Applicant: **Jones, Julia**
Organisation: **Bangor University**
Funding Sought: **£0.00**

DIR28IN\1054

Introducing research-informed conservation agreements for forest restoration in Anjouan, Comoros

Deforestation on Anjouan (Comoros) threatens both biodiversity and human livelihoods. Conventional approaches to address this have been largely unsuccessful. We will draw on a decade of experience from Anjouan and insights from international research on conservation agreements (including a unique Randomized Control Trial of a Bolivian scheme) to design an innovative, conservation agreements approach to forest restoration ready for scaling up. Unusually, robust impact evaluation of outcomes will be built-in; contributing to a culture change in conservation.

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Prof
Name	Julia
Surname	Jones

[redacted]

OTHER DETAILS

Title	Mr
Name	Hugh
Surname	Doulton
Organisation	Dahari

[redacted]

GMS ORGANISATION

Type	**General**	**Type**	**Local charity organisation**
Name	Bangor University	**Name**	Dahari

[redacted]

Section 2 - Project Summary, Ecosystems, Approaches and Threats

Q3. Project Title

Introducing research-informed conservation agreements for forest restoration in Anjouan, Comoros

Q4. Key Ecosystems, Approaches and Threats

Please select up to 3 biomes that are of focus, up to 3 conservation actions that characterise your approach, and up to 3 threats to biodiversity you intend to address, from dropdown lists.

Biome 1

Tropical-subtropical forests

Biome 2

No Response

Biome 3

No Response

Conservation Action 1

Land/water protection (area/resource/habitat)

Conservation Action 2

Livelihood, economic & other incentives (incl. conservation payments)

Conservation Action 3

Education & awareness (incl. training)

Threat 1

Agriculture & aquaculture (incl. plantations)

Threat 2

No Response

Threat 3

No Response

Q5. Summary of project

Please provide a brief summary of your project, its aims, and the key activities you plan to undertake. Please note that if you are successful, this wording may be used by Defra in communications e.g. as a short description of the project on the website.

Please write this summary for a non-technical audience.

Deforestation on Anjouan (Comoros) threatens both biodiversity and human livelihoods. Conventional approaches to address this have been largely unsuccessful. We will draw on a decade of experience from Anjouan and insights from international research on conservation agreements (including a unique Randomized Control Trial of a Bolivian scheme) to design an innovative, conservation agreements approach to forest restoration ready for scaling up. Unusually, robust impact evaluation of outcomes will be built-in; contributing to a culture change in conservation.

Section 3 - Dates & Budget Summary

Q6. Project Country(ies)

Which eligible host country(ies) will your project be working in?

Country 1	Comoros	**Country 2**	*No Response*
Country 3	*No Response*	**Country 4**	*No Response*

Do you require more fields?

⦿ No

Q7. Project dates

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 1 year, 8 months):
01 April 2022	31 March 2024	24 months

Q8. Budget Summary

Darwin Funding Request	2022/23	2023/24	Total request
(Apr - Mar) £	£91,142.00	£108,794.00	199,936.00

Q9. Proportion of Darwin Initiative budget expected to be expended in eligible countries: % [redacted]

Q10a. Do you have proposed matched funding arrangements?

⦿ Yes

What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

Bangor University will provide [redacted] in matched funding by waiving all overheads. The University of Oxford will provide [redacted] in matched funding by waiving all overheads, and [redacted] in travel costs (from Brasenose College). Dahari will provide [redacted] of matched funding via its donors Bat Conservation International ([redacted] and Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund ([redacted].

In addition (uncosted) we have commitment from six international experts (from Madagascar, Bolivia, Spain, Finland, Denmark and France) who will review our conservation agreement scheme and the development of the impact evaluation. Finally, Dahari will provide two vehicles and motorbikes for use in the field delivering the project.

Q10b. Total confirmed & unconfirmed matched funding (£) [redacted]

Q10c. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you fund the project if you

don't manage to secure this?

No Response

Section 4 - Darwin Objectives and Conventions

Q11. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the evidence of the problem your project is trying to address in terms of biodiversity and its relationship with poverty. What is the need, challenge or opportunity? For example, what are the drivers of loss of biodiversity that the project will attempt to address? Why are they relevant, for whom? How did you identify these problems?

Please cite the evidence you are using to support your assessment of the problem (references can be listed in a separate attached PDF document).

The Comoro Islands are a tropical archipelago between Madagascar and Mozambique with exceptional terrestrial biodiversity: 20% of vertebrates and around 30% of plant species are endemic (1,2). They have suffered one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world (3). The island of Anjouan is the worst affected, losing 80% of its natural forests between 1995 and 2014 (4). This extreme deforestation has had significant consequences for local livelihoods. Only ten rivers on Anjouan still flow permanently, compared to fifty around forty years ago (5), while heavy soil erosion reduces agricultural yields and silts the reefs, reducing the productivity of fishing.

Deforestation is therefore contributing to poverty on Anjouan (Comoros is 156th on the Human Development Index), but poverty also exacerbates deforestation. Remaining mature forest trees are sometimes cut and sold for timber (6). Farmers practice extensive agriculture which, coupled with a high and rising population density and high dependence on agriculture for livelihoods, puts further pressure on forest areas. With each generation, fields are becoming smaller and livelihoods more marginal, and more trees are cut, further contributing to the cycle of degradation and poverty (7). Forest patches on the island of Anjouan now remain on only the most inaccessible slopes.

Various efforts to reverse trends in forest loss since the 1980s have been largely unsuccessful. While protected areas now exist on each island, environmental laws lack support and application at the local level. Weak social cohesion and representative local leadership complicates collective conservation action.

Dahari has been working to conserve and restore forest in Anjouan since 2013. A strategic planning process (2020-2021) concluded that continuing to pursue collective forest management approaches was not likely to be effective. Instead, the decision taken was to build on a successful pilot conservation agreement scheme to protect the critically endangered Livingstone's fruit bat, which has run for the last five years with seven landowners in the Moya Key Biodiversity Area (part-funded by the Darwin Initiative). Under the scheme, farmers gain agricultural investments in their other fields and small payments for research and tourist visits to the roost site conditional on land management agreements.

This proposal builds on learning from Dahari's pilot scheme and their broader expertise in reforestation and agroforestry development to develop a new conservation approach. Conservation agreements, and related 'Payment for Ecosystem Services-like' schemes, have become a widely-used approach for incentivizing conservation on private land using conditional incentives (8,9). As with any approach, there are pitfalls (10,11) and the limited existing evidence-based suggests mixed results (12,13). Our project brings together substantial international research and practice expertise (including that associated with a Randomized Control Trial of a conservation agreements scheme in Bolivia; 14–18) to facilitate the design of a rigorous, research-informed conservation agreement approach for the Comoros. The scheme design will, unusually, build-in robust impact evaluation. This will deliver benefits in the short to medium term (conserving and restoring the critical remaining forest in Anjouan), while also influencing conservation practice internationally by providing a model for genuinely research-informed conservation.

