

New Projects Webinar



Darwin Plus



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

NIRAS-LTS International



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Agenda



- Welcome
- Introduction to the schemes
- The role of the Darwin Secretariat & key personnel
- Introduction to project technical & financial reporting
- Project communications
- Questions

Objectives



- To provide an introduction to the Darwin Initiative
- To 'meet' the Darwin Plus key people and understand their roles
- To get an insight of the administration and reporting requirements under Darwin Plus



Poll



What is your history with Darwin?

- I have no history with Darwin
- My organisation has had a Darwin project before
- I have worked on a Darwin project before
- I have led one or more Darwin projects before

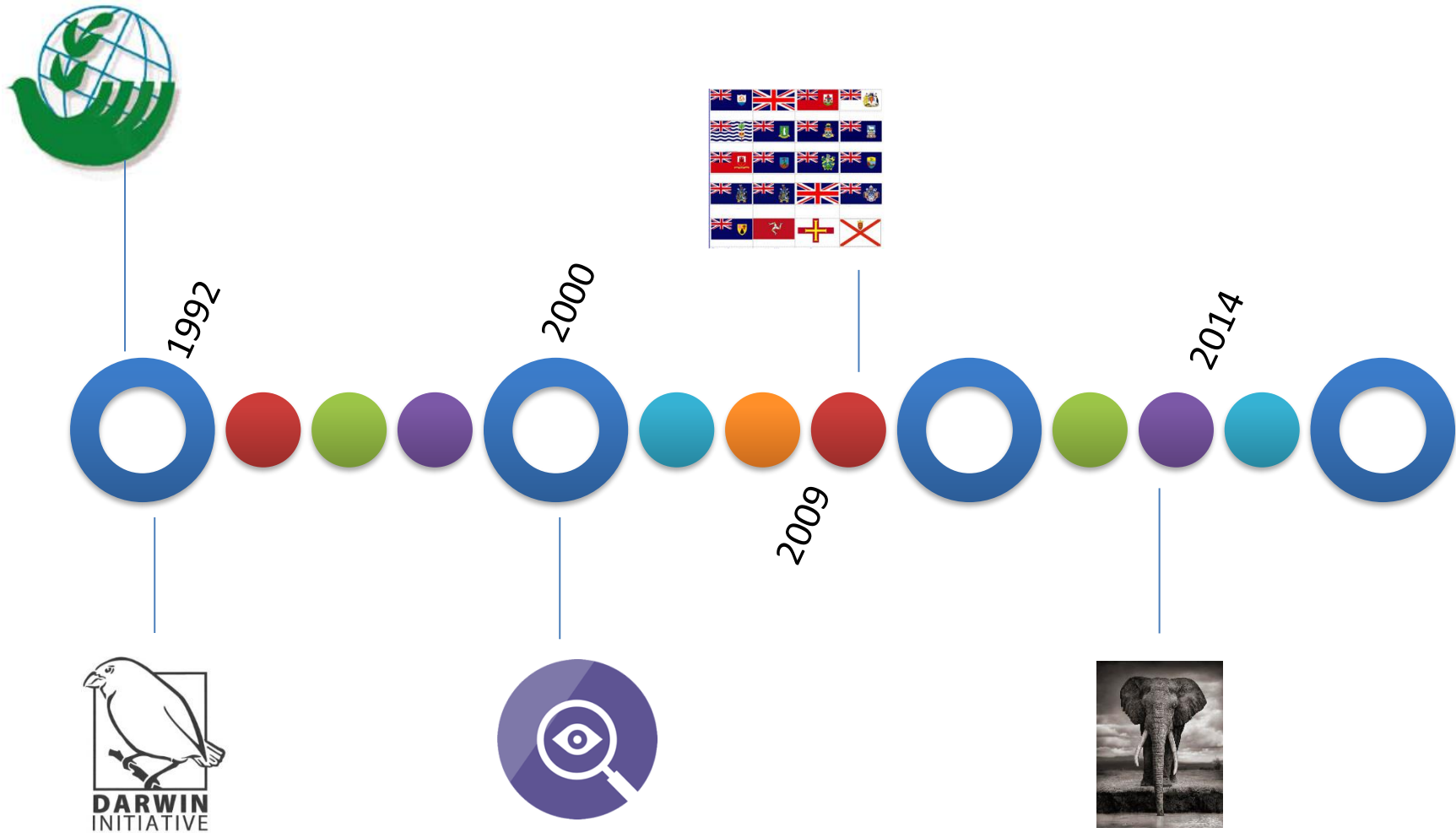
Welcome & Congratulations!



