

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 2022

Project reference	DARCC005
Project title	Co-Galapagos: catalysing community action for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ecuador (Galapagos)
Lead partner	Galapagos Conservation Trust
Partner(s)	FUNCAVID (Fundación Un Cambio por la Vida), University of Cambridge (King's College)
Project leader	Sophia Cooke
Report date and number	31/10/2022. HYR1
Project website/blog/social media	https://co-galapagos.org

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).

Bold numbers correspond to our SMART indicators in our logframe.

Output 1: Capacity and capability of local NGO FUNCAVID strengthened to manage and channel funding into a growing portfolio of community projects. We have been successfully delivering our planned 8 knowledge exchange sessions (2 in person, 6 online) covering topics across project and financial management and policy in Galapagos. These have been delivered over a longer time period than initially planned due to Co-Galapagos (Co-G) team availability (finishing in early November) **(1.1)**. Additional fortnightly online meetings represent a regular forum to share resources, to monitor delivery and document lessons learned with consistent attendance across partners. Project-level policies for grant management and safeguarding will continue to be developed and will be shared with project leaders in advance of the proposal process. We have developed an M&E plan and online spreadsheet following the DI workshop and trained all partners in capturing key indicators. The project risk assessment has been reviewed and updated (at 6 months) and the budget is tracked quarterly. Grant income was c.£2,245 in Q1-2 (3 small grants (£/\$)) and c.£4,390 in Q2 from tourists/individuals (one donation of \$500, plus 37 donations (£/\$) through our international online crowd-funder). We plan to run another crowd-funder in December or January due to the success of the first **(1.2)**. Our potential fundraising leads are growing via a new partnership with the biggest National Park Guides association and potential collaborations with one large Ecuadorian tour operator and five local restaurants and hotels. These partnerships would increase our reach and potential donor base. All of our learnings to date and our initial plans are being captured in a Strategic Plan for Co-Galapagos for 2023 - 2025 which although several sections are completed, has been delayed by two months due to staff changes and illness (now set for delivery 30 Nov) **(1.3)**. We have approached seven experts to become an 'Advisory Panel' for Co-G (aka 'Project Board') with a meeting planned in December to review the Strategic Plan. *Activities 1.1 & 1.3. delivered, 1.2 delayed (due Q4), 1.4. on track, 1.5. delayed (due Q3).* **Output 2: Co-Galapagos projects strengthened via increased capacity to deliver tailored coaching for project leaders and facilitate their**

