

## 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. 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. 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>	Mitko Karadelev
<b>Project title</b>	Fungi Albanici: Establishing Fungi Checklist and Preliminary Red List, and Proposing Important Fungal Areas In Albania
<b>RSG reference</b>	13351-B
<b>Reporting period</b>	1 April 2013 - 30 September 2014
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£11790
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:mitkok@pmf.ukim.mk">mitkok@pmf.ukim.mk</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	15 October 2014

**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
Collection of fungi species in diverse habitats followed by identification and compilation of a first Checklist of Albanian fungi.			√	Extensive field research was conducted and more than 1,300 specimens were collected from over 30 localities in different parts of the country, mostly in the national parks: Valbonë, Hotovë, Prespa, Llogara, Dajti, Shebenik-Jabllanicë, Korab-Koritnik and Tomorri. The first Checklist of Albanian fungi has been produced containing 824 fungal species.
Compiling the first Preliminary Red List of Fungi of Albania, compliant with IUCN categories and criteria.			√	A total of 75 species have been included in the List as follows: 2 CR, 4 EN, 17 VU, 13 NT, 4 LC, and 35 DD.
Presentation of the Checklist of Albanian fungi and Preliminary Red List during the International Conference on Biological and Environmental Sciences in Albania.			√	<p>The first project results (Overview of Fungi Species in Prespa National Park) were rendered via a lecture at the Third International Conference of Ecosystems, held in Tirana in early June 2013, later published as a paper in the International Journal of Ecosystems and Ecology Science, Volume 3/4, 2013 (<a href="https://sites.google.com/a/ubt.edu.al/eko-eto-bioklim/international-journal-of-ecosystems-and-ecology-science-ijees-issn-2224-4980/volume-3-4-2013">https://sites.google.com/a/ubt.edu.al/eko-eto-bioklim/international-journal-of-ecosystems-and-ecology-science-ijees-issn-2224-4980/volume-3-4-2013</a>)</p> <p>The first Preliminary Red List of Fungi was revealed at the 4th International Conference of Ecosystems in Tirana (23-26 May, 2014). At the same event, the Ecology and Distribution of Lignicolous Fungi in Albania was presented through a poster, and the paper thereof was published in the Conference Proceedings Book (<a href="https://sites.google.com/site/environmenthealthassociation/4th-">https://sites.google.com/site/environmenthealthassociation/4th-</a></p>

				<p><a href="#">international-conference-of-ecosystems-tirana-albania-may-2014/proceedings-book</a>).</p> <p>All these presentations are available for view on <a href="http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm">http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm</a>.</p>
Publication of the Preliminary Red List in the European Council for the Conservation of Fungi Newsletter and European Mycological Association's Electronic Newsletter.			✓	The compiled Preliminary Red List of Fungi has been submitted to the European Council for Conservation of Fungi Newsletter for publication.
Development of criteria for selection of IFAs in Albania for the first time; identification of key fungal species.			✓	IFA criteria have been developed based on the presence of rare and threatened species, richness, and mycological significance of the habitat. It has been established that 11 areas meet the criteria for nomination of Important Fungal Areas.
The Preliminary Red List and the identified and proposed IFAs will be a major step towards supporting the current biodiversity conservation mechanisms in Albania, given that enormous quantities of mushrooms are exported but no fungi protection legislation has been enacted.			✓	The project has contributed to the said objective by means of compiling of the first Preliminary Red List and the IFA Map. The number of IFAs will be increasing commensurate with future fungi research in Albania. The List will consequently be foundation for production of an Official Red List of Fungi and for preparation of legislation of fungi protection in the future.
Publication of a brochure on protected and strictly protected fungi from the Preliminary Red List, and a country map of proposed IFAs.			✓	The brochure, entitled Threatened Fungi in Albania, with an emphasis on economically relevant species, and the Country Map of IFA have been printed. The brochure contains photographs and data on selected fungi species from the Preliminary Red List (fungi species description, distribution, IUCN categorisation, protection measures etc.). The brochure is available on <a href="http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm">http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm</a> .
Raising public awareness via media campaign and wide-range			✓	A large-scale media campaign has been conducted. The promotional

distribution of promotional material.			material – brochure and IFA map – has been disseminated among local population and stakeholders, and this distribution will definitely persist after the project completion.
Raising public awareness via presentations before the local population and meetings with the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration (MoEFWA) representatives, academia and local government.		✓	<p>The first Preliminary Red List of Fungi was communicated at the 4th International Conference of Ecosystems in Tirana (23rd-26th May 2014), through a lecture and an in-depth discussion with academia and Albanian officials from the relevant ministries who were in attendance.</p> <p>The Mycological Conservation Research in NPs of Albania was poster-presented at the prestigious Third International Congress on Fungal Conservation, held in Mugla, Turkey (11th-15th November 2013) (<a href="http://www.fungal-conservation.org/icfc3/isfc3_program_me_and_abstracts.pdf">http://www.fungal-conservation.org/icfc3/isfc3_program_me_and_abstracts.pdf</a>). Soon these findings will be published in the Fungal Conservation newsletter of the International Society for Fungal Conservation.</p> <p>All our posters and talks are available on <a href="http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm">http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm</a>.</p> <p>On 27th-28th August 2014, in Shebenik-Jabllanice NP, a lecture on the topic of Preliminary Red List of Albanian Macrofungi was delivered and a fungi foray was organised. This outreach activity was within a week-long Ecological Summer Camp, involving 30 students of diverse study areas, with active involvement of local NGOs representatives and local residents. In this we cooperated with the Albanian NGO PPNEA (Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania) and the Macedonian Ecological Society, whose Ecological Summer Camp was part of their EU-funded project for cross border cooperation.</p>