Q12. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q12a. Your project must support the commitments of one or more of the agreements listed below.

Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported.

☑ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
☑ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
☑ Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q12b. National and International Policy Alignment

Please detail how your project will contribute to national policy (including NBSAPs, NDCs, NAP etc.) and in turn international biodiversity and development conventions, treaties and agreements that the country is a signatory of.

This project will contribute directly to meeting the Comoros' commitments to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as outlined in the second draft of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), published in 2016. By seeking to develop an innovative approach to forest restoration, unique for the country, it responds directly to the first direct cause of biodiversity loss identified: the ongoing impact of agricultural expansion and timber extraction (p. 14). By looking to improve the sustainability and profitability of local agricultural practices in ways that are directly tied to forest restoration through conservation agreements, the project responds to parts of all five of the strategic goals outlined in the NBSAP (pp. 28 – 29).
Dahari has a good working relationship with the CBD focal point Mr Abdouchakour Mohamed from the Fisheries Directorate and has discussed this project with him. Over the course of this project, we will keep in touch with him to discuss project progress, so he can advise us as appropriate and also feed project results into reports and other updates to the CBD.
The Comoros updated their first Nationally Determined Contribution to the UNFCCC in November 2021. This renewed the country's commitment to reducing emissions associated with Land Use Change and Forestry. This project will contribute to the country's aims under the UNFCCC of protecting forest areas, reforestation, and increasing agro-forestry.
The project also contributes to the Comoros' efforts to meet the SDGs, both broadly in terms of linking development and environmental protection, and through objectives that will contribute directly to SDGs 1 (no poverty – through agricultural and agroforestry development), 2 (no hunger – through agricultural and agroforestry development),13 (climate action – through reforestation, forest protection and adoption of climate-smart agricultural methods), 15 (life on land – through forest and biodiversity conservation measures).

Section 5 - Method, Innovation, Capability & Capacity

Q13. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- **How have you reflected on and incorporated evidence and lessons learnt from past and present similar activities and projects in the design of this project?**
- **The need for this work and a justification of your proposed approach.**
- **How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).**
- **What will be the main activities and where will these take place?**
- **How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, risks etc.).**

Please make sure you read the guidance documents, before answering this question.

The first stage is to evaluate the pilot conservation agreement scheme Dahari ran since 2015. This will be a qualitative impact evaluation building on the theory of change, interviews with participating farmers, Dahari staff and other stakeholders to capture perceptions of how much change they attribute to the scheme (reflexive counterfactuals; 19). The evaluation will include transect walks and participatory mapping focused on tracking the fate of mature trees and wider changes in vegetation and farming practices.
The second stage is research and development to provide the information needed to allow a new conservation agreement scheme to be designed to deliver the best possible outcomes for conservation and forest restoration on Anjouan. This phase includes focus group discussions to discuss motivations for retaining mature trees on the land, the value of potential interventions to compensate for restoration investments by farmers, how conditionality in the new scheme could operate. A questionnaire survey will explore likely uptake under various conditions. A legal review of some key tenure questions will

be conducted with a local consultant. Extensive mapping, local consultation and gap-filling data collection will feed into a plan to identify the priority areas for roll-out and units for randomization (necessary for the robust impact evaluation). Learning from the Watershared conservation agreement scheme in Bolivia (including a Randomized Control Trial exploring mechanisms by which it did or did not change things;14,15,17,18) will be incorporated into the design of the scheme (exchange trips with Natura Bolivia are co-funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund).
The third stage will build on the results of the first two, and consultation with local authorities and international experts to finalize the design of the scheme. Robust impact evaluation of the outcomes delivered by a conservation intervention is often not possible as it needs to be designed into a scheme from the start. We are designing a randomized, staggered rollout to facilitate robust impact evaluation and learning in the medium to longer term (beyond the life of this project).
The fourth stage is the implementation of at least 40 agreements with a stratified random subset of farmers in order to test and refine the design of the scheme.
A major aim of this project is to bring new ideas and capacity to the Comoros. The international team members will deliver lectures at the University of the Comoros, and train university students and Dahari staff on the job in new approaches. We will use this project to demonstrate how conservation science can more directly feed into conservation practice.
Hugh Doulton (Dahari) will manage the project supported by Misbahou Mohamed (Dahari), and Edwin Pynegar (Bangor). Strategic review against the logframe will take place every quarter with the wider project team. Julia Jones (Bangor) will work closely with Siti Mohamed (Dahari) and Misbahou on the design of social research elements, the scheme, and the impact evaluation. Owen Lewis (Oxford) will support Amelaid Houmadi (Dahari) in the design and application of biodiversity and habitat monitoring protocols. Data will be managed via open-source software.

Q14. Innovation

Please specifically outline how your approach or project is innovative, noting the opportunity to describe the methodology is next.

Is it the application of existing evidence/technology/approach in a distinctly different sector, the development of new technologies/approach in an existing area, or is it a totally disruptive approach?

There is a growing awareness in conservation science that conservation needs to get better at learning from failures and adapting when things are not working (20). In addition, conservation practice suffers from a lack of high-quality impact evaluations (21), in part because project timelines do not incentivize resources being invested in establishing baselines and designs that facilitate the robust evaluation of outcomes (22,23).
This project is highly innovative in two ways:
1) The project is designed in response to the lack of success in reversing the alarming deforestation rates in the Comoros. We will develop a completely new, research-informed approach to forest restoration in the country based on conditional conservation agreements, drawing insights from research and experience of 'Payments for Ecosystem Services-like' scheme around the world.
2) We will design and begin the rollout of the scheme to facilitate a robust counterfactual evaluation of impact beyond the timeline of this project. Although this is a risk as is dependent on future funding, we see this as extremely valuable to both the scheme and to help advance conservation practice which suffers from a lack of robust impact evaluation to inform learning.
Insights from Natura Bolivia's conservation agreement scheme (15,24) will be complemented by field research led by international experts working with a locally-embedded team (with external input from independent experts - see letters of support).
As well as successfully kick-starting the first effective approach to forest restoration in Anjouan, the aim is, therefore, to contribute to a culture change in conservation.

Q15. Capability and Capacity

How will you support the strengthening of capability and capacity in the project countries at organisational or individual levels, please provide details of what form this will take and the post-project value to the country.

