Darwin Plus:
Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund

Final Report

*To be completed with reference to the "Writing a Darwin/IWT Report" Information Note: (https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/reporting-forms-change-request-forms-and-terms-and-conditions/). It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)*

Darwin Project Information

Project reference	DPLUS108
Project title	Caribbean Overseas Territories Natural Capital Accounting Programme
Territory(ies)	Anguilla, Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Lead organisation	Economics for the Environment Ltd. (eftec)
Partner institution (s)	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
Darwin Plus Grant value	£254,700
Start/end date of project	June 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2022
Project leader name	Jake Kuyer
Project website/Twitter/blog etc.	
Report author(s) and date	Jake Kuyer, Ian Dickie, Siegi Arndt, Natalya Kharadi, Sophie Neupauer March 31st, 2022

1 Project Summary

The aim of the "Caribbean Overseas Territories Regional Natural Capital Accounting Programme" was to establish a system of ecosystem accounting to capture the benefits that the natural environment provides within official statistics of five UK Caribbean OTs. This should complement and enhance other national statistics, providing robust evidence for environmental and economic policy and management. The project included capacity building with relevant government departments, supported by a regional practitioner's network with a dedicated coordinator. The work acted as an exemplar of applying the recently adopted United Nations statistical standard on ecosystem accounting (UNSEEA-EA[1]) in the region and for small island states.

The project was applied at a 'national' scale within each individual UKOT (Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos Islands), and in aggregate across the 5 UKOTs, building a regional body of work.

The livelihoods of people in the Caribbean are highly dependent on their natural environments. They are also under immense pressure to develop economically, often in ways which directly and indirectly damage the environment. The environment is regularly undervalued in decision-making and funding allocations, and this damages its capacity to provide ecosystem services

[1] Ecosystem Accounting | System of Environmental Economic Accounting

(e.g. protection from sea surge and flooding, tourism, and healthy fisheries) that are essential to people's livelihoods. This problem has become widely recognised in the last decade (with this evidence being captured in the 2021 Dasgupta review[2]), and has led to the development of the UN SEEA-EA.

The project helps to address this problem by applying a natural capital accounting approach to produce data that systematically links physical and economic evidence on the value of these and other benefits with the underlying environmental assets that provide them. To sustain the production of this data, and increase its use, the project created a practitioner's network linking environmental managers and statisticians across the OTs.

The accounting outputs present environmental data to decision makers in the same terms used to consider other socio-economic factors. By strengthening evidence of the value that the environment provides to people, it can be better represented within decision making. Ultimately this aims to support decision making for more sustainable and resilient economies.

2 Project Stakeholders/Partners

The project engaged local partners on each of the 5 OTs. The respective environmental departments were the lead partners in each of the 5 OTS. The project was developed based on an understanding of need from previous work within each of the OTs, and with the support of the nominated department lead contact (generally the Director). However, the accounting work involved inputs from numerous Government departments and public bodies. Including environmental ministries and national statistical offices. The key organizations engaged are listed in Annex 5.

Project partner, JNCC, led on GIS analysis and evidence for the project. It was able to draw on its long history of working in the OTs, including initiation and continuation of Natural Capital approaches. Regular communication between eftec and JNCC has ensured that the project benefited from the relative strength of both partners' skillsets, drawing on the different evidence and contacts each have from working in the OTs.

JNCC was able to ensure that the latest evidence on ecosystem services (e.g. storm hazard resilience modelling) was fed into the project in a timely manner. JNCC's strong networks within the OTs were used as the project developed to engage with various stakeholders and identify and collect available data.

From project initiation in June 2020, the OT partners have been involved in engagement, planning and data collection activities. They helped to:

- Prioritise the most material ecosystem assets and ecosystem services for measurement in the ecosystem accounts;
- Organise the virtual workshops; and
- Identify contacts from different departments or organisations from whom to collect data.

Other technical specialists from across government departments have also been included in discussions and workshops, and this has supported outreach to other stakeholders, including the private sector, and general public.

The project benefitted from strong commitment from key individuals involved, representing the Departments listed in the table above. The lead contact from each of these organisations at the outset of the project remains engaged in eftec's ongoing practitioners' network (now funded separately – see Annex 6, D4, D8).

The projected operated as a partnership, with OT departments regularly being consulted over the development of the project. Furthermore, much data collection and engagement activities occurred via the departments, it is not an exaggeration to say that this support was critical in being able to achieve the projects outcomes.

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957292/Dasgupta_Review_-_Abridged_Version.pdf

3 Project Achievements

3.1 Outputs

The project successfully completed all major outputs.

