**Darwin Plus Main: Annual Report**

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note” (<https://darwinplus.org.uk/resources/information-notes>)

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

**Submission Deadline: 30th April 2024**

**Submit to:** [**BCF-Reports@niras.com**](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) **including your project ref in the subject line**

# Darwin Plus Project Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project reference |  |
| Project title |  |
| Territory(ies) |  |
| Lead Partner |  |
| Project partner(s) |  |
| Darwin Plus grant value |  |
| Start/end dates of project |  |
| Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2023-Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2) |  |
| Project Leader name |  |
| Project website/blog/social media |  |
| Report author(s) and date |  |

**Note:**

* **Please ensure you have selected the correct template for your project and please remove the blue guidance notes from all sections before submission.**
* **Your report will be published on the Darwin Plus website. If there is any confidential or sensitive information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.**

All Annual Reports are reviewed by a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) consultant. They will use your original application and logframe (or the most recent approved logframe) as a basis of their review. Therefore, it is important that you refer back to this document when writing this report. The review acts as an independent viewpoint of whether the project is making the progress it states based upon the report and associated evidence submitted**. It is strongly recommended that you submit the means of verification listed in your logframe to support your assertions of progress, clearly labelled as annexes and cross-referenced within your reporting.**

When making statements of progress or impact please ensure you refer as much as possible to sources of evidence including the indicators and means of verification outlined in your project logframe. For example, when reporting training events, some measure of effectiveness is required as well as the numbers participating and duration. In order to comment on quality of work it is useful to share with the reviewer project documentation such as training manuals, meeting reports, training feedback etc.

**Please note:** Major changes in the logframe (e.g., Output and Outcome level changes) must be approved by NIRAS. You can do this through submission of a Change Request form which can be found [here](https://darwinplus.org.uk/resources/change-request-forms/).

Submission of changes to the project design in the Annual Report does not constitute notification. Changes requiring formal approval include, but are not restricted to: a delay or change in project implementation causing a re-budget; staff changes (relating to CVs provided at application stage); changes in Outputs or Outcome; project termination. If not clear whether a change requires formal approval please check with [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com).

**Report formats:** This report should be sent in MS Word only (if you have concerns about layout you may submit a PDF but this is in addition to a Word version). If you have already answered a question in one section, do not repeat the information in another section, but refer back to the section number.

Each section contains questions to guide the completion of the report.

Not all guiding questions have to be answered - Project Leaders should exercise judgement as to those most relevant to the project.

The assumption is that project partners will play an active role in writing the report.

# Project summary

Please provide a brief overview of your project and what the project is aiming to achieve. For this section you should consider the following:

* What environmental and/or climate change issue/s is the project designed to address?
* Why are they relevant, and for whom?
* Briefly describe the location (with a map if possible) of the project.

You may find it helpful to refer to your original application form or previous reports, and you may use text from your application form to provide information in this section, ensuring you update it as relevant.

# Project stakeholders/partners

Darwin Plus projects are required to be collaborative.

Please describe the support or engagement between all formal partners and key stakeholders and this project, and how this has developed over the last year of the project. You should focus on:

* Whether partnerships were based on demand stemming from the host country/ies or communities, and the extent to which all partners are involved in project planning, monitoring and evaluation and/or decision making.
* Particular achievements, lessons, strengths or challenges with the partnership(s), and how have the latter been met.
* Describe how relevant local stakeholders, local communities, public institutions and technical specialists who are not formally partners in the project have been involved as appropriate.

Please support comments with evidence.

# Project progress

This section (3.1- 3.4) is the main narrative report on project progress in the last year, and should be a flowing paragraphed presentation written in a formal style. Sub-sections reflect the progress against the project’s logframe. We do not require a summary at the start, just clear reporting under 3.1 to 3.4. Please ensure that you clearly refer to evidence to support the narrative.

Annex 1 requires you to provide a **condensed version** of this narrative against the logframe Impact, Outcome and Outputs. In this section and in Annex 1 please report against the Outcome and Output indicators in the latest approved version of the logframe. Please also include your full project logframe in Annex 2.If there have been changes to the logframe please indicate where these are, and please note that, as described above, major changes to the logframe must be submitted for approval by separate email.

## Progress in carrying out project Activities

**Briefly,** please report on progress in implementing the project’s Activities for this year. **You should report the progress of Activities under the Outputs** **to which they relate**. Have the Activities been carried out inthe manner and time planned?

Please support comments with evidence to support progress towards Activities.

Ensure you refer to specific activity numbers and be clear if there have been any changes to activities. It is important these match what is presented in Annex 2 (full project logframe).

## Progress towards project Outputs

Report on how overall progress has been made towards the project Outputs and how likely the project is to achieve them by its close. Address each Output in turn, identifying the baseline condition, change recorded to date, and the source of evidence for this change. Please comment on how you are measuring the Output indicators. Please support comments with evidence and use indicators to support progress towards Outputs.

