



## Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2014)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	20-004
<b>Project Title</b>	Enhancing economic development through improved natural resource management on Montserrat
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Montserrat
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Coral Cay Conservation
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Government of Montserrat
<b>Project Leader</b>	<i>Alistair Cole</i>
<b>Report date and number (eg HYR3)</b>	<i>31 October 2014, HYR3</i>
<b>Project website</b>	<i>www.coralcay.org</i>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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 to end September).**

The last six months of the project have been extremely busy, with large strides taken to complete many project goals. The summaries below provide details of individual outputs scheduled to be delivered between April and September 2014 (see also monthly project updates, supplementary material 001-006).

### *1.1 Carry out marine surveys*

Due to logistical constraints and unforeseen adverse weather conditions in year 1 the survey effort was hampered. Happily, in the first six months of year two the marine survey effort has increased greatly. Using an enhanced Reef Check methodology, surveys have been completed at 15 of 44 identified sites originally selected in the project proposal. A complete survey at one site consists of transects at both 6 and 12 meters depth. In addition to the 15 completed survey sites three further sites have been started, with transect completed at 6 meters. All of these sites are located on the western side of Montserrat. By the end of 2014 it is hoped that the remaining sites on this side of the island will be completed.

### *1.2 Establish and monitor two permanent transect sites*

A permanent monitoring site has been established at Bransby Point in Foxes Bay and this has been surveyed on a monthly basis since its placement in August. A second site in Lime Kiln Bay has also been identified and a recce has been conducted. The permanent transect is due to be surveyed for the first time by the end of October 2014. In the remaining months of the project it is also planned that a further two sites will be identified and established as permanent monitoring sites. One location at Rendezvous Bay in the north of the island has already been recced and will be established in 2015.

### 1.6 Hold quarterly management committee meetings.

As highlighted in the end of Year 1 report there have been some difficulties in holding regular committee meetings. This has primarily been as a result of difficulties in finding a date when all members are available and on the island. In the review report for Year 1, it was suggested that alternative members could be selected who can then report to the relevant organisations. Unfortunately due to the nature and size of many of the organisations on Montserrat the current committee members are the best and/or only plausible representatives. In the last quarter a second committee meeting was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2014, and was attended by the majority of committee members. Project progress was discussed along with queries and plans for the next quarter (supporting material - 007). The main outcomes from the meeting were:

- It was agreed an additional shore bird survey site would be added to CCC's survey locations, in Carr's Bay.
- DoA requested data from the first survey of the established Permanent Transect.
- DoA requested scientific and dive training for Fisheries Officers (subsequently agreed – see section 3.6).
- It was agreed that a second Fisherman's workshop would be held by the end of 2014.
- DoE agreed to explore options for rubbish removal from A number of Montserrat's beaches.

### 1.7 Run four stakeholder workshops

The first stakeholder workshop was held in April 2014 (supporting material - 008). The next workshop is scheduled for November 2014. The focus of the workshop will be to discuss the scientific findings of the project so far in relation to fisheries and the implementation of the LMMA. It will involve local fishermen, community stakeholders and officials from the Department of Environment and the Department of Agriculture.

### 2.1 Conduct terrestrial surveys

Building on the work carried out in Year 1 terrestrial surveys have continued at a good pace over the last quarter. Mechanical faults with the survey vehicles have again, at times, limited the number of surveys that have been possible. At the end of September the survey progress was as follows:

- Breeding and migrant land birds – 93 transects
- Herptiles – 38 transects
- Invasive plants – 26 transects
- Shore birds – 264 transects

As agreed by the members of the steering committee a further shore bird survey site has been added in Carr's Bay. Herptiles surveys are to be focussed in the Duberry Cassava over the next quarter as this is region where it most likely that surveys will locate the critically endangered Montserrat Galliwasp (*Diploglossus montisserrati*).

### *2.3 Host stakeholder engagement event to disseminate scientific findings*

At the start of August 2014 CCC hosted the first open day at our expedition site known locally as the Taj. This event was held to showcase the work we had conducted on Montserrat over the previous year. Presentations were delivered throughout the day on a variety of topics. The primary presentation detailed the findings of our survey work with an open forum to discuss issues and promote conservation ideas. Further presentations were given on Montserrat's marine and terrestrial diversity and its importance as a centre of endemism for some species. The event was also used as a means to promote the scholarship programme. Over the course of the day over 20 individuals visited the site and took part in the forum and other educational activities on offer.