Output 1, to develop a consolidated Caribbean UKOTs Natural Capital Account was completed in March 2022. This is a first for the UKOTs, and one of the first publications of this type globally. With agreement from each OT, this account has been shared with stakeholders such as JNCC, the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Caribbean Development Bank.

Output 2, developed a Caribbean OTs regional Natural Capital Accounting practitioners' network, which has enabled significant capacity building and resulted in a legacy benefits. A network coordinator was recruited and retained (See Annex 2.1.a-b) for the project duration. Regular meetings were held, with good attendance from OTs representatives. Their commitment to the network is demonstrated by their willingness to attend an in-person conference on Anguilla in March 2022despite ongoing COVID travel complications (See Annex 2.3.a-b) and continuing to attend post-project practitioners network meetings (supported by subsequent funding to eftec – See Annex 6E).

Output 3 (Update Natural Capital Accounts for Anguilla, Montserrat and Turks and Caicos Islands) and Output 4 (Develop initial Natural Capital Accounts in British Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands) were achieved, with production of national Ecosystem Accounts for 2019 and 2020 for all five OTs. The activity need to produce these accounts supported engagement within each OT to raise awareness and deliver training to environmental and statistician practitioners, including through site visits to Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands (See Annex 2: 1.3a1-1.3a2; 4.1f-4.1g; 4.2f-4.2g).

The production of the 5 OT accounts in line with the UNSEEA-EA statistical standard enabled to aggregation of OTs data into the Consolidated OT ecosystem account (Output 1).

All achievements are recorded in the supporting Annexes, including indicators and evidence to demonstrate success.

3.2 Outcome

The project achieved its outcome of the "Caribbean UKOTs being are able to value the benefits they receive from the environment through natural capital accounting, and this supplies evidence for better informed decision making". The relevant OT departments have accepted their 2019 and 2020 ecosystem account reports (pers comm, Conference Delegates), and started the process of formal publication (e.g. for Montserrat, S Tuitt, pers comm). They all have approved publication of the consolidated OTs 2020 ecosystem account by eftec and JNCC.

Evidence of use of the national and consolidated accounts to inform decision makers is reflected in the activities in each OT, such as engagement with other parts of respective Governments during OT activities. These have included multiple statisticians, environment department and other public employees engaging in project training. Policy-makers have also been engaged with the Ecosystem Accounts, having good awareness of their content and how it could be used, demonstrated both by participation in presentation of the accounts, with high-level engagement including Ministers speaking about them at the Conference (Anguilla), Minister on-screen interviews (Virgin Islands), an official hand-off to the Premier (Cayman Islands), and Premier and Minister participation in presentation of the Ecosystem Accounts (TCI, Montserrat). Interest in the outputs has resulted in coverage in the mainstream press (See Annex 6, B) and invitations to present the material at relevant conferences (e.g. planning sector on Cayman) and to regional bodies (e.g. the Caribbean Development Bank, See Annex 2, 0.3e).

Engagement in the development of ecosystem accounting is reflected in inputs to the project from external organisations (in particular inputs to the conference through the in-person participation of a delegate from the Caribbean Development Bank (funded by the Bank), as well as virtual involvement from the Caribbean-based Cropper Foundation, the UK OTs Conservation Forum, Environmental Systems, and Island Innovation, an international network of small island states).

Appetite amongst the OTs to continue to develop and use Ecosystem Accounting to input to decision-making is demonstrated by their ongoing commitment to the practitioners network, and commissioning of work by an NGO (RSPB) to generate data on the economic benefits of Iguanas for TCI tourism suitable for use to influence decision making and to incorporate into in ecosystem accounting. Wider engagement in this outcome is demonstrated by the ongoing funding of the practitioners network by a UK donor (See Annex 6 D3), and presentation of the project's work and consolidated OTs Account to over 20 Caribbean Development Bank staff (I Dickie, 19/5/2022. Annex 2, 0.3e). The consolidated OTs Account has also been shared with ONS and Defra in the UK, the UN Statistical Division, Inter-American Development Bank, and Conservation International.

Evidence of these outcomes is provided in the supporting Annexes.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

Assumptions and required external factors were monitored and addressed throughout the project delivery. Firstly, the continued engagement and support of the OTs' governments was critical to project delivery. Regular contact was made throughout the project to ensure that project stakeholders were kept aware of progress and able to contribute to its development (see Annex 2, 2.2). Invitations and data requests were generally routed through key contacts, giving them visibility and association with the project across their government, as well as setting up the structure for continued ecosystem accounting activities, such as data collection.