## Progress towards the project Outcome

Please report on progress made towards the project Outcome. You should make specific reference to the Outcome indicators including baseline condition and progress to date, and provide evidence against them. Consider the following:

* Are the indicators adequate for measuring the intended Outcome?
* Is the project likely to achieve the Outcome by end of funding? If not, what action will you take to ensure the situation can be improved?

## Monitoring of assumptions

Monitoring of critical conditions (risks and assumptions) is crucial to project success. Report on whether Outcome and Output level assumptions still hold true. If there have been any changes in assumptions, in what ways is the project meeting or managing these? Please support comments with evidence.

Assumption 1:

Comments:

Etc.

# Project support to environmental and/or climate outcomes in the UKOTs

The overarching objective of Darwin Plus is to provide support to the UKOTs to achieve strategic long-term outcomes for the natural environment.

* Please describe the progress the project has made in this year to support the achievement of this objective. Please support any comments with evidence.
* What contribution is your project making to key UKOT Government priorities and themes e.g. Environmental Charters, national biodiversity strategies, and environmental action plans etc.
* How is the project working to support the host Territory(ies) to meet their obligations under multi-lateral agreements extended to the UKOTs, particularly those on biodiversity and climate change?

Please ensure your response to this section remains relevant and has been updated to reflect any recent actions. You should focus on what contributions you have made within the reporting period, rather than the alignment of your project more generally to agreements as outlined in the application form.

# Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please compete the table below for information on the involvement of women in your project’s governance, and provide an assessment of where you think your project sits on the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) scale provided below. The scale goes from less ambitious to more ambitious moving top to bottom. As a reminder, all BCFs projects should be aiming for a GESI Sensitive approach at a minimum.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board[[1]](#footnote-2). |  |
| Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women[[2]](#footnote-3). |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **GESI Scale** | **Description** | **Put X where you think your project is on the scale** |
| **Not yet sensitive** | The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn’t quite meeting the requirements of a ‘sensitive’ approach |  |
| **Sensitive** | The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities. |  |
| **Empowering** | The project has all the characteristics of a ‘sensitive’ approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups |  |
| **Transformative** | The project has all the characteristics of an ‘empowering’ approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change |  |

Please justify your assessment and provide evidence. If you have assessed yourself as ‘not yet sensitive’ how will you address this?

* How have you taken in to account the GESI context in designing your approach?
* How have you ensured meaningful participation for all engaged in the project?
* Explain whether and how your project has made it more equitable for women and marginalised groups?
* If you have not made it more equitable, can you demonstrate that it is not more inequitable?
* What lessons have you learnt from this?

If there have been any notable achievements or changes to approach this year please include these within your response.

# Monitoring and evaluation

Discuss systems and processes employed internally to monitor and evaluate the project this year. Comment on the suitability of this approach, and whether you have identified any areas for improvement.

When writing this section, consider the following:

* How can you demonstrate that the Outputs and Activities of the project actually contribute to the project Outcome?
* What are the indicators of achievements (both qualitative and quantitative) and how are you measuring these?
* Have there been any changes made to the M&E plan over the reporting period
* Do partners share the M&E work or is this the role of one organisation? How is information shared amongst partners/stakeholders?

# Lessons learnt

Use of lessons learned is important for continuous improvement and adaptive management. This includes lessons from all levels including administrative, management, technical, and M&E. When writing this section, consider the following:

* What worked well, and what didn’t work well, this past year?
* If you had to do it again, what would you do differently?
* What recommendations would you make to others doing similar projects, for example tackling the same issues or working in the same geographical area?
* How are you going to build this learning into the project and future plans?
* Are you going to change your plan next year as a result of this learning? Do you plan to submit a Change Request?

# Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

For this section you should consider the following:

* Have you responded to issues raised in the review of your last year’s Annual Report? If you are unable to access your past reviews, please contact [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com).
* What were the views of project partners on the review?
* Briefly describe what actions have been taken as a result of recommendations from last year’s review, unless you have already clearly done so through a separate note or the half year report.
* Please use this section to respond to any feedback you received when your project was funded, if appropriate.

# Risk Management

* Have any new risks arisen in the last 12 months that were not previously accounted for?
* Has the project made any significant adaptations to the project design this year to address risk?
* If you have an existing risk register, please submit an updated version of your risk register with your Annual Report. Please note this is a newer requirement of projects. For older projects, you are encouraged to develop a risk register for your project if you don’t already have one. The template can be found on the [Darwin Plus website](https://darwinplus.org.uk/resources/risk-management/).

# Sustainability and legacy

Discuss the profile of the project within the Territory/ies and what efforts have been made during the year to promote the work.

