

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	Mfombo Didacus Tamambang
Project title	Reducing Forest Fire and Feather Harvesting, Threats on the Bannerman's Turaco in the Bamenda Highland Forest.
RSG reference	17785-1
Reporting period	January 2016 - December 2016
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	tamambangdida@gmail.com
Date of this report	December 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
To ascertain the socio-cultural pressure of feather decoration to the hunting of the Bannerman's turaco.				However, information asymmetry on the importance and feather use by some elders and notables posed limitation to the results.
To update the population status, raise local awareness and make measures to reduce forest fires in this landscape.				Forest fires still remain a great threat to this species habitat. This is mostly practiced by herdsmen, who burn up old grass to enable fresh grass development for their cattle.
To establish a community driven conservation programme.				-Integrating farmers (indigenes) and herdsmen (believed settlers) under a single community conservation programme was quite difficult. -Some communities previewed have not yet been involved in this programme. -The CFWCP has not yet been legally registered with the government.

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

No major unforeseen difficulties were noted during the project's cycle.

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

a) Establishment of a community led conservation action plan (CAP):

The engagement of a community of diverse cultural background including about 150 hunters, 200 crop farmers, 150 bee farmers, other forest users and decision makers in the establishment of the CAP was one of the most important outcome of the project. About 70 community groups (including old and newly created groups) were condensed to form the community forest and wildlife conservation programme (CFWCP). The CFWCP assisted in the community consultation and logframe process that led to the realisation of the CAP. Some of the objectives and

activities that were included in the conservation management plan were: *Prunus africana* exploitation plan and reforestation plan in community forests, watershed management, tree planting, education and community awareness raising, promotion of bee farming, piggery, poultry and agro forestry as alternative livelihood activities.

b) Improving knowledge on the population and distribution of the Bannerman's turaco:

Over 70 students and 40 community members were trained on bird field data collection and assisted in the project. The project outcome has indicated a slight increase in population and the identification of new forest patches in the landscape where the species lives. Of the 215 count stations established in the landscape; individual or flocks of birds were counted on about 195 plots, while the rest recorded no count of the Bannerman's turaco. Altogether, 90% of the plots set up in the Killum-Ijim forest recorded at least a count. The Killum-Ijim forest has a high encounter rate, bird abundance and bird population density. This is closely followed by the Mt Mbam, and then the Boyo forest. A sub population of the species were found in forest patches of the Bafut-Ngemba forest (including; Bamendankwe hills, Batibo and the Lake Awing). Although, the technique used was not a population census, population estimates showed about 8500 individuals (this includes a combination of previous data collected in the Fossimondi forest area). The encountered turaco species were mostly found on some local fig trees species on which they feed. A study to understand the species feeding habit would be necessary to its conservation.

c) Promotion of Apiculture as strategy to reduce forest fires:

Forest fires still remain a main threat on this species. Encouraging farmers and even herdmen to mount hives in the forest reduced forest fires in some villages by about 20%. This is because farmers who used fire to clear forest before and had hives in the forest were scared that the fire would consume their hives.

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

The Bamenda Highlands tribes understand the importance of the Bannerman's turaco and other local bird species to their culture. During the process of questionnaires administration, interview and focused group discussions, local community members were able to learn and understand more about the conservation project through the questions that were asked to them. This exchange of knowledge between the researchers and local community members was a medium that encouraged knowledge sharing and learning. Also, through community education sessions, they understood these species, its relation to their customs and tradition and therefore were fully involved in the project. Some community members including students, hunters and notables were trained in the field research. This supported the community's acceptance of the project results. Acceptance of the results by the communities of the landscape harnessed their involvement in the development of the conservation action plan (CAP). The