Creation of a new database (FUNGI ALBANICI) accessible online with reference to all identified fungal species of Albania.			√	Data has been yielded on 860 species, and the newly created database of all identified fungal species of Albania to date is accessible online <a href="http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm">http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm</a> .
Selected representative specimens will be donated to the Albanian Natural History Museum or to an interested institution, thus contributing for creation of a National Collection of Fungi of Albania.			√	We have donated a portion of fungal specimens to the management of Prespa National Park in Albania. The negotiations with the Albanian Natural History Museum are still underway.

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

The adoption of the Preliminary Red List of Fungi of Albania by the relevant government authorities and its use as a point of departure for preparation of fungi protection legislation is a time consuming process, depending on their will and interest in prompt taking of the aforementioned step. We have invested all our effort in highlighting the urgency of this matter.

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

The first Checklist of Albanian fungi has been generated, comprising 824 species – all of them new for Albania, and the resulting full database is accessible online. It has resulted from collection of abundant fungal material (over 1,300 specimens) in diverse habitats, particularly NPs, and their laboratory identification. Hitherto, there had not been any data on macromycetes of Albania in scientific journals, and the only official data had been the 20 species reported in The Red List of Albanian Flora, issued by the Ministry of Environment of Albania in 2008.

A Preliminary Red List of Fungi of Albania has been produced for the first time, pursuant to IUCN categories and criteria. A total of 75 species have been included in the List as follows: two are Critically Endangered (CR), four are Endangered (EN), 17 are Vulnerable (VU), 13 are Near Threatened (NT), four are Least Concern (LC), and 35 are Data Deficient (DD). The list lays the grounds for production of an Official Red List of Fungi and subsequent preparation of fungi protection legislation in Albania.

Potential IFAs in Albania have been selected for the first time. They have been proposed by developing criteria dependent on the presence of rare and threatened species, richness and mycological significance of the habitat, then applied to the nominated sites. Eleven areas have been found to satisfy the criteria for nomination of Important Fungal Areas. An IFA map has been released, where information (list of key fungal species, criteria) on each IFA has been provided. The Preliminary Red List and the proposed IFAs are a major step towards supporting the current biodiversity conservation mechanisms in the light of the major threats - excessive exploitation by the locals, accompanied by fragmentation and destruction of fungi habitats.

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

The local community demonstrated interest, and they participated in the discussions following the project presentations delivered during the visits. They had hardly ever had an opportunity to hear about fungi in Albania from fungi experts. They learned of the rare and threatened species in Albania, the proposed Important Fungal Areas, the commercial species and their sustainable use. The published brochure and map have been disseminated among the local communities albeit their distribution will not stop with the project implementation.

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

The Preliminary Red List and IFAs are open working documents, given the expectations that new species will be identified during future research, coupled by the potential for change in the degree of exploitation of specific species by local population.

The dissemination of the outreach material (brochure and map) among the local population and stakeholders will also proceed as a follow-up project activity. During our prospective visits to Albania, either for research purposes or meetings with environment conservation partners, we will go on giving out the brochure and the map. In addition, we have established excellent collaboration with Prespa NP management and with the most trustworthy Albanian environmental NGO - PPNEA (Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania), who are willing to further distribute our promotional material to their associates and to the locals.

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

The Checklist, Preliminary Red List of Fungi and the IFAs as key project outputs will be made available to the authorities in charge of conservation and the relevant programmes, such as the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, the Albanian National Biodiversity Strategy, the local government, conservation NGOs, etc. We have already shared the seminal results of our endeavours via the two environment conferences in Albania and the international fungal conservation congress in Turkey, where not only academics but also environment officials attended.

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

The RSG was used within the anticipated project period of 18 months.

**8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. Local exchange rate used: 1 GBP = 78.3 MKD (October 2014)**

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
<b>Equipment</b>				
GPS and Electric Dehydrator	440 GBP	440 GBP (34,452 MKD)	/	

