

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	DARCC011
Project title	Realising the Durban Vision: Strengthening Madagascar's Protected area management capacity
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Madagascar
Lead partner	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
Partner(s)	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
Project leader	Hanitra Nomentsoa Andrianantenaina
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2 31 st October 2023
Project website/blog/social media	N/A

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).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Progress made for each output are detailed below:

Output 1: Formal training improves the skills, knowledge and attitudes of PA managers/directors

- 1.1. The training module on "*Leadership, team management, conflict resolution, communication and gender*", used in the previous session (in 11-13 October 2022), was improved, based on concrete examples and sharing experiences from participants and also, based on their feedback during the training assessment.
- 1.2. A training session on "*Leadership, team management, conflict resolution, communication and gender*" was held from 07 to 09 September 2023 and 12 new directors/site managers including 3 women were trained. From the project start to date, 50 directors/site managers including 10 women (out of 60 targets) received training on managerial and technical skills.
- 1.3. For each training session, pre- and post-training evaluation forms are filled in by the participants to assess the skills and knowledge acquired, but also to identify areas for improvement for each training session (approaches used, trainers, etc.). For training courses completed before March 2023, an online evaluation form has been sent to participants to measure the impact and changes brought about by the application of the training they attended.

Output 2: Practical exchange visits and training improve the skills, knowledge and attitudes of PA technicians.

2.1. Three exchange visits were made. The dates of the activities, the protected areas visited and the number of participants for each exchange visit are summarized below:

- 14-15 June: Lac Alaotra Protected Area. 30 protected area managers including 4 women participated,
- 26-28 July: three Protected Areas in southern Madagascar (Anjà Community Reserve, Isalo National Park and Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park). 31 protected area managers including 5 women participated,
- 23-24 August: Menabe Antimena Protected Area. 30 people including 9 women took part in this exchange visit.

A total of 89 protected area managers including 17 women took part in these exchange visits during this period. In total, 148 people out of 240 targets attended exchange visits.

2.2. Pre- and post-exchange visit evaluations are always carried out to assess the knowledge and practical skills acquired by participants, as well as to evaluate participants' networking.

Output 3: A practitioners continue to strengthen and broaden priority competences through ongoing professional development and learning opportunities.

3.1. Three training courses were organised for technicians on three themes:

- 16-18 May 2023 (Antananarivo): *Planning effective conservation projects using the Conservation standards*. 21 protected area managers including 6 women took part in the training,
- 25-26 May 2023 (Toliara): *Engaging with local communities, evaluating and monitoring social and behaviour change*. 16 protected area managers including 5 women participated in the training,
- 11-13 July 2023 (Antananarivo): *Ecological restoration*. 35 protected area managers including 10 women attended the training.

A total of 69 protected area managers including 21 women benefited from these training courses during this period. To date, 255 people including 69 women (out of 300 targets) took part to training sessions: 205 technicians (including 59 women) and 50 directors/site managers (including 10 women).

Two protected area managers have been selected to take part in the DESMAN training course from 11 September to 01 December 2023, in Jersey.

The selection process for the next DESMAN training session from 12 February to 03 May is already currently ongoing. The names of the two selected participants should be announced by the middle of November.

3.2. For training courses completed before March 2023, an online evaluation form has been sent to participants to measure the impact and changes brought about by the application of the training they attended.

3.3. A draft of the handbook has been developed and the contents of the modules will be added as they become available. It is intended that all participants in the project's activities will be able to benefit from it.

Output 4: PA managers and technicians access PA management learning resources and technical information through online resources and regular peer-peer meetings.

4.1. The content of the modules, training materials and various documents already used to date have been compiled and standardised. These documents are progressively uploaded in Durrell's Learning Management System (LMS) as they are completed. Anyone who has already taken part in one or more of the project's activities will then have access to this LMS to consult and follow the courses they are interested in online.

4.2. A regional meeting for the southern region was organised on 31 July and 01 August 2023. The main points discussed during this meeting were the creation of a regional platform of Protected Area managers and the evaluation 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.

One of the main challenges we faced over the last 6 months was finding new participants for the activities. In fact, most of the people who applied to take part in the activities were those who had already taken part in one or more training courses. This made it difficult to achieve the target number of people to be trained. We therefore had to discuss this problem with the focal points and make them aware of the need to share information, especially with people who had never taken part in project activities. We also made sure to inform several protected area management organisations so that they could inform and raise their staff's interest in attending the activities. They can also designate representatives from their organisations who really need the training.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

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)?

No Estimated underspend: £

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?

No

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**