communities attended the CAP planning meeting at the level of the villages, tribes and the landscape. Representatives were sent from the level of the tribes to attain the CAP process. Communities have been involved in the implementation of the conservation plan. They were involved in the community tree planting activities on field and along watersheds. Communities were trained on the use of local material to produce bee hives. This will secure project sustainability, as it is going to expand bee farming as conservation strategy in the landscape.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes! Using the log frame in the project enabled the identification of sustainable conservation livelihood alternatives in the landscape which need to be exploited and expanded on to protect the species. Honey production is a major alternative activity in the landscape to cropping. White honey is promoted locally and it's gaining international recognition as a Biodiversity Indicator Product. Therefore expanding on the practising of this activity and others in the landscape is prior; especially as it can be used as a tool to reduce forest fires. Also understanding the feeding habits of the species is fundamental step to its conservation. Furthermore, it is worth mapping out forest fires and its impact in the landscape. This will enable the understanding of forest change to forest fires.

- To integrate the remaining villages of the landscape into the CAP.
- To map out using Landsat imaging, forest lost to forest fires in the Bamenda highlands.
- To study and integrate feeding habits of the Bannerman's turaco into its conservation.
- To reduce forest fires and the hunting of endangered wildlife species in the Bamenda Highlands Forest through the promotion of bee farming as an alternative livelihood activity to improve crop pollination, hence yield.
- To ensure community sustainability by expanding on communities abilities to construct bee hives from local material to expand apiculture.
- To legalise the CFWCP and continue capacity building in the implementation of the CAP.
- To reconcile conservation education strategies with local culture and tradition.

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

The team has used public presentations to share the results of the study in the community and at the regional level. The presentations targeted indigenes, local chiefs, other researchers and government officials. In order to reach a wider public and researchers in other parts of the country and the world, this work will be put on manuscripts for peer review and publication. Also the data will be made available to the public at public libraries and at the MfoFou head office.

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 Rufford grant was used between January and December 2016. This coincided with the projected time scale for the project.

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
Field transportation for project staff	800	800		
Field accommodation	200	170	+30	Some community members assisted to accommodate field teams.
Field supplies	130	130		
Food assistance to project staff	2120	2120		
Hiring of field guards	50	0	+50	Trained community research aids served as field guards.
Acquisition of camera	250	250		
Purchase of a GPS	350	350		
Transportation refund to participants to meetings and seminars.	400	400		
Reporting, public presentation and data publication	400	400		
Capacity building and establishment of a CAP	300	300		
Total	5000	4920	+80	The budget difference of 80 pounds would be used to continue the sharing of information and results of the project.

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

Honey farming has been identified as sustainable conservation strength, especially as forest fires remain critical. In some parts of the landscape where apiculture is highly practised, forest fires have reduced. This is because locals are scared to use fire as a means to clear forest for it would burn their hives (i.e. "if we burn fire our hives in the forest will burn off"). In addition, the white honey that is harvested from the Bamenda highlands is increasingly gaining international recognition as a biodiversity indicator product and needs to be promoted and certified. Therefore, integrating agro forestry and bee farming will restore the Bamenda highlands forest ecosystems, as it would promote crop pollination and improve yield. Furthermore, it would protect the Bannerman's turaco, guard the customs and traditions of the indigenes and improve economic and living standards of forest adjacent communities. The next steps are listed below:

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- To ensure community sustainability by expanding on communities abilities to construct bee hives from local material to expand apiculture.
- To map out using Landsat imaging, forest lost to forest fires in the Bamenda highlands.
- To legalize the CFWCP and continue capacity building in the implementation of the CAP.
- To reconcile conservation education strategies with local culture and tradition.

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! The logo of the RSGF was printed on all field questionnaires, communiqués and education materials. Furthermore the logo was included on all presentation slides made in the course of the project. During radio programmes the public was made to understand the support of the RSGF to the project. During school education and drawing contests pupils and students were made to understand that prizes were awarded by the RSGF through the MfoFou.

11. Any other comments?

The funds received from the RSGF foundation have been very significant to this project and have also been very significant in promoting my career as a conservationist. The publication of my project update on the RSGF website, created an opportunity for me to meet a wider audience, including university professors to discuss the way forward. This has been a significant contribution to my career.