Secondly, the continued support and cooperation of environmental and other departments on each OT (Assumption 1.1) is reflected in ongoing data collation to enable production of the 2019 and 2020 accounts (Assumption 1.2). The ongoing engagement in the project objectives is reflected in the willingness to engage and participate in the end of project Conference, and the post-project continuation of the ecosystem accounting practitioners network (Assumption 2.2, 2.3).

Sustaining the project communications and development of this network was supported by the recruitment and retention of the regional coordinator (Assumption 2.1).

Participation in the practitioners' events was another useful way to gauge continued interest in the project. Key contacts throughout the project (i.e., supported accounting work) are listed in Annex 5. Table 3.1 below shows change in contacts at various stages in the project cycle. We should look at development, persistence and expansion of network:

Table 3.1: Key contacts throughout project years (note this is confidential)

OT	Year 1 Accounting		Year 2 Accounting		Post-Accounting	
	Contact(s) at Start	Contact(s) during accounting work	Contacts at start	Contact(s) during accounting work	Conference participants	Post-project network participants
Anguilla	Carencia Rouse	Carencia Rouse	Carencia Rouse Lori-Rae Alleyne	Carencia Rouse	Carencia Rouse	Carencia Rouse
British Virgin Islands	Mervin Hastings Rozina Norris-Gumbs	Mervin Hastings Rozina Norris-Gumbs	Mervin Hastings Rozina Norris-Gumbs	Mervin Hastings Rozina Norris-Gumbs	Argel Horton Shane Walters	Argel Horton Shane Walters
Cayman Islands	Gina Ebanks-Petrie Fred Burton	Gina Ebanks-Petrie Fred Burton	Gina Ebanks-Petrie Fred Burton	Gina Ebanks-Petrie Fred Burton	Lauren Dombowsky	Gina Ebanks-Petrie Timothy Austin

	Timothy Austin Jeremy Olynik	Timothy Austin Jeremy Olynik	Timothy Austin Jeremy Olynik Adolphus Laidlow Selburn Christian	Timothy Austin Jeremy Olynik		Jeremy Olynik
Montserrat	Lavern Ryan-Rogers	Lavern Ryan-Rogers	Lavern Ryan-Rogers Siobhan Tuitt	Lavern Ryan-Rogers Siobhan Tuitt	Lavern Ryan-Rogers Siobhan Tuitt	Lavern Ryan-Rogers Siobhan Tuitt
Turks and Caicos Islands	Eric Salamanca	Jatavia Howell	Jatavia Howell	Jatavia Howell Alex Bennett	Jatavia Howell Alex Bennett	Jatavia Howell Alex Bennett

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

The project has set up a system for better accounting for the value that the environment provides to people in the Caribbean OTs. The accounting format links scientific and ecological data to socio-economic data readily comparable to other national economic statistics (e.g. GDP).

Evidence of the use of the ecosystem accounting results in the thinking it is intended to influence includes:

- Specific communications by members of the practitioners network about ecosystem accounting (see Annex 6, B);
- The willingness of a wider group of stakeholders in different OTs to engage with training and/or internal communications around ecosystem accounting (See Annex 2, output 3 and 4);
- External communications, and resulting mainstream press coverage (See Annex 6, B), around the ecosystem accounts results (e.g. Annex 6); and
- Interest in the project's work from regional stakeholders (e.g. Caribbean Development Bank, Cropper Foundation – See Annex 2, 0.3e and f).

Activities within the project demonstrated links to wider environmental sustainability issues. In year 1 links to the Sustainable Development Goals were made in the BVI account. The project conference raised issues about measuring carbon sequestration and its potential trading within voluntary carbon markets. Project results were also presented at specific sector events (e.g. Cayman Islands Mangrove Lunch & Learn for developers). (refs).

However, it should be borne in mind that this process of influencing decision-making is at an early stage. It will take time for this data to permeate into all its potential decision-making uses. In the longer term, awareness of the value that the environment provides, as well as having the data to back it up, will facilitate sustainable management and decision-making which benefits both the environment and the well-being and prosperity of the Caribbean OTs.

5 OPTIONAL: Gender equality

This project explicitly considered gender and other aspects of social inclusion both in its operation and in its desired outcomes. In hiring the NCA coordinator, the role was designed to be flexible and open to a wide variety of skills and flexible working options. In fact, of the six applicants invited for interview, 5 were female, and all were based either in the Ots or other Caribbean states. The eventual appointee was a female from Jamaica.

