

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	DARCC012
Project title	Capacity for Natural Capital Accounting for Sustainable Development in Ghana
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ghana
Lead partner	UNEP-WCMC
Partner(s)	Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)
Project leader	Kiruben Naicker
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	20-10-2023, HYR 2
Project website/blog/social media	

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.

According to the planning and M&E systems in place for the project, the following progress has been achieved during the reporting period from April to September.

National Plan finalised by September 2023

The National Plan has been drafted and consulted with national stakeholders. A 2nd draft was compiled integrating stakeholder input. Following a technical review, a 3rd draft was compiled. This 3rd draft would need further technical review, quality assurance and stakeholder consultation. The plan will be finalised at the end of November for publication and release in January 2024.

2nd Consultation Workshop

A 2nd workshop was held at the Coconut Grove Hotel, Accra on the 26th of April 2023. This workshop aimed to validate the draft National Plan for the implementation of NCA in Ghana. A total of 51 delegates from government institutions, non-governmental organisations and other relevant organisations participated in the workshop. To ensure ownership of the plan, participants brainstormed on the draft National Plan and the prioritization of accounts. The target of 30 participants attending and engaging in the workshop was exceeded. However, further technical review, quality assurance and stakeholder consultation would be required on subsequent drafts of the national plan.

Draft demonstration accounts

The compilation of a Fisheries account has been initiated. This deliverable is in the data-gathering phase. Compilation of the account is expected to be completed in December 2023. Other supporting deliverables, which include the technical note and the metadata report are being compiled in a parallel process.

Implementation Strategy finalised by the end of Quarter 4.

An outline of the implementation strategy was developed. The strategy is scheduled to be finalised by the end of quarter 4.

3rd Stakeholder consultation workshop scheduled for November 2023.

The 3rd consultation workshop was planned for November 2023. In consultation with the national partner, this workshop has been rescheduled for January 2024.

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.

The revised time frames for the outputs of the project are within the timeline of the project. Consultation and integration of stakeholder comments are important to ensure co-development among stakeholders, which increases buy-in and ownership of implementation. The lesson learned is that further consultation, technical review and quality assurance are required, which may incur additional capacity and time. With hindsight, these requirements would need to be included in the planning and timeline of the overall project.

National Plan published by January 2024

The latest iteration of the national plan following technical review and quality assurance would require further consultation before it is finalised for publication in January 2024.

Draft demonstration accounts

The compilation of the draft Fisheries account will be completed in December 2023, which will then be prepared for consultation with national stakeholders in January 2024

Implementation Strategy finalised by the end of Quarter 4.

The draft implementation strategy, which will be aligned to the latest iteration of the national plan will be prepared for consultation in January 2024.

3rd Stakeholder consultation workshop rescheduled for January 2023.

The technical review and further consultation of the national plan have had a cascading impact on the timing of subsequent project deliverables. This has warranted the rescheduling of the 3rd stakeholder consultation workshop to January 2024 where the National plan will be released. The draft implementation strategy and the draft demonstration account will also be consulted with national stakeholders in this workshop.

Due to staff turnover within the project team, and broader capacity building internally, the following experts have been included in the project team: Emma Calhoun, with economic analyses experience, will assist with the compilation of the account. Dr Emma Lockerbie, with expertise in fisheries management, will support the team. Matt Kaplan will be responsible for the editorial review of all deliverables of the project. Katherine Despot-Belmonte will ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into all deliverables of the project. Sophie Armitage will provide additional administration support to the project.

The staff changes within the project team and the rescheduling or adjustment of the timing of deliverables are not expected to impact the overall timeline of the project. The final delivery and outcome of the project has not been impacted. These changes will be communicated to Darwin through a change request prior to submission of this report.

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
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes: before submission of half yearly report
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Not yet
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?

Planned expenditure for consultation of the national plan by the national partner will take place in December 2023 and January 2024.

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**