

Final Project Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Complete the form in English and be as concise as you can. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Eduardo Reséndiz
Project Title	Health Assessments in Sea Turtles from Baja California Sur
Application ID	18896-1
Grant Amount	£5000
Email Address	jresendiz@uabcs.mx
Date of this Report	7 June 2018

1. 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
Generate information about sea turtles health status and presence or absence of diseases.				<p>These by far are the most rewarding parts of our field work. Generating information about sea turtles health status and presence of diseases can help sea turtle and ecosystem conservation. We established the baseline of health monitoring and non-invasive techniques for the health assessment of sea turtles in BCS, with the information generated, 80 marine turtles were diagnosed clinically healthy, This indicates that the ecosystems where we work provide the optimum conditions for turtles to carry out the corresponding activities to the different stages to their life cycle, juvenile, sub-adult and adult. With this, the management plans of the species in a protected natural area are being generated for their conservation. And it is proposed in the medium term to generate conservation strategies for these organisms and their ecosystems. Additionally, we included in the project the members of the local community, fishermen and tourists for the conservation of sea turtles</p>
Generate the information about the presence of diseases and etiological agents.				<p>Generating the information about the presence of diseases and etiological agent's gives us the reference about the impact of this related to public health. Sea turtles are sentinels, one of their ecological functions is to participate as indicators of ecosystem health; for their anatomical and morphological characteristics, their behaviour, and also because they spend up to 40 years in their feeding areas exposing themselves to</p>

				environmental conditions in the development areas. With our studies and fulfilling this objective we can infer and know the good state of conservation in which the working area is located, this allows us to create management and conservation plans to keep this area free of risks and threats that affect these and other species, to the ecosystem and consequently the public health of the place.
Creating preventive measures of conservation in BCS				Generating this kind of information will allow us to complement and develop the monitoring programmes with the aim of creating preventive measures of conservation in BCS, and now this is our next step.

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

Fortunately, we did not have any problems during the development of the project, since before we started we met with the local authorities and the radio to inform about the project, we also had the necessary permits and we were constant, in addition we fulfilled in time and form with the monthly delivery of the partial results and corresponding advances, to the authorities and those involved in the project. Therefore, we always have the necessary support to fulfil our work.

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

a). Establishment of monitoring, reference information and participation of community members:

The monthly health monitoring for sea turtles was established with the participation of members of the local community, fishermen and authorities, and the baseline information on the health of these organisms was generated, which will be used at the local level with the intention of minimising risks and threats that affect marine turtles. This generated information is being used as a national reference and replicated in other marine turtle conservation sites.

b). Management plans and conservation strategies for marine turtles in Baja California Sur.

With the results of this project, together with the corresponding authorities, we are working on the management and conservation plans for marine turtles in Baja California Sur and the first national management and conservation plan.

c). New partnerships developed

We generate working alliances with the Autonomous University of Baja California,

who support us in the diagnosis of infectious threats at the molecular level, we also participate in the creation of the first marine turtle network at a scientific level in Mexico together with the Universidad del Carmen, in order to write a book to disseminate this information and continue with the marine turtle conservation plans at national level.

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

During the monitoring, we achieved the continuous participation of at least 10 members of the local community, among fishermen, young people (students) and women. They were trained in the management of sea turtles, data recording and conservation activities. This project also benefits the community by increasing outreach workshops and training in marine turtle species identification and raises awareness for increased habitat protection. Students play a major role in the community as the next generation leaders and planting a seed for their careers in conservation will extend to other community members.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we obtained funds for the government for community outreach workshops, and we have the responsibility and commitment to continue with these studies to generate the indicators and health parameters of these species, and to complete and complement the management and conservation plans of these natural areas.

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

Participating in workshops, symposiums and congresses, as well as the publication of part of these results in scientific journals and the other in a book of marine turtle specialists. Also I want to attend to the next Rufford conference in Guatemala and share progress and challenges about working with these topics.

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

One year, June 2017 to June 2018. The grant helps us to obtain the material and equipment, for the financing of field trips and for diagnostic kits for laboratory work.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Gasoline for boats and field work	2700	4000	1300	The cost of fuel increased in Mexico monthly, thus increasing the cost to fuel the boats for the fieldwork. We covered this with funds from the Proyecto salud de tortugas marinas from the University and local authorities
Nets material and construction	500	600	100	100 more were used because on two occasions the nets were broken and they had to be repaired. We covered this with funds from the Proyecto salud de tortugas marinas from the University.
Sample collection material	800	800	0	It was enough to buy the material and equipment
Material to process samples and diagnosis	1000	1300	0	300 more were used to repeat two suspicious samples suspected of the presence of a herpesvirus and had to buy another reagent. We covered this with funds from the Proyecto salud de tortugas marinas from the University.

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

The next important steps include continue with the workshops, continue with the fieldwork with the local community, to create the health indicators and parameters, to evaluate the ecosystem status and create the conservation strategies for the organisms and for the ecosystem.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, I used the Rufford logo in every presentation; workshop and always we mentioned directly that this Project was funded by the Rufford foundation.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Jorge Armando Vega-Bravo: He participates in sea turtles captures.

Ana Sofia Merino-Zavala: She helps us with the analysis of health status of the organisms and impact in the ecosystem health.

Yoalli Hernández-Gill: Help us in the sample collection.

Boat captains **Luis F. Trasviña** and **Alexis García**, Helps us with the nets management and the localization of the turtles.

Also, **Helena Fernández-Sanz**, **Dilan Ramos**; **Sofía Barrientos**, **Martha del Sol Valladares** and **Valeria Lucero** joined to the team, they helped us with the field work, the collection of samples and laboratory analysis.

12. Any other comments?

I really can't express it enough how grateful my team and I are for funding from the Rufford Foundation. If it weren't for funding, we could not have developed this work, we would not have made the partnerships we have made. Rufford funds have allowed us to gain the skills and abilities to grow up. This opportunity has served as a platform to grow professionally and personally. And I would like to comment that it has helped me grow and improve as a person.

I feel very grateful for your support and I would like to continue working to contribute even a grain of sand for conservation in my country.