Darwin Plus Round 9

- 54 applications received at Stage 1
- 35 applications invited to Stage 2
(of these, 33 submitted as 2 withdrew)
- **29 new projects funded & 2 D+ fellowships**

The Evolution of the Schemes

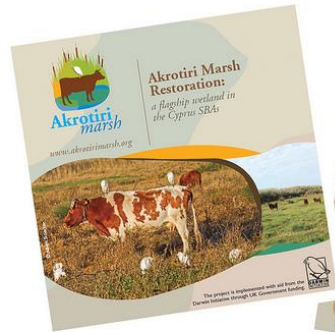


The Schemes



Darwin Plus: Expected to support environment/climate change issues in UKOTs

Fellowship: Fellowships cover experiential or formal training related to natural resource management or environmental policy. Can be up to 24 months in length.



Darwin 'Family'



Darwin & IWT Secretariat (Defra)

Programme Administrators (NIRAS-LTS International)

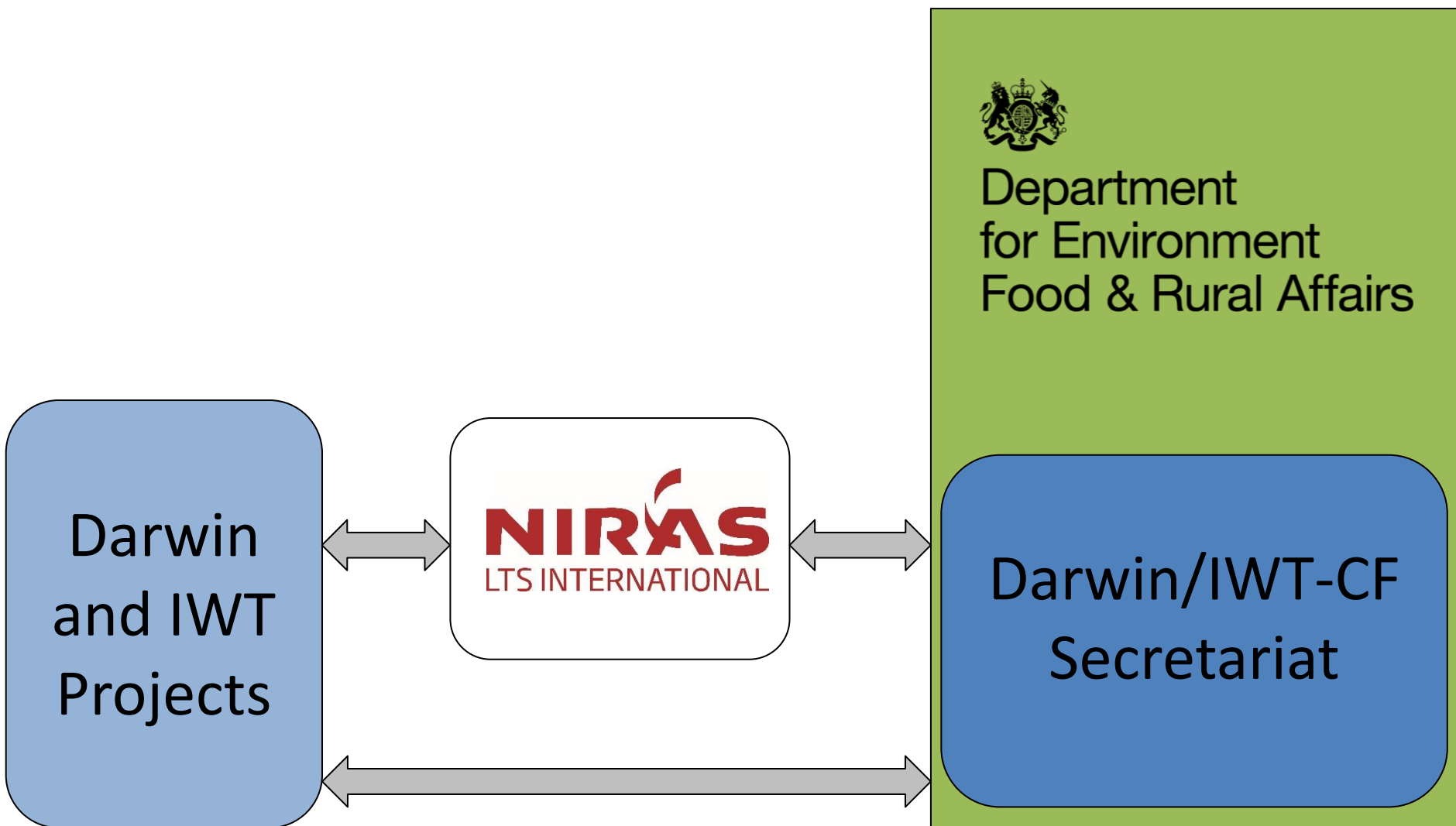
D+, Darwin and IWT-CF projects

Darwin Plus Advisory Group (DPAG)