* What evidence is there of increasing interest and capacity resulting from the project?
* Is the project generating interest from other organisations and institutions?
* Are the intended sustainable benefits post-project still valid or have you, or are you, planning to make changes to what was originally proposed?

# Darwin Plus identity

* What effort has the project made to publicise Darwin Plus, e.g. where did the project use the Darwin Plus logo and promote Darwin Plus funding opportunities or projects?
* How has the UK Government’s contribution to your project’s work been recognised?
* Was the Darwin Plus funding recognised as a distinct project with a clear identity or did it form part of a larger programme?
* To what extent is there understanding of Darwin Plus within the territory(ies) and who is likely to be familiar with Darwin Plus?
* If you have a X (Twitter)/Instagram/Flickr/Blog/YouTube etc. account is this effective and have you linked back to the Biodiversity Challenge Funds / Darwin Plus and its social media channels?

# Safeguarding

Biodiversity Challenge Funds are committed to supporting projects develop and strengthen their safeguarding capabilities and capacity to prevent, listen, respond and learn. Defra will not automatically penalise projects where safeguarding concerns are identified, but will help projects respond and learn from the experience. We are committed to helping project strengthen their safeguarding approach and if you have any sensitive questions around safeguarding please contact NIRAS separately.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months? | | Yes/No |
| Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months | | Yes/No |
| Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point? | Yes/No [*If yes, please provide their name and email]* | |
| Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months? | Yes/No [*If yes, please provide date and details of training*] | |
| What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding? | | Past: % [and number]  Planned: % [and number] |
| Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. | | |
| Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. | | |
| Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants. | | |
| Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved. | | |

# Project expenditure

Please expand and complete Table 1. If all receipts have not yet been received, please provide indicative figures and clearly mark them as Draft. The Actual claim form will be taken as the final accounting for funds.

### Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project spend (indicative) in this financial year** | **2023/24**  **D+ Grant**  **(£)** | **2024/25**  **Total actual D+ Costs (£)** | **Variance**  **%** | **Comments**  **(please explain significant variances)** |
| Staff costs |  |  |  |  |
| Consultancy costs |  |  |  |  |
| Overhead Costs |  |  |  |  |
| Travel and subsistence |  |  |  |  |
| Operating Costs |  |  |  |  |
| Capital items |  |  |  |  |
| Others (Please specify) |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** |  |  |  |  |

Highlight any agreed changes to the budget and **fully** explain any variation in expenditure where this is +/- 10% of the budget. Have these changes been discussed with and approved by Darwin Plus?

**Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Secured to date | Expected by end of project | Sources |
| Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£) |  |  |  |
| Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£) |  |  |  |

# Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Please use this section to provide any further comments on progress that have not been covered elsewhere in this report. Issues that might be covered in this section include:

* Has the design of the project been enhanced over the last year, e.g. refining methods, or exit strategy?
* Discuss any significant difficulties encountered during the year and steps taken to overcome these if not already discussed elsewhere.
* Are there any issues you would like to raise with Darwin Plus? Please highlight anything sensitive as this can be redacted prior to this report being published.

# OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

In this section you have the chance to let us know about outstanding achievements of your project or significant strides towards attaining a particular goal so far that you consider worth sharing with the wider Biodiversity Challenge Fund community. This could relate to achievements or considerable progress already mentioned in this report, on which you would like to expand further, or achievements that were in addition to the ones planned and deserve particular attention. We may use material from this section for various promotion and dissemination purposes, including for example, publication in the Defra Annual Report, Darwin Plus promotional material, or on the Darwin Plus website. **Please limit text to 400 words.**

Please also include an engaging high resolution image, video or graphic\* that you consent to be publicised alongside the above text. Please ensure:

* that you have left the above agreement clause to indicate your consent. Text without this will not be used
* any images or videos are sent as separate files and not embedded in the body of the report

\*If you have no photos or videos for reasons of sensitivity, then please state that clearly and the BCFs Comms team can work to create an alternative graphic.

Image, Video or Graphic Information:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)** | **File Name or File Location** | **Caption including description, country and credit** | **Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)** | **Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)** |
|  |  |  |  | Yes / No |
|  |  |  |  | Yes / No |
|  |  |  |  | Yes / No |
|  |  |  |  | Yes / No |
|  |  |  |  | Yes / No |

# Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project summary** | **Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024** | **Actions required/planned for next period** |
| **Impact**  Insert agreed project Impact statement | (Report on any contribution towards positive impact on biodiversity or positive changes in the conditions of human communities associated with biodiversity e.g. steps towards sustainable use or equitable sharing of costs or benefits) |  |
| ***Outcome*** (Insert **agreed** project Outcome statement) | | |
| Outcome indicator 0.1 | (Report progress against indicators, and reference where evidence is provided e.g. Evidence provided in section 3.1 of report and Annex X). This should be a **condensed summary** of your reporting in section 3.3 of the report) | (Highlight key actions relevant to this indicator planned for next period) |
| Outcome indicator 0.2, Etc.  Insert additional rows depending on how many indicators you have |  |  |
| **Output 1** (Insert **agreed** Outputs with indicators relevant to that Outputs in lines below). | | |
| Output indicator 1.1 (Insert original Output level indicators) | (Report progress against indicators, and reference where evidence is provided e.g. Evidence provided in section 3.2 of report and Annex Y). This should be a **condensed summary** of your reporting in section 3.2 of the report) |  |
| Output indicator 1.2, Etc.  Insert additional rows depending on how many indicators you have |  | (Highlight key actions relevant to this indicator planned for next period) |
| **Output 2.** (Insert **agreed** Output) | | |
| Output indicator 2.1. |  |  |
| Output indicator 2.2. Etc. |  |  |
| **Output 3.** Etc. | | |

# Annex 2: Project’s full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

| **Project summary** | **SMART Indicators** | **Means of verification** | **Important Assumptions** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Impact:** | | | |
| **Outcome:** |  |  |  |
| **Output 1**  Add more outputs as necessary | 1.1  1.2  1.3. etc. | 1.1  1.2  1.3. etc. |  |
| **Output 2** | 2.1  2.2 | 2.1  2.2 |  |
| **Output 3** | 3.1 | 3.1 |  |
| **Activities** (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1) | | | |

# Annex 3: Standard Indicators

The Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs) use high quality and accessible Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) to enable scaling, replication and increase the impact of the funds and the projects we support.

By asking project teams to report against a minimum of three indicators with the Darwin Plus Standard Indicators, we aim to increase our contribution to the global evidence base for activities that support biodiversity conservation, benefits to local communities, and capability & capacity.

The tables below are provided to assist project teams in reporting against Standard Indicators. Please report against the Standard Indicators that you have selected specifically for your project in Table 1 below. Refer to the Standard Indicator Guidance & Menu available on the [Darwin Plus](https://darwinplus.org.uk/resources/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning/) website for guidance on how to select indicators, as well as how to disaggregate reporting within your chosen indicators.

For projects submitting their first Annual Report, you should complete the Y1 column and also indicate the number planned during the project lifetime. Older projects should copy and paste the information from previous years and add in data for the most recent reporting period.

We recognise that the Standard Indicators in our menu are by nature general. We also ask you to develop your own Project Indicators. These should be more specific and relevant to your project. See our BCF MEL guidance on best practices for selecting and developing Project Indicators.

### Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

| **DPLUS Indicator number** | **Name of indicator** | **Units** | **Disaggregation** | **Year 1 Total** | **Year 2 Total** | **Year 3 Total** | **Total to date** | **Total planned during the project** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| E.g. DPLUS-A01 | E.g. Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training | People | Men | 20 |  |  | 20 | 60 |
| E.g. DPLUS-A01 | E.g. Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training | People | Women | 30 |  |  | 30 | 60 |
| E.g. DPLUS-B01 | E.g. Number of new or improved habitat management plans available and endorsed | Number | New | 1 |  |  | 1 | 2 |
| E.g. DPLUS-B01 | E.g. Number of new or improved habitat management plans available and endorsed | Number | Improved | 1 |  |  | 1 | 3 |

In addition to reporting any information on publications under relevant standard indicators, in Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. You should include publications as supporting materials with your report. Mark with an asterisk (\*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

### Table 2 Publications

| **Title** | **Type**  (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, CDs) | **Detail**  (authors, year) | **Gender of Lead Author** | **Nationality of Lead Author** | **Publishers**  (name, city) | **Available from**  (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Annex 4: Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

This may include outputs of the project, but need not necessarily include all project documentation. For example, the abstract of a conference would be adequate, as would be a summary of a thesis rather than the full document. If we feel that reviewing the full document would be useful, we will contact you again to ask for it to be submitted.

It is important, however, that you include enough evidence of project achievement to allow reassurance that the project is continuing to work towards its objectives. Evidence can be provided in many formats (photos, copies of presentations/press releases/press cuttings, publications, minutes of meetings, questionnaires, reports etc.) and you should ensure you include some of these materials to support the Annual Report text.

If you are attaching separate documents, please list them here with an Annex reference number so that we can clearly identify the correct documents.

# Checklist for submission

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Check |
| Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the **correct template** (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and **deleted the blue guidance text** before submission? |  |
| **Is the report less than 10MB?** If so, please email to [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) putting the project number in the Subject line. |  |
| **Is your report more than 10MB?** If so, please discuss with  [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line. |  |
| **Have you included means of verification?** You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report. |  |
| If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 15)? |  |
| Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors |  |
| Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully? |  |
| Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report. | |

1. A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)