

## The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

### Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Helbert Anchante
<b>Project title</b>	Ensuring Viability of Marine Otters ( <i>Lontra felina</i> ) at Lagunilla, Paracas National Reserve.
<b>RSG reference</b>	10491-2
<b>Reporting period</b>	01 October 2011 - 30 September 2012
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5,840
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:acoremabiodiverso@yahoo.com">acoremabiodiverso@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	19 February 2013

**1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
To contribute to marine otter conservation in Peru.			X	Gathering information on the impacts generated by human activities and inclusion of users of the Paracas National Reserve in the awareness process helped toward enhancement of the conservation status of the marine otter in the Pisco area.
To learn the dynamics of the behaviour of marine otter in areas with human activity.			X	Understanding the dynamic of the behaviour of the marine otter where its range overlap areas of human settlement or permanent transit of people allow us to get a better perspective about management of this species in a natural protected area and in turn better decisions by relevant authorities.
Work with users of the Paracas National Reserve to improve the conservation status of marine otter in the study area.			X	Including users of the Paracas National Reserve in the education and communication programme about marine otter lead them to understand the importance of the species in this natural protected area and their role in the mitigation of threats to ensure viability of otter population in the Reserve.

**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).**

At the early stages of the project activities it was very difficult to include to both owners and personnel of the five restaurants located in the Lagunilla as part of the awareness programme. These people was totally reluctant to provide information as they thought the project had as an objective to take them out of the Reserve; it must be admitted that at the beginning this public was quite aggressive not only with the researchers but with some visitors. The Paracas City Council was even requested to provide security in some instances. However, after several attempts they realize the real aim of the project and the importance of their participation for marine otter conservation and development of tourism activities in the area.

**3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

- The success in including owners and personnel of the restaurants in the education and awareness process, taking in account the difficulties to approach the public at the beginning.

- The information on the human impacts faced by marine otter groups in the Lagunilla area, which will allow to have basic tools for decisions to make about conservation of the species in the Paracas National Reserve.
- The public reached by the marine otter awareness programme was very important because it reveals that once they have the proper information they become willing to participate in subsequent threat mitigation actions. Some of the public were already involved during the previous awareness initiative, which indicated that it had a positive effect.

**4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project (if relevant).**

Through this initiative it was possible to involve several and diverse groups, including first the owners and personnel of the local restaurants located in the area used by the marine otters of Lagunilla; also the awareness actions reached artisanal fishermen, fish traders, divers, rangers and voluntary rangers of the Paracas National Reserve, local guides, drivers of taxis and other transport taking passengers to the area and the visitors, as Lagunilla is a regular stop during the land tours into the Paracas National Reserve. Outside the study area, marine otter education and awareness actions were organised to reach school children and undergraduates of the Biology and Environmental Engineer careers.

The work with fishermen and divers was deployed mostly through informal talks and interviews at the Lagunilla dock after the end of their fishing journeys, using informative marine otter sheets. They knew about the presence of these animals, thus the information provided to them was mostly focused to show that marine otters are not a nuisance for them, but the work they carried out indirectly caused negative effects on the animals. Fishermen became very interested and started to report marine otter sightings around the Lagunilla dock; this is an important step as before the project activities fishermen were rather indifferent. In the case of the divers, there was an agreement with their association to meet with all members and expose about the marine otter and its main conservation problems.

The hardest part of the work involved the owners and personnel of the five restaurants settled in Lagunilla. Two of these restaurants were at the beginning totally reluctant to any possibility of listen or participate in any of the planned awareness actions. This was because for the last few years they have problems with the Reserve administration and don't respect the regulations they should follow given that they are inside a marine protected area. However, after several attempts it was possible to ease their resistance, to meet with them, to talk and explain the importance of their participation in the initiative.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes. We consider very important to continue the work on marine otters, by far the most endangered marine mammal in the Peruvian coast. Therefore it is important to continue the population study in the Paracas National Reserve and to expand it to other localities along the coast. At the same time the awareness programme should be extended to reach new community groups and to reinforce those public with which the work has been done up to now; as a communicational strategy in this case is important to develop educational materials on marine otters to be used by teachers and students strengthening in this way the awareness process.

## 6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The result of this work will be present as a research report to the head office of the Paracas National Reserve. I am already sharing this information through lectures and workshops requested by schools and local universities. Also, the marine otter workshop has become part of the training sessions for the Volunteer Rangers Programme organised each year by the Paracas National Reserve.

## 7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The project activities were developed according to the timescale proposed from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012.

## 8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
01 Responsible for project activities	£1,920	£1,900.08	£19.92	No significant difference
01 assistant for project activities	£1,680	£1,667.42	£12.58	No significant difference
<b>Transport</b>				
• Behavioural study	£1,320	£1,319.72	£0.28	No significant difference
• Conservation Actions	£300	£261.75	£38.25	No significant difference
Awareness materials	£80	£80.14	-£0.14	No significant difference
Communications	£240	£238.48	£1.52	No significant difference
Fieldwork materials	£40	£39.42	£0.58	No significant difference
Office supplies	£70	£69.80	£0.20	No significant difference
Permits and reporting	£190	£190	£0.00	No significant difference
Bank fees		£73.19	-£73.19	Applied to the transfer
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,840.00</b>	<b>£5,840.00</b>		Exchange rate: 1 £ sterling= 1.5473 American dollars.

## 9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

No doubt, education and awareness about the marine otter directed to users of the Paracas National Reserve is pivotal at this stage, together with monitoring of the status of marine otter groups in the study site and other location within the Reserve. We must have in account that the first survey of this species in the Reserve indicated that no more than 50 marine otters can be found and it is necessary to survey other historic locations in the Reserve to evaluate the viability of the otters pointed out by previous researchers. This will provide us with guidelines for a better management of the species in the area.



**10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

Yes. The awareness material produced as part of the project included the RSGF logo.

