



**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.

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| Project reference | DPLUS216 |
| Project title | Supporting Atlantic Territories Invertebrate Conservation |
| Country(ies)/territory(ies) | Anguilla, Ascension, Bermuda, and the Falkland Islands |
| Lead Organisation | Buglife |
| Partner(s) | Anguilla National Trust, Bermuda National Trust, Falkland Islands Government, Bermuda Government, Anguilla Government, Species Recovery Trust |
| Project leader | Andrew Whitehouse (Head of Operations at Buglife) |
| Report date and number (e.g. HYR1) | 29/10/2024 HYR1 |
| Project website/blog/social media | https://www.buglife.org.uk/projects/supporting-atlantic-territories-invertebrate-conservation/ |

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.

Although the project started 3 months late due to the delay in confirmation of the success of the funding bid, and the subsequent delay in the recruitment of a Project Manager, good progress has been made. All equipment for starting surveying has been ordered and has arrived or is in transit to Anguilla, Bermuda, or the Falkland Islands. All three aforementioned territories have a detailed plan of sites that will be sampled by local partners from a period of November 2024 to March 2025, with samples being exported to the UK during April-May 2025 for identification in Y2 of the project. One contractor has already been hired who will conduct comprehensive fieldwork on the Falkland Islands.

Initial training delivery is now scheduled for these territories, focusing mainly on use of equipment and how to maximise efficiency in collecting a broad representative range of invertebrates both geographically and seasonally during the work. The Falklands Islands contractor will also assist in delivering in-person training to our island partners. Further training in December or January focused on the identification of certain invertebrate groups is planned, including a comprehensive spider course for all four territories delivered by the Project Manager (an experienced arachnologist). Early links have already been established with expert taxonomists who work on Coleoptera, Hemiptera, and Lepidoptera, and this bodes well for the identification portion of the project's framework. Initial mapping of data for Important Invertebrate Areas (IIAs) has started, using Ascension as a pilot.

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.

The project was unable to start for the first 3 months of funding, due to a delay in getting confirmation of funding. This impacted the start of the project as a result of a three month delay in recruiting the Project Manager, which alone resulted in an underspend [REDACTED]. Within Q1-3, due to the above reasons, there is a further general underspend [REDACTED] at present in the project. Non-employment underspend can be broken down as:

- [REDACTED] - UK travel underspend.
- [REDACTED] - T-shirts for partners (is intended to be spent later, increased from original budget amount [REDACTED] by moving [REDACTED] of PM salary budget line).
- [REDACTED] - Training (most training will now be delivered by the Project Manager)
- [REDACTED] - Recruitment underspend.
- [REDACTED] - UKOT travel underspend due to late start shifting priorities, (but can spend in Y1 in advance of Y2 travel if required).
- [REDACTED] - Uniform and PPE underspend.
- [REDACTED] - Taxonomic experts underspend

We have decided to make a change request in Q4 rather than Q3 once we have a better understanding of the total year's underspend and how best to reassign funds and reforecast spend during the lifetime of the project. We have highlighted this previously in emails to BCF when asking some general questions about filling in the Half Year Report.

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

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| Discussed with NIRAS: | Yes/ No |
|-----------------------|---------|

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|----------------------------------|---------|
| Formal Change Request submitted: | Yes/ No |
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|---|---------|
| 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?

No.

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.

N/A

Checklist for submission

| For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 st April 2024) | |
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| 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. | |
| 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 |

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|--|---|
| 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 |