

Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	DPLUS94
Project title	Developing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Tools for the Turks and Caicos Islands
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Turks and Caicos Islands
Lead organisation	South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI)
Partner(s)	Turks and Caicos Government (TCIG) Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR), Economics for the Environment Consultancy (eftec),
Project leader	Tara Pelembe – Project leader; Dr Julian A. Tyne – Project Manager
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.south-atlantic-research.org https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/research/marine-science/developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos/ @SAERI_FI

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

Activities that were scheduled for the period Q1 and Q2 for this year are outlined below. None of the deliverables for work package 4 were due in the first 6 months of this year.

Output 2: WP2. Development (and extensive analyses where appropriate and feasible) of GIS baseline data maps (2.7 – 2.13).

A report on the sub-adult green turtle tracking data has been drafted and circulated to the PMG for approval report in [annex 1 \(2.7\)](#). Report on the proportion of different habitat types in the existing MPAs drafted and circulated to the PMG for approval, report in [annex 2 \(2.8\)](#). These reports will also be available <https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/research/marine-science/developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos/research-marine-science-developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos-reports/> and <https://www.gov.tc/decr/projects/msp/reports>

We have also published a short piece in the local Times of the Island magazine <https://www.timespub.tc/pdfpub/fall-2020-Times-of-the-Islands.html> page 30.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions imposed on the TCI (see section 2b) we were unable to undertake coastal cultural values surveys face to face. Working closely with our collaborators on this aspect of the project (economics for the environment (EFTEC)), we designed an online survey for TCI residents to answer questions that would have been asked during the planned face to face survey on the coastal cultural values of the islands. We also engaged the help of a local TCI resident to help provide support for people having problems filling in the online survey form and to contact local businesses. Using the online survey method, we were able to obtain 65 responses (2.9). The report is still being compiled, and there is still some spatial analysis to be undertaken, but there is a briefing draft with some statistics in [annex 3](#). The final report will be available via <https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/research/marine-science/developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos/research-marine-science-developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos-reports/> and <https://www.gov.tc/decr/projects/msp/reports>

As the TCIG were updating their IT infrastructure there were some delays in configuring the servers on the TCIG IT network. Consequently, we used SAERI servers to temporarily host the MSP TCI [WebGIS](#) and data portal <http://116.203.208.239:5000/>. The TCIG platform is now up and running <https://webgis.gov.tc> and is ongoing (2.10) and includes over 35 data layers (2.11). The WebGIS is available publicly online via <https://webgis.gov.tc> so the public can visualise some of the spatial layers that have been collected or created from existing data (2.12). The metadata catalogue has been uploaded to the central TCIG data portal which is being configured <https://dataportal.gov.tc/>.

We facilitated three WebGIS training sessions which were held online over the GoToMeeting platform as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions here in TCI. The first session was for TCIG stakeholders with 15 attendees, and although only one person responded to the survey we did meet their expectations and the second was for other MSP stakeholders with 12 attendees, and this time we exceeded course expectations (see [annex 4](#)). The third session was for the DECR and consisted of showing the attendees how to create point, line or polygon layers on the WebGIS application. The aim of this session was to be able to generate discussion regarding ideas on where certain zones should be placed. For example, beach vending zones. On this occasion we had 14 participants and layers were created and used in the upcoming workshop (2.13).

Furthermore, the MSP project officers have been involved with the DECR in helping to draft several policies, such as the Turks and Caicos Islands National Beach Access Policy <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SnUNpw5tWjdD51TANV03J0Xftp7fBOJm/view> and the Turks and Caicos Islands Beach Vending Policy <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L-KUc8Cz45qfrvfqHBoDi7718MxxMZU6/view> by providing spatial layers to help identify preferred areas for each policy. The WebGIS application was used during online meetings to discuss appropriate locations for beach access and vending zones.

Output 3: Work Package 3: Stakeholder engagement

We had 35 expert participants engaged in our recent workshop to identify ecologically important areas around the TCI. The workshop was held over four mornings 9am-12:30pm TCI time and online over Zoom (see section 2b). The outcomes were that there are some gaps in the data required to be able to undertake robust modelling to identify important ecological areas around the Turks and Caicos Islands **(3.3)**. A small 'expert working group' was also agreed upon to contribute to modelling work **(3.4)**. (see [annex 5](#)) The final report will be available <https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/research/marine-science/developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos/research-marine-science-developing-marine-spatial-planning-msp-tools-for-turks-and-caicos-reports/> and <https://www.gov.tc/decr/projects/msp/reports>

Figure 1 some workshop 2 participants using Zoom

Output 4: WP4: provide advice on appropriate policies, practices and frameworks for MSP.

No deliverables for this output due during the first 6 months of the second year.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The unexpected development was the COVID-19 pandemic (please see section 2b).

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

One of the recommendations as a result of our earlier 'Setting the Scene' workshops in January and February 2020, was to make regular visits to South Caicos, Grand Turks and Providenciales to update stakeholders on the project progress and garner feedback. However, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions we have been unable to visit each of the islands on a regular basis. The two MSP project officers have been working from home since mid-March 2020, when the lockdown in the islands started and due to refurbishment of the DECR offices.

Output 2: WP2. Development (and extensive analyses where appropriate and feasible) of GIS baseline data maps.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions in the Turks and Caicos Islands we were unable to undertake face-to-face interviews with residents. Therefore, we developed an online survey as an alternative to face-to-face interviews. We also engaged a local resident to help with people having difficulty with the online survey. The Covid-19 restrictions may contributed to the number of responses we obtained **(2.9)**.

We had to modify our WebGIS training courses to be run remotely using GoToMeeting software as a consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions. However, we managed to engage 41 participants and feedback was positive **(2.13)**

Output 3: Work Package 3: Stakeholder engagement

We recently facilitated our second workshop, and as a consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions here in TCI we had to run it virtually using Zoom software. This resulted in the workshop being held later than anticipated, at the end of September beginning of October, rather than in August. We still believe we can fulfil the development of some analytical spatial layers due in December 2020 to be included in the WebGIS application and data portal. Furthermore, the funds allocated for the second workshop were under spent. However, we don't believe that these delays will affect the budget or timetable. We are submitting a change request to reallocate funds allocated to the second workshop, to the Masters student.

2c. 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
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Formal change request submitted:	Yes/No
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Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No
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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. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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 project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**