integration into a peer-learning network. We recruited our Co-G Project Coach in April - Cristina Calvopiña - who brings a wealth of experience working on sustainable development and community focused initiatives in Galapagos (2.1). Cristina's role has enabled a much stronger connection with community project leaders to better understand their needs and has enabled the portfolio to expand to 16 projects (5 funded and in their first delivery phase, 6 in promotion phase on the Co-G website for fundraising, 5 in proposal co-development/ project leader training phase covering varied topics such as the circular economy, gender equality and environmental education). Cristina has assembled initial training resources for project leaders including guides to Co-G project selection criteria and templates for proposals and reports (2.2). One-to-one meetings have been conducted with all 16 project leaders to understand training needs, logged in a meetings log to track coaching delivery. The first group workshop addressing the results of these meetings will be delivered in December with project leaders, interns and the Co-G team providing a networking opportunity to reinforce the Co-G community peer-learning network which is currently primarily delivered via a WhatsApp Project groups to share information and invites to the training sessions (2.3). Questionnaires for project leaders and for interns have been created, to compare and evaluate Co-G's impact. Data will be analysed in phases (we will include the first in our first annual report). (Activity 2.1 – 2.6 delivery ongoing as per implementation timetable). **Output 3: Paid internship scheme launched to drive Co-Galapagos communications and provide support for projects, research and policy activities.** We have not delivered planned promotional radio slots – with social media working well the need for this is currently being reviewed and we will be in touch shortly (3.1). The "word of mouth" promotion among local youth and organisations has resulted in regular enquiries for internship opportunities and we have even received funds from other island-based organisations to run internships through this scheme (\$1,870 received for 2 additional internships – part of 1.2). In Galapagos, we have delivered 6 full internships (6 weeks full time or 12 weeks part time) and 3 that were not completed due to interns having other commitments. We expect to exceed our target of 8 full local internships before the end of the grant and are building on these learnings to improve intern retention (3.2). Intern topics have included communications (one UK intern part time for 6 months and several on island), mapping Galapagos research efforts (including on different species), optimising a new island intranet for schools, programming a new citizen science app for bird identification, and developing the policy pack (see Output 4). We have introduced weekly meetings with Co-G interns and have cultivated an active WhatsApp group community. We continue to provide training opportunities in person (successful workshop delivered in August) and online for example, in project communications. So far, two interns have input into the Co-G Communications Plan and two supported delivery (3.3). There have been significant updates to the Co-G website and effort invested in building social media audiences although due to the huge demand on time, we have reduced the scope of our communications plans. Useful products such as infographics, project videos and SDG resources for schools have been produced and will continue to be promoted into 2023. We piloted a buddy scheme with one UK-based intern and one Galapagos-based communications intern but encountered language barriers and so will need to invest more resources to connect our interns if they are not confident in English or Spanish. (Activity 3.1 under review, 3.2 – 3.4 on track, 3.5 delivered but reduced scope, 3.6 ongoing). **Output 4: Co-Galapagos becomes an integral part of the Policy Advisory Group to the Galapagos Hub, facilitating a communication channel between community voices and Government to advance priority SDG targets.** Lucía Norris (Policy Lead), in partnership with a Co-G Policy Intern, Pablo Llerena (internship July-September) produced a Galapagos Policy Pack outlining all relevant policies to biodiversity and sustainable development in Galapagos from the Galapagos 2030 Plan to the global SDGs. This is the first step to support community project leaders to map linkages to policy. In addition, this resource represents a unique summary of the complex political landscape that is also useful to NGO programme leads, researchers and policy makers alike (reflections from stakeholder consultations to date). The Policy Pack has become a living document that will be cultivated by future policy interns. We are planning to translate it into English and design a public facing version in early 2023 to further increase uptake and be able to share with other locations. Lucía has undertaken six project leader meetings so far linked primarily to three key policy topics (i) achieving priority SDG targets in Galapagos, particularly focusing on: (ii) achieving gender equality and (iii) achieving a circular economy (4.1). All Co-G projects to date

have been mapped against the SDG targets, contributing to a sister initiative (also managed by Co-G team members) to map key research, conservation and policy efforts in Galapagos. This information flow is already supporting the development of policy briefs that will be further supplemented by interviews with the other project leaders in November. The delivery of our first Co-G policy brief has therefore been pushed back to December to include the outcomes of these interviews and the Co-G training workshop and incorporate more local voices. This brief will provide policy makers an overview of the tools for achieving the 2030 SDG Agenda in Galapagos and an overview of current community projects **(4.2 & 4.3)**. *(Activities 4.1. delivered (finished in Q2) but extension to Q4 for translation of Policy Pack, 4.2 on track, 4.3 & 4.4 delayed to Q3, 4.5 at project end).*

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.

Communications: To support communications management in Galapagos, in June we requested that 50% of the funding requested for Roberto Proaño's salary could be reallocated to new Communications Coordinator Marcos Quinga. While outside the timeframe for this report, we wanted to highlight that, due to personal circumstances, Marcos has unfortunately had to resign from the role. We will submit a change request form ASAP, highlighting how the funding can be best used - i.e., split between Roberto (re-absorbing some tasks) and the time spent by FUNCAVID Director, Daniel Proaño, overseeing communications delivery by interns.
Internship age bracket: A change was requested (and approved) for the internship scheme as we identified candidates >30 years could also benefit, as was the case for Pablo who supported development of the Policy Pack, who was a great asset and has since secured a job following this internship at top Ecuadorian university, Universidad San Francisco de Quito.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes/No

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

Change request reference if known: Not known (two change request forms approved)

4a. 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: £

4b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

It was highlighted to us following approval of our second change request form to address that, with our training plans for community project leaders expected to be implemented throughout the project period (i.e., through to September 2023), it may be hard to complete any follow-on activities needed. Due to the nature of the project (not all projects starting at once), some project leaders will have completed their training well in advance of September 2023. To ensure we have the resources for critical actions/to continue support for any projects starting nearer the end of the grant period, we have developed a funding plan for 2023 - 2025 to continue delivery of Co-Galapagos operations (including potentially a DI Main application).