

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	Edgar Pollard
Project title	The establishment of the Harurarumu forest community conservation area
RSG reference	15115-1
Reporting period	July 2014 – June 2015
Amount of grant	£5700
Your email address	edgarjmp@gmail.com
Date of this report	31 August 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
A signed agreement that is recognised by the government and local stakeholders for the establishment of a community conservation area.		X		We have established an association that is recognised by the government and local stakeholders as a primarily conservation focused NGO. However we plan to work toward fully registering the area as a protected area under the Protected Areas Act 2010, this will give greater conservation recognition to the site.
The increased awareness and knowledge of local people in the importance of biodiversity and why natural resources should be managed sustainably.		X		There is an increased awareness and knowledge amongst the local people regarding the importance of biodiversity and natural resources. Particularly amongst the core tribal members who have been able to participate in training and interacted with and gained outside exposure on the issue. Since the beginning of this protect we have been approached by at least 10 other surrounding tribes stating their interest in conservation. There is still however more work to be done regarding conservation awareness and knowledge sharing.

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

Difficulties that arose during the project include:

Communication, as many times communication to the conservation area was down and difficulties arose is sharing information and keeping up to date with the project coordinator who was based in the city.

Project leadership, there is a minor lack of an individual leader who is standing up to lead this project from the community. However there has been a good team cohesion amongst the tribal leaders and great examples of working together. A lot of these leaders are rather young so there may be a need for leadership training further down the line.

Time and busyness of project coordinator, the grant recipient has many part-time jobs as well as being involved in other projects, this has led to a lack of input from the project coordinator in some instances.

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

1. The establishment of a conservation area and association that is tasked with the sustainable management of that area and tribe.
2. The building of a research hut in the forest using traditional designs and materials that has already been used by outside researchers.
3. A wider, greater interest in conservation and conservation related activities by surrounding communities and tribes and real possibility of increasing the area that is under conservation.

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

The local community were the main people involved in the project, mainly the principle tribe of Hahorarumu Uru and they carried out the activities and made the decisions. Benefits from the project include small cash income for work which some villagers used to pay school fees for their children, some locals have also benefitted from an increased awareness and knowledge about the environment and conservation after interaction with outside projects and also outsiders visiting the project site.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes we plan to launch the site in September 2015 with a formal launch programme and feast with invited guests that include the government and surrounding tribes. We will also continue to invite tourists and researchers to the site and will start a Facebook page for promotion. We also plan to continue awareness about conservation to surrounding tribes and communities. We also plan to continue with a forestry monitoring and inventory programme and a ranger's programme. We have also been invited to attend a national rangers training workshop.

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

We are setting up an online Facebook page that will also be launched when we have our official launch. We also plan to attend national workshops and conferences to talk about our project whilst doing local awareness and information sharing with surrounding communities.

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 anticipated length of the project was 12 months from July 2014 to June 2015. We actually started meetings, consultation and work in August 2014 and there is some money left over that will be used for our launching event in September 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. Local exchange rate of GBP1.00=SBD12.16

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount GBP (SBD)	Difference	Comments
Awareness meetings – 4 occasions	400	400		Some of this money is left and is earmarked for use in the launching event.
Posters – 200 copies	400	275	-125	Only 100 posters were able to be printed
Transport – Honiara to Project Site	500	830	+330	More trips had to be made that was anticipated
GPS – 1 item	200	200		
Camping equipment	400	150	-250	We did not purchase all equipment as we had already completed the research hut.
Fieldtrip Food	200	200		
Fieldtrip wages	800	250	-550	Some of these wages were able to be covered by the visiting university students
Community meetings	200	820	+620	This was hugely underestimated as there were many community meetings held and in all cases refreshment was provide and transportation as well for some community members.
Conservation Area signage	400	400		
Research Hut	1000	825	-175	All materials used were local and therefore reduced the cost of the hut

Look & Learn trip	1200	1350	+150	The trip cost more than expected especially transport costs between destinations.
Total	5700	5700		

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

Post launching there needs to be activities in place so that the tribe can keep busy be involved in conservation related activities. There is still a need for wider awareness with surrounding tribes and communities on conservation and the importance of biodiversity and natural resource management. There is a need for further training on leadership, project management and dealing with money and financial reporting.

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, we have made a poster that has the RSGF logo. We have already featured in a newspaper article and plan to further feature and highlight RSGF during our launching. Our official signboard will also feature the RSGF logo.

11. Any other comments?

As part of the awarding of this grant the recipient was asked to do a survey to determine the potential of the site for research and eco-tourism, a survey was written using survey monkey and a summary of the results of the survey follows:

18 people from outside the Solomon Islands answered our Survey Monkey questionnaire.

1. More than 75% of informants had already visited the Solomon Islands with a third for research purposes and also a third for holidaying purposes.
2. Half of those that had already visited the Solomons had been between two and five times with four people visiting on more than 10 occasions.
3. More than 75% of visitors visited Guadalcanal, this makes sense as this is where Honiara the main entry to the Solomon Islands is located. The second most visited location is Gizo followed by Tetepare. Malaita was only visited by around a fifth of visitors.
4. Village homestays and guesthouses are the most common form of accommodation for guests on holiday.
5. Hiking and trekking was the most popular activity that holiday makers participated in, this was followed by bird-watching and cultural tours.
6. For those interested in visiting the Solomon Islands Nature tours are an activity that most are interested in participating in, this is followed by hiking/trekking, cultural tours and diving.

7. Just under 90% of informants state that a basic eco-lodge would be their minimum requirements in terms of accommodation.
8. Most state that a restaurant or meal in house to also be minimum facility requirements, just under half also stating that they would like an internet connection.
9. Under half of informants state preference for organised transfers for transport requirements, a third are happy to use local transport and over a fifth are happy to find their own way.
10. Most would prefer to participate in a mix of guided and self-guided activity options.
11. For those visiting for scientific research there is an equal spread between terrestrial and marine related work.
12. The most common area for terrestrial based work was with plants, this is then followed by Frogs, mammals, community-based conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
13. For those conducting research from a field station all state that they would require basic accommodation and meals, more than a quarter would require local guides and 66% would need working space and meeting areas.
14. Just over 70% of informants say that they would be interested in conducting terrestrial research on Malaita in the future.
15. For those interested in terrestrial research in Malaita most are interested in plants, sustainable use of natural resources and community based conservation.
16. Most would plan to visit the study site two to five times.
17. Most of those that answered the questionnaire were from Fiji, followed by Australia.
18. Most are in the age-group of 35-50 years old, followed by the 50-60 age bracket.
19. Just more than half are male.
20. With just under 90% having a minimum postgraduate education level
21. Most of those that answered are in an academic field

Based on the above summary there seems to be the potential for a small research and eco-tourist market in the study site.

I would also like to note that during the biological survey with students from the Kansas University there were a couple of exceptional finds, we are still working on a report that will be released at a later date.

1. The presence of the Malaitan Endemic: Malaita honeyeater (*Myzomela malaitae*) which was found in abundance. It is also classed as Near Threatened by IUCN Red List and as the only forest conservation area on Malaita Island it is important for the existence of this species.

2. The new discovery of the blue faced parrot finch (*Erythrura trichroa*) never ever seen before on Malaita and is probably a new species or sub-species. There was only 1 caught which means it is rare and conservation action is needed.
3. The discovery of a new frog that belongs to the *Litoria* genus. The confirmation of its status as being a newly discovered species is yet to be known since DNA analysis is currently being undertaken. This frog is also rare with only 1 specimen found.