



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



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

Half Year Report

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

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DPLUS206
Project title	Climate impacts on Falkland Islands past, present and future freshwater dynamics
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Falkland Islands (FI)
Lead Organisation	South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI)
Partner(s)	UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and Falkland Islands Government
Project leader	<i>Dr Alastair Baylis</i>
Report date and number	HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/dplus206-climate-impacts-on-falkland-islands-past-present-and-future-freshwater-dynamics/

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

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

The project focus for the last 6 months has been recruitment and planning. I am very pleased to report that we have successfully recruited a project manager, and the planned start date is 01 November 2024. We have continued to engage closely with project partners over the past 6-months, including meetings with the new Falkland Islands Government head of the Department of Agriculture, and our CEH partners. Similarly, as we prepare to commence the work packages, we have reached out to stakeholders, via a project presentation during Farmers week (04 July 2024) to introduce the project. We look forward to November, when the project will be in full-swing!

The project website is set-up and available via:

<https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/dplus206-climate-impacts-on-falkland-islands-past-present-and-future-freshwater-dynamics/>

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.

As yet, no notable problems have been encountered.

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

Discussed with NIRAS:

Yes/ No

Formal Change Request submitted:

Yes/ No

Received confirmation of change acceptance:

Yes/ No

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

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

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 2025)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

NA

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

- clarity is needed on how landowner engagement would be maintained post-project to ensure best implementation of project outcomes;

SAERI has a close working relationship with the Department of Agriculture (DoA). Landowner engagement post-project would be managed through the DoA, with the support of SAERI's GIS Data Officer, which would ultimately be responsibly for maintaining (and updating) data products produced.

- how could the results be used practically to benefit biodiversity and what mechanisms could there be for this? How could the involvement of local conservation NGOs help support the development of biodiversity benefits and long-term sustainability?

Project outputs, including baseline data on FI freshwater dynamics, will provide FIG with key data to support the delivery of national initiatives associated with climate change adaptation and mitigation. For example, a greater understanding of changes in FI freshwater over time, and the relationship with habitats and land use, will focus and enhance terrestrial habitat restoration efforts, and land management. The project will identify options and recommendations for the continued monitoring of freshwater and data tools from the project (e.g., maps) will be made freely available within the Falkland Islands data portal, which combined with workshops, will have a lasting legacy in support of biodiversity. Improved understanding of the impacts of changing climate and land-management on the hydrology of the FI will also help with developing policies to protect and enhance the vast carbon stocks held in Falkland peatlands, which are critically dependent on the maintenance of high-water levels and thus highly vulnerable to loss (leading to CO2 emissions) if exposed to sustained drying.

- consider whether higher resolution datasets from Sentinel have a longer return period than 12 days;

Thank you - we will look at higher resolution datasets from Sentinel. Our Project Manager is yet to commence work packages. However, we can provide further information in our annual report (March 2025).

- it would be encouraging to see examples of existing terrestrial habitat restoration projects and potential scale for adaptation to enhance/sustain biodiversity;

Thank you. Our Project Manager is yet to commence work packages. We will certainly do our best to understand how existing/ongoing habitat restoration projects impact freshwater dynamics. We will provide further information on the feasibility of this, in our next half year report (September 2025).

- will the report card evaluate evidence based on terrestrial climate change impacts, incorporating, but not restricted to, key stakeholder perspectives?

Yes. We will undertake a small review of current state of the knowledge, including stakeholder perspectives.

- indicators for outputs 2 and 3 are timebound to the end of the project, but no milestone indicators are included. Indicators should monitor progress towards outputs, not only completion of an output;

Our log frame for Output 2 and Output 3 now includes a progress report to the Project Management Group by Y2, Q3.

- indicator 0.2 is not a measure of stakeholder understanding/knowledge: attendance at a workshop is an indicator of presence only. Indicators which measure learned and/or applied knowledge would be beneficial;

Our log frame now includes a post-workshop questionnaire to measure change in knowledge/practice.

- incorporate M&E plans into the logframe at the beginning to ensure transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness;

We have included M&E into the logframe. Not that M&E will be developed by the Project Manager (1 Nov 2024 commencement) and will have the sign-off of the Project Management Group, which includes all project partners.

- consider if you can measure benefits to people.

Noted. We will discuss how we can measure benefits to people at the Project Management Group level, once we have our Project Manager in-place. We will report back on this point in our annual report (March 2025).

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	X
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	X
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1 st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	X
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	X
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	X
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	X
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	X
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	X