

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2022

Project reference	DPLUS103
Project title	Saint Helena Climate Change and Drought Warning Network
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	St Helena
Lead partner	St Helena Government (Environment Natural Resources and Planning Directorate)
Partner(s)	Connect Saint Helena, Saint Helena Research Institute, Arctium, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, UK Met Office
Project leader	<i>Darren Duncan</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR3</i>
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.arctium.co.uk/dplus103-climate-change-and-drought-warning-network/

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).

1. Mist and rainfall data continue to be collected at 4 locations across the Peaks. The 7 Automatic Weather Stations continue to telemeter data to the Bottom Woods Met Station for processing and uploading to the Weatherlink and Met Office WOW (Weather Observations Website) portals.
2. Geology and geophysics surveys delayed from Year 2 are being completed between 9th October and 6th November. At the time of writing all planned geophysics surveys have been completed, alongside a review of the island's volcanic geology in key catchments. Comprehensive surface water and groundwater sampling is also being completed as part of the parallel Cloud Forest Restoration Project. Both teams are working together, so that the data can be used by both projects.
3. All water resource monitoring tasks are on schedule. Additional borehole tests are being planned for the week starting 31st October whilst the geology and geophysics team are on island. The tests will provide more aquifer response and water quality data.
4. Collection of historic data sets is complete, and the outputs of the climate report stakeholder consultation have been reported to support final design of the reports. Next steps will be to see if the Climsoft database can generate reports to meet requirements, if not alternative reports will need to be developed.
5. Water resource data from 2019 to 2021 has been collated and is being calibrated by the project team.
6. Robert George (project Water Resource Monitoring Technician) completed 2 weeks of training in the UK between 27^h September and 6th October 2022. Robert completed courses with Van Walt and the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. They focussed on water level and flow data collection, data interpretation and equipment maintenance and

repair. Robert also spent time at the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew country estate at Wakehurst Place where he was introduced to the Estate soil carbon monitoring network by Dr Gary Egan. Robert has continued his training on St Helena with the geology and geophysics team and is now trained to set up and use the geophysics equipment alongside Michel Groen.

7. All project reporting needs to be completed between November 2022 and March 2023. This will put pressure on the DPLUS103 project team as many reporting elements have been delayed due to Covid-19 related project delays.

2. 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.

1. The team are catching up with Covid-19 related fieldwork delays and capitalising on the fieldwork completed on St Helena in January and February 2022. It is expected that the monitoring data sets will now meet the minimum length of time outlined in the last change to the Logframe.
- 2.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance N/A

Change request reference if known:

4a. 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: ████████

4b. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget 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.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

1. The overall project budget for Year 3 may include an underspend related to additional geophysics staff time. The October/November 2022 fieldwork is yielding better results than expected and this additional data processing time may not be required. The team will be able to make a final decision on this in November 2022.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response 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 NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**