### *2.4 Hold quarterly stakeholder engagement meetings*

As with the committee meeting for the marine project, the committee has met once in the last quarter on the 4<sup>th</sup> September. The next meeting is scheduled for the beginning of 2015.

In June 2014 CCC hosted a beach clean event at Carr's Bay beach (supporting material - 009). The event was advertised across the island and encouraged the local community to come and assist CCC staff and volunteers in collecting litter from one of Montserrat's premier snorkelling beaches. The event was attended by over 20 individuals and in the four hours of litter collecting four truck-loads of rubbish was removed from the beach. The event also provided an open forum to discuss matters relating to the conservation work on Montserrat and how plans for management may effect local communities.

At the end of the quarter CCC's Project Scientist and Science Officer attended a multi-organisation meeting to outline the Overseas East Caribbean States (OECS) Ocean Governance Unit. This multi-agency project aims to develop management plans and reform ocean governance. CCC will be assisting in this project wherever we can over the coming months.

### *3.1 Promote the project and Montserrat at events*

In the last quarter CCC staff have conducted a range of promotional activities to spread awareness of the project, attract new volunteers and increase Montserrat's profile within the public consciousness. These events have included DIVE 2014 at the NEC in Birmingham where CCC had a stall to promote our work and encourage participations (supporting material - 010) . In addition CCC staff have presented lectures at three schools, covering topics including the work we undertake, the science of conservation projects and how individuals can get involved. As a result of these presentations two of the schools have signed up to run team expeditions to the Montserrat site in the summer of 2015, with a total of approximately 30 kids. Over the last six months promotion has also continued through Google Adwords. In this time traffic has equated to an equivalent value of US\$17,925, resulting in 1,580,540 adverts being clicked and 10,124 clicks through to the CCC website.

### *3.2 RSPB marketing*

CCC's project has been publicised on the Montserrat pages of the RSPB website, informing potential volunteers of the project work and how they can get involved (<http://www.rspb.org.uk/joinandhelp/donations/campaigns/rainforests/montserrat.aspx>).

Furthermore, RSPB representatives promoted the Montserrat project with flyers and information at DIVE 2014. In addition to external advertising, RSPB has also promoted the project within the organisation and offered the expedition to staff. From this promotion a RSPB staff member and a friend have signed up to participate in the project next quarter.

### *3.3 On-going recruitment of volunteers*

International volunteers have been recruited on an on-going basis over the duration of the last quarter. All volunteers are trained through our Skills Development Programme to assist in the survey work. Thirty individuals have signed up and completed an expedition in the last six months as citizen scientists.

### *3.4 Press coverage*

A number of staff have been involved in promotion of the project on a local radio station ZJB over the last six months. Staff have recorded three live and pre-recorded interviews detailing the successes of our work, promoting the scholarship programme and inviting the community to join us for kids' education events at the National Library in Brades. In addition staff were invited to be special guests on the Saturday morning cultural show. In the interview we discussed the then, upcoming open day that was to be held at our expedition base.

In August CCC staff gave an interview and site tour to a travel reporter from NPR radio. The reporter was compiling a piece on Montserrat and the eco-tourism potential of the island.

### *3.6 On-going recruitment of scholars*

The scholarship programme has been extensively publicised in the last quarter. In addition to local radio show broadcasts posters have been distributed to a variety of organisations on the island such as schools, libraries, local shops and community centres.

Staff have actively promoted the scholarship scheme to prospective student at the Montserrat Community College. This presentation was delivered to over 30 students who are in the final year of school. This is a key demographic which has been highlighted by GoM in order to provide training to school leavers and encourage the uptake of environmental jobs.

In the last quarter, our first scholar Keanu Barnwell completed his programme, becoming an active and important member of our marine survey teams. During his training Keanu achieved his PADI Advanced Open Water qualification as well as his Reef Check EcoDiver certification. Following his success in the marine scholarship he then went on to complete our terrestrial training and become a proficient terrestrial surveyor.