<b>Consumables (Laboratory and field-trip material)</b>				
Paper, HP Laser Jet print cartridge	100 GBP	102 GBP (8,000 MKD)	+2 GBP	
Paper bags, aluminium foil, plastic vacuum bags, reagents, microscope slides and cover glasses for microscopy, needles, forceps, laboratory sterile blades, etc.	100 GBP	108 GBP (8,500 MKD)	+8 GBP	Additional funds have been provided by a MMS field research project
<b>Fuel costs</b>				
270 l per month/10 months + pay tolls	3,200 GBP	3320 GBP (260,000 MKD)	+120 GBP	Additional funds have been provided by a field research project implemented by the project leader
<b>Telephone and internet costs</b>				
Communications with team members, NGOs and local authorities.	100 GBP	100 GBP (7,830 MKD)	/	
<b>Printing and publishing expenses</b>				
Printing and publishing of map and brochure	1,250 GBP	1250 GBP (97,875 MKD)	/	
<b>Subsistence costs (Project coordinator/team)</b>				
Public transport	300 GBP	275 GBP (21,500 MKD)	- 25 GBP	The remaining funds have been reallocated to the subsistence budget items.
Food (rest of the days)	300 GBP	332 GBP (26,000 MKD)	+ 32 GBP	Additional funds have been obtained by a MMS field research project.
Accommodation (120 days x 5 person x 10 GBP)	6,000 GBP	6,325 GBP (495,250 MKD)	+ 325 GBP	Additional funds have been provided by a MMS field research project.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,790 GBP</b>	<b>12,252 GBP</b> (959,330 MKD)	<b>462 GBP</b> (36,174 MKD)	Additional funds have been obtained via a MMS* field research project and a project of the project leader.

MMS\* - Macedonian Mycological Society

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

The project activities are suitable for incorporation into the framework of the Albanian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Besides, the collected fungal data will be at the disposal of the NATURA 2000 Biodiversity Programme when time comes for its inception in Albania.

## 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?

The logo was inserted in all published material (brochure, map of IFA) and in the Power Point presentations delivered at conferences and before the local population. All of the aforementioned documents are available for view on <http://macfungi.webs.com/fungialbanici.htm>.

The RSGF also garnered broad publicity through coverage of our project not only by news media in Albania, but also in Macedonia, Kosovo and as far as China and Algeria, as follows:

- **Lajm** – Macedonian national newspaper in Albanian language: [http://lajmpress.com/top\\_lajme/34447.html](http://lajmpress.com/top_lajme/34447.html)

- **Zhurnal** - regional news agency covering Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo: <http://www.zhurnal.mk/content/?id=1462510563524>

- **ATA (Agjencia Telegrafike Shqiptare / Albanian Telegraphic Agency)** - leading Albanian press agency, in Albanian, English and French: <http://www.ata.gov.al/shkencetare-nga-maqedonia-regjistrojne-kerpudhat-ne-shqiperi-134985.html>

- **Gazeta Shqiptare & BalkanWeb.TV** – leading Albanian national newspaper, internet news agency and online TV: <http://www.balkanweb.com/kultur%C3%AB/2691/studiues-nga-maqedonia-regjistrojn--k-rpudhat-n--shqip-ri-197809.html>

- **Gazeta 55** – Albanian local daily from Tirana: <http://gazeta55.al/file/pdf/20140629.pdf>

- **Koha Jone** – Albanian local newspaper from Tirana: <http://www.kohajone.com/flashnews/item/12422-shkencetare-nga-maqedonia-regjistrojne-kerpudhat-ne-shqiperi.html>

- **Koha Ditore** – leading national newspaper from Kosovo: <http://koha.net/?id=4&l=15724>

- **Shqiptaria** – Albanian national internet news medium: <http://www.shqiptarja.com/lajme%20shkurt/2749/shkenc-tar--nga-maqedonia-regjistrojne--k-rpudhat-n--shqip-ri-222535.html>

- **Illyria** – Albanian-American newspaper: <http://illyriapress.com/shkencetare-nga-maqedonia-regjistrojne-kerpudhat-ne-shqiperi-lista-te-jete-baze-per-perpilimin-e-nje-liste-te-kuqe-zyrtare-te-kerpudhave-dhe-pergatitjen-e-legislacionit-per-mbrojtjen-e-tyre-parq/>

- **China Internet Information Center** (the authorised government portal site to China) [http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2014-06/27/content\\_32796236.htm](http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2014-06/27/content_32796236.htm)



- **Xinhua** (Chinese national news agency) [http://french.xinhuanet.com/environnement/2014-06/27/c\\_133443806.htm](http://french.xinhuanet.com/environnement/2014-06/27/c_133443806.htm)

- **People's Daily** (Chinese national newspaper) <http://french.peopledaily.com.cn/n/2014/0628/c96851-8747987.html>

- **China Radio International** (state-run radio station broadcasting to a global audience) <http://french.cri.cn/621/2014/06/27/302s390057.htm>

- **Reporters**, national newspaper from Algeria: <http://www.reporters.dz/biodiversite-les-champignons-dalbanie-recenses/11011>

## 11. Any other comments?

For a comprehensive gallery of photographs concerning our Fungi Albanici project, please refer to <http://macfungi.webs.com/apps/photos/?ss=15038780>.

We paid due attention to promoting the project via social media, too. Thus, we specifically created and actively maintained a blog (<http://macfungi.webs.com/apps/blog/categories/show/1736871-fungi-of-albania>) and a Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/459070170875588/>), as outlets for our RSG activities and for initiating a discussion with the public. All our project follow-up efforts will continue to be shared in the Fungi of Albania Facebook group and on twitter (<https://twitter.com/mkdmymology>).