Darwin Expert Committee (DEC)

Illegal Wildlife Trade Advisory Group (IWTAG)

Who's Who?



Darwin & IWT Secretariat



Doug Gibbs – Darwin Initiative and IWT Challenge Fund

Scott Nelson – Policy Advisor (Darwin Plus)

Lee Lyons – Darwin Plus and Biodiversity in the OTs

Saskia Boardman – Senior Policy Advisor (Darwin Plus and Biodiversity in the OTs)

Chelsea Goodwin – Policy Support

Defra finance team – Financial administration (payment of claims)

The role of the Darwin Secretariat



- Overall management and strategy of Darwin Initiative and IWT-CF
- Ministerial advice (PQs, correspondence, briefings)
- Management of LTS International Contract
- Support to the DEC, DPAG, IWTAG
- DEC/DPAG/IWTAG appointments
- Publicity and events – involving Ministers
- Engagement with overseas Posts

Any questions?



Reporting & Accountability



- There are a number of requirements to ensure the high standard of projects is maintained
- These can be divided into:
 - Project technical reporting
 - Project financial reporting
- Broadly consistent process between schemes



Expectations of projects



- High **quality** and **scientific**
- **Collaborative**
- **Assist** countries to meet their objectives under the various biodiversity conventions for Darwin



Technical Reporting



- Projects required to report twice per year for the duration of their grant:
 - Half Year reports
 - Annual reports
 - Final reports
- Project reports are posted on the website (minus contact details & financial details)



Darwin Plus Fellowships



- Projects are required to submit:
 - Interim report
 - Final report

Interim reports are submitted 1 month after the halfway point.

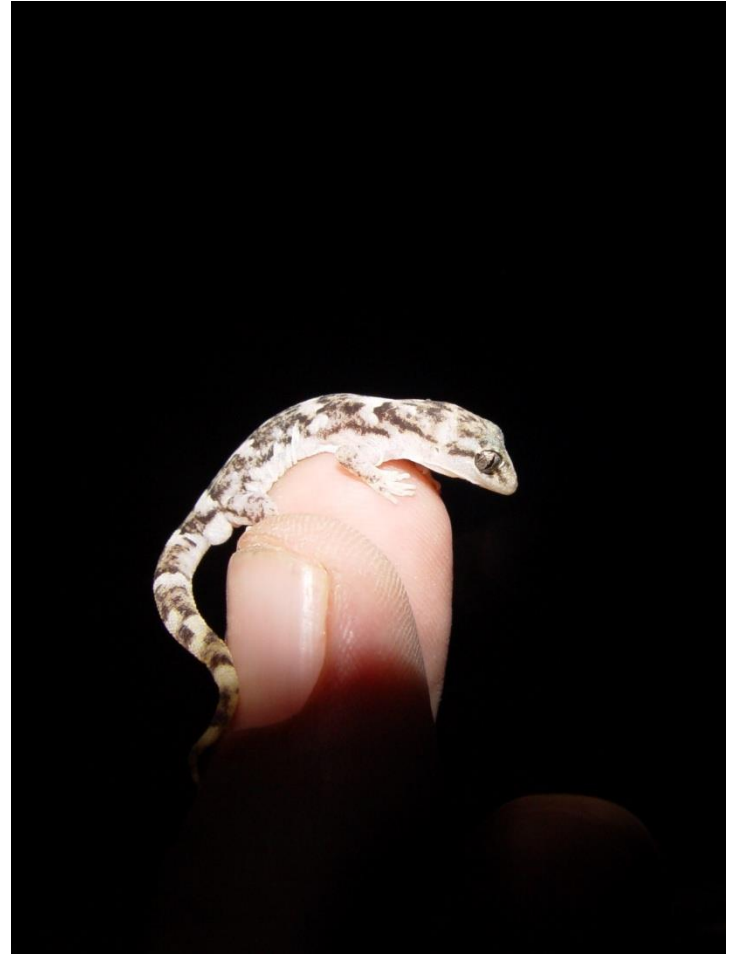
And final reports within 1 month of the end date.



