



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



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 2025

Please note all projects that were active before 1st October 2025 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

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

Project reference	30-024
Project title	Strengthening ecological and socioeconomic resilience in the Atlántida Seascape, Honduras
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Honduras
Lead Organisation	Fundación Hondureña para la Protección y Conservación de Cayos Cochinos
Partner(s)	Fauna & Flora Fundación Cuero y Salado (FUCSA) Centro de Estudios Marinos (CEM) Fundación Islas de la Bahía (FIB) La Asociación Pro Comunidades Turísticas de Honduras (LARECOTURH)
Project Leader	Marcio Aronne
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	N/A

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).

Activity 1.1. Since April 2025, 295 patrols have been carried out in collaboration with the Honduran Navy and the Environmental Protection Battalion, of which:

- 88 were in the Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge (CSWR), detecting 4 incidents of illegal fishing gear, 1.08m of dredging, 5ha of deforestation.
- 24 were in Utila, Bay Islands Marine National Park (BIMNP)
- 183 were in Cayos Cochinos Marine National Monument (CCMNM), detecting 10 incidents of illegal fishing gear, 28 tourism violations, 4 ransacked hawksbill nests and 6 areas of illegal mangrove cutting.

1.2. In Utila, 36 iguana monitoring sessions were carried out, in which a total of 466 individuals (147 males, 231 females, 40 juveniles and 48 hatchlings) were sighted along 81 transects in

Utila. In CSWR, 2 manatee monitoring sessions were conducted, recording 9 individuals, and 3 water quality monitoring sessions were undertaken. In CCMNM, 48 hawksbill nesting monitoring sessions (with 41 nests recorded), 6 stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) monitoring sessions and 2 water quality monitoring sessions were undertaken.

1.3. Biannual operational plans for Turtle Harbor Wildlife Refuge and CSWR were reviewed, and highlighted the importance of maintaining regular patrolling efforts. FCC is building capacity of four CCMNM park guards, to reinforce effective patrolling efforts.

1.4. Nine environmental education workshops were held with a total of 655 children (347 girls) in BIMNP. Five environmental education talks were given in CSWR to 173 people (83 women), and one workshop on waste collection and sorting was held to promote recycling to 23 children (13 girls). Two workshops on were held on: 1) fishing regulations in Corozal and 2) responsible fishing guidelines in Cayitos de Utila, with 37 people (8 women). At Ocean Fest, CEM manned an information stand on conservation, and led one Fishing for Life campaign in Río Coco with 83 people (36 women). As part of the Gararu Festival at MNMACC, activities were held to promote the protection of hawksbill sea turtles, and on World Oceans Day, environmental education activities were held with the participation of 196 people (126 women, 70 Garifuna and 4 Miskito).

1.5 The municipality of Balfate has approved a municipal ordinance that includes responsible fishing guidelines for 12 economically and ecologically important species, led by CEM. These guidelines were also presented to the Committee of the Oceans, conformed of directors of the Institute of Forestry Conservation (ICF), Directorate of Fisheries (DIGEPESCA) and the Merchant Shipping.

1.6 Weekly follow-ups have been conducted with 27 users of OurFish.

1.7 Mangrove planting:

- 10 people (5 women) took part in planting 0.28ha (49 red mangrove seedlings) in Utila
- 22 people (10 women) took part in planting 0.6ha in Salado Barra

Further to this, 2ha of coconut trees have been planted in two communities.

1.8 In the community of Dantillo, an alternative livelihood was developed with a group of 6 women, selling natural juices made with seasonal fruits and flavoured shaved ice. Support was provided for the operation of the business and for strengthening product manufacturing capacities. In Salado Barra and Boca del Toro, a total of 17 families and 2 educational centres benefited from a family garden project in the communities. A kit of tools and seeds (mustard, pumpkin, cucumber and coriander) was provided. With the women's groups from East End and Chachahuat, a viable business has been identified that consists of making and selling handmade soap with by-products from community restaurants.

1.9 The National Manatee Conservation Programme held a meeting of the community manatee first aid stranding network, which was attended by 13 people (4 women, 3 Garifuna).

1.11 FCC conducted training on coral identification and bleaching monitoring, with the participation of 6 FUCSA technicians, and 4 technicians were trained in fish reproductive aggregations through passive acoustic monitoring. Four FUCSA technicians and 2 university staff were trained fish post-larvae recruitment methodology. Two CEM and FCC technicians were trained in the Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA). CEM facilitated one training session on the application of gender analysis methodologies for 2 technicians from LARECOTURH and 1 from CEM. One virtual workshop was held on collecting information on sharks and rays bycatch.

2.2 Eight business models and financial projections, based on Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analyses (CVCAs), are underway.

2.6 Celebration of the Honduran Artisanal Fishers' Day attended by 264 people (75 women and

16 international fishers from Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, and Guatemala).

3.4 At the Fishers' Roundtable General Assembly a new steering committee was elected by 40 fishers (8 women). Board conformed of 7 people – 3 women (up from 2), 3 Garifuna fishers (up from 1).

