

## The Rufford Foundation Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Jessica Williams
Project title	Piecing together the story of sea turtle poaching: Conservation solutions for Mozambique
RSG reference	14226-2
Reporting period	24/1/2014 – 31/10/2015
Amount of grant	6000 GBP
Your email address	jess@mozturtles.com
Date of this report	13.10.2015

**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
Gain critical information on how many turtles are being caught, along with where and why.		Yes		We have gathered both quantitative and qualitative information about the illegal take of turtles. However it will be important to continue these works to see how rates of illegal take persist and if motives for take change.
Surveys of the beach dune system along the coast adjacent in suspected and poaching hotspots will be conducted to document physical evidence (turtle shells, bones, flesh, egg shells) of poaching activities and turtle mortality.			Yes	Surveys of the beach dune system have been completed. We now have identified 170 individual poaching events from an area that represents about 40% of the total nesting beach habitat within the province.
We plan to work with local CCP (community council of fisheries) groups in the villages nearest to poaching hotspots to facilitate the delivery of community presentations conducted by their own CCP presidents or village chiefs.		Yes		We have been building our relationship with local CCP's in the area and have prepared outreach presentations in Portuguese and audio in local dialect Choape. We have experienced varying levels of support from communities and will continue to pursue these activities. However we needed to strengthen our relationship in the villages before the talks will be openly received. Instead we have chose to focus on developing the fishers reporting network and building relationships with individual key fishermen before delivering outreach to whole community. In particular we have experienced some resistance from some of the traditional village chiefs, who openly confessed to continue to endorse illegal take, despite concerns from within their own communities. Without the support of the traditional chief we have been forced to find other suitable ways to work with the communities. So far, we have found that partnership with the local primary school and its headmaster is the best way.
We also plan to further develop classroom activities and sea turtle education campaigns in local schools.			Yes,	Outreach and education activities are occurring on a weekly basis within the area through the support of project partners.
Distribution of results- Incidents of poaching, as			Yes	Results have been reported on a seasonal basis in a national sea turtle status nesting report.

recorded during beach surveys, will be reported directly to collaborating government officials.				
Geospatial information collected about poaching will be supplemented into marine spatial planning process.		Yes		GIS analysis is currently in progress. On completion, we anticipate the production of a number maps to visually display the location and rate of illegal take, This will be printed and given to local authorities as well as being made available online.
Prepare a report documenting the frequency and key locations of illegal poaching events, the impact these activities are having on local nesting and foraging populations of sea turtles, and the reasons why poaching is occurring.		Yes		We are currently preparing a manuscript that will detail the quantities, locations and fishers behaviours regarding the illegal take of turtles. From this scientific paper we hope to produce a translated copy of this in Portuguese and an additional report simplified for non-scientific audiences. The reports will be prepared on completion of the scientific paper (Jan 2016).

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

- Timeframe- collecting interviews with fishers took much longer than anticipated as it often relied on their availability and then to coordinate with a local dialect translator.
- Unsupportive views of traditional chief in Chume village- we are consistently trying to interact with the chief and strengthen ties so he can help us engage Chume village as a whole towards the notion of turtle conservation. Building these relationships require consistency (project and staff), time and nurturing so we will persist with this. In addition we will also look for an equally well respected but alternative “chief” to interact with this community, as the community members themselves have described the traditional chief as “having the head of a donkey” and they have insisted we need to find a compatible way to work around him.
- Loss local of a team member who represented a key link between project and local communities. Unfortunately one of our integral and dear local team members passed away earlier in the year from HIV. However we have managed to find and train another and enthusiastic team member who will help us collaborate with a new adjacent village- Matimbe. We are eager to see how things will progress in Matimbe and hope that the more nearby villages who participate with the turtle project, the more peer pressure the traditional chief of Chume village will feel.

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

- Insight into illegal take motives between two major areas and representing five different coastal communities. This is the first time in Mozambique the motives, drivers and behaviours for poaching have been investigated and these findings are essential in helping understand why illegal take of marine turtles is still so widespread throughout Mozambique.
- Quantitative, geospatial and genetic records of illegal take events throughout the province. This information can be used to guide into management actions and future MPA planning.

We can also use it to demonstrate the frequency of poaching and highlight problem areas that require improved enforcement efforts on the ground.

- Engaging local fishers to report turtle encounters and facilitating positive and informative turtle encounters with local beach users (i.e. fishers joined us to watch a hatching event and learn about the nest excavation process, for many it was the first time they have seen or held a baby turtle).

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

- There is a much greater level of general knowledge in the communities adjacent to the turtle nesting beaches and awareness of the need for conserving the local turtles. Most fishers who we meet along the nesting beach patrols or beach surveys are familiar with the goals of the project and are enthusiastic to learn more about the biology of the turtles.
- We have been training a new turtle ecotourism guide to assist us with beach patrols and nest excavations and interacting with fishers.
- We have been providing small incentives for fishers who actively participate in our fishers reporting network.
- Local children have participated in outreach activities and have had opportunity to do activities that are not part of standard Mozambican curriculum (e.g. painting turtle friendly eco bags, building life size turtle models).