Half Year Reports



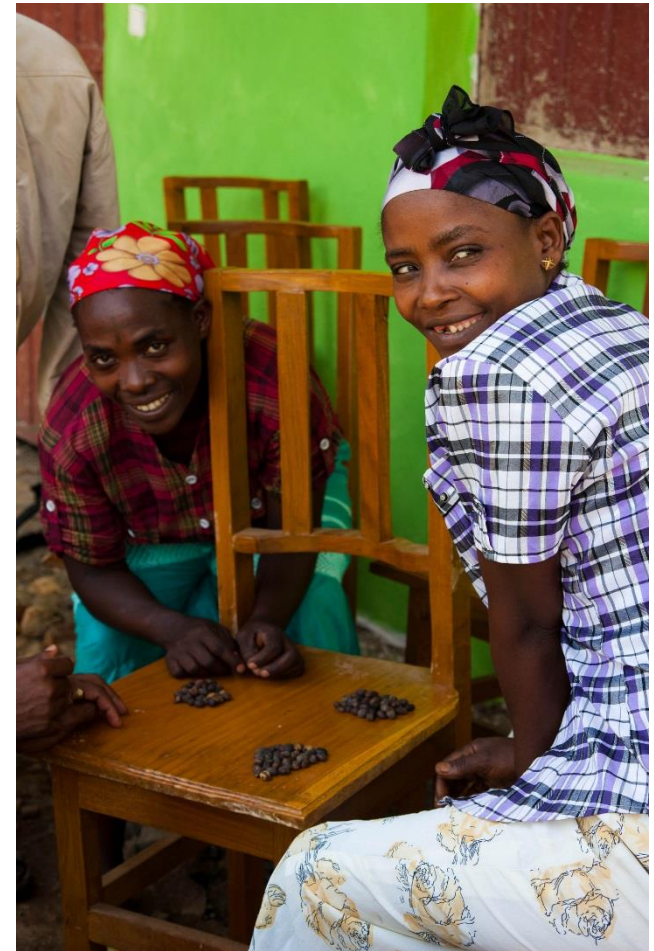
- Provide a brief update on project progress
- Opportunity to discuss queries/issues (also available all year round)
- Submitted by **31st October** annually



Annual Reports



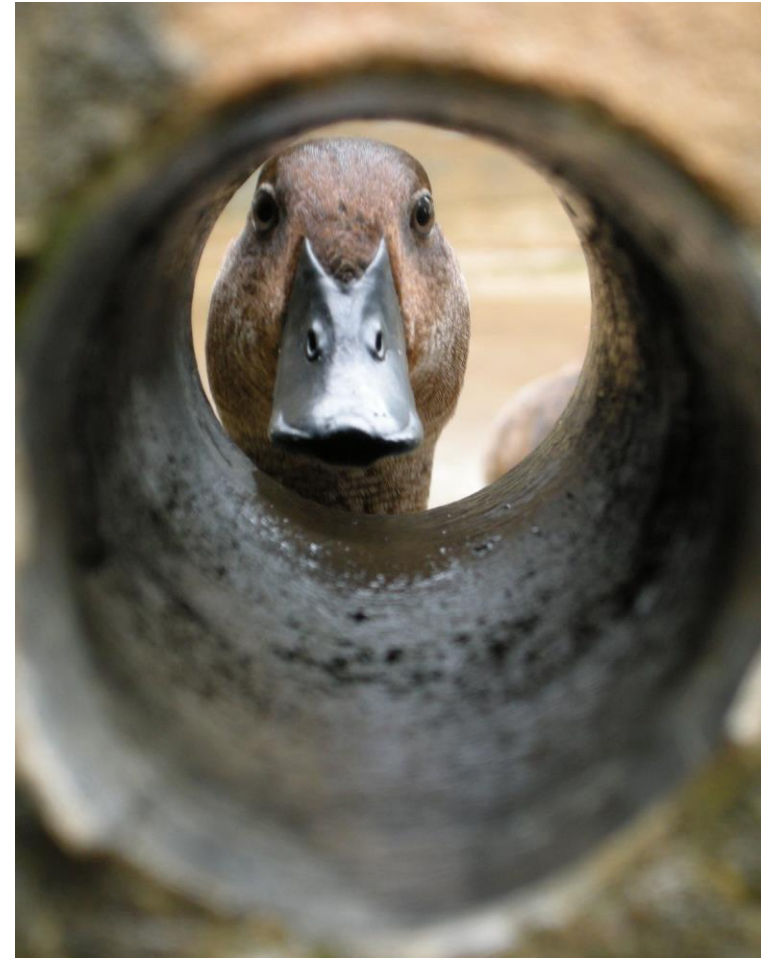
- To detail progress against planned activities, Outputs & Outcome
- Good use of indicators & evidence (means of verification) reduces reporting burden
- Due **30th April** annually