The core aim of this project is to draw on international expertise to build the capability and capacity of Dahari to redesign their approach to conservation. Attracting experienced staff to work in conservation in the Comoros is challenging (a planned scientist recruitment through Dahari under our previous Darwin project failed). Hence the major expenditure is to

fund the expertise from Bangor University for a full-time researcher (Dr Edwin Pynegar, to be hired by Bangor University) to support Dahari.
Edwin will spend 80% of his time in the Comoros working alongside Dahari staff. The project also includes substantial expert input from Professor Julia Jones (Bangor) and Professor Owen Lewis (Oxford). Experts from the University of Antananarivo, Autonomous University of Barcelona, and Natura Bolivia will provide input into the scheme design, while experts from the University of Helsinki, Copenhagen University, and Montpellier will review the impact evaluation plans. This heavy injection of international scientific expertise is intended to drive rigorous innovation and establish a research-informed conservation agreements scheme set up to maximize learning.
Edwin Pynegar will work closely with Hugh Doulton and Misbahou Mohamed (Dahari) in the design of the conservation agreements scheme. Misbahou, a Darwin fellow (EIDPS034), will be supported to build his professional network and provided with dedicated training towards leading the future implementation. Owen Lewis will work alongside Dr Amelaid Houmadi to build the ecological monitoring and evaluation component and train the ecology field team. Julia Jones and Edwin Pynegar will work with Siti Mohamed to design the social research elements. Students from the University of the Comoros will gain training and experience by doing their dissertation research alongside the project, while the core project team will give lectures at the university to build understanding of approaches to conservation and impact evaluation.

Section 6 - Gender, Awareness, Change Expected & Exit Strategy

Q16. Gender equality

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Explain how your project will collect gender disaggregated data and what impact your project will have in promoting gender equality.

The Comoros has a Gender Development Index of 0.891 (the ratio of female to male Human Development Index). This shows that women in the Comoros, on average, experience lower development then men, mostly due to lower access to education and lower wealth.
There are important gender dimensions to livelihoods and natural resource exploitation in the Comoros, with sons tending to inherit agricultural fields and daughters inheriting houses. There are also gendered crop preferences and specialisation and division of labour that require attention when developing interventions.
Dahari has evolved a gender-sensitive outreach approach, strengthened under the previous Darwin project (24009). Improvements to outreach mechanisms were made including the recruitment of women outreach agents, targeting existing women's cultural associations in the villages, and supporting women's leadership and knowledge exchange between women. This led to 42% of beneficiaries of agricultural support being women by the end of the project in 2021, with a progressive increase each year.
This gender-sensitive approach will be applied within this project, with existing female outreach agents facilitating mobilisation of women farmers in zones targeted for the conservation agreements approach. There will be additional factors to take into account during this new intervention, in particular that most farmers in highland areas are male. Research with farmers during the development phase for the scheme will take into account gender livelihood differences, interviewing farmers individually and performing focus groups differentiated by gender where appropriate. Should gender differences in livelihood activities and needs relevant to the implementation of the scheme become evident from this research, then these will be integrated into the design of benefits to be generated for male and female farmers.

Q17. Awareness and understanding

How will you raise awareness and understanding of biodiversity-poverty issues in your stakeholders, including who are your stakeholders, what approaches/formats/products will you use, how you will ensure open and free access to all data, and how will you know that the messages are understood?

The target of the conservation agreement scheme are farmers with fields in mid-to- high elevation areas (>500m) where it is important to maintain forest fragments and restore forest to ensure water provisioning and the conservation of endemic biodiversity. We will ensure that the design of the scheme, and its communication, builds on existing environmental values rather than risk undermining them15.
We aim to sign agreements with 40 farmers during this project. Within the units (likely to be water catchments), we will communicate the project via local radio and village events, as well as through collaborating with local religious leaders. Other key stakeholders are the mayor's offices in the intervention zone, and regional government and environmental

authorities in the Comoros, in particular the National Parks Agency. We have planned outreach with these actors through individual meetings to keep them abreast of progress and garner input to the scheme.
Finally, we want to communicate our learning from a fully research-informed redesign of a conservation approach to the wider conservation community. We will do this through at least one international publication and presentations to partners, other researchers and donors internationally.
Our project website and Dahari's facebook will be kept up to date and any local communications tools produced will be available there.
Dahari have already started to improve data management during their previous Darwin grant: they are increasingly using Kobo (open source software running on android devices) to collect monitoring data in the field and reduce the risk of data loss. This project will further embed these skills in Dahari. Quantitative research being conducted as part of this project will be made publicly available e.g. on pre-print servers and on FigShare. Qualitative research data will not be archived because of the cost of effectively anonymizing it and limited re-use value.

Q18. Change expected

Detail the nature of the outputs you expect from the project (for example report, practical demonstration, know-how, new process, product or service design) and how these will help you to target the identified need, challenge or opportunity in terms of biodiversity and poverty reduction, and links between them.

You should identify what will change and who will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).

When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail – number of households should be the largest unit used.

Short term change (within life of the project)
40 farmers enrolled in research-informed conservation agreements and receiving direct benefits (from agro-forestry and help with supply chains) in exchange for committing some of their land and time to conservation and restoration. This will benefit the 40 farmers enrolled in the scheme (mostly poorer farmers as these predominate among those farming the marginal steep and high-elevation land of most significance for biodiversity and ecosystem service provisioning).
Increased capacity of Dahari staff (and students from the University of Comoros) in applied ecological and social research and in study design for robust impact evaluation. Key staff (5 women and 6 men) will benefit in terms of targeted professional development, with impacts for the wider Dahari team (60 people). The wider environment sector in Comoros will benefit from this investment in local capacity (the project brings intense investment from international expertise).
Alongside the design of the scheme, we will design the implementation with medium to longer term impact evaluation of outcomes built in. The wider conservation practice community will benefit from an example where a scheme has been set up using research and rolled out to explicitly allow high-quality impact evaluation. This will help raise standards in conservation.

Longer-term change (not visible within the life of the project)
Conservation agreements scheme scaled-up to reach at least 500 farmers across all the headwater areas of the Moya Key Biodiversity Area. This will benefit the farmers involved who will gain agricultural and supply-chain support.
Forest areas critical for securing water provisioning are restored. This will benefit downstream farmers who will benefit from the hydrological ecosystem services provided by maintaining and restoring forests in critical headwaters (women are more frequent farmers in lower elevation areas). Fishers will benefit from reduced siltation which is damaging the reef (and its productivity as a nursery ground).
Roost sites of the Critically Endangered Livingstone's fruit bat housing 50% of the population are protected on Anjouan. This benefits all those interested in conservation, as well as impacting on natural forest regeneration through the bats' role as keystone seed dispersers.
Biodiversity in the Ntringui protected area that includes the Moya forest Key Biodiversity Area (potentially additional areas depending on wider uptake of the model) in the Comoros in a better state and the Comoros is on track to deliver on its commitments to the Convention of Biological Diversity. The National Parks Authority and the wider Comorian population will benefit.
The outcomes of the scheme are robustly evaluated because the scheme has been set up with the counterfactual in mind. The wider conservation practice community will benefit from the learning generated. Too many conservation projects

focus their monitoring and evaluation only on things which can be measured within the lifetime of the project, meaning there are vanishing few robust impact evaluations of the ultimate outcomes of interest in conservation (and fewer still which provide insights into why outcomes were or were not achieved).