Gender equality aims have been supported both within the delivery of the project, and as an outcome of the project itself.

Project delivery:

- 4 of the 5 OT partner leads were female
- The Ecosystem Accounting Coordinator appointed, trained, and paid by the project was female (as were 4 of the 5 shortlisted candidates)
- 7 of the 8 practitioners who participated in the in-person conference in Anguilla were female

Project outcomes:

- Inherent to the project outcomes is developing an understanding of how the environment benefits different groups, and therefore how environmental and economic management decisions may impact on different people. In Year 1, this was explored with the assistance of the New Economics Foundation who are experienced in developing an understanding of the gender and inequality impacts of various policies and initiatives (see Annex 6A). Ecosystem accounts recognise all benefits to people from the natural environment, and are not limited to measuring benefits associated with goods and services traded in markets. This is important, as participation in market activities is not equal across all social groups and by gender. Thus ecosystem accounts ensures that measurement of the benefits from the natural environment to people is not skewed by market or other bias and supports gender equality.
- In identifying not only the benefits from the environment, and their economics value, but crucially *who* benefits, the ecosystem accounting process helps build understanding of which stakeholders win and lose from policy and planning decisions which impact on the environment, and its ability to provide benefits. This aspect was routinely highlighted and discussed during presentations and capacity building exercises.

6 Sustainability and Legacy

The aim of the project was to embed a process within the Caribbean OTs governments for the ongoing production and use of ecosystem accounts. As such, the project was implemented with a mind to its sustainability and legacy throughout. Some important activities and outputs towards this outcome include:

- **Data collection / data catalogue** – an important component of putting Ecosystem Accounts together is in identifying and collecting available data. This is no easy feat, and often consumes at least half of the total effort in producing ecosystem accounts. However, once done thoroughly, subsequent iterations become easier for a number of reasons. Firstly, the individuals involved in producing the accounts are familiar with the process and sources of data, and this has been reinforced by the training delivered through the project. Secondly, the data sources are explicitly recorded in the Excel™ accounting workbooks (following a template established by eftec), making them easier to follow-up and update in subsequent years. To consolidate this information, the project also produced a 'Data Catalogue' (see Annex 6, A1-5) for each of the Caribbean OTs, to outline what data would be useful, what data is available, and where. Not only did this better enable future ecosystem accounting activities, it should also greatly facilitate data sharing for other projects and purposes.
- **Ecosystem Account framework and technical reports** – in developing initial Ecosystem Accounts in each OT, the project has provided a framework for future annual editions of accounts. As such, the accounts can be reproduced with significantly less resource requirements in the future based around the existing framework. Each OT has been supplied with a Technical report outlining the methodologies employed within the Ecosystem Accounts, these will also inform reproduction and updates of the analysis.
- **Engagement and awareness raising** – another key component of the project was engagement and awareness raising around the general concepts and processes

ecosystem accounting, and the existence of the OT national Ecosystem Accounts and potential uses of the environmental economics evidence within them. Awareness of the ecosystem accounting process and its uses builds support for future activities.

- **Capacity building** – throughout the project we worked with local practitioners on every stage of development. We did not want to act as external consultants coming in to deliver a product, but rather partners developing a process, and the internal government capacity to take it on. This also including explicit presentations and training opportunities, including virtual sessions, in-person training in Cayman Islands and the Virgin Islands, and additional activities at the in-person practitioners' conference (See Annex 2 outputs 3 and 4, and Annex 3).
- **Practitioner's network** – the practitioner's network was sent up precisely to create support channels to enable practitioners in individual Caribbean OTs, who often are on small teams with limited resources, to have a group to draw on for advice and knowledge sharing into the future. It also offers a means to band together to identify mutually beneficial opportunities for raising external support, such as supplemental training, technical input or follow-up projects on issues faced by multiple Caribbean OTs. Five virtual network events were run between September 2021 and March 2022, and this contributed to the successful delivery of the project Conference. The project conference was a key activity in building this network, allowing sharing of experiences, brainstorming discussions and social engagement between practitioners. All participants in the practitioners network during the project have engaged in the continuation of the network post-March 2022 (See Annex 6.D8).
- **International connections –** throughout the project outreach activities sought to make useful connection in the region, build awareness of the Caribbean OTs ecosystem accounting work and foster engagement with the OT practitioners. This included the Caribbean Development Bank, who was present at the conference, the Cropper Foundation, acting as the regional Natural Capital Lab, who also presented at the conference, Island Innovations, a social enterprise consisting of a global network of island states, and further links with other Darwin+ funded projects.
- **Technical support –** routes for further technical support have been explored, including via additional grant applications, funding mechanisms via the JNCC, and the potential for cross-OT direct funding.
- **Government commitments –** members of each of the five Caribbean OTs governments have been engaged with and made commitments to continue to support the ecosystem accounting process, having seen the value in better understanding the benefits from the environment and how better environmental and economic management can benefit the people of the Caribbean OTs.