Final Reports



- Provide information on the *overall* success of the project against its proposed outcome, outputs and activities
- Good use of indicators and evidence (means of verification) reduces reporting burden



Reducing the reporting burden



- Report against original application unless changes have been made to logframe
- Significant changes to logframe/design need to be approved
- More tips can be found in the information note [here](#).



Indicators



- Indicators are what will be measured to show progress and outcome
- Should be SMART:



Reporting Evidence – Do's



- Report clearly and concisely
- Make sure you are reporting against the latest (and approved) version of your logframe
- Involve project partners where possible
- We encourage projects to report on what has changed and to provide evidence of these changes
- Ensure that you check the Darwin Plus website prior to submitting your report to ensure that you **are using the latest version of the template** – reporting templates are updated annually
- Ensure evidence submitted is clearly labelled and sign-posted

Reporting Evidence – Do's



Provide evidence to demonstrate where claims come from, for example:

*“Activities 3.3 and 3.4 have largely been completed in Year 3, well ahead of schedule and with a more solid outcome than anticipated since we have progressed the KBA almost to acceptance rather than simply assessing feasibility and producing a draft application. The formal acceptance of the KBA is expected early in Year 4. **Evidence for the indicators and activities under Output 3 is provided in Annex 6 and summarised point-by-point in the Annex 1 logframe.**”*

Move beyond reporting on outputs - include evidence on what has changed

*“Output 1: Project Management structure, monitoring, evaluation and communications tools established. **Considering the baseline that no project management structure was in place before the start of the project, there is now a project management structure and communication tools in place, progress of this output is good.**”*

Reporting Evidence – Don'ts



- Write general statements without evidence, for example:
 - “we are making good progress”*
 - “we believe this is true”*
 - “we think that this progress is adequate”*
- Only list activity outputs e.g. no. of workshops, plans, maps.
- Forget about higher level outcomes and impacts – what has changed and how in terms of biodiversity or environment?

Poll



How is the pace of this webinar?

- Far too slow
- A bit slow
- About right
- A bit fast
- Far too fast



Any questions?

Financial Reporting Requirements



- Quarterly advance claims, but Q4 claim is based on actuals and in arrears
- Advanced Actuals for selected projects
- An audit at closure of project
- Defra retain the right to spot check