Q19. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change, including how your outcome can be scaled. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline why and how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, longer term, your expected Impact.

This should directly relate to your overall project's Theory of Change which must be uploaded alongside your logframe at Q24. See the separate Theory of Change Guidance **and Section 2.3.2 of the** Darwin Initiative Innovation Supplementary Guidance **for further information on your Theory of Change.**

The project outcome will be an innovative conservation agreements scheme ready for scaling up and with rollout designed to facilitate robust impact evaluation. The first two outputs – an analysis of Dahari's current scheme, and phase of targeted applied research – will feed into the third, the development of a robust scheme with the support of international experts (see letters of support). Critically, the rollout for the scheme (which starts with 40 farmers during the lifetime of this project), will be designed to allow robust impact evaluation of outcomes in the medium to longer-term (beyond the lifetime of this project) to provide wider learning for conservation practice (again the design of the impact evaluation will be validated by experts-see letters of support).
The whole project is structured to deliver scaling of the innovation post-project. There are a number of key assumptions leading from the outcome to long-term forest restoration. Farmers need to perceive they are getting enough benefits to buy into the scheme and renew their agreements. Dahari also needs to generate sufficient donor funding for the first few years of the scheme whilst the long-term financing plan based potentially on niche agroforestry crops is developed and implemented.

Q20. Exit strategy

How will the benefits or outcome be sustained post-funding? Will the innovation be mainstreamed into "business as usual" to continue to deliver the benefits? How will the required capability and capacity remain available to sustain the benefits? How will your approach, if proven, be scaled? Are there any barriers to scaling and if so, how will these be addressed?

At the end of this project Dahari will have signed the first 40 conservation agreements with a sub-set of farmers and have planned roll out to at least 500 farmers to be complete by 2026.
We expect some donor support will be needed for the length of time of the first set of contracts (likely to be five years). We believe that the high quality, research-informed conservation agreements approach will be attractive to donors. Dahari will continue to fundraise to cover implementation, with the two Dahari co-funders of this proposal expected to maintain and increase funding – CEPF begins a new five-year investment in the hotspot in 2022. Dahari will reach out more widely following the publication of its new strategic plan in early 2022. Dahari are also considering a Darwin main or Darwin extra application. Research grant applications via Bangor or Oxford (or other researchers who provided letters of support) will cover the ongoing impact evaluation.
By 2027 Dahari plans to have established effective income-generation projects linked to the conservation scheme that underpin its financial sustainability. Early avenues being explored are high-value export crops that can be grown under forest cover (with support from World Agroforestry), and added-value export to the island of Mayotte. These studies will contribute to the basis of a long-term financing plan by the end of this project.
Wider uptake from 2027 beyond the Moya forest KBA will be dependent on the National Parks adopting our conservation agreements approach. Dahari has recently signed a partnership agreement with the Parks Agency, and will advocate for the conservation agreements approach to be adopted as a complementary mechanism to Protected Areas. Dahari is also scoping for an intervention in the forest block of La Grille on the island of Grande Comore.

Section 7 - Risk Management

Q21. Risk Management

Please outline the 6 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, one Safeguarding Risk, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register, using the Risk Assessment template, and be prepared to submit this when requested if they are recommended for funding. Do not attach this to your application.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Fiduciary The Comoros are 160/180 on Transparency Internationals' 'Corruption Perception Index 2020'. There is therefore a risk of funds being used for unintended consequences (due to fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriation).	Moderate	Unlikely	Moderate	All project money is spent by Bangor University or Dahari. Bangor have rigorous financial procedures to verify project spend and experience of working with medium-sized associations based in low income countries (such as Dahari). Dahari have robust systems, annual audits and long experience with Darwin and other funders.	Minor
Safeguarding Risk of people associated with the project misusing their position and sexually harassing or exploiting local people, students or staff associated with the project.	Major	Rare	Moderate	All institutions involved in this project have clear safeguarding policies applying to staff. However, we will ensure these are fully understood and operationalized for the project context by developing a code of conduct and clear anonymous reporting procedure. Team members will be identifiable when in the field.	Minor
Delivery Chain Travel restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic may interrupt the project activities as the overseas expertise and travel between Europe and the Comoros is needed for the project.	Possible	Moderate	Major	While the project is designed to include international travel, the lead applicant was able to deliver effective projects in Madagascar over the last 2 years and Dahari have maintained operations through this period. We can adapt as long as Edwin Pynegar can travel. The Comoros have also largely escaped Covid.	Moderate

Risk 4 Farmers do not choose to engage in the conditional conservation agreement scheme we will design as part of this project.	Major	Unlikely	Major	The scheme will be designed with the involvement of the farmers and local authorities from the very start. Focus Group Discussions and questionnaires will feed into workshops (involving farmer representatives). We also have a pilot scheme and scoping research earlier this year that demonstrates positive engagement in the approach.	Minor
Risk 5 The value of the project setting up the impact evaluation depends on finding further funding to carry out the endline evaluation some years after this project ends. If this doesn't happen, this part of the project will have been of limited value.	moderate	unlikely	moderate	We have already engaged with researchers who work on impact evaluation who have expressed interest in conducting research using our randomized roll-out longer term. Genuinely building impact evaluation of outcomes into a project from the start is so rare we are confident that funding will be found.	Minor
Risk 6 Project team members are injured when doing field work in remote areas of the Comoros.	unlikely	moderate	moderate	Dahari has a fieldwork risk assessment which will be updated at the start of this project (including planning for the best way to access health care). No lone working in areas without mobile phone reception.	Minor

Section 8 - Implementation Timetable

Q22. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities

Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the Word template as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project and upload this below as a PDF.

Implementation Timetable Template

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and fill/shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out.

Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q23. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E (see Financial Guidance).

A substantial objective of this project is to design the implementation and roll-out of the proposed new conservation agreement scheme in a way that builds in the opportunity to do robust impact evaluation of the intervention's outcomes in the medium to long term (beyond the life of this project). There is a real lack of such robust impact evaluations in conservation practice, partly because it requires investment beyond usual project timelines. However for conservation practice to advance, the learning that can result from such evaluations is needed, hence this Innovation proposal. We first lay out our approach to designing this longer-term impact evaluation into the roll-out of the new Dahari conservation agreement scheme which our project will develop, before detailing the Monitoring and Evaluation of the project outputs and progress during project implementation.

1) Designing the conservation agreements scheme to facilitate the evaluation of outcomes.

