnaires. Training visit reports</p> <p>3.4 Vegetation monitoring report.</p> <p>3.5 Copy of Seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan. Photographic evidence of installed biosecurity signage</p>	<p>Every invasive plant can be located and removed. This will be achieved as the project will bring in expert technical expertise to ensure target density zero of non-natives is achieved.</p> <p>Trust staff are willing and able to participate in capacity strengthening opportunities.</p>

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

	<p>alongside international experts for at least two weeks per year.</p> <p>3.4 Invasive non-native plants no longer present on the Tobago Islands by end of project with population density of zero recorded.</p> <p>3.5 Long-term seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan developed by end of Yr3.</p> <p>3.6 Biosecurity plan enhanced following consultation with BVI Government stakeholders by end of Yr3</p>	<p>3.6 BVI Government consultation feedback</p>	
<p>Activities</p> <p>1.1 Carry out desk-based research and review of existing studies and grey literature</p> <p>1.2 1-day refresher training for NPTVI staff in plant identification and survey techniques, led by Kew, plus follow-up 'learning by doing'</p> <p>1.3 Field surveys on Great and Little Tobago to establish native, threatened plant baseline data and set up ongoing monitoring</p> <p>1.4 Kew to provide equipment and training to NPTVI to support gathering of photo footage</p> <p>1.5 Nutshell captures pre-eradication film footage of Great and Little Tobagos plus NPTVI conservationists</p> <p>2.1 Finalise arrangements for international transport of firearms and ammunition</p> <p>2.2 Six field visits to Great Tobago and Little Tobago to complete goat eradication work</p> <p>2.3 Review fixed point photographs and survey data</p> <p>2.4 Production of vegetation monitoring report</p> <p>3.1. Source and arrange delivery of necessary plant management equipment (herbicides, sprayers etc)</p> <p>3.2 Indigena deliver plant management training to NPTVI staff</p>			

Project Title: Habitat Restoration of Great & Little Tobago National Parks (BVI)

- 3.3 NPTVI and Indigena co-develop emergent plant eradication strategy, workplan, spatial management database and biosecurity plan
- 3.4 NPTVI staff deliver plant eradication workplan with Indigena support
- 3.5 Field surveys to confirm absence of non-native plants on Great and Little Tobago
- 3.6 Write long term seedbank control strategy and biosecurity plan