7 Lessons learned

A project of this scope and ambition was always going to be challenging, and we understood the context of this fairly well from previous experience of project development and implementation. As such, we had a reasonable grasp of what to expect and planned accordingly, but there is always learning that occurs across any project, especially when trying to push into new grounds such as with this project. Some key lessons learned include:

- Despite allowing significant time for start up and data collecting activities this still extended beyond schedule. It would seem reasonable to plan for a full 6 to 12 months to fully 'initiate' a project of this level of complexity.
- Working across 5 Caribbean OTs was ambitious, and while ultimately successful, the additional resources and attention required to work across multiple Caribbean OTs should not be underestimated. While some economies of scale exist, and there is certainly synergies from working in multiple partnerships, each additional OT included should be expected to add an additional 25% to 50% to project management activities.
- Specific to this project, engagement with the OT statistics teams proved both very productive, but also had to overcome additional barriers. In general, they perceived a

Darwin plus project, and work on Ecosystem Accounts, to both be environment-specific activities, within the remit of the environmental departments. Therefore, additional engagement was need to stimulate engagement in the accounts as statistical tools, within the remit of the national statics' office.

7.1 Monitoring and evaluation

A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan was set up for this project, and an internal M&E advisor has been identified within eftec to offer an independent review on the project processes and progress against the logframe. The M&E advisor operated independently from the project delivery team. The purpose of these is to ensure that the outputs are completed in the targets set and contribute to the programme outcomes. The advisor is also responsible for assessing the quality of the outputs produced. M&E work undertaken is shared by the project manager to the partner organisations.

The project was implemented largely to plan, with two main points to report on:

- **Flexibility on timing is key** – adhering to programmed timelines, even by year's quarter (3-month segments) is not fully within the control of the project team. Not only does the specific context of the Caribbean OTs mean that some tasks end up taking significantly longer than planned, this also varies within OTs themselves, and from one OT to another. Where important tasks have other project dependencies, delays can be compounding. Contingency should be planned for from the outset, and monitoring and evaluation should be understanding and flexible to this fact.
- **Realistic ultimate outcomes** –the activities, outputs and outcomes originally envisioned were feasible, and all have been achieved. The full delivery of the outcome to 'incorporate evidence into decision making' with 'evidence used by a range of decision-makers' in a long-term aim for this field of work. As such a two-year project can at best take a major step towards achieving this outcome, and put in place processes and capacity to continue progress towards it. However, its full achievement is not within the outright scope of the project for two reasons: (1) it can take months or years for the evidence to work its way into actual policy and planning decisions, beyond the timeline of this project and (2) it will ultimately be up to practitioners and decision-makers to produce and use this evidence, and not within the control of the project team. The LogFrame was changed to reflect a softer outcome of evidence being 'accessible' for decision making, which has been achieved.

7.2 Actions taken in response to annual report reviews

The annual review from the first year raised two main points. The first around the achievability of one of the main outcomes. The logframe was revised in September 2020 removing the requirement for the NCAs to be published within national statistics as this is outside the control of the project (outcome 0.2). Instead, the focus on this indicator is with the awareness of the natural capital accounts and their use for decision-making. This is reflected in the logframe in Annex 2.

The second was around the availability of evidence. A catalogue of evidence, is provided with this report and cross-referenced throughout the 10 sections. This is addressed by better documenting the evidence on achievements in this final report's Annexes.

Further evidence is also provided on the quality of the relationships with local practitioners throughout this report, such as their engagement in relevant communications and the project Conference.

8 Darwin Identity

The project was consistently presented UK Government funded Darwin Initiative project through engagement activities across all five Caribbean OTs throughout the 2-year timeline. The Darwin Initiative, and 'Funded by the UK Government' logos feature on the slide decks for presentation and talks, the reporting materials, project communications, conference folder and press releases and other engagement.

The project has been defined and recognised as a distinct project throughout, but also placed within the context of implementing the new (2021) UN SEEA-EA guidelines.

