

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

Project Ref. No.	18-017
Project Title	Developing knowledge to eradicate house mice from UK OT islands
Country(ies)	Tristan da Cunha, Falklands and South Georgia
UK Organisation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Collaborator(s)	Conservation Department Tristan da Cunha (CD-TDC), Falklands Conservation (FC), The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI)
Project Leader	Dr Richard Cuthbert (RSPB)
Report date	31 October 2012
Report No.	Half year report number 3
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).

Planned project activities in bold type, activities undertaken in normal type

Activities 1.1-1.3 completed in Year 1 and activities 3.1-3.3 completed in year 2

1.4 Produce report identifying key outstanding issues for Gough Island and develop work plans to address these

An RSPB internal report on the key outstanding issues has been produced.

2.1 Develop and agree research plans for Steeple Jason with FC and WCS

Research plans were agreed with FC and WCS for the 2013 winter field season.

2.2 Carry out one summer and one winter field season of research on Steeple Jason

Summer field season completed in Jan/Feb 2011, winter field season successfully undertaken in August 2012.

2.3 Produce and disseminate research reports from fieldwork

Draft fieldwork reported produced from the August 2012 field season

2.4 Incorporate research findings into Feasibility Assessment and produce Draft Operational Plan for mice eradication on Steeple Jason

Following discussions with WCS (the island's owner) an international eradication expert has been contracted to produce a feasibility study for Steeple Jason to be completed by February 2013. Depending on the outcome of this assessment a decision will be taken on whether to produce a draft Operational Plan.

3.4 Carry out fieldwork on South Georgia

Fieldwork successfully completed during February-March 2012

3.5 Produce and disseminate research reports from fieldwork

Fieldwork report produced for partner organisations, one paper submitted and in press, second paper in preparation.

3.6 Incorporate research findings into Operational Plan for mice eradication on South Georgia

The South Georgia Heritage Trust have received and incorporated the project's findings in

to their plans for the 2013 operational planning for eradicating mice from South Georgia.

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.

Plans to undertake the bait trial on Gough Island during September/October 2012 were postponed due to the South African National Antarctic Programme (SANAP) undertaking the inaugural voyage of their research vessel (the Agulhas II) and due to the fact that a new helicopter company was involved in this voyage. Both the Agulhas operations and the helicopter company will need to be closely involved with the bait trial on Gough and we decided that there was less operational risk to the trial if this was postponed to 2013.

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

A change request form (details below) was submitted to LTS outlining the delay in the large-scale bait trial plans for Gough Island and requesting that the project's end date be prolonged until 31 January 2014 and that there is a carry forward of funds in to 2013-2014.

Discussed with LTS: Yes (September 2012)

Formal change request submitted: Yes (September 2012)

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes (September 2012)

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: £71,435

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

Not applicable

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 or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form 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 eg Subject: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**