The ultimate aim of the conservation agreements scheme is to protect remaining mature trees (especially those important as roosts of the critically endangered Livingstone fruit bat) and encourage regeneration of forest in the headwaters of rivers emanating from the Moya Key Biodiversity Area while supporting the livelihoods of farmers and engaging them in conservation in these steep, upland areas of the Comoros. The scheme, therefore, seeks to impact on the following:

a) Number of mature trees in the landscape

b) Area and quality of regenerating forest

c) Livelihoods of farmers enrolled in the scheme

d) Environmental attitudes of those enrolled in the scheme and the wider landscape

Alongside the design of the scheme we will develop appropriate indicators which can be effectively and efficiently surveyed at baseline and end line across intervention and control sites. Critically we are also designing roll out so that we can evaluate the impact of the intervention on these outcomes. The details are to be finalized during this project but we envisage a staggered Difference in Differences design25 using statistical matching26 to decide on the order of implementation of the scheme in the units. This will be led by Julia Jones who has internationally recognized expertise in conservation impact evaluation26–29.

2) Monitoring and Evaluation of project outputs over the lifetime of the project

Project leader Hugh Doulton takes ultimate responsibility for this, supported by the rest of the team. Progress against the indicators and activities in the logframe will be reviewed every quarter in online management team meetings. Any issues or lessons arising will be integrated into project delivery through updated logframe versions agreed by Darwin and/or remedial action in project implementation. Particular attention will be paid to building the data management systems essential for the longer-term evaluation of project outcomes as this is vital to this bigger picture objective of the project although it will not be evaluated within the project timeline.

Total project budget for M&E (this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)	[redacted]
Percentage of total project budget set aside for M&E	[redacted]
Number of days planned for M&E	160

Section 10 - Logical Framework

Q24. Logical Framework

Darwin Initiative projects will be required to monitor (and report against) their progress towards their expected Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

Logframe Template

Please complete your full logframe in the separate Word template and upload as a PDF using the file upload below. Copy your Impact, Outcome and Output statements and your activities below - these should be the same as in your uploaded logframe.

Impact:

The forests of the island of Anjouan in the Comoros archipelago are restored, securing water supplies, improving livelihood resilience and conserving endemic biodiversity

Outcome:

An innovative, research-informed conservation agreements scheme designed to allow robust impact evaluation is ready for scaling across high priority areas for water and biodiversity on Anjouan

Project Outputs

Output 1:

A qualitative evaluation of the impact and functioning of Dahari's pilot conservation agreement scheme protecting roost sites of the Livingstone's fruit bat in the Moya forest Key Biodiversity Area informs development of the new scheme

Output 2:

A research and development phase provides the necessary information to develop a robust conservation agreement scheme

Output 3:

A comprehensive strategy for the implementation, scaling up and long term evaluation of a robust conservation agreements scheme to restore key forest areas in Anjouan is produced.

Output 4:

The design of the scheme is tested through implementation with a stratified random sub-set of at least 40 farmers.

Output 5:

Capacity is built in the Comoros for developing and implementing conservation agreement schemes, and learning is shared internationally.

Do you require more Output fields?

It is advised to have less than 6 Outputs since this level of detail can be provided at the activity level.

⦿ No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1

1.1 Design and implement Key Informant Interviews with landowners, Dahari staff and other stakeholders (including participatory transect walks)
1.2 Conduct qualitative impact evaluation to identify lessons for the new conservation agreement scheme
2.1 Design and implement Focus Group discussions with farmers to discuss key elements around the new scheme.
2.2 Design and implement questionnaire survey to explore likely farmer uptake under different conditions.
2.3 Hire a legal consultant and work closely with them to conduct a legal review of relevant land tenure law.
2.4 Finalise priority areas through integrating existing mapping layers and agreed criteria.
2.5 Identify units for roll-out of the scheme through mapping and additional field work.
3.1 Organize workshops involving key stakeholders to capitalise on outputs to structure the final scheme.
3.2 Design agreements, write up strategy and impact evaluation design for the scheme
3.3 Arrange online meetings with independent experts in community conservation, PES and conservation agreements, and impact design.
3.4 Finalise methods and conduct baseline data collection (ecological and socio-economic) for the initial sub-set of units.
3.5 Reach out to donors and submit grant applications
3.6 Analyse and develop appropriate long-term financing option for the scheme with support of advisors and partners.
4.1 Outreach with the target farmers.
4.2 Sign agreements with farmers in the target catchments.
4.3 Conduct a brief satisfaction survey after 6 months of the agreements running inviting feedback from participating farmers.
5.1 Training of Dahari staff in social and ecological field methods and scheme design.
5.2 Select students and support them to complete dissertations.
5.3 Deliver lectures at University of the Comoros.
5.4 Prepare papers for publication.
5.5 Deliver presentations to regional and international audiences.

Section 11 - Budget and Funding

Q25. Budget

Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.

Note that there are different templates for projects requesting under £100,000 and over £100,000. Please refer to the Finance Guidance for more information.

- Budget template for projects under £100k
- Budget template for projects over £100k

Please ensure you include any co-financing figures in the Budget spreadsheet to clarify the full budget required to deliver this project.

NB: Please state all costs by financial year (1 April to 31 March) and in GBP. The Darwin Initiative cannot agree any increase in grants once awarded.

Please note the next section is about the financial aspects of your project, rather than technical elements.

[redacted]

Q26. Funding

Q26a. Is this a new initiative or does it build on existing work (delivered by anyone and funded through any source)? Please give details.

⦿ New Initiative

Please give details.

This project proposal builds on Dahari's integrated landscape approach to restoring forests in the Comoros that dates back to 2008. The work has been part-funded by the Darwin Initiative through an initial collaboration between Bangor and Dahari (project 24009 between 2017 and 2021), as well as by multiple other funders including the European Union and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.
However, this project proposal represents a new initiative to redesign Dahari's approach to forest restoration and develop a scalable conservation agreement approach informed by science. This project involves substantial resource allocation to research time as this is what Dahari feels they need to develop a successful approach building on and moving forward from previous projects and learning.
Dahari has a small grant (from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund) to finance an exchange between Natura Bolivia and Dahari so that Dahari can learn lessons from Natura's experience of establishing (and robustly evaluating) a conservation agreement scheme to support forest conservation and catchment protection. This will generate ideas and new understanding but this Darwin Innovation project is critical to turn that exchange into a functional, well-designed conservation agreement scheme in the Comoros.

Q26b. Are you aware of any current or future plans for similar work to the proposed project?

⦿ No

Q27. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

One laptop computer (to be donated to Dahari at project end)

Q28. Value for Money

Please describe why you consider your application to be good value for money including justification of why the measures you will adopt will secure value for money.

