

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 | Mohammad Farhadinia |
| Project title | People and Persian Leopards in North-eastern Iran: Patterns of Interaction and Implication for Conservation |
| RSG reference | 16598-2 |
| Reporting period | Final report (December 2014 to June 2016) |
| Amount of grant | £5000 |
| Your email address | mohammad.farhadinia@zoo.ox.ac.uk |
| Date of this report | 15 June 2016 |

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 comprehensive human-dimension baseline will be developed with information on people's attitude and their interaction with communities. | | | © | We conducted a systematic questionnaire survey across four seasons to understand interaction between communities and leopards (about 70% of herding community was addressed) |
| Possibility of human-leopard conflict and its underlying root causes and drivers are explored which can be used to calibrate existing "compensation schemes" managed by the Iran Department of Environment. | | © | | Along with satellite collaring ongoing in Tandoureh NP, we obtained reliable information on patterns and causes of conflict between leopards and communities. |
| Local conservation practitioners (i.e. experts and game wardens) are trained how to monitor and protect the leopard which is expected to enhance their protection and monitoring capabilities; | | | © | Three workshops have been organised to train local conservation practitioners. Also, practical training was intensively provided for local experts and rangers during field work. |
| Increased awareness among communities about the leopard population and requirements for survival and more interaction | | © | | Media campaign was launched on Facebook to spread the word at different levels, from local to international. Additionally, a seminar for local poachers and hunters was |

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| <p>with game wardens is expected. So, improvements in the levels of support being received from the local community and more interaction with park authorities are expected;</p> | | | <p>organised to discuss about the project findings and how to improve conservation, attended by some 50 hunters and the area's authorities. Local schools are hosting leopard educational courses in coming fall, then school kids are planned to visit the NP as a leopard tour. Educational plan is developed during summer 2016.</p> |
| <p>Relevant stakeholders, such as decision makers, DoE managers, etc. will receive proper knowledge to show stronger support for promotion of conservation in the area;</p> | | © | <p>Multiple meetings and debates have been organised to discuss about project findings with local, regional and national authorities at Department of Environment (10 meetings in Tehran, one meeting in Mashad, 15 meetings in Dargaz Tandoureh), Veterinary Organization (two meetings), Bureau of Education (one meeting) and local influential persons and governmental authorities (two meetings) Also, five seminars have been organised for wider public and biologists to share project outcomes and findings.</p> |
| <p>By means of presenting knowledge and sharing experiences with other similar projects in NE Iran, a more comprehensive platform for leopard conservation in that vast part of the country is developed.</p> | © | | <p>Project findings, progress and news have been regularly shared on the project Facebook (ca. 5000 followers). Also, project annual report was sent to other conservation practitioners, five seminars for biologists, conservationists and university students have been organised in Tehran. Also, we are working closely with Iran DoE to leverage project approach in order to be applied to other key leopard sites in Iran, but it needs more time to be</p> |

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

Initially, our outreach plan was mainly focused on schools kids, but later we found that provision of veterinary services can be more meaningful to people, along with increasing awareness. Therefore, we had to change our plan slightly.

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

1. We provided a comprehensive baseline about interaction between people and leopards; now we are developing community-based educational programmes.
2. We illustrated a complete understanding of livestock disease problems which can decrease community income; then we developed proper veterinary services and vaccination programmes, particularly for those adjacent to the park;
3. We raised a significant attention toward importance of: 1) engagement of poachers and hunters, and 2) prevalence of infectious diseases that can affect adversely population of the wildlife, among decision-makers at regional and national level.
4. We leveraged Tandoureh NP among local authorities to provide stronger support for nature conservation.

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

Based on our baseline surveys, we learned that people lose more animals due to diseases rather than predators. We found that PPR infection can be a serious concern for local people, so in partnership with Veterinary Organisation, a vaccination programme was developed during November 2015. For 2016, we plan to do the same for foot and mouth disease, another major concern for people living around Tandoureh.

Also, we found that lack of proper expertise among local vets has caused dissatisfaction among people, so we are organising training courses for local vets for better diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases, particularly those common between domestic and wild animals (to be held in fall 2016).

Additionally, we are providing awareness to multiple social groups at local level which can increase their tolerance toward the leopard and to trigger their support (especially from authorities) for leopard conservation.

We expect that as the project continues; local people could be more involved, based on joint plans to be developed with stakeholders.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, this work has been part of a larger ongoing Project Persian Leopard in Northeastern Iran which will last until 2020. The project is composed of five main components: 1) research and monitoring; 2) partnership and collaboration; 3) law enforcement; 4) livestock health programme; and 5) outreach and media. The latter, was started using the RSG fund, but the whole project will be continued.

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

We have a drafted a scientific paper on human-leopard interaction in north eastern Iran to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal by the end of 2016. Furthermore, we are compiling a comprehensive guideline for conservation educational projects based on lessons learned from similar projects across the world which will be freely available for other conservation practitioners in Iran. Multiple seminars and lectures have been organised for biologists and conservationists.

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

Between January 2015 and April 2016, the RSG was used.

We were successful to accomplish many of our activities, except school kid educational programmes which will be done in summer (educational plan development) and outreach programmes at schools (fall and winter 2016/2017). The main reason for postponing was we changed our priority from school kids to hunters and shepherds, so more time was spent to lobby and to learn on these two key groups.

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 |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---|
| Equipment | 0 | 260.91 | +260.91 | For project's 4WD vehicle |
| Travel and subsistence | 1350 | 426.26 | -923.74 | Lower cost in local facilities |
| Consumables | 650 | 660.43 | +10.43 | Almost equal |
| Salary and stipend | 2280 | 3652.4 | +1372.4 | More locals were paid for services and activities |
| Printing | 720 | 0 | -720 | Covered through Crowdfunding |
| Total | 5000 | 5000 | 0 | |

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

We will continue this part of the project by addressing three important target groups: 1) school kids; 2) hunters/poachers; and 3) herders and shepherds. We have started educational efforts for some (hunters) while others will be covered until 2017. Besides outreach programmes, hunters will be more focused to engage them to resolve key causes of poaching, as a main threat to the leopard survival.

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?

We had our project annual report (2015) which RSG logo was used.

11. Any other comments?

The current work is a start to a larger project which is implementing since 2013 in Tandoureh to improve leopard conservation in Iran-Turkmenistan borderlands. Most of this work was spent to explore patterns and problems, to train local conservation practitioners, to find key persons and to share findings to authorities to get support. During upcoming year, we will focus more on applying our findings to different target groups in the community in parallel with other activities such as satellite collaring, camera trapping, motivating law enforcement, etc. We are hopeful that our comprehensive approach can provide a better situation for the leopards and their prey in Tandoureh.