

The Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (known as 'Darwin Plus')

Darwin Plus, established in 2012, funds environmental projects in the UK Overseas Territories. Priority funding areas are set for each application round and are based on the [Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy](#) and the Environment Chapter of the annual Joint ministerial Council (JMC) Communique. The funding priorities can be found in the [Darwin Plus Application guidance](#) for each round, which is available on the Darwin Plus page on [.gov.uk](#). Other areas can also be funded if they are a priority for the Territory concerned.

Priority funding areas for the most recent round were:

- Developing data systems on biodiversity (and human activities affecting biodiversity) to help develop policies and management plans (including baseline survey and subsequent monitoring);
- Dealing with invasive alien species including prevention through improved biosecurity and/or eradication/control where species have already become established;
- Developing approaches to deal with the effects of climate change, including renewable energy schemes;
- Developing tools to value ecosystem services to inform sustainable development policies and practices and/or mainstream environmental issues;
- Developing ecosystem-based initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of the terrestrial and marine environments;
- Promoting sustainable fisheries within the UK Overseas Territories, including the development of sustainable management plans and development of the fisheries sector, including aquaculture.

Applicants are encouraged to make early contact with OT governments as part of the application process to ensure that their proposals address priority needs.

Selection process

The Darwin Plus Advisory Group (DPAG) reviews and scores each application received against the published criteria below. The DPAG is made up of a mix of UK Government officials from Defra, DFID and FCO, a representative of UKOTA and external experts who have experience of working on environmental issues in the UK OTs. A list of current DPAG members can be found on [.gov.uk](#).

Each application is independently reviewed and scored by 3 members of the DPAG. Applications are then discussed in detail at a sift meeting so differences in scoring can be addressed and the strongest projects recommended for funding.

In addition, OT governments are asked to rank project proposals as high/medium/low priority for their Territory.

A prioritised list of projects recommended for funding is then submitted to UK Ministers for approval.

Annex: Selection and scoring criteria

The selection and scoring criteria are made available in the application guidance as soon as an application round is opened. The current criteria are as follows:

1) Policy Priorities

- Demonstration of clear environmental and/or climate change orientated measurable outcomes that deliver long-term strategic objectives in the host UKOT(s)
- The extent to which it contributes to implementing multilateral environmental agreements, particularly those on biodiversity and climate change, that have been extended to the UKOT(s) in question
- The extent to which it contributes to the delivery of existing commitments such as those set out within the UKOT Environment Charters, national biodiversity strategies, environmental action plans, or equivalent
- The extent to which it contributes to the delivery of existing priorities and processes identified through the Environmental Mainstreaming Initiative (where this has been undertaken) or in the JMC Communiqués
- The level of local ownership, as evidenced by commitment from relevant local stakeholders including UKOT Governments
- The extent to which deliverables will contribute to embedding good environmental decision-making in UKOT policies and processes

2) Impact

- The capacity and capability of the institution to deliver the project;
- The anticipated outcome of the project within the UKOT(s) including as a contribution to environmental goods and services of benefit to local people and more widely;
- The sustainability of the project – how the outcomes will be sustained after the funding is finished, including the extent to which it builds capacity within the UKOT(s);

3) Technical Excellence

- The extent to which the project has been well-planned – does it have a clear goal, purpose and outputs? Are the activities practical and achievable? Are the risks identified and well managed?
- Is there a monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure changes are measurable and that evidence of change can be provided? Is there a well-defined exit strategy in place from the start of funding to encourage sustainability?
- Whether it represents value for money.