A second scholar, Veta Wade also joined CCC for the scholarship programme during the last six months. Vita works for the Montserrat Culture Department and wanted to gain experience of the environmental heritage Montserrat has to offer. Like Keanu Vita successfully completed her PADI Diving and Reef Check qualifications.

In the last month of this quarter discussion began with our partners in the Department of Agriculture into the scope for training fisheries technicians and other government employees with diving and marine science skills. It is hoped that this new potential group of participants will participate in the scholarship scheme over the next quarter.

### *4.2 Host ten open days for schools*

The educational workshops held at the National library in Brades have continued to go from strength to strength over the last six months. These bi-monthly events have covered a huge range of topics including, bats, sharks, sea birds, the mountain chicken, manatees, snakes and even an introduction to SCUBA diving with the participants getting to try breathing underwater in a dunk tank. Attendance at the events are regularly over 25.

In the latter part of this quarter the library sessions changed to focus on preparations for the upcoming Alliouagana Festival of the Spoken Word in November. The theme for the festival this year is 'animals in literature' and so CCC has been helping children from the community

to design animal costumes for the final day parade.

In addition CCC education officers have presented a variety of scientific classes to school children at a range of ages. Classes have been taught in both Brades and St' Augustine primary schools. They covered topics such as food webs, reef ecology, endangered and invasive species and terrestrial habitats.

#### *4.3 Develop and deliver educational puppet show*

With the success of CCC's puppet show, 'Danny's Dilemma' at the Alliouagana festival in November 2013, CCC has been asked on a number of occasions to perform it again. The show highlights a variety of conservation and environmental threats that impact the marine and terrestrial resources of Montserrat through a fun and informative show.

In July 2014, CCC was asked to perform the show at the Calabash festival which celebrates African heritage and Montserratian culture through local food, music and craftwork. The show was delivered to over 80 people and was a big hit with the local children.

The next performance of the show will take place at this year Alliouagana festival in November.

#### *4.4 Deliver two teacher training events*

This quarter as seen a lot of work in developing a teacher training programme. Education staff from CCC have developed and delivered both one-on-one training and group sessions for staff at St' Augustine's Primary school. The group training focussed on ways to engage pupils in science lessons and how to construct educational and fun lesson plans. These issues had been cited by staff in previous consultation meetings and so the training sought to directly address these issues (supporting material – 011-012). In addition a one-on-one development session was held between CCC's Education Officer (EO) and a teacher from St' Augustine's. This session culminated in the delivery of a science lesson with the theme 'Ecology', by the EO, to demonstrate the principles taught.

The training was very well received with many of the teachers commenting on the high standard of training provided (supporting material – 013).

#### *4.5 Develop and screen two educational films showcasing Montserrat's natural environment.*

These videos are still in development. The story board for the marine video is due to be finalised by the end of October 2014 with filming happening in the following months.

#### *4.6 Produce and distribute two poster designs.*

The Terrestrial poster has been finalised and signed off by all the project partners (supporting material – 014). Due to high printing costs on Montserrat the poster has been printed elsewhere and will be sent to the island as soon as it is ready. A first batch of ten posters has been produced for distribution to schools, libraries and other community buildings.

The Marine poster is still in development. Due to the unavailability of the artist until December 2014 the design has not been finalised. However, it is due to be finished in the early part of next year ready for distribution.

**2a. 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 is one problem that has come apparent in the last six months. Prevailing weather patterns and swell direction mean that it is unlikely that we will be able to complete all of the 44 marine transects originally proposed by the end of the project. During most of the year prevailing winds and swell come from the east. These conditions mean that for the majority of the time we have deemed it unsafe for our survey boat to travel to the east coast of the island. At certain time of year when the weather is very calm it would still be possible to survey the east coast but these occasions are few. This situation, coupled with the fact that between December and March the sea conditions are too rough for any diving activities means that we will likely be unable to complete the surveys on the east coast.

At the start of the project we were unaware of the severity of the sea conditions. Now that we have experienced a full years' worth of weather and surveying we have come to the conclusion that the target of all 44 not achievable before the end of March 2015.

**2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year.** 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 and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

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

None

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 can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk) . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**