

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2012)

Project Ref No	19-029
Project Title	Laying the Foundations for Invertebrate Conservation on St Helena.
Country(ies)	St Helena and UK
UK Organisation	Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Collaborator(s)	St Helena National Trust, St Helena Government, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (Edinburgh).
Project Leader	<i>Dr Richard M Smith</i>
Report date	<i>25 October 2012</i>
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	<i>HYR 1</i>
Project website	<i>pending</i>

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).

Richard Smith and Adam Wolfe, the new Director of the St Helena National Trust (hereafter referred to as the 'Trust'), met for the first time at the Darwin workshop for new projects in March 2012.

A Memorandum of Understanding for the running of project has been agreed and signed by all of the project partners.

Contracts for the delivery of the project have been agreed and signed between Buglife and two project partners: the Trust and Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (that with the Environmental Management Directorate - EMD, St Helena Government, will await appointment of the Invertebrate Officer post in the Nature Conservation Division, later in the project).

The two posts that will deliver the project locally on St Helena – Invertebrate Coordinator and Education Officer – are currently being recruited by the Trust. Applicants for the Coordinator post have been interviewed and a final short list is currently being assessed against references. The Education Officer post received one eligible local applicant, who is likely to be offered the post.

The invertebrate conservation consultant has reaffirmed his commitment to the project, since the original project application; he has provided considerable voluntary support during the establishment phase of the project.

Elements of the project that were due to start, but have not yet done so, are: collating the evidence base, beginning training, education and outreach, developing the website for invertebrate resources and organising collaboration with the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

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.

As significant staff and institutional changes have taken place on St Helena since the project application was made, the local implementation of the project has been delayed.

It has taken time to establish new relationships and confirm the project framework both with the Trust and SH Government: Adam Wolfe began as the new Trust Director only at the end of April 2012; the Environmental Management Directorate and its Nature Conservation Division were both new structures since the original application, so partner commitments had to be confirmed. It has taken an understandably longer time to develop the MoU, contracts and for the Trust to recruit new staff.

All these issues are not problems in themselves, but have slowed getting local posts established and thus starting the initial phases of the project work. It is now most probable that the two Trust posts will be filled from early 2013. It is therefore envisaged that a proportion of the project budget for Trust salaries in 2012 / 13, plus some associated fieldwork costs, will need to be carried forward.

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

Not yet – changes were to be discussed when it was known better when Trust staff would be in post.

Discussed with LTS: no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted: no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

Received confirmation of change acceptance no/yes in.....(month/yr)

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

Yes X 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: £ based on estimated start dates for posts.

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

No, despite the delay, we are happy with what has been established so far. The sole local applicant for the Education Officer post is well suited to the proposed role. The candidate would be strengthened through an initial period of training, followed by mentoring, within the Trust. The post description is being revised to reflect this need.

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**