3.6 The Seascope Youth Network, led by CEM, participated in an exchange of experiences, where it had the opportunity to learn about natural resource conservation initiatives and from other groups leading environmental actions (16 people, 12 women).

3.7 A Seascope Committee meeting was held in July 2025, attended by 32 organisations (42 participants). The Fishers' Roundtable met twice in the past 6 months.

4.1 All five partners have applied to a Fauna & Flora organisational development fund (established with separate funding), based on priorities identified in their organisational development plans.

4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 Fauna & Flora has provided safeguarding and gender inclusion basics training to all local partners in August 2025. Organisational social safeguards and safeguarding policies and procedures have been reviewed for LARECOTURH, FIB and FUCSA.

5.1 CVCA undertaken in Cacao with the participation of 12 people (10 women).

5.3 Initiatives identified in the CVCA are being developed in the communities of Salado Barra, Boca del Toro, Dantillo, East End and Chachahuat, as mentioned in activity 1.8.

5.4 A business plan was developed to support community tourism in Boca del Toro, with 10 people (7 women).

5.5 Food safety training delivered for 6 women from the community of Dantillo. Informative signs with minimum sizes for 6 fish species were delivered to Flying Fish collection centre. Training on food handling was carried out in the communities of Salado Barra and Boca del Toro (12 women).

5.8 Workshop with the Centre of Atmospheric, Ocean and Seismic Studies (CENAOS) and municipalities of CSWR with the aim of obtaining the necessary inputs for the development of the Climate Change Monitoring Plan.

Progress towards project outcomes

Indicator 1.1 No manatee poaching recorded in CSWR. Four hawksbill nests ransacked in CCNMN.

1.2 2.88ha planted in the communities of Salado Barra, Río Esteban, El Perú and Utila.

1.3 Due to a change in authorities, the protocol has been reviewed again.

1.4 Monitoring sessions per topic: 10 fisheries landing site; 8 water quality – 16 sites; 6 mangrove; 2 manatee; 32 turtle; 6 SCTLD; 1 CVCA.

2.1 Five training sessions were held in different communities of the seascope, totalling 107 participants (78 women and 29 men). Eighteen women from Dantillo, Salado Barra, and Boca del Toro participated in sessions on food safety. In Corozal, a workshop on fishing regulations was held with 18 participants (11 men and 7 women, all Garifuna). In Cayitos de Utila, 20 fishers were trained in responsible fishing guidelines (19 men and 1 woman). In addition, 23 women entrepreneurs from East End and Chachahuat participated in a workshop on business models, and 36 people (29 women and 7 men, 26 of them Garifuna) were trained in the production of handmade soaps. In total, 73% of the participants were women and 41% belonged to Garifuna communities.

2.2 Hooks of the correct size to avoid juvenile catch were distributed in 2 communities and ice boxes to maintain the cold chain were distributed 5 communities.

2.3 Fishers have been supported in better catch management, cold chain, storage and added value for products. La Rosita collection centre in Salado Barra has been reactivated, artisanal fishers has been connected with restaurants in El Porvenir, and the cold chain has been improved in the communities of Sambo Creek, East End and Chachahuate. These efforts have benefited 162 artisanal fishers, 40% of whom are women and 44% of whom are Garifuna.

2.4 As part of the Río Esteban Patron Saint Festival, a Small-Scale Fishing Tournament was held to promote responsible fishing activities with the support of 16 students and 3 teachers previously trained in monitoring fish landings, who participated in the tournament registration and reinforced their knowledge of minimum sizes and sustainable fishing practices.

3.1 In April 2025, the Fishers' Roundtable's bylaws, vision and mission were established. In September 2025, the President of our Atlantida Fishers' Roundtable became president of the National Roundtable.

3.2 LARECOTURH started their Fishers' Roundtable membership census in June 2025 and have reached 346 fishers (21/23 fisher associations). Data collected includes fisher perceptions of their representation and role in decision-making.

3.3 Fishers' Roundtable met in August 2025 to re-elect their steering group – of seven members, three are Garifuna (up from one) and three are women (up from two). The Seascope Committee's bylaws, including steering group re-election protocol, are under review by the Institute for Forestry Conservation (ICF).

4.4 Fauna & Flora delivered safeguarding essentials (again) and gender inclusion basics training to all local partners in August 2025, as well as providing one to one support in social safeguards and safeguarding policies and procedures.

5.1 CVCA implemented in Chachahuate (12 participants, 10 women) and in La Rosita, 18 people (15 women).

5.4 Utila, El Perú, Río Esteban and Salado Barra participated in reforestation activities, planting 2.88ha.

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.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

Discussed with NIRAS:

No

Formal Change Request submitted:

No

Received confirmation of change acceptance:

N/A

Change Request reference if known: N/A

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)

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 2026)?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Estimated underspend:

4c. If you expect an 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, and not later than 31st December. 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 BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Suspensions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk

No

6. Project risk management

6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.

N/A

7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.
The project is classified as 'Empowering', and of its participants 85.3% are women and 38.9% are Garifuna, demonstrating inclusive and participatory approaches.

Checklist for submission

Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate.	X
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	X
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	X
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	X
Submit to BCF-Reports@niras.com	X
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	X