

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

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

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 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DARCC023
Project title	Bolstering Príncipe's resilience to marine plastics through strengthened community capacity
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	São Tomé and Príncipe
Lead Organisation	Fundação Príncipe
Partner(s)	-
Project leader	Litoney Oliveira
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	Website: https://fundacaoprincipe.org/en/homepage Instagram: @fundacaoprincipe

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

Output 1. Local stakeholders (FP, government, coastguard, communities) have increased capacity and capability to monitor plastic pollution at beaches, in-water and river mouths and knowledge of marine plastic pollution distribution across Príncipe

Implementation of monthly beach and in-water monitoring surveys have continued to occur over selected sites for both methodologies. A centralised database is now in construction with assistance of technical consultant (**activity 1.6**), with initial data analysis being used to provide results of the project to be disseminated to local community stakeholders in knowledge exchange presentations. The beach monitoring database now consists of records of 13,312 debris items including 75% of this being plastic (10,181 plastic items). Further analysis has shown the beaches that have the highest average plastic items found, including some of the islands most important sea turtle nesting beaches. The most common found items bottle caps, plastic bottles and plastic bag pieces. As for in-water samples the majority of these were

classified (utilising the MSFD methods learnt by the FP team; **activity 1.3**) as ‘SHE’ plastics for example food packaging. The creation of these databases will provide opportunities to explore the data further to aid in report writing for dissemination as well as for potential scientific publications or presentations. The FP will be supported by the technical consultant to develop data management, analysis and scientific presentation skills (**activity 1.6**). These two databases can be reported under Standard Indicator **DI-C16**.

Output 2. There is a centralised reporting mechanism for local stakeholders to record ingestion/entanglement events and marine turtle interactions in Príncipe

The questionnaire developed to consult fishers on discarding fishing gear (nets) and entanglement incidents have now been closed (**activity 2.3**). With critical further information from the latest fisheries census assessment for São Tomé and Príncipe has given the project team access to the total number of fishers using nets on Príncipe, and it is now known the questionnaire has achieved participation from 62% fishers (n=52) utilising nets on the island (therefore achieving **Indicator 2.2**). The questionnaire included questions on net use, opinions and perceptions about discarding behaviours and the frequency of entanglement events. The technical consultant has already started to work alongside the FP team to analyse this data, with the results and insights being written into dissemination reports and prepared for a scientific data publication. Participation in questions particularly in questions regarding perceptions, behavioural norms and potential solutions can be reported under Standard Indicator **DI-B05**.

Output 3. The local communities are empowered to monitor, and have increased awareness of, the issue of plastic pollution via the deployment of citizen science tools and knowledge exchange presentations

The ‘Jovens pelo Planeta’ continue to collect beach litter data (**activity 3.2**). Now questionnaires have been completed the dissemination of the project results have begun in fisher communities and have continued at schools. Within fisher communities these had been previously delayed from the timeline due to concerns over influencing questionnaire results over opinions and perceptions about entanglement events & ALDFG (**activity 3.4**). The FP team have worked with the technical consultant to produce a presentation to begin to analyse the data collected in Output 1 and use this to produce slides about the state of plastic pollution on both the beaches and water (Figure 1.).

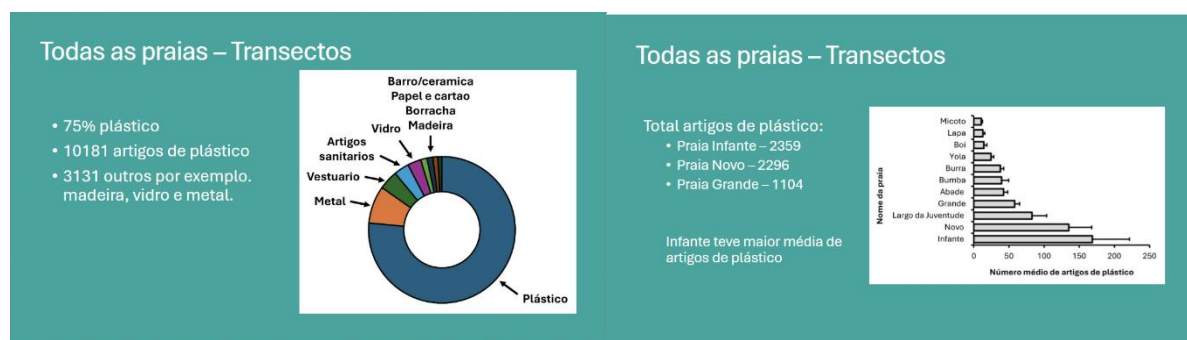


Figure 1. Presentation slides created by the FP team for community engagement with analysis support from technical consultant.