Claims conditions

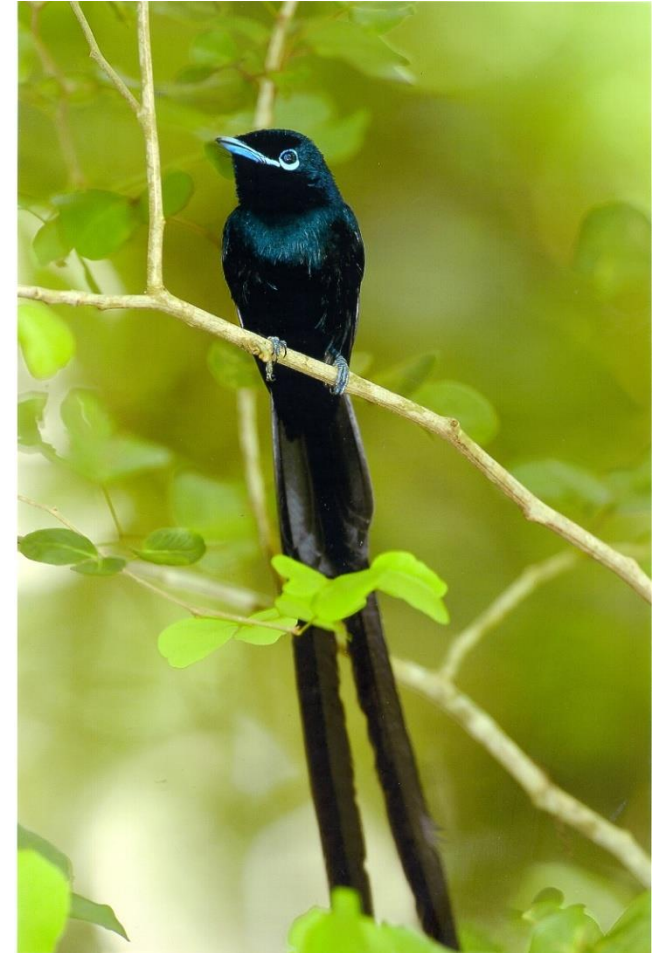


- Quarters 1, 2 are advance claims linked to reporting and return of Annual Grant Acceptance Form
- Quarter 3 is a straight advance
- Quarter 4 Actual Claim is not an advance and is dependent on actual expenditure for the year
- A retention is made from the final claim pending a satisfactory final report.

Claim Process



- Electronic claims with a clear signature
- LTS checks claim and that related reporting received
- Batched eligible claims to Defra for approval
- Approved claims then sent for payment; international payments slightly different
- You will be informed when to expect payment to your account



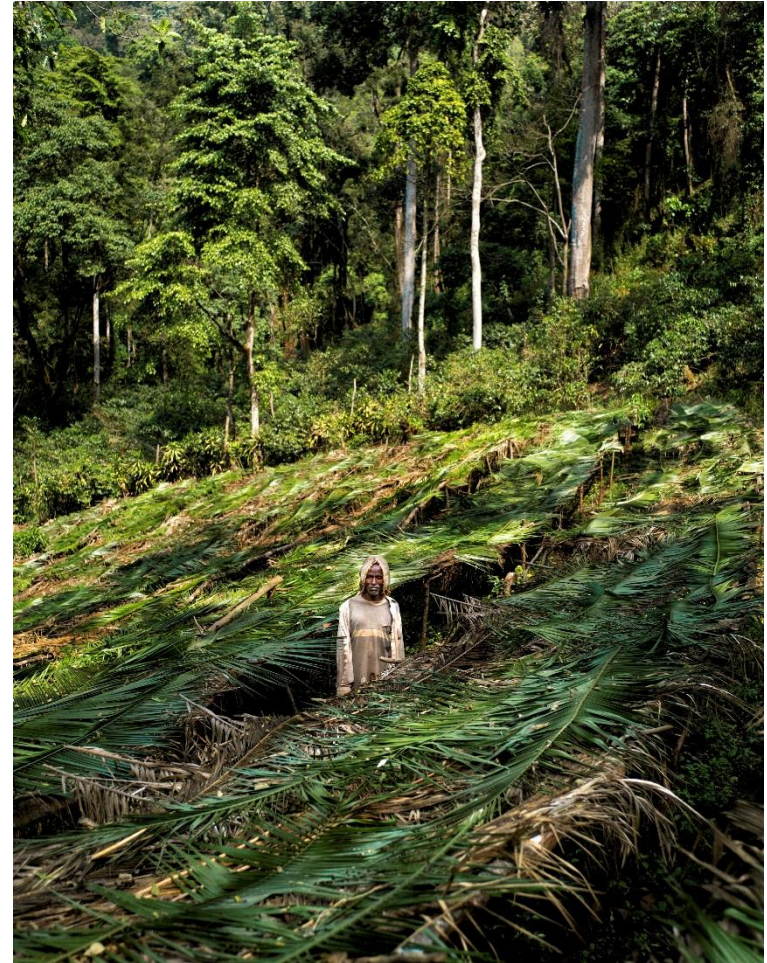
Conditions for Payment

Claim	Reporting	Financial	Other
<i>Quarter 1 – advance</i>	n/a	n/a	Year 1 – signed Award Acceptance Form received From Year 2 onwards, signed Annual Grant Acceptance Form received
<i>Quarter 2 – advance</i>	From Year 2 onwards, prior year annual report received.	From Year 2 onwards, prior year Quarter 4 – actual claim received and verified.	n/a
<i>Quarter 3 – advance</i>	From Year 2, prior year annual report accepted as administratively complete	n/a	n/a
<i>Quarter 4 – actual</i>	Annual report received	Quarter 4 – actual claim received and verified.	n/a
<i>Final claim, less retention</i>	Final report	Final claim form	n/a
<i>Retention</i>	Final report accepted	Audit letter - where required	n/a

