

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2016)

Project Ref No	DPLUS039
Project Title	Sustainable development and management of St. Helena's fisheries and marine tourism.
Country(ies)/Territory(ies)	St Helena, South Atlantic
Lead Organisation	Environment and Natural Resources Directorate, St Helena Government
Partner(s)	Plymouth University, South Atlantic Research institute, Georgia Aquarium, Mote Marine Laboratory, Ascension Island Government Conservation Department, Stanford University
Project Leader	Mrs Elizabeth Clingham & Mr Gerald Benjamin
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR2
Project website/ Twitter/ Blog/ Instagram etc	https://www.facebook.com/St-Helena-Fisheries-Marine-Tourism-Darwin-Project-1112109018861550/?fref=hovercard
Funder (DFID/Defra)	Defra

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

The project has made excellent progress, building on momentum generated during year one. The various work areas have now become second nature to both marine section staff and other stakeholders who are involved in fisheries and marine tourism related activities. Project partners continue to undertake their expected roles and responsibilities. All of the necessary procurement of goods required for the year has been undertaken in an effort to avoid delays.

St Helena formally declared its EEZ as a category VI marine protected area on the 14th September 2016. The associated Marine Management Plan was published in the St Helena Gazette and outlines all of the necessary conditions required to ensure that all fishing and tourism activities are undertaken sustainably.

This Darwin project is required to complete a fisheries management strategy however the work undertaken thus far has helped to initiate a much broader fisheries sector strategy which the SHG has supported via additional funding.

To date the project has had considerable local media coverage via newspaper articles and radio interviews and we have created a project specific facebook page and the Georgia aquarium continues to regularly post blogs etc. Plans are underway to focus our next local marine awareness week (planned for Feb/March 2017) on project related outputs.

Capacity building - Marine Section staff trained as local fisheries observers (output 1) & Fisheries Science, management and observer outputs (outputs 2 – 5 & 8)

The project continues to support the capacity building of the local staff through continuous use of skills acquired as previously reported. All work areas have continued as planned. The fisheries science consultant has proved invaluable in, supporting local capacity and mentoring local staff.

Up until the Mid July 435 otoliths and 31 gonads had been collected from various tuna, bait and ground fish species. A visit to the Ascension Island Conservation fisheries laboratory was

undertaken in August 2016. The visit facilitated inter-island working relationships and shared use of their newly established fisheries lab facilities. Three local marine section staff processed all of the samples collected, including the preparation and reading of otoliths and histological analysis of gonads. The training St Helena staff received gives them a detailed understanding of all elements of how fisheries biological data is analysed to ensure that sample collection has been undertaken correctly. This was achieved through one to one mentorship of them by the AIMS project team as part of DPLUS 021.

Tuna tagging has been very successful by the end of September 506 tuna had been successfully tagged and by approx 30 tags had been returned by local fisherman. The necessary logistical and travel arrangements have been made to have two members from Stanford University arrive on St Helena to undertake the satellite tagging of tuna.

St. Helena has been signed up to the International Pole and Line foundation and has generated support from the local fisheries sector including offshore fisherman to potentially making the St Helena Exclusive Fishing Zone the world's first one by one fishing zone

A fisheries legislative review committee was established in May 2016 to review and update St Helena's fisheries related ordinances to ensure that it is consistent with commitments under the Marine Management Plan.

Reporting by observers of marine based tourism compliance and human interaction with marine species (Output 6)

The marine environmental accreditation scheme continues and assessments have been undertaken with each operator each month. Assessment are recorded via a checklist and written report and entered into a dedicated marine accreditation database. Operators have demonstrated excellent compliance thus far and are becoming familiar with filling in and submitting logbooks. The Project manager continues to represent marine based initiatives through participation in the island Tourism Development Committee.

Establish comprehensive information regarding whale shark and cetaceans in St Helena's waters (including data on identification photos (eco ocean), biological data and tagging (whale sharks only) (Output 7)

Since dedicated fieldwork began in Jan 2016 two satellite tags have prematurely come off whale sharks as they exceeded the crush depth of tags. Live data tags continue to excite whale sharks followers, notably when one shark surfaced a few hundred meters from the Ascension coast. Acoustic receivers were recovered in May 2016 and has provided some evidence that whale sharks do indeed stay in St Helena waters longer than previously thought. Still awaiting results from archival tagging in Yr 2 Quarters 3 & 4.

Marine ecosystem services assessment (Outputs 9 to 11)

A full ecosystem service valuation has been completed for fisheries and tourism activities on St Helena. Fieldwork undertaken in March/April 2016 included a short residency of Plymouth University staff with the Environmental Management Division, a stakeholder workshop and meetings with key representatives to access data sources and build capacity for ecosystem service assessments.

An ecosystem service valuation report has been written. This includes a quantitative and qualitative valuation of indicators of the social and economic benefits associated with fisheries and tourism activities and assessment against long term trends in the data (where appropriate).

2a. 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.

For this period specifically the biggest problem was the uncertainty of access to St. Helena. Following the unfortunate delay in commercial flights to and from the island we were presented with project personal not being able to confirm travel. It has been assumed that from this period St. Helena would have air travel with this not being the case we were required to rearrange work schedules etc to facilitate all work needs adding strain to local staffing capacity and project partner on island support.

Exchange rates effected costs of satellite tags and therefore budgeting.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to 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 rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your projectschedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**