Output 4. Young women and mothers at risk have established enterprises supported by the “Plastic Re-use Hub” which generate alternative income streams and improve local livelihoods

Further targeted beach litter collection campaigns have continued for plastic waste collection to be used in the creation of re-use products, with a total of 98.6kg of plastic collected to be used to make products (**activity 4.2**). Since April 2024, a total of 187 items have been sold by the “Plastic Re-use Hub” for a total of 3,155 STN (contributing to Standard Indicator **DI-B04**). The “Plastic Re-use Hub” continues to develop as a waste-based sustainable enterprise (**activity 4.6**), a shop space continues to be developed in a central location in Santo Antonio to sale

products, there is also plans for discussions with major hotels to stock products to sell to visitors to the island. Furthermore the members of the “Plastic Re-use Hub” have taken part in community events such as during the Environmental Education Fair organised by FP on 6th June 2024 (Figure 2).

The FP team is currently strategizing how best to organise and lead community workshops on how to produce waste-based products (e.g. ‘eco-bricks’) (**activity 4.3**) However, the ‘Plastic Re-Use Hub’, building on business plans developed through a separate project (please see attached) has proceeded with selling their products. Despite setbacks in terms of power outages and certain machine parts being unavailable locally, they have seen steady sales (please see monthly sales sheet attached, from March 2024) (**activity 4.5**).



Figure 2. Visitors looking at the products developed by the ‘Plastic Re-Use Hub’, during the Environmental Education Fair organised by FP on 6th June 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.

With **activity 2.3** the team faced issues of research fatigue amongst the fisher communities of Príncipe regarding participation in the questionnaires. This meant that responses particularly from one key fishing community (Abade) agreed to give less responses than was anticipated. However, using data from the latest census the responses received (n=52) still captured responses from a large portion of fishers that use nets on islands. This will not affect the budget or timetable of project activities. Analysis will be able continue onwards as planned with the existing sample size of responses with numerous insights to be gathered.

Weather and boat issues creating issues for accessing remote beaches/ in-water sites in the South of Island. Some were switched to access by car.

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/ No
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/ No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/ No

Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend: ██████████

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 2025)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £ ██████████

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project 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?

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Respond to feedback in annual report*

Please ensure that supporting material is clearly referenced and easy to find in the Annex.

In further reports the project team will endeavour to make sure supporting material is clearly referenced and ordered in an easily accessible and logical way within the Annex of the reports.

Please ensure that the Darwin Initiative identity is included to a greater degree within project materials. See section 13 for more information.

The project team will ensure that when using social media accounts are the promoting the work of this project the Darwin Initiative logo and media channels will be appropriately featured. We will also ensure the logo is integrated into project materials as they workshop support materials, surveys and further publications that arise from the work of this project.

To ensure the project achieves the scalability it desires, the project team should ensure they have an appropriate exit strategy in place and to detail how local government and other stakeholders become involved. See section 12 and 16 for further information.

Community presentations to increase the number of people that have been involved in the project to aid with scalability. Each presentation has been conducted with the local government and stakeholders in mind, and they have consistently been invited to these, as well as to training events conducted previously. As part of **activity 1.7** results from all monitoring activities

in Output will be presented to local authorities which will hopefully open discussion, for example about some of the items most found on beaches that show evidence of local sources. Regarding the “Plastic Re-use Hub” there are plans to get a consulting specialist to provide support in the development of business ideas and provide further financial training to ensure sustainability of these alternative income streams after the end of the project. The project team aims to place business development with this aforementioned guidance with the women involved. As for monitoring FP team will have full autonomy to carry on with monitoring activities along their work programme, due to increased capacity in sampling methods, sample processing and database management.

Please include lessons learnt and report on the kinds of challenges that came up and how they were overcome. This is particularly relevant for the section on MEL.

These were covered in section 7 & 10 of AR1 including significant staffing issues, team capacity for monitoring and technological issues. However, will endeavour to make these clearer and reflect on them more fully in terms of MEL.

No safeguarding concerns are considered in AR1 however training is declared to have happened. The project team should please ensure to detail more about their safeguarding training procedures.

From the 17th to the 25th of July, 2023, an eight-day in-person workshop was held for the lead applicant organisation (Fundação Príncipe), which focused on social safeguards, doing a stakeholder analysis, developing a stakeholder engagement plan, and a grievance mechanism. Through this training, which was attended by all FP staff, FP now has a strengthened social safeguards portfolio, which will better allow it to deliver effective conservation on the ground, and with communities and other stakeholders.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	