The Darwin Initiative gained exposure to:

- Caribbean OTs Governments through:
    - a series of introductory engagement activities at the beginning of the project
    - two sets (release of the 2019 Ecosystem Accounts and the 2020 Ecosystem Accounts) of high-level presentations to Government decision makers (including Ministers and Premiers)
    - Explicit government practitioners' training sessions and capacity building exercises
    - The 3-day conference held on Anguilla 1st to 3rd March 2022
    - Two site visits (Cayman Islands and Virgin Islands)
- The people of the Caribbean OTs
    - Releases on government websites and social media
    - Media events in Cayman Islands and Virgin Islands
- International organisations, through presentations and discussions with:
    - Caribbean Development Bank
    - Natural Capital Lab
    - United Nations Environment Programme
    - Eurostat
    - United Nations Statistics Department
    - Government of Guernsey
    - University of the West Indies
    - World Bank

Promotion of the project through electronic and social media includes:

- eftec's newsletter coverage (See Annex 6, C).
- Practitioners' network members social media accounts, including posts related to content of the project Conference (refs).

9 Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery

COVID-19 impacted many aspects of the projects.

The pandemic caused significant disruption in project Year 1. The initial 2-month delay in beginning the programme made getting started very challenging, as the project management structure had to be implemented alongside the initial engagement activities and the beginning of the data collection and analysis phase. The project was able to make progress with the content of these activities through virtual meetings and networking. However, some of the engagement and outreach opportunities associated with in-person meetings were lost.

Furthermore, COVID-19 meant there were competing priorities for government practitioners, even more so than under normal circumstances. In many cases, this limited the amount of time and effort they could dedicate to the project, especially in the earlier phases before they could really start to see the value in the project and invest more time into it. Over these initial phases, the project team had to take on additional burden regarding outreach, data collection, and developing the first iterations of the ecosystem accounts.

A particular challenge was that the two site visits, to Cayman Islands and Virgin Islands, were not able to occur until the end of the project. While these sites visits were ultimately successful,

in general it would have been good to use them to foster engagement and commitment earlier in the project.

We were then confronted with the new, highly contagious Omicron variant in project Year 2. Again some in-person activities were disrupted, but continued virtually. Others were re-scheduled, with in-person visits to Cayman, TCI and BVI taking place, enabling training and communications activities.

Conducting a multi-OT conference, especially in the midst of COVID related travel restrictions, was challenging. Three months before the conference was due to take place, a survey of the practitioners was carried out by the network coordinator to assess their demand for the event, and their preference to travel for an in-person event, or to hold it virtually. A majority of the network responded indicating a willingness to participate and travel, and therefore the decision was taken to go ahead with the event.

There is significant administrative burden for such an event under normal circumstances, but even more so with the additional travel requirements imposed by Governments in response to the pandemic. In the end, we were able to proceed with the conference, with the key participants (including all the members of the network who indicated the intention) attending in-person in Anguilla. Some presenters and delegates were not able to travel, but we accommodated their attendance via video link.

Organising and executing site visits and the in-person practitioners' conference in the midst of ongoing concerns around the contagiousness of the new Omicron variant was very challenging. The uncertainty led to an initial delay to travel arrangements. The site visits and conference involved organising travel for participants from 7 countries, including flights and accommodation, transfers, standard paperwork, COVID tests on departure and entry, in both directions, general precautions while in attendance, and a whole host of other issues. On top of this, all of these aspects added not only administrative burden but are all also associated with financial costs which had to be planned for and paid out in the face of much uncertainty.

The project did manage to adapt and progress largely to plan, making use of improved virtual communication and other means to address difficulties, although the site visits did reinforce the critical importance of face-to-face interactions and live experience of environmental sites in the delivery of these types of projects.

The adaptation to COVID constraints did stimulate new ways of working, for example the use of an online portal to provide conference delegates and presenters access to the agenda and supporting documents, resulting in less printed material being generated and distributed for the conference.

The project outcomes are highly relevant to the socio-economic response to the COVID pandemic. The trend data between the 2019 and 2020 ecosystem accounts produced for this project (and preceding years partial accounts where available for Caribbean OTs) show clear COVID-related trends in some benefits (e.g. recreation and Tourism). The accounts also capture the dependence of people's livelihoods on the natural environment. This information can inform the Caribbean OTs response to the pandemic – at the project conference and other engagement activities, the opportunity was also taken to discuss how the process and evidence of ecosystem accounting could help to promote and manage a greener economic recovery, including a return to more sustainable tourism and economic management.