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

Yes, the 2015/2016 sea turtle nesting season will officially commence on November 1<sup>st</sup>. We plan to focus our efforts for monitoring for nesting and poaching by training an additional two monitors to patrol Manhame Beach and expand to more remote and inaccessible beaches to the North, where nesting and poaching efforts are suspected to be high. We will do this with the assistance of two local community members, which we will train in standard monitoring techniques, species identification and basic environmental outreach skills so these monitors can interact with local fishers. We are also continuing to expand our fishers reporting network, which involves local fishers reporting all marine turtle related activities. Through this network 85% of our nesting events from the past two seasons have been identified and we would like to continue to develop and expand the network to promote sea turtle conservation initiatives in the future.

We would also like to continue education and outreach activities with local schools and CCP groups. Much work is still required to work with communities to develop their own ideas for sustainable alternative livelihoods.

We are also working in the present nesting season (15/16) in Praia de Rocha, where the first nesting events have already been reported. This area is similar to Dovela, in that there is only one tourism estate in the area that employs over 40 people from the adjacent village. This area is a poaching hotspot that we identified during the course of our project, of nesting turtles, eggs and foraging and adult turtle's in-water. We are planning ongoing outreach meetings with the estate staff and the local CCP to try and reach out to a large percentage of this community to change local perceptions of turtles to non-consumptive values.

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

I am currently preparing two peer reviewed articles which present information gathered during the course of this project. They are expected to be submitted for publication within the next few months. Additionally these papers will also be translated into Portuguese and formally presented to relevant government institutions as well as being disseminated through the C-turtle and Mozambican Marine turtle working group (GTT) and IOSEA networks.

We are also incorporating preliminary findings from this work into community outreach presentations which are being lead through the conservation programme of Marine Megafauna Foundation and local educational outreach activities conducted by All Out Africa.

**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 has taken longer than anticipated because we needed to work around the nesting turtle season (October to April) each year and needed numerous seasons' worth of data to accurately represent and understand the situation. Additionally it proved difficult to collect fishers' interviews across a short time frame, as it often relied on availability of the fishers and local translators. To a certain extent the project analysis and reporting stage is still on going and will likely require another six months before written outputs will be available for dissemination.

**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
Travel expenses (car hire/ food) to remote poaching hotspots.	2600	2000	600	Some additional in-kind support was provided during the course of the project allowing us reallocate this extra 600 towards fuel expenses to make site visits for the present nesting turtle season.
Fuel	1000	1000	0	
Subsistence-Mozambican team member	2000	2000		
Outreach materials	150	100	50	Remaining has been put aside for preparation of materials to present to authorities conveying poaching hotspots results
Internet- data storage	200	200	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5950</b>	<b>5300</b>	<b>650</b>	

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

- Further work to strengthen relationship with local communities, particularly Choqe, Dovela and Matimbe villages where nest poaching was a prominent problem in the past 2014/2015 nesting season.

- Continue to disseminate results about rates of poaching, locations, motives by fishers for poaching to local communities, general public and key government, scientific and enforcement stakeholders.
- Continue to outreach and education activities in coastal communities particularly throughout the nesting season.
- Continue seasonal efforts to monitor turtle nesting season and monitor for illegal take.
- Identify and train suitable community conservation champions to be involved with outreach and nesting season monitoring programme.
- Further work is required to understand the dynamics between poverty and illegal take of sea turtles, including suitable poverty alleviation strategies and sustainable alternative livelihoods.
- Conduct genetic analysis of samples collected from poached turtles to determine the specific regional management units and populations the turtles belong to. This information will help contextualise the impact illegal take in Mozambique is having across the greater Western Indian Ocean region and may encourage increased trans-boundary conservation collaborations.

**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?**

- Yes, some population dynamic results were presented at the international sea turtle symposium in Turkey in April 2015 and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association 9<sup>th</sup> conference 26<sup>th</sup>- 30<sup>th</sup> October 2015 in South Africa.
- Additionally the logo was used on the info brochure we have developed to hand out to fishers as part of the fishers reporting network.
- On our blog- mozturtles.com
- We have a number of reports and scientific papers, which are currently being finalised, and as soon as they are available for dissemination we will send a copy of these materials through.

**11. Any other comments?**

We would like to sincerely thank the Rufford Foundation for providing us with financial support for to conduct this work. RSGF are the primary financial supporter for our small grassroots sea turtle conservation project and without this support our efforts would not have been possible. We are proud to be a grantee of the RSGF and part of the network of conservation projects they support globally. We would also like to highlight the tremendous value of the Rufford Grantees Southern African conference held in April 2015, which provided fantastic opportunities for networking, information exchange and peer support from other conservationists working within the region.