

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

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

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Bishnu Prasad Devkota
Project title	Snow leopard conservation: People's perception on the verge of rural livelihood
RSG reference	10952-B
Reporting period	17 May 2013 to 31 December 2014
Amount of grant	£12,000
Your email address	devkotabishnu@yahoo.com
Date of this report	3 January 2015

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
Assess people's perception towards snow leopard conservation			Fully achieved	Peoples' perception across Nepal in six protected area has been assessed which is very positive.
Assess the effectiveness of livestock insurance scheme		Partially achieved		Poor implementation of livestock insurance scheme though it is very effective in bringing positive response of local people towards snow leopard conservation.
Construct predator proof demonstration corals to mitigate human- snow leopard conflict.			Fully achieved	People have started building predator proof corals out of local resources.

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

We did not face such difficulties in the field. However working in the Himalayan region, where people have seasonal migration is tough task. We had to follow up several times for single work. Knowing peoples' perception is difficult because people show less willingness to explain the exact information. Even in such condition, the effect of our previous projects was very supportive to implement this project. We also took extended time period to accomplish the task.

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

This project aimed to access peoples' perception towards snow leopard conservation within the level of existing human-snow leopard conflict. With this aim, implementation of this project has brought out important outcomes in the field of snow leopard conservation.

a. Peoples' perception towards snow leopard conservation assessed: As per our plan we assessed people's perception towards snow leopard conservation in six snow leopard range protected areas of Nepal. In Kanchanjunga Conservation Area, Sagarmatha National Park, Langtang National Park, Annapurna Conservation Area, Manaslu Conservation Area, Shey Phoksundo National park we interviewed around three hundred local residents to perceive their knowledge on snow leopard conservation. Majority of the people are very positive towards snow leopard conservation with the existing modalities of conservation adopted by the government of Nepal. People believe that snow leopard is god's pet and its conservation should be given priority. However people also request the concerned authority to support people's livelihood in snow leopard range by generating alternative means of income.

On this topic two BSc students carried out their research in partial fulfilment. They were financially and technically supported by our project. We aim to publish the findings of these research in some referred journals, and this will be shared with The Rufford Foundation after getting them published.

- b. Study effectiveness of livestock insurance scheme:** Livestock insurance scheme is very effective on imparting positive attitude of local people towards snow leopard conservation. If implemented effectively, this can be a vital tool in garnering people's perception towards snow leopard conservation. People also complain for its lengthy procedure in getting the compensation which is also not enough. Among the study conducted in six protected areas, people should positive attitude towards snow leopard conservation where livestock insurance scheme has been started to those protected where this is still not implemented.
- c. Predator proof demonstration corals constructed:** Predator proof corals have been constructed in the pastures of Saldang, Phoksundo and Vijer. People have started keeping livestock herds in group and giving more time to guard their livestock during the grazing time in the field. Since the tradition of keeping dog to guard their livestock has drastically decreased in the last years, this can be an option in lessening the livestock predation by snow leopard and other wild animals. Awareness in local communities is slowing increasing and people look for ways how human-snow leopard conflict can be minimized.

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

Our assumption is that unless we obtain local people's support, we cannot successfully implement conservation activities. Having such an occupied mind, we tried to involve local communities in all of the activities which were feasible. During the implementation of the project we conducted stakeholders meeting before the start up. These consultations with stakeholders was indeed important to convince local communities about their role in snow leopard conservation. Local youth showed eagerness to learn and share their view for snow leopard conservation. Local youth were also used as enumerator and translator while conducting household interview and key informant survey. Local communities themselves were involved in constructing predator proof corals. Local youths also worked as field assistant and porter during the implementation of this project. We conducted most of our activities in close coordination with local institutions, community based organisations and local conservation workers.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Over the last few years, local people are becoming aware of the need of snow leopard conservation. The Government of Nepal and other organisations working in wildlife conservation have focused on snow leopard conservation and more research work in it. The impact of climate change in the conservation of such species has to be assessed with more research. In the coming days we aim to carry more research work and also train new generation to work on snow leopard conservation. We aim to publish relevant article based on our work and disseminate it to the wider range of public. Meanwhile, the enhancement of livelihood of local communities that are most effected by snow leopard conservation will be our priority area of working.

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

We have been working in close coordination with other organization and individuals working in snow leopard conservation. We have emphasised the involvement of university students in snow leopard research and asked them to present their findings in different forum too. The team leader of this project also led some consultancies work from WWF Nepal. In this regard, 12 university students were involved in snow leopard research and in coordination with our team. We also worked in coordination with Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and other non-governmental organisations. Thus at local and national level, the result of our work is being simultaneously shared with stakeholders.

We also plan to publish the result of work in peer reviewed journal and disseminate in relevant conferences. We aim to explore every possible ways of sharing our work so that more and more people know about the importance of snow leopard conservation.

7. Timescale: Over what period was The Rufford Foundation grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The project was anticipated to be completed by June 2014 with the duration of 1 year. Due to field situation, our project took some additional time to accomplish. After the request for extended time, The Rufford Foundation had accepted it.

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
Herders questionnaire survey (Enumeration cost, local assistants wages, stationeries in six protected areas for three months)	£3000	£3500	500	Additional support from WWF Nepal obtained
Key informant survey (Enumeration cost, local assistants wages, stationeries in six protected areas for three months)	£1800	£1800	00	
Expert opinion survey	£ 1000	£ 1000	00	
Construction of predator proof corals (materials and construction cost)	£ 4000	£ 4000	00	
Accommodations for project implementing team	£ 1000	£ 1000	00	
Transportation to and from sites	£ 900	£ 1000	100	Support obtained from WWF Nepal
Communication	£ 200	£ 200	00	
Report dissemination	£ 100	£ 100	00	
Total	£ 12000	£ 12600	600	

Support in kind was obtained from local organizations, government organizations and contribution from local people.

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

The conservation of snow leopard is prioritised programme of different stakeholders in Nepal. Different organisations have adopted different approaches of conservation. Coordination of all stakeholders and action research are possible way to figure out and implement successful snow leopard conservation activities. Local people should be made responsible for the conservation of this endangered species. In the next step we aim to involve more researchers in snow leopard conservation and disseminate their findings through referred journals and conferences.

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

During the project period we acknowledged The Rufford Foundation in different forums. The team leader presented our findings of previous project in First Asia Park Congress held in Japan in 2013. RSGF received publicity during the implementation of this project.

11. Any other comments?

Snow leopard is barometer for assessing environmental health and biodiversity conservation in high mountainous areas. The changing climate is threatening its survival due global environment change. But less work has been conducted in this sector. So, we also aim to carry out more research focusing the effect of climate change in the conservation of snow leopard.