Change Requests



- Projects looking to make significant changes (both technical and financial) should submit a change request form
- This includes:
 - Re-budgets – carry-forwards not allowed
 - Virements – movement of money between budget lines
 - Changes to logical framework
 - Staff changes (senior technical staff) including CV
 - Timing changes (e.g. extensions)



Change Request Form



- KISS – clarity of request is important including clear justification
- Deadline for rebudgeting now stricter
- Previous requests noted
- Significant financial changes and implications
- January – March requests only under exceptional circumstances and clearly justified



Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Initiative
CHANGE REQUEST FORM



INTERNAL USE ONLY – NOT TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT					
CR reference		Date received		Date PL informed	
Date sent to Defra		Recipient in Defra		Date response from Defra	

Application for Approval to Amend Project or Budget
for any IWT CF or Darwin/Darwin Plus Project

Before completing this form, please read the additional Guidance at the end of this document

Please indicate which type of request this is: Financial* Other
**any change which requires movement of funds between financial years*

Project Ref and Title	
Request from (name and organisation)	
Email address	

Please confirm you have read the change request guidance document and understand that there is no guarantee a request will be granted

Please be aware Financial change requests are reserved for exceptional circumstances, or circumstances out of your control. They will not be granted in instances of bad planning. You are expected to outline clearly why you were not able to foresee these changes, and what you have done to mitigate them.

You should submit this request as soon as possible, and where there has been a delay you should explain the reasons for this. You should submit any change request **no later than the annual forecasting exercise** (January).

Please keep your request clear and in plain English. Provide enough context for us to understand the request and justification, but keep the request short. **Avoid technical jargon**. If there are multiple changes we suggest using a numbered list to make them easy to follow across sections.

Brief background to your request. Please provide a short explanation of why you need to submit this request. Please remember that we do not know your project in detail so you should provide enough information to set the scene. Please use clear simple English and avoid jargon.

Covid-19



- We recognise the current pandemic may have lasting implications for current and new projects
- We expect all projects to consider any changes required to dates and spread of funds across financial years. Remember the links from budget to logframe to timeline – changes in timing may affect them all. Submit changes through a CR.
- We are open to revisions to projects

Offer paperwork



- Package of materials
- Timing – may be longer if you have a caveat to address
- Return GAF and Supplier Form
- Timeline to claim payment



Terms and Conditions



- Confirms how the funds can be used e.g. no UK party political use
- Outlines the rights retained by Defra should grantees not follow requirements e.g. reclaiming of funds, eligibility of future applications
- Requirements re branding/communicating about your project
- Safeguarding





Any questions?

Promoting your project



Communication Channels

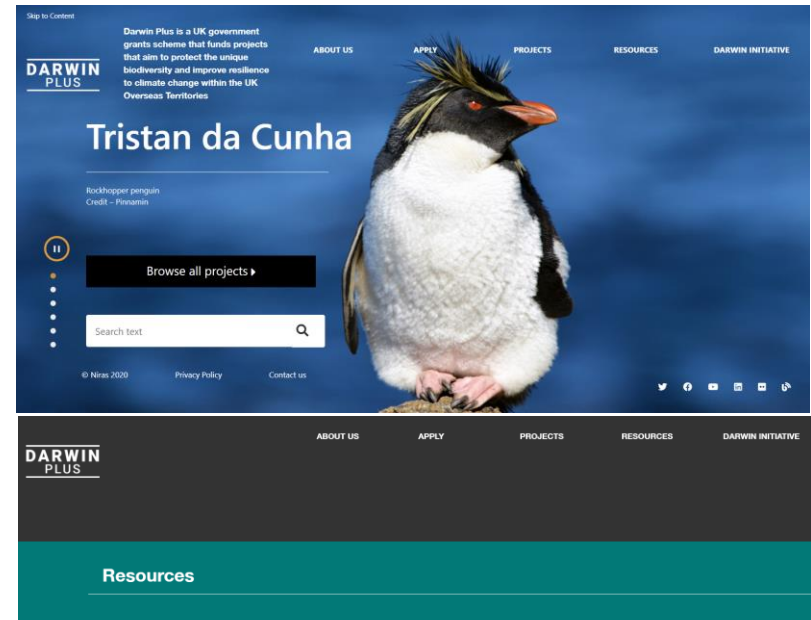
- Darwin Plus website
- Newsletters
- Twitter account
- Facebook page
- Blog
- Flickr photostream
- Information notes



Website



- Darwin Plus Website: <https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/>
- First stop for all technical and admin **resources** for **Darwin Plus projects** – including claim forms, reporting forms, and change request template
- Platform for our various **publications** – including newsletters, information notes, and workshop proceedings
- You can search for **projects** by various criteria, including by country or lead organisation