By far the biggest cost on this project is the full-time (18 months) post-doctoral researcher employed by Bangor University (Dr Edwin Pynegar). When Dahari initially approached Bangor they made it clear what they most wanted from the collaboration was someone with relevant international expertise in designing and implementing conservation agreements to be based with their team in the Comoros. They also wanted staff time from experts at the strategic level to advise. Both Bangor University and Oxford University have waived all overheads (a total of [redacted]). Brasenose College, Oxford are covering travel costs for Professor Owen Lewis. The research expertise feeding into this project, therefore, represents exceptional value for money. Significant expertise is being invested upfront in the development of this new approach given strong plans for scaling post-project through Dahari, and setting up the programme in a way that facilitates a full impact evaluation, thus providing wider lessons.
Dahari has also provided significant co-funding through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and Bat Conservation International. Dahari has a strong track record of project implementation and grant management in the

Comoros, including for Darwin, the EU, CEPF and the French Development Agency. Dahari will manage all expenditure in-country, ensuring best practice and value on purchasing.
This project represents a unique opportunity to build on Darwin's legacy in the Comoros, using UK expertise to have a transformative impact on approaches to biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation in the Comoros.

Section 12 - Outputs, Open Access, Ethics & Safeguarding

Q29. Safeguarding

Projects funded through the Darwin Initiative must fully protect vulnerable people all of the time, wherever they work. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.

Please confirm the Lead Partner has the following policies in place and that these can be available on request:

We have a safeguarding policy, which includes a statement of our commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse	Checked
We have attached a copy of our safeguarding policy to this application	Checked
We keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and how they were dealt with	Checked
We have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures to use when allegations and complaints are made, and have clear processes in place for when a disclosure is made	Checked
We share our safeguarding policy with downstream partners	Checked
We have a whistle-blowing policy which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised	Checked
We have a Code of Conduct in place for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours -- inside and outside the work place – and make clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards	Checked

Please outline how you will implement your policies in practice and ensure that downstream partners apply the same standards as the Lead Partner.

Bangor University, Dahari and Oxford University have strict policies which apply to the conduct of their staff.
At the start of the project we will review existing safeguarding policies and draw up a code of conduct for use by the project (example code of conduct is attached). Everyone associated with the project (this includes students from the University of the Comoros) will be trained in the code of conduct when they join the team.
Project documentation distributed locally will make it clear how complaints about behaviour can be made.

Q30. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting the key ethical principles, as outlined in the guidance.

Julia Jones is chair of the college ethics committee at Bangor University so has substantial experience in considering ethical issues in related projects and will lead on ethical aspects.
Our project will meet all legal and ethical obligations in all the UK and the Comoros including relevant access and benefit sharing legislation (however the project will not cover specialised or sensitive knowledge domains such as utilization of genetic resources and intellectual property rights). We will comply with Bangor University's Research Ethics Policy and all research conducted will undergo independent review through this policy. While the project brings in substantial international expertise, there is strong local leadership from the Comoros and involvement of local people in the design of the project (see letters of support). The project recognises the value and importance of traditional knowledge and respects

the rights, privacy, and safety of all people impacted. The project uses Prior Informed Consent both for anyone involved in the research and, of course, for anyone engaging in the conservation agreements scheme (this is by its nature voluntary). We will uphold the credibility of evidence, research and other findings (Bangor University academic integrity policy is very strong here).

Section 13 - FCDO Notifications

Q31. FCDO notifications

Please whether there are sensitivities that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will need to be aware of should they want to publicise the project's success in the Darwin competition in the host country.

No

Please indicate whether you have contacted your Foreign Ministry or the local embassy or High Commission (or equivalent) directly to discuss security issues (see Guidance Notes) and attach details of any advice you have received from them. If you have not, please say why not.

⦿ Yes, advice attached

Please attached details of any advice you have received.

[redacted]

Section 14 - Project Staff

Q32. Project staff

Please identify the core staff on this project, their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Please provide 1-page CVs or a 1 page job description, further information on who should be classified as core staff can be found in the Finance Guidance.

Name (First name, surname)	Role	% time on project	1 Page CV or job description attached?
Hugh Doulton	**Project Leader**	42	Checked
Misbahou Mohamed	Conservation agreements local lead	83	Checked
Dr Amelaid Houmadi	Ecological local lead	25	Checked
Siti Mohamed	Social outreach local lead	25	Checked

Do you require more fields?

⦿ Yes

Name (First name, surname)	Role	% time on project	1 Page CV or job description attached?
Prof Julia Jones	Expertise on impact evaluation and agreements expertise	10	Checked
Dr Edwin Pynegar (100% for 18 months of the 24 month project)	Lead on agreements scheme development	75	Checked
Prof Owen Lewis	Expertise on ecological impact	3	Checked
Ishaka Said	Ecology and reforestation technician	50	Checked
Nadia Amba Keldi	Ecology and reforestation technician	50	Checked
Nastazia Mohamadi	Reforestation and mobilisation technician	50	Checked
Mourdi Mohamed	Agricultural Technician	50	Checked
Youssouf Katada	Mobilisation Technician	50	Checked

Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

Ensure the file is named clearly, consistent with the named individual and role above.

[redacted]

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

⦿ Yes

Section 15 - Project Partners

Q33. Project partners

Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Partner), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far and planned.

This section should demonstrate the capability and capacity of the Project Partners to successfully deliver the project. Please provide Letters of Support for all project partners or explain why this has not been included.

The partners listed here should correspond to the Delivery Chain Risk Map (within the Risk Register template) which you will be asked to submit if your project is recommended for funding.

Lead Partner name:	Bangor University

Website address:	www.bangor.ac.uk
Why is this organisation the Lead Partner, and what value to they bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	Bangor University, through the involvement of Professor Julia Jones and Dr Edwin Pynegar, brings expertise in the design and evaluation of conservation agreements, including running a unique Randomized Control Trial of a conservation agreement scheme in Bolivia which has substantial learning for this project. Edwin will be hired by Bangor to work on this project, current he is based in Bolivia supporting the NGO Natura Bolivia to further improve their effectiveness informed by the research he did when a PhD student at Bangor University. Bangor University act as the lead partner partly for administrative reasons. This project was initiated by Dahari and they approached Bangor University as they are seeking our expertise to redesign their conservation approach. Because such a substantial proportion of the funding is going through Bangor University (as Dahari wanted Bangor to recruit and manage a full-time researcher because of challenges they have had recruiting appropriate expertise on local pay scales), we took advice from Eilidh Young who suggested it would be better to put Bangor as the lead rather than Dahari to avoid having to transfer funds from the UK to the Comoros and back again.
Allocated budget:	[redacted]
International/In-country Partner	⦿ International
Represented on the Project Board	⦿ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from the organisation?	⦿ Yes
Have you provided a cover letter?	⦿ Yes

Do you have partners involved in the project?

