



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Foreign &
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Office



Department
for International
Development



Darwin Plus: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2015)

Project Ref No	DPLUS039
Project Title	Sustainable development and management of St. Helena's fisheries and marine tourism.
Country(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,
Project Leader	<i>Mrs Elizabeth Clingham & Mr Gerald Benjamin</i>
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) 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) (max 500 words).

Logistically the project had a good start. All project partners have agreed and signed MOAs outlining the roles and responsibilities. To that end procurement of goods, PPE, satellite tags and mechanical tags, travel arrangements etc. has commenced to meet project requirements.

To date the project has had numerous local media coverage via newspaper articles and radio interviews and plans are underway to focus our local marine awareness week (planned for Feb 2016) 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 local post of Marine Conservation (Fisheries) Worker has been filled. This new staff member has already demonstrated competency in basic fisheries science skills and other work area competencies required to deliver this project.

One local staff member has attended a basic training/exposure visit with the Falkland Island Fisheries Department.

The terms of reference for a Fisheries Scientist was completed and the post advertised, but the advert failed to attract suitable applicants. This caused a three month delay to the planned commencement of local capacity building and fisheries data collection outputs. However, we have now recruited a consultant to undertake these work areas who will arrive on Island mid October and stay until January 2016 in the first instance.

In preparation for expected offshore fisheries observer related work risk assessments have been undertaken. All local staff have successfully undertaken working at sea, sea survival skills, fire at sea training and passed the necessary medical health checks.

Seabird foraging and geospatial analysis of tracking data has commenced.

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

The marine environmental accreditation scheme, which includes marine tourism best practice guidelines and assessment criteria, was agreed by local council. Therefore training of local tour operators and assessment will commence in November. Local staff will conduct these assessments. The Project Manager has been appointed to the Tourism Development Committee to represent marine based development initiatives.

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)

I3s software package has been installed to support humpback whale identification. All historical records have been entered. The whale shark work plan for January has been completed and is ready for implementation in January 2016.

Marine ecosystem services assessment (Outputs 9 to 11)

Plymouth University has successfully recruited on post doctoral researcher. Project Leader Dr Stephen Fletcher arrived on island in September 2015. An ecosystem services assessment was completed. He conducted a background literature review. The methodology determined for on island data collection has been devised.

To undertake initial identification of ecosystem services a stakeholder workshop was conducted. The workshop was held on 28th September and approximately 20 key stakeholders were in attendance. A program of interviews has been undertaken and key datasets obtained so that outputs 10 & 11 can be implemented.

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 (max 300 words).

Logistically, International recruitment from a remote island like St Helena is difficult. Future projects should include additional funding support for international advertising. To that end the most significant change to budget allocation has been to support the recruitment of a Fisheries Scientist via a consultancy for which a change form was completed and approved.

St Helena is going through a period of rapid change regarding access. Travel bookings, local accommodation and other associated travel booking are become increasing difficult to book which threatens project deliverables to the timeframes. Uncertainty in terms of flight arrangements is also frustrating and hinders planning beyond May 2016. The knock on effect with the above mentioned uncertainties also means that local accommodation providers are reacting by increasing costs for accommodation and associated services which could impact costs allocated for visiting project partners or consultants.

St Helena's limited access also impacts procurement of essential project equipment in a timely manner. There is also some change to the equipment purchases required to ensure outputs can be delivered which also has been submitted via a change request form and approved.

This project requires considerable communication as project partners are internationally widespread. SHG's infrastructure to support this was limited therefore locally we have had to install separate communication lines (internet to use Skype etc) which is expensive and adds an additional £100/month to the budgeted other/operating costs.

However, the project is still expected to deliver the projected budget with a slight (not significant) variation in expenditure distribution.

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

yes

Discussed with LTS: **Yes**

Formal change request submitted: **Yes**

Received confirmation of change acceptance: **Yes**

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 as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. 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 and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

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

No, I find Darwin support to be helpful and accommodating.

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 project schedule/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 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: DPLUSXXX Darwin Half Year Report**