

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2011)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	18-016
<b>Project Title</b>	Darwin Initiative to Enhance an Established Marine Protected Area System
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Cayman Islands
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Bangor University, Wales (School of Ocean Sciences) SOS
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Cayman Islands Government (Department of Environment) (DOE) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC, USA)
<b>Project Leader</b>	Dr. John Turner, Bangor University
<b>Report date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2011
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.caymanbiodiversity.com">www.caymanbiodiversity.com</a>

## 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).

Progress has been excellent with all planned activities for Q1 and Q2 for Year 2 successfully completed or rescheduled for more appropriate times within Year 2. Scheduled activities and outputs have been completed in full and in some cases well ahead of schedule.

Against the agreed baseline timetable for the project, activities 4.1 -4.5 and 2.5-2.6 set for Q1 and Q2 of Year 2 have all been addressed as follows:

4.1 Ecological Gap Analysis update and review. *Activity completed in full ahead of schedule during project year 1.*

4.2 Steering Group Meeting 3: Identification of concerns and threats. *Completed in Grand Cayman in June 2011, coinciding with Turner's visit (Ebanks-Petrie, Austin, McCoy, Olynik, Turner, Richardson).*

4.3 District community stakeholder meetings on Grand Cayman, Little Cayman and Cayman Brac to engage comments on perceived risks and benefits and to set conservation vision and goals. *Meetings completed in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. Eighteen meetings held to date with focussed group meetings and a press briefing in addition to original proposed district community meetings. Little Cayman district community meeting to be held in October 2011 when residents have returned from seasonal leave. Significant media interest at this stage (5 mini documentaries, 2 radio phone ins, 1 radio interview, 6 press items, bringing total of 74 media outputs in year 2 to date).*

4.4 Environmental Risk Assessment and mapping. *Activity completed in full ahead of schedule during project year 1.*

4.5 Field survey to verify specific habitats. *Activity rescheduled for Q3 of year 2; see below.*

2.5 Reef resilience re-survey at 55 permanent sites, specifically to compare with previous survey July 2009, July 2010, and to assess medium term recovery from bleaching. Involvement of Bangor MSc students. *Surveys completed with the addition of 8 new survey sites, increasing total number of permanent sites from 55 to 63 to enable more robust analysis (McCoy, Gibb – DOE & Richardson- SOS Bangor, +Hillyer & Looker, NERC MSc Bangor). MSc theses submitted by Hillyer, K. (2011) Influence of marine protected areas on resilience to bleaching, disease and compromised health in Scleractinian and Milleporid corals, the Cayman Islands); Looker, E. (2011) Investigating coral reef resilience by*

*analysing Scleractinian and Millepora Recruitment within Marine Protected Areas of the Cayman Islands, Caribbean).*

2.6 Fish biomass survey within and outside MPA at selected sites – all islands. *Activity rescheduled for Q4 of year 2; see below.*

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments 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.**

There have been no notable problems or unexpected developments with the project over the last six months, though there have been two small modifications to the original schedule of activities which are detailed as follows:

2.6 Fish biomass survey within and outside MPA at selected sites – all islands. *Activity rescheduled from Aug./Sept. 2011 to Feb-March 2012. (Original plan was to sample at different times of year, but variation in first 2 surveys suggests further surveys must be completed at same time of year to manage variation). Re-scheduling will not affect the budget or timetable of all project activities significantly since the activity will still be undertaken within year 2 of the project.*

4.5 Field survey to verify specific habitats. *Moved from July/Aug to November 2011. This enables TNC partners to be present, and allows for training workshop and dive tourism stakeholder consultation prior to survey. Re-scheduling will not affect the budget or timetable of all project activities, since again, activity takes place in year 2.*

**Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? no**

**Discussed with LTS: no (N/A)**

**Formal change request submitted: no (N/A)**

**Received confirmation of change acceptance no (N/A)**

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

Yes  No

**If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.**

**Estimated carryforward request: £**

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

**No**