

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Sunil Lal Rajbhandari
Project title	Study of Investigation of Population, Habitat and Hatching Success of <i>Gavialis gangeticus</i> in Narayani River of Chitwan National Park
RSG reference	14161-2
Reporting period	24 February 2014
Amount of grant	£ 5970
Your email address	sunilrajbhandari@hotmail.com
Date of this report	31 March, 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 the population of <i>Gavialis gangeticus</i> in Narayani River.			√	This study recorded a total of 60 gharials in the Narayani River, Chitwan National Park. This represents the largest remnant population of gharials. In India and Nepal, only about 200 gharials in the wild were recorded. This could be baseline information to the protected area managers, especially in strengthening conservation efforts to the protection of this critically endangered species. In addition, such information may also help in strengthening the implementation of the conservation activities of gharial conservation action plan.
Study the basking activities of gharials in relation to water depth.			√	Understanding the critical habitats including the basking sites in relation to water depth is extremely beneficial to the policy makers, especially in the improvement of habitats and conservation of aquatic ecosystems. This could be useful in designing the monitoring protocols and evaluation of the gharial habitats in the river basins of Nepal.
Study the hatching success of gharials.			√	The existing practices of egg collection from the natural nests and immediate transfer of eggs in artificial pits, again to another artificial pits and lack of practical skills in breeding aspects (monitoring of nest temperature) has created problems in gharial conservation efforts. The park should establish monitoring stations around nesting sites during the breeding season in order to evaluate the reproductive success. An overall trend analysis of hatching success is required to prepare the management strategy for enhancing the reproductive success. The Gharial Conservation and Breeding Center's (GCBC) role in monitoring population and breeding activities is still inadequate. The booster grant will attempt to evaluate the overall management interventions practised by the GCBC and will attempt to resolve the existing problems prevailing in gharial conservation efforts.
Generate awareness and education towards		√		This study strengthened the awareness level on the importance of gharials to local fishermen,

gharials amongst and between conservationists, local communities, natural resource managers and policy makers.				game scouts and park managers.
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

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

1. The population and distribution pattern of *Gavialis gangeticus* in the Narayani River is known. This information is useful in formulating the management strategies and conservation measures to the protection of the critically endangered gharials.
2. The critical habitats and habitat requirements of the gharials in the Narayani River have been identified. It helps the park management in the preparation of habitat restoration and recovery of population and improvement of basking sites.
3. This research suggests the need of considering the effects of environmental factors including the nest temperature and humidity in order to evaluate the nesting ecology, sex differentiation and reproductive success of gharials.

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

The local communities actively participated in focal group meetings and discussions thereby enhancing the level of awareness among the fishermen, game scouts and park staff. This has led to their strong commitment in the involvement in the implementation of aquatic species conservation plan.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The outcomes suggested by the 2nd RSG will be implemented in collaboration with local partners through seeking the grant from the Rufford Foundation and other international conservation agencies. The continuation of this work will focus primarily on nesting ecology and its management and also the human resource management.

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

The information generated from this research would be widely disseminated to the policy makers, university students, and government agencies, local communities through public forums, interaction programs and publication of findings.

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 for a period of 1 year starting from 24th February 2014 to 31st March 2015.

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
Professional Services	840	840		
Field Expenses	2580	2580		
Field gears and equipments	825	825		
Stakeholder/interaction meetings	625	625		
Maps/GIS software	600	600		
Stationary (Photocopy, Printing, Web Maintenance)	200	200		
Publication	200	200		
Communication	250	250		
Miscellaneous	500	500		
TOTAL	5970	5970		

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

To give continuity and sustainability of the project outcomes delivered from second RSG, I would expect the funding of the booster grant from the Rufford Foundation.

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 RSGF logo was used widely in all the programs of focal group and interaction meetings according to grant contract agreement. I believe that RSGF received wide publicity.

11. Any other comments?

I believe that the RSG grants by Rufford Foundation has contributed a lot in the task of conservation of Himalayan wildlife and biodiversity.