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# Securing Pockets of Paradise in the Caribbean; embedding capacity for invasive alien species management in UKOT based organisations

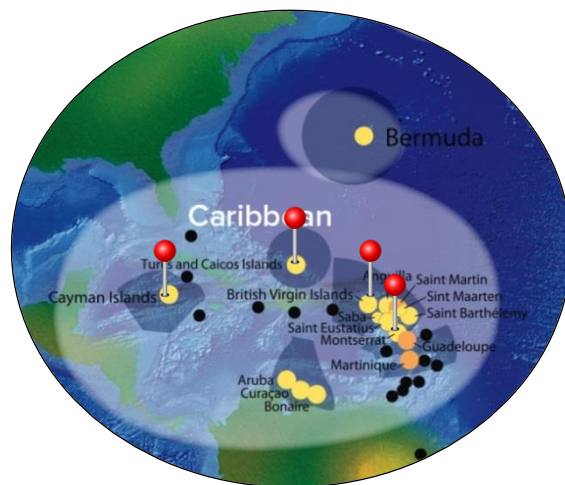
**Targeted territories:** British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Montserrat; Turks and Caicos Islands

**Total project budget:** 442,243 Euros

**BEST 2.0 grant awarded:** 398,541 Euros

**Duration:** May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months)

**Lead organisation:** Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)



**Partner organisations:** National Park Trust of the Virgin Islands; National Trust of the Cayman Islands; Department of Environment of Montserrat; Montserrat National Trust; National Trust of the Turks and Caicos Islands



## Background:

Invasive alien species (IAS) are a major threat to the biodiversity of the European Overseas Territories. A large number of islands in the UK Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are affected by invasive vertebrates and invasive plants.

Invasive species not only directly and severely threaten the unique biodiversity of the OCTs; their activity increases erosion, limits productivity of native vegetation, engenders watershed and thus reduces the resilience of Caribbean ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

Management of this problem lies with a few small organisations and environment departments across the OCTs despite the potential far reaching effects of this environmental degradation to the economic and social prosperity of the OCTs. Local organisations are building skills in IAS management but this needs reinforcing and sharing in order to build more strategic approaches that are ultimately mainstreamed across territory government departments.



### Description of the Project:

The issue of IAS will be addressed in 4 ways:

- Training individuals in each territory on IAS management approaches and implementing on-the-ground practical IAS management activities in 9 sites within 4 Key Biodiversity Areas across the 4 territories.
- Implementing a targeted public awareness campaign to raise awareness of the problem of IAS.
- Hosting a regional IAS management meeting, developing regional protocols/guidelines addressing critical IAS management issues and mapping IAS knowledge and capacity gaps.
  - Developing national protocols for British Virgin Islands and Montserrat.



### Intended results:

- Increased capacity of NGOs and local authorities in the four territories to tackle the problem of IAS.
- Increased public awareness and support within the territories for the actions to manage IAS.
- Increased collaboration between Caribbean territories to address the problem of IAS.
- Protocols developed by the project are embedded into IAS strategies in British Virgin Islands and Montserrat.

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