Newsletter



Darwin Newsletter:

Darwin-Newsletter@ltsi.co.uk

- Released quarterly and themed around a particular topic
- 1 page A4 articles or less
- Use images to grab attention
- Distributed widely via e-mail, Twitter and internally in Defra
- Reliant on good images and good stories



A woman fishes in the ZSL supported community fishpond in Chitwan National Park, Nepal. Credit: ZSL



 /DarwinInitiative
 @Darwin_Defra
 blog.darwininitiative.org.uk

The Darwin Initiative supports developing countries to conserve biodiversity and reduce poverty. Funded by the UK Government, the Darwin Initiative provides grants for projects working in developing countries and UK Overseas Territories (OTs).

Projects support:

- the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)
- the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
- the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



darwininitiative.org.uk

Social Media



[@Darwin_Defra](https://twitter.com/Darwin_Defra)

- Tweet us your project updates and blogs
- Over 6,400 followers



[@DarwinInitiative](https://www.facebook.com/DarwinInitiative)

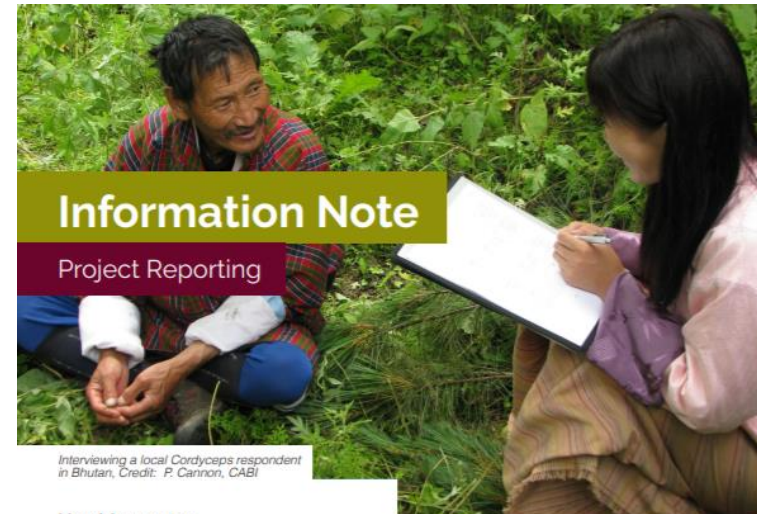
- Follow us on our other social media platforms



Information Notes



- Technical guidance and learning
- Used to highlight and promote the Darwin Initiative
- For specific events or occasions
- Thematic



Interviewing a local Cordyceps respondent in Bhutan. Credit: P. Cannon, CABI

Key Messages

- All projects that receive funding from the Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus or Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund are required to write reports.
- This information note aims to act as a guide for the different types of technical reporting under each of the schemes.
- The specific reporting requirements for your project depend on the scheme it is funded under, as the templates and timing for the reports can vary.
- It is important to check the relevant website regularly as all templates are updated annually. Please ensure that you are submitting your report using the latest available template covering the correct reporting period.
- Some reports such as the Annual and Final Reports are subject to independent reviews. The Review templates can be found on the fund websites alongside the report templates. You might find it helpful to consider these when writing your own reports to help you understand how your reports will be assessed.
- The final section of this information note highlights what to do and what to avoid to help you produce strong reports for your project.

The Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus and Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund are UK government grant schemes.

The Darwin Initiative helps to protect biodiversity and the natural environment through locally based projects worldwide.

<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/>

Darwin Plus funds projects that aim to protect unique biodiversity and improve resilience to climate change within the UK Overseas Territories.

<https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/>

The IWT Challenge Fund provides support to projects around the world that are tackling the illegal wildlife trade.

<https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/>

 /DarwinInitiative

 @Darwin_Defra

 blog.darwininitiative.org.uk/







Other Opportunities



- Convention Side events
- Workshops
- Lectures
- Conferences
- International Campaigns



Publicising your project



- Keep us informed of progress
- Please mention Darwin Plus and use the Darwin logo
- Maintaining a high profile for Darwin helps maintain Government funding
- Contact NIRAS-LTS and/or Defra for further info

Framing your project



- It is important to consider how your project may be perceived by others
- Explaining your project to non-technical audiences is becoming more important
- The virtual workshop session on communications will look at these issues in more detail

Thanks for listening!



Final questions?