

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

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

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2022

Project reference	IWT116
Project title	Equipping southwest Indian Ocean countries to combat illegal shark trade
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Mozambique; Tanzania
Lead partner	Wildlife Conservation Society
Partner(s)	Mozambican National Oceanographic Institute (InOM); Tanzania Deep Sea Fishing Authority (DSFA); Dr Rima Jabado, UAE; Dr Demian Chapman, Mote Marine Laboratories, United States; Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Project leader	<i>Rhett Bennett</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website/blog/social media	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

The project started July 1st 2022, therefore the report covers the period July through September.

Activity 1.1: CITES shark/ray identification guides were translated to Swahili as planned. However, the participants from the identification training workshop indicated that English guides would be more appropriate. We are therefore finalising which language the guides will be printed in (most likely English), with digital Swahili versions made available online. The guides will be printed in November 2022.

Activity 1.2: In August 2022, 22 Government staff (15 males and 7 females) in Tanzania were trained on shark and ray identification and the use of the CITES shark/ray identification guides, in a 2-day workshop run by Dr Rima Jabado (project partner), in Tanzania in August. A survey conducted at the end of the meeting revealed that participants had gained critical knowledge that will be used in their day-to-day activities. The workshop also allowed engagement with the newly designated representative for marine related issues from the Tanzania CITES Management Authority, from the Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI).

Activity 1.6: Research has been initiated into potentially appropriate platforms on which to develop the mobile phone app. for customs agents, and discussions have been initiated among WCS staff in several countries involved in IWT, to learn from past experiences.

Activity 2.1: Coastal fishery catch surveys have taken place at 9 sites in Tanzania and 7 sites in Mozambique throughout the reporting period. Data are recorded on mobile phones, and automatically uploaded to a database. A data visualization tool has been developed to view the collected data, and this is currently being tested.

Activity 2.3: Numerous genetic samples have been collected in Tanzania and Mozambique. A batch of samples from each country has been sent to the genetics laboratory at Stellenbosch

University in South Africa (a project partner) for analysis. The first round of laboratory analyses will begin in Q3 of this year.

Activity 4.1: Fishing community engagement has started in Tanzania and Mozambique. In Tanzania, we have started working with the local fishing communities to map catches of sharks and rays for various fishing grounds, with the goal of identifying hotspots in the community fished areas. This covers 2 landing sites, used potentially by 13 different fishing communities, in Tanzania. In Mozambique, a sensitization meeting was held with the fishing community in Costa do Sol, in Maputo City in September, to raise awareness of 2021 legal regulatory changes that pertain to shark and ray species. The meeting was attended by 90 participants (76 males and 14 females), predominantly fishers from the Costa do Sol Community Fishing Council, from the Muntanhana and Macaneta fishing villages, as well as fish traders and the community in general, and several people who work directly or indirectly in fisheries resource management, including representatives from the National Fisheries Administration, National Institute of Oceanography, the lake, river and coastal police and enforcement sector, and WCS.

We also took the opportunity during an institutional meeting held in South Africa, in July 2022, to have a project “kickoff” meeting, and for the regional and in-country WCS project leads to discuss and plan the implementation of upcoming activities in the IWT project, over the period July to September.

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.

In 2021, the Mozambique fishing regulations were amended, with the inclusion of 14 species of sharks and rays in the “prohibited from capture” list. This had negative repercussions, as the enforcement authorities were poorly informed of the details and for a period were inappropriately arresting fishers for the capture of any shark species. This resulted in fishers hiding shark catches from authorities and data collectors, in fear of prosecution. However, a sensitization meeting was held to engage the fishers and authorities, at the main landing site in Maputo City, Mozambique, in August 2022, to raise awareness of the actual regulations, and to ensure fishers and authorities are aware of which shark species may be legally caught and those which are prohibited. The outcome was positive. The net result is likely to reflect a period of artificially low catch records of sharks and rays, until the sensitization meeting. There will not likely be impact to the budget or timetable of activities.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes/No NO

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No NO

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No NO

Change request reference if known:

4a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

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

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

No thank you

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), 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.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS-LTS International 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**