⦿ Yes

1. Partner Name:	Dahari
Website address:	www.daharicomores.org
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	Dahari, created in 2013, is the lead in-country partner. Dahari supports rural communities to restore the ecosystems of the Comoros. The NGO has over 65 employees and an annual budget of around 700,000 euros. Their Co-Director Hugh Doulton is project leader, and will thus coordinate project management, reporting, and communications with Darwin. Hugh has 15 years of experience of leading projects in the Comoros, including with Darwin funding. He will also work with Co-Director Misbahou Mohamed, a Darwin fellow, to lead development of the conservation agreements scheme from the Dahari side. Siti Mohamed will lead social outreach with farmers in the field. Amelaid Houmadi, with a PhD from the University of Antananarivo, will lead on ecological assessments and baselines from the Dahari side.

Allocated budget:	[redacted]
International/In-country Partner	⦿ In-country
Represented on the Project Board	⦿ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	⦿ Yes

2. Partner Name:	Oxford University
Website address:	www.ox.ac.uk
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	The University of Oxford, through the involvement of Professor Owen Lewis, will provide expertise and training on ecological components of the project, especially the design of forest monitoring and evaluation protocols to generate reliable baselines and to monitor the effectiveness of agreements for biodiversity outcomes. Lewis brings extensive expertise in mapping and monitoring biodiversity in rainforests and in human-modified tropical landscapes. This includes recent work in Sabah, Malaysia assessing biodiversity value and ecosystem functioning in forested set-asides within agricultural landscapes, and designing practical forest quality monitoring schemes for use by local stakeholders. Lewis first worked in the Comoros in 1992 and has experience of the country's biodiversity and conservation contexts. In 2019 he was invited to join Dahari as a scientific advisor and undertook a scoping visit to the Moya watershed, leading to a successful GCRF-Research England-funded project that mapped the remaining forested areas across the island of Anjouan, informing the current work.
Allocated budget:	[redacted]
International/In-country Partner	⦿ International
Represented on the Project Board	⦿ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	⦿ Yes
If no, please provide details	*No Response*

3. Partner Name:	*No Response*
Website address:	*No Response*
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	*No Response*
Allocated budget:	0
International/In-country Partner	◯ International ◯ In-country
Represented on the Project Board	◯ Yes ◯ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	◯ Yes ◯ No
If no, please provide details	*No Response*

4. Partner Name:	*No Response*
Website address:	*No Response*
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	*No Response*
Allocated budget:	0
International/In-country Partner	◯ International ◯ In-country
Represented on the Project Board	◯ Yes ◯ No

Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	○ Yes ○ No
If no, please provide details	*No Response*

5. Partner Name:	*No Response*
Website address:	*No Response*
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	*No Response*
Allocated budget:	0
International/In-country Partner	○ International ○ In-country
Represented on the Project Board	○ Yes ○ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	○ Yes ○ No
If no, please provide details	*No Response*

6. Partner Name:	*No Response*
Website address:	*No Response*
What value does this Partner bring to the project? **(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**	*No Response*

Allocated budget:	0
International/In-country Partner	○ International ○ In-country
Represented on the Project Board	○ Yes ○ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	○ Yes ○ No
If no, please provide details	*No Response*

If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

No Response

Please provide a cover letter responding to feedback received at Stage 1 if applicable and a combined PDF of all letters of support.

[redacted]

Section 16 - Lead Partner Track Record

Q34. Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Has your organisation been awarded Darwin Initiative funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

◉ Yes

Please provide details of the most recent awards (up to 6 examples) and go to Q10.

Reference No	Project Leader	Title
DARPP224	Dr Tim Pagella	Gender sensitive diversification of smallholder cocoa systems in Lampung Indonesia (scoping)
DARFW054	Prof Julia P G Jones	Lead mentor for a Darwin Fellowship to Susan Kougama
24-009	Dr Fergus Sinclair	Landscape approach to enhance biodiversity and livelihoods in the Comoros
18-016	Dr John Turner	Darwin Initiative to enhance an established protected area system, Cayman Islands

EID-PS028	Dr Julia P G Jones	Lead mentor for a Darwin Fellowship to Voahirana Randriamamonjy
17-006	Dr Julia P G Jones	Bushmeat hunting in Madagascar: linking science, policy and livelihoods

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts?

If yes, please upload these on the certification page. Note that this is not required from Government Agencies.

⦿ Yes

Section 17 - Certification

Q35. Certification

On behalf of the

Trustees

of

Bangor University

I apply for a grant of

£199,936.00

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- **I have enclosed CVs for project key project personnel, letters of support, budget, logframe, theory of change, safeguarding policy and project implementation timetable (uploaded at appropriate points in application)**
- **Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report (or other financial evidence - see Financial Guidance) are also enclosed.**

Checked

Name	Ben Davies
Position in the organisation	Head of research accounting
Signature (please upload e-signature)	[redacted]
Date	03 December 2021

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.

Please upload the Lead Partner's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF

Section 18 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

I have read the Guidance, including the "Guidance Notes for Applicants**",** "Supplementary Guidance for Darwin Initiative Innovation**",** "Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guidance**",** "Theory of Change Guidance**",**"Risk Guidance**" and "**Financial Guidance**".**	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions **for this fund.**	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for my project.	Checked
I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
I have checked that the budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application has been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have attached the below documents to my application: • my completed **logframe** as a PDF using the template provided	Checked
• my 1 page **Theory of Change** as a PDF which includes the key elements listed in the guidance	Checked
• my **budget** (which meets the requirements above)	Checked
• my completed **implementation timetable** as a PDF using the template provided	Checked
• **1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff** identified at Question 32, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not.	Checked

• a **letter of support** from the Lead Partner and partner(s) identified at Question 33, or an explanation of why not.	Checked
• a **cover letter from the Lead Partner,** outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant.	Checked
• a copy of the **Lead Partner's safeguarding policy**, which covers the criteria listed in Question 29.	Checked
• a signed **copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts** for the Lead Partner, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country(ies) and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin website **immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.**	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Initiative website**.**	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in this application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the latest copy of the Privacy Notice for Darwin, Darwin Plus and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund available here. This Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead organisation, location, and total grant value) on the GOV.UK and other websites.
Information relating to the project or its results may also be released on request, including under the 2004 Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Defra will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).

