

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2023

Project reference	29-003
Project title	Improving livelihoods and protecting biodiversity on Floreana Island, Galápagos
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ecuador
Lead partner	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
Partner(s)	Island Conservation (IC); Jocotoco Foundation; Galápagos National Park Directive (GNPD), Galápagos Conservation Trust (GCT), Ecuadorian Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, (MAG) Universität Wien (UW)
Project leader	Jeff Dawson
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2 31 October 2023
Project website/blog/social media	<p><i>Press releases:</i></p> <p>https://www.ambiente.gob.ec/avanza-la-implementacion-del-proyecto-de-restauracion-ecologica-de-la-isla-floreana/</p> <p>https://www.islandconservation.org/groundbreaking-ecological-restoration-initiative-begins-on-floreana-island-galapagos/</p> <p>https://www.islandconservation.org/groundbreaking-ecological-restoration-initiative-begins-on-floreana-island-galapagos-2/</p> <p>https://www.elcomercio.com/tendencias/ambiente/galapagos-especies-extintas-reinsertadas-islas.html</p> <p>https://mousefreemarion.org/es/comienza-la-erradicacion-de-roedores-y-gatos-en-la-isla-floreana-de-las-galapagos/</p> <p><i>Blogs:</i></p> <p>https://www.islandconservation.org/12-galapagos-species-for-floreana/</p> <p>https://galapagosconservation.org.uk/12-missing-species-set-to-return-to-floreana/</p> <p>https://www.islandconservation.org/tequila-sunrise-or-floreana-sunrise/</p> <p><i>Websites:</i></p> <p>https://jointheiocc.org/projects/floreana-island-galapagos-ecuador/</p> <p>https://www.durrell.org/conservation/places/gala-pagos/</p>

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).

Output 1: The last six months have involved catching at risk species to bring into captivity during the eradication of invasive species on Floreana. Renovations to the two finch aviaries (lowland and highland) were completed in May. Five species of Darwin's finch have been caught and are being held within the aviaries at the following numbers (as of 19 October 2023): Cactus finch: 60; Small ground-finch: 199; Medium ground-finch 152; Small tree-finch: 63; Medium tree-finch: 50. Numbers caught were less than planned due to effects of El Nino (see section 2).

In April 2023, the installation of the ceiling mesh in the long-term short-eared owl captive-holding enclosures on Santa Cruz was completed along with completion of live food setup (guinea pig and mouse cages) for the owls. Two new positions (Veterinarian and Mouse-farm keeper) were recruited in July to oversee the owl mitigation component. A total of 64 owls were caught on Floreana between 13 July and 4 September, held initially in the temporary aviary on Floreana and transported via seven boat trips to the permanent aviaries on Santa Cruz. IC undertook some additional pre-eradication baseline assessments related to the associated marine environment (e.g., diurnal and nocturnal seabird, marine iguana abundance) in July 2023. IN total of 15 GNPD staff have been trained in species monitoring techniques though finch and owl mitigation work and associated non-target species monitoring work.

Output 2: No activities undertaken in this period. Will be done early Q4Y2 and Q1Y3.

Output 3: So far, in Y2 we have seen the commitment of Floreana farmers to learn and apply the techniques learned during training provided to them during Y1. Furthermore, during Q2 Jocotoco's technical team conducted a survey of island producers to determine the number of farmers who have implemented and tested the new livestock feeding management practices. Results are summarized as follows:

1. Of the 30 farmers surveyed, 13 (43%) defined themselves as women and 17 (57%) as men.
2. Regarding the application of cattle feeding practices in barns: 30 (100%) gave affirmative answers that they were implementing these practices.
3. How would you rate the implementation of feeding practices? 24 (80%) reported good experience with 6 (20%) reporting a fair experience. No one reported it as bad.
4. Would you implement these practices after eradication? 24 (80%) reported they would continue to implement them with 6 (20%) reporting they would implement some of them.

Further surveys will be done during the remainder of Y2 as not all farmers were available to be interviewed at this time.

Output 4: According to the technical team report, at least 30 farmers currently implement livestock management practices learned during training. Especially corn planting, grass cutting, silage making, baling, and storage using the machinery and training this grant has financed. With the eradication taking place October-December 2023 further assessments will be made of impacts of the baiting on livestock and feed management during and post eradication.

Responses to Y1 Annual Review comments

1. Please provide a status update of socioeconomic and farmers' livestock production reports

During 2022, INEC (Ecuadorian Statistics and Census Institute) conducted a population and housing census, so we have updated information on the number of inhabitants, demographics, housing type, etc. In the case of Floreana, they reported 145 inhabitants of which 52% are men and 48% are women, the household size is 2.96 members among other information. Furthermore, the results from the agricultural census for Galapagos (Renagro) were also published in 2022. The results for Floreana have yet to be processed but will provide a baseline against which ongoing socioeconomic assessments of Floreana farmers will be assessed.

2. Activity 4.4 (Undertake baseline surveys) was not carried out due to prior commitments of Jocotoco. However, the project addressed this by planning to utilise baselines from a comprehensive assessment conducted in 2017. It is unclear what happened with the allocated budget. Kindly provide clarification.

The budget allocated for the baseline study was part of the budget allocated for field trips and travel expenses of the Jocotoco technical team on Floreana. Whilst the baseline was unable to be conducted this budget was utilised to carry out all the other activities undertaken by Jocotoco reported in Y1 of the project.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.

[Redacted content]

[Redacted content]

[REDACTED]	
3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?	
Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes (El Nino)
Formal Change Request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	No
Change request reference if known:	

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)	
Actual spend: [REDACTED]	
4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: [REDACTED]
4c. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget 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.	
NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.	
5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?	
Not at this time	

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**