

# PROJECT ONE-PAGER

## Resurrection Island: enterprise, conservation and development around the Aral Sea



**Country of implementation:** Uzbekistan

**Project duration:**  
September 2021 – August 2024

**Grant recipient:** University of Oxford, United Kingdom

**Implementing partners:**  
Institute of Zoology under the Academy of Sciences, State Committee for Ecology and Environment Protection, Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage, Saiga Conservation Alliance, UzKorGas Chemical, LLC “The Pearl Group”.

**Budget:** £399,326

**Primary Contact Person:**  
Dr Joseph Bull

**Email:**  
[joseph.bull@biology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:joseph.bull@biology.ox.ac.uk)

**Facebook:**  
[ResurrectionIslandProject](https://www.facebook.com/ResurrectionIslandProject)

**Website:**  
[www.darwininitiative.org.uk](http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk)  
(28-003)

### Background

Located in the centre of the former Aral Sea, Resurrection (*Vozrozhdeniye*) Island’s unique biodiversity includes over two hundred vascular plant and vertebrate species which flourished as the island was cut off for many years. The region possesses an enormous untapped potential for ecological, adventure and cultural tourism.

The recent drying of the Sea and decommissioning of a Soviet-era abandoned military base on the Island allowed access to scientists, but also to resource extraction, making clear both its ecological and cultural value, and its vulnerability. Regional biodiversity is rapidly declining due to environmental change and human activity. Further, biodiversity is increasingly impacted by largescale industrial development, but there is limited understanding of, or capacity for, industrial biodiversity impact mitigation, which both regional and national government actors are keen to remedy.



### Projects goals and objectives

1. To address unemployment drivers through piloting new tourism-linked income streams (e.g., dark skies tourism, homestays) linked to Vozrozhdeniye Island which can be replicated more widely;
2. To address poaching and lay the foundation for tourism, by supporting protected area designation for Vozrozhdeniye Island;
3. To address potential industrial infrastructure damage through technical support for effective biodiversity impact mitigation.