Project Title: Introducing research-informed conservation agreements for forest restoration in Anjouan, Comoros

Project Summary	**SMART Indicators**	**Means of Verification**	**Important Assumptions**
Impact: The forests of the island of Anjouan in the Comoros archipelago are restored, securing water supplies, improving livelihood resilience and conserving endemic biodiversity (Max 30 words)			
Outcome: (Max 30 words) An innovative, research-informed conservation agreements scheme designed to allow robust impact evaluation is ready for scaling across high priority areas for water and biodiversity on Anjouan	0.1 Priority areas for implementation mapped and used to design randomized staggered roll out to deliver robust long term impact evaluation (by start of Y2). 0.2 A research-informed strategy for the updated conservation agreements scheme (by middle of Y2). 0.3 Forest integrity and socio-economic baselines methods are finalised, and established for the first agreements (by middle of Y2) 0.4 40 conservation agreements have been successfully implemented for 6 months and assessed (by project end).	0.1 Map showing planned roll out and summary of independent review of impact design. 0.2 Implementation strategy for conservation agreements scheme and summary of independent review. 0.3: Ecological and social databases; methodology documents. 0.4: Database of agreement holders and project-end survey.	The research and learning phases of the project are not heavily impacted by Covid-19, political trouble, or other crises. Land-owners in high priority areas on Anjouan see value in engaging with conservation agreements scheme.
1. A qualitative evaluation of the impact and functioning of Dahari's pilot conservation agreement scheme protecting roost sites of the Livingstone's fruit bat in the Moya forest Key Biodiversity Area informs development of the new scheme	1.1 Key Informant Interviews and field visits with the 7 landowners and 8 staff involved in the pilot scheme show perceived impacts of the current scheme (both socio-economic as well as ecological). 1.2 Qualitative report highlighting what changed and what did not due to the scheme and what lessons there are for the new Dahari conservation agreement scheme. (All by end of Y1)	1.1 Summary interviews report; plot maps and tree counts. 1.2 'Lessons learnt' document.	Members of the pilot scheme are willing to engage with this lesson learning phase.

2. A research and development phase provides the necessary information to develop a robust conservation agreement scheme	2.1 50 farmers (at least 40% female) take part in focus groups to improve understanding of motivations for retaining mature trees, the value of potential interventions to compensate for restoration investments by farmers, and how conditionality in the new scheme could operate. 2.2 Questionnaire survey (including Willingness to Accept contingent valuation) completed with 100 farmers (at least 40% female) to explore likely uptake under different conditions. 2.3 A legal review of land tenure law in the Comoros as relevant to the proposed scheme is undertaken. 2.4 Mapping finalises priority target areas in the Moya forest Key Biodiversity Area and identifies units for roll out. (All by end Y1)	2.1 Report summarising focus group discussions. 2.2 Summary survey report. 2.3 Report of legal review. 2.4 Map of prioritised areas showing units for randomized roll out.	Farmers are willing to engage in the research and learning phase. Appropriate Comorian consultant available to conduct the legal review.
3. A comprehensive strategy for the implementation, scaling up and long term evaluation of a robust conservation agreements scheme to restore key forest areas in Anjouan is produced.	3.1 Two workshops including key stakeholders capitalise on outputs 1 & 2 to structure the final scheme (Y1: 1, Y2: 1). 3.2 The strategy and impact evaluation design are written up (Y2) 3.3 The design of both the scheme and of a robust impact evaluation against a counterfactual is validated by independent experts (both Y2). 3.4 Baseline data collection complete for the units where initial roll out will be carried	3.1 Workshop reports. 3.2 Strategy and impact design documents 3.3 Summary meeting notes. 3.4 Meeting agendas and summary reports. 3.5 Database of ecological and socio-economic indicators at baseline.	Key local and regional authorities in the Comoros engage constructively with this new scheme. Additional independent experts agree to review the scheme once invited. Donors continue to support Dahari and new donors are attracted to the research-informed conservation agreements approach.

	out, and their matched controls (Y2). 3.5 Donor funding is secured to finance the first 3 years of the scheme, and a realistic long-term funding plan is proposed (Y2).	3.6: Funding agreements and funding plan.	
4. The design of the scheme is tested through implementation with a stratified random sub-set of at least 40 farmers.	4.1 By Q3 of Y2 conservation agreements are signed with at least 40 farmers (a stratified random sub-set of the full set identified for the longer-term scheme). 4.2 75% of farmers signing agreements report positive attitude to scheme after first six months (end Y2).	4.1 Database of agreement holders; individual agreements. 4.2 Data from rapid social survey of farmers signing agreements and summary report.	Land-owners in targeted high priority areas on Anjouan are willing to engage in conservation agreements scheme.
5. Capacity is built in the Comoros for developing and implementing conservation agreement schemes, and learning is shared internationally.	5.1 15 Dahari staff demonstrate improved skills and understanding of robust impact evaluation, ecological survey protocols to monitor forest integrity, social research tools such as focus group discussions and choice experiments (workshops in Y1 then mentoring). 5.2 Two students from the University of the Comoros complete their dissertations embedded within the project (Y1:1, Y2:1). 5.3 Four lectures linked to project activities are delivered by visiting project partners at the University of the Comoros (Y1: 1, Y2: 3). 5.4 At least one peer-reviewed publication is prepared for the applied conservation literature by end Y2. 5.5 Two international presentations share	5.1 Lists of training workshop attendees; survey of Dahari staff at start and end of project. 5.2 Submitted dissertations. 5.3 Lecture files and attendee lists. 5.4 Draft manuscripts with targeted journals. 5.5 Presentation files and attendee lists.	Dahari staff absorb training and learning. The University of the Comoros remains willing to engage with the project. Strong students commit to the proposed dissertations.

	learning with other conservation organizations and funders by end Y2.		

Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

1.1 Design and implement Key Informant Interviews with landowners, Dahari staff and other stakeholders (including participatory transect walks)
1.2 Conduct qualitative impact evaluation to identify lessons for the new conservation agreement scheme
2.1 Design and implement Focus Group discussions with farmers to discuss key elements around the new scheme.
2.2 Design and implement questionnaire survey to explore likely farmer uptake under different conditions.
2.3 Hire a legal consultant and work closely with them to conduct a legal review of relevant land tenure law.
2.4 Finalise priority areas through integrating existing mapping layers and agreed criteria.
2.5 Identify units for roll-out of the scheme through mapping and additional field work.
3.1 Organize workshops involving key stakeholders to capitalise on outputs to structure the final scheme.
3.2 Design agreements, write up strategy and impact evaluation design for the scheme
3.3 Arrange online meetings with independent experts in community conservation, PES and conservation agreements, and impact design.
3.4 Finalise methods and conduct baseline data collection (ecological and socio-economic) for the initial sub-set of units.
3.5 Reach out to donors and submit grant applications
3.6 Analyse and develop appropriate long-term financing option for the scheme with support of advisors and partners.
4.1 Outreach with the target farmers.
4.2 Sign agreements with farmers in the target catchments.
4.3 Conduct a brief satisfaction survey after 6 months of the agreements running inviting feedback from participating farmers.
5.1 Training of Dahari staff in social and ecological field methods and scheme design.
5.2 Select students and support them to complete dissertations.
5.3 Deliver lectures at University of the Comoros.
5.4 Prepare papers for publication.
5.5 Deliver presentations to regional and international audiences.