10 Finance and administration

10.1 Project expenditure

Current Year's Costs	2021/22 Grant (£)	2021/22 Total actual Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain any variance)
Staff costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	Due to COVID19, we were unable to travel and carry out in-person training and associated tasks in Year 1. In line with our approved change request, [redacted] was moved from Year 1 to Year 2 to account for this shift in timing. Despite COVID19-related issues, in-person site visits and the project-end "Caribbean Ecosystem Accounting Conference" were successfully completed at the end of Year 2. The underspend in time relates to JNCC's inability to travel to the OTs for the conference in March 2022.
Consultancy Costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	NEF's work on gender and equality guidance was successfully implemented in Year 1. Following a marginal overspend in Year 1, the Year 1 advice was fec into Year 2, and the Year 2 allocation was not required
Overhead Costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted] of overheads was moved from Year 1 to Year 2 corresponding to the approved Staff Costs change (see above). The overspend relates to higher administrator costs, particularly in respect of arranging travel and subsistence for eftec and partner delegates, responding to changing COVID19 regulations in the UK and across the OTs, and providing additional support to the delegates.
Travel and subsistence	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	Due to COVID19-related travel restrictions in Year 1, the full [redacted] budget was moved to Year 2 with consent from Defra. Ultimately, eftec was able to travel to the OTs and successfully conducted 2 site visits and the project-end conference hosted in Anguilla. JNCC was not able to travel and hence the underspend in this item.
Operating Costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	As above, COVID19 is the reason for this variation. The original Year 1 budget of [redacted] was transferred to Year 2 with Defra's consent. With the rise of Omicron in Jan '22, we conducted a survey to ascertain whether there would be sufficient attendance in an in-person event. As a result, it was agreed to proceed in-person, however not all parties were able to attend in-person (including some OT representatives, and external speakers). The lower attendance rate accounts for much of the underspend. Costs to enable stakeholders to attend were not required, as the Caribbean Development Bank met its delegate's travel and accommodation costs, in line with their operating policy. Costs relating to virtual training and attendance were nominal.
Capital items				
Others	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	These bank charge costs relate to payments to the OTs and regular monthly payments to the NC Co-ordinator.
Audit costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	Audit cost capped at [redacted] and accrued.
TOTAL	[redacted]	[redacted]		

Staff Costs includes staff costs for eftec, the five participating Overseas Territories, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and our Natural Capital Co-ordinator based in Jamaica. JNCC provided a call-down service to support modelling and mapping across the Caribbean OTs, coordination and administration of the Practitioner's Network workshops, administrative tasks, and newsletter text and design support. Due to COVID19, JNCC was not able to send a representative to the OTs in February/ March 2022 for the site visits or attend the end-of-project conference in-person, which accounts for their underspend.

Staff employed (Name and position)	**Cost (£)**
Jake Kuyer, Principal Consultant (eftec)	[redacted]
Ian Dickie, Director (eftec)	[redacted]
Sophie Neupauer, Consultant (eftec)	[redacted]
Natalya Kharadi, Senior Consultant (eftec)	[redacted]
Georgie Conlan, Researcher (eftec)	[redacted]
Ece Ozdemiroglu, Founding Director (eftec)	[redacted]
Rob Daniel, Consultant (eftec)	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

Consultancy – description and breakdown of costs	**Other items – cost (£)**
TOTAL	

Capital items – description	**Capital items – cost (£)**
TOTAL	

Other items – description	**Other items – cost (£)**
TOTAL	

Due to COVID19, and risks and uncertainties it brought with it, we had to make changes to the project activities and associated logistics and budget. Despite this and thanks to the strong commitment from project partners and engagement of the stakeholders, we delivered the outputs promised and achieved the objectives.

For example, the site visits and associated tasks planned for Year 1 had to be moved to Year 2. Defra approved our request to move [redacted] (staff costs, associated overheads, travel and other) from Year 1 to Year 2 too. In Year 2, as soon as were able to, we conducted site visits and were

able to successfully undertake the end-of-project conference in person - despite the rise of Omicron. While not all parties were able to attend in person, some OT representatives and external speakers were able to present at the conference virtually – with assistance from the Anguillan team. The underspend on the travel and accommodation costs reflect this shift to hybrid in-person and online attendance.

JNCC also contributed match funding of [redacted] in Year 2.

