

Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2021)

Project reference	28-001
Project title	Building wetland resilience in Madagascar; Community-based conservation of Lake Tseny
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Madagascar
Lead organisation	Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)
Partner(s)	Madagasikara Voakajy (Mavoa) Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT)
Project leader	Harison Andriambelo, Country Coordinator, WWT Madagascar
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	October 2021, HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	Web page on www.wwt.org.uk (in prep)

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

The project acceptance letter from the Darwin Initiative was received on 12 August 2021, and the first two advance requests (for Q2 Jul-Sep and Q3 Oct-Dec) were submitted on 14 September. We were therefore primarily focused on project inception during the reporting period; agreeing sub-grants with partners, reviewing the log frame, recruiting for one new field position, and revising the work plan. As a result of these efforts, a Change Request will be submitted before the end of 2021 to notify the Darwin Initiative of possible material changes we would like to make to the project, including the log frame.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for COVID-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Although we had originally planned for the project to start in July, no notable problems or unexpected developments have been encountered beyond the delayed start.

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of COVID-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The project was designed during the pandemic, and the field operations of WWT and our partners have already been adapted to the demands on the pandemic and in line with appropriate health and safety measures, both internal to each organisation and those issued by the Government of Madagascar. For these reasons, we have not needed to make any material alterations to the logical framework, specific activities or operational modalities of the project as a result of the pandemic, although the situation is constantly under review.

2c. 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 (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: Unknown

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. 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, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

We would like to note here that we think a rebudget Change Request is quite likely before the end of the calendar year. We are working with the project partners to revise the budget so as much as possible can be achieved by the end of the first financial year.

We have also prepared responses to the suggestions provided by Darwin Projects in our acceptance letter (12 August 2021). These were incorporated into our internal project inception report and are available on request. Those with material impact on the log frame or otherwise will be noted in any upcoming Change Request.

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 DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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 e.g. Subject: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**