

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	Vahit Alan
Project title	Investigation and Conservation of Cetacean Species in the Karataş Coasts
RSG reference	19304-1
Reporting period	2016-2017
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	vahitalan@gmail.com
Date of this report	26 April 2017

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
Meetings with stakeholders and the other local communities				Many meetings were held to explain significance and increase recognition of the project.
Sea surveys for marine mammals investigation (determining cetacean distributions and abundance in the Karataş coasts)				Important preliminary data were obtained on the individuals of dolphin in the area. Some individuals in the area were identified by photographic method and stored as catalogue for further studies. It was not possible to say certainly that there are resident population/s in the area due to short period of time in the study. Besides, there were no previous studies in the area to be complementary with this study. Thus, further studies will require for understanding the feature of the populations. Even though some stranding records were obtained for some species, Bottlenose dolphins is the species that uses the area most frequently. Preliminary results indicate that the area is one of the important area for cetaceans.
Identifying potential important area used by cetacean species				During the study period, an important interaction between dolphins and fisherman were determined. The area is the potential feeding area for the individuals. Estuary area has the most frequent encounters as well as intense fisheries activity.
Educational and capacity building activities				Awareness activity with fishermen and other stakeholders were successfully applied, however we could not have any educational activities at the schools of the region due to political issues that

			had happened in summer 2016. Impacts of state of emergency still continues. Even though we waited for some month more than project duration, we could not get permissions for these activities.
Preparation and distribution promotional and educational material			All products such as educational posters and fliers had been printed and distributed to important spots for stakeholders. They were also sent to offices of related ministries but we could not had chance to meet them due to the political issues for further discuss.

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

Most important unforeseen difficulty regarding to the study was political issue that have happened in summer 2016 in Turkey. Due to state of emergency, all permission processes were delayed, also some of them were not completed entirely such as educational activities. Instead we organised more activities in public spots which are important for stakeholders. We also distributed more material to spread as printed products. Another difficult was lack of previous data on dolphins in the area. To tackle this, we increased the number of field survey and we also applied stranding record questionnaire.

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

We obtained important dataset for the individuals of dolphin that inhabit in the area. These data set was important for the region due to being first attempt on the area. Preliminary information contributed to increase understanding of cetacean populations in the area. This dataset will be used successfully to shape further studies in the area and will give important support for policy/decision makers.

At the end of the study, we created the first photograph catalogue of dolphins in the area. We certainly know that most frequent species in the area is bottlenose dolphin and the area is potential feeding area for them. However, for understanding population structure in the region, further investigation is required. Stranding records also gave us information that other some species also uses the area.

The project will also contribute to increase awareness of local people as well as provide important data set as scientific and management purposes. Even though we could not organise meeting at the schools of the region, we organised more activities in public spots which are important for stakeholders. We also distributed more material to spread as printed products.

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

We also had chance to reach regional people and decision makers more than local community by using regional newspapers. Our project took almost half page in many regional newspapers which made us easier to reach broad community in the region. We also paid attention of regional decision makers as well as increasing awareness of local people. We believe that dolphins has been started to discuss as part of our region, besides being problem for fishermen

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Further information is required in the area. Because we still not sure about the population structure in the region. Another important issue is interaction between dolphin and fishermen. More public awareness activities will be required to tackle perception that dolphins are problem for fisheries. More information is need to obtain from fisherman to understand the situation for sustainable management of the area.

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

We distribute many printed material for local people and local decision makers. After state of emergency, we plan to meet government officers to explain our results. We also had many chances to spread our project to broader region by using local newspaper. Feedbacks proved us that articles in the newspapers were effective way to increase awareness of our project. We have also started to prepare scientific presentation to share our results in national and international scientific meetings.

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 grant was used trough out the length of the project. As proposed first we met local stakeholders to introduce project and its aims. At the same time period field survey study planned and organised. We spent more time for field survey than we purposed due to lack of previous information on the cetacean in the area. Field survey continued almost the end of the project. Awareness work package had been started in the middle of the project period. Products printed and distributed to stakeholders that we met in the beginning of the project. Also some public spots were used to spread our words to more people in the local. However, we had delayed to reach schools for educational activities, despite we had started our attempting in the beginning of fourth quarter of project period. Even though we wait for some months to get permission, state of emergency has been extended and schools became summer holiday time. That is the reason why we are late for some months to present our final report.

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
Nikon 80-400 mm Lens	800	750	+50	It was purchased 50£ cheaper prize.
Boat Renting & Fuel	3400	3700	-300	Budged were transferred from the other items. Thus, the number of field study has been increased.
Travel Expenses	300	250	+50	It was purchased 50£ cheaper prize.
Printed Materials	500	300	+200	The materials were made cheaper, thanks to personal connections.
TOTAL	5000	5000	0	

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

Two important matters should have taken the priority for the next steps. First of all, knowledge on populations of dolphins in the area has to be increased to understand more for management plan of the region. We certainly can say that Karataş region is very important for individuals of dolphins especially estuary impact area. This brings another matter; the region is important for fisherman and fisheries as well as dolphin. Thus, second important matter should be to understand interaction between fishermen and dolphin which are in the same level of trophic network, so they have to compete over the time. Better understanding in these issues will provide more sustainable management plan and application in the area.

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

We used RF logo in all our products. We also designed and wore t-shirts that include individuals from area and RF logo on it, during the field work period as well as our daily life in the area. People paid attention on products. We will definitely say that RF had intense publicity in the area.

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

12. Any other comments?