10.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Source of funding for project lifetime	Total (£)
The Joint Nature Conservation Committee – Year 2	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

Source of funding for additional work after project lifetime	Total (£)
Fishmongers Society (see Annex 6D4)	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

10.3 Value for Money

We believe this project has been effective in delivering its core objectives (i.e. ecosystem accounts for 5 Caribbean OTs, and capacity building in OTs practitioners), and a wide range of associated benefits, and therefore provides good value for money.

In the short term, the 5 Caribbean OTs accounts have been produced on a consistent basis. This coupled with training and capacity building, including through site visits delivered despite the challenges of COVID19, have resulted in a step change in these OTs ecosystem accounting capacity. Strong attendance and participant feedback scores (See Annex 2.3e) indicate engagement with the project, and have established significant inter-Caribbean OT working on ecosystem accounts for the first time. This is reinforced by the continued engagement of the practitioners' network in the post-project meetings.

The account outputs have stimulated political and press engagement, through numerous meetings with officials, and national media headlines generated in several Caribbean OTs (See Annex 6.b). This involves original messaging around the idea of the natural environment as an asset that contributes to the economy and wellbeing. It provides a strong additional complement to existing pro-environment messages for nature conservation.

The effectiveness of these outputs has enabled the project to attract further funding, from the Fishmongers society (UK), to support a continued network of Caribbean OTs ecosystem accounting practitioners through the December 2022. This reflects the establishment of a community of practice, which represents a strong outcome, and therefore very good value for money.

In the medium term, the project has made a major step in the structural change of embedding ecosystem accounting in Caribbean OTs national statistics. This is one step in a longer term process, but will influence current practice, and encourage adoption of the UN SEEA-EA methods across the Caribbean. This potential was reflected by the presence of the Caribbean Development Bank at the end of project conference, and subsequent presentation of the consolidated regional account results to their staff (Annex 2, 0.3e).

Comparators for the resources used as difficult to provide as this has been a unique project. Similar activities we are aware of include:

- Projects to develop methods for the UK national ecosystem accounts. eftec has led a series of these projects over recent years, with budgets typically exceeding £100,000 for one method (e.g. Tourism and Outdoor leisure) or ecosystem (Woodland, Urban ecosystems).
- Projects to develop capacity to produce ecosystem accounts in specific countries (e.g. Uganda, Liberia) funded by the GEF or World Bank range in value from US$100k – millions for one year of account production per country. While the Caribbean OTs are smaller in geographical and economic size, the major steps taken to produce two years of accounts for the 5 OTs (at a cost of £[redacted] per annual ecosystem account) within this project represent good value for money.

11 OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

The project set an ambitions scope of work and achieved a considerable amount of success in delivering it. Ecosystem accounting is an emerging field of practice, as such it is constantly evolving, and incorporating such a dynamic approach in the context of the Caribbean OTs with all the inherent data and resource limitations made the work particularly challenging, but also of critical importance to help sustain and build resilience into Caribbean environments and economies. We are therefore pleased with the progress that was made, furthermore working across five Caribbean OTs in parallel, in establishing ecosystem accounting within the local governments.

Along with being a novel way to use data and produce evidence, ecosystem accounting presents a compelling and intuitive narrative about viewing the environment as an asset that provides numerous benefits to people, as measured within Ecosystem Accounts, and as such should be managed and invested in alongside other economic assets. People really grasped on to this framing, as seen by the Caribbean OTs stakeholders adopting this narrative in their own discourses, both at high level government meetings, and via media engagement spreading messages to the general population in print, on screen and over the radio.

Alongside the technical work collecting and processing data and producing the Ecosystem Accounts, and all of the capacity building and engagement activities alongside it, the project went beyond the individual OT focused activities to make links across Caribbean OTs, and set up a Practitioners Network. This not only brought environmental and statistics practitioners together, often for the first time, but also helped build connections between peers from across the 5 Caribbean OTs, culminating in the first ever Caribbean Ecosystem Accounting Conference. On the theme of connecting the Caribbean OTs, the project also broke new ground in aggregating the 5 individual OT Ecosystem Accounts into a consolidated Caribbean OTs Ecosystem Account – to our knowledge the first of its kind in the world.

While ecosystem accounting can still be considered in its infancy, the 5 Caribbean OTs can now be viewed as leaders at their practical adoption and implementation, a feat that many other nations are sure to follow, with significantly greater time and resource investment over the coming years. Early indications have shown that the evidence produced by the ecosystem

accounting process can be readily adopted by government agencies in support of more balanced decision making. This in turn leads to better management of ecosystem assets for sustainable environments, resilient economies, and prosperous communities across the Caribbean.

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, **do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 11)?**	
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.	
Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	No
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	