

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Rutuja R. Kolte
<b>Project title</b>	In-situ conservation of endemic plants of Chaukul, Lateritic Plateau of northern Western Ghats (NWG) of Maharashtra by community involvement
<b>RSG reference</b>	20301-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	September 2016 – December 2017
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5000
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:rutu24kolte@gmail.com">rutu24kolte@gmail.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> January, 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
Baseline Data				Total 169 herbaceous plants belonging to 39 families have been documented. Of these, 79 species are endemic. However, this number may increase in future as few more grasses remained unidentified. <i>Lepidagathis clavata</i> is rediscovered after 166 years from other than type locality.
Training				We have documented the techniques such as collection, photography, herbarium preparation, etc in the field to the people and students. However due to their other commitments they could not be fully trained.
Awareness				We could initiate awareness about herbaceous flora, endemism, importance of lateritic plateaus as habitat and their conservation.
Ecotourism And Capacity Building				Local people are coming forward to understand ecotourism, sustainable utilisation of the bioresources and etc.
Conservation				Though local people were practising conservation practices using their traditional ways, during this project we emphasised on importance of conservation, lateritic plateaus as habitat, endemism, etc. We could initiate awareness about herbaceous flora which is reach at Chaukul plateaus.

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

We didn't face any unforeseen difficulty during project.

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

**A) Baseline Data** – During this project total of 169 herbaceous species have been documented. Out of that, 79 are endemic to Western Ghats. *Lepidagathis clavata*

Dalzell is a steno-endemic species, which we have rediscovered after 166 years after type collection. This baseline data can be used for further conservation strategies. Village Panchayat and Forest Department can use this data in different strategy planning.

**B) Initiation of awareness about herbaceous plant diversity** – People staying at Chaukul, were aware about tree and shrub flora but not about herbaceous flora which is rich at Chaukul. Because of this project we could initiate awareness about herbaceous plant diversity. In addition to this we also focused on importance of lateritic plateaus as habitat, fauna, endemic species, ecotourism, etc.

**C) Education of School students** – During this project because of different workshops, lectures and field tours students could learn about plants, biodiversity, plant-animal interaction, etc. Also they have explored their extracurricular talent such as essay writing, preparation of posters, paintings, floral arrangements, etc.

**D) Understanding local people's perspective** – During this project we could understand local people and student's understanding towards biodiversity. It's their unseparated part of life. They follow their own traditional methods to conserve them and they feel proud about that.

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

Different groups (Students, elderly people, government and NGO people) have involved in different kind of activities

**A) As partners** – We all, i.e. Village panchayat and villagers of Chaukul, Chaukul high school, Forest Department Amboli, Malabar Nature Conservation Club, Amboli (MNCC) and Department of Botany, Goa University worked as partners in this project. All these authorities were having equal importance and all participated actively throughout the project.

**B) Fieldwork** – Some of the enthusiastic locals and students accompanied us on fieldwork. In addition to that for schoolchildren and for college students special field trips were arranged. We explained about flora, fauna, plant-animal interactions, microhabitats, endemism, etc. During this project they could explore basic things such as, collection of plants, plant-animal interactions, biodiversity, etc.

**C) Lectures during workshop** – In workshops, lectures were arranged for students and locals on topics such as, biodiversity, lateritic plateaus, ecotourism, etc. Students were more enthusiastic to listen to these different topics. During these lectures participants interacted with experts also.

**D) Activities for school students** – To actively involve students we had arranged essay competition, exhibition of posters, painting and handmade arts by using natural resources, floral arrangements, etc. Through this they could explore their extracurricular activities.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, we would like to continue this work. We have successfully initiated awareness about biodiversity. This village can be developed as a model to show conservation practices. In addition to that, as I mentioned, they have their perception about this diversity, which we would like to document. Biodiversity wise this area is rich and the baseline work will be strengthened to declare this area as a protected area.

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

**A) Research community** – Scientific findings can be presented in conferences as posters or in oral forms, research papers, etc. Already data collected in this project have presented in two conferences:

- a) International Botanical Congress, China 2017 – as poster.
- b) Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy (IAAT) – one Poster, one oral.

**B) School/Colleges** – To share the results we have involved the school students and students from undergraduate colleges during workshop and field trips. They will be involving in different biodiversity related activities in future.

**C) Local people** – We have involved them during workshop and fieldwork. We have prepared a pamphlet on herbaceous plants of Chaukul in local language which they can use. We will be fixing big banners in this village to show findings of this project. We are in the process of finalizing small pocket book which will give general information of Chaukul and its biodiversity.

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

RSG used from September 2016 – December 2017. Duration of project extended by 2 months from anticipated duration.

**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 assistant /Salaries /Stipends /Honorarium	1000	988	12	We could manage only one field assistant for full time. Whoever was available accompanied with as field assistant. Some amount was extra so I used it for visa process to attend conference and present work (by prior permission from authority).

Field work (Accommodation, Food and travel)	1500	1419	81	We had budgeted more amount for food and less amount for travelling. But in actual field work maximum amount was required for travelling. Local people were very co-operative. The person from village where we used to stay he gave some concession in food and accommodation. So extra money from food and accommodation we utilised for travelling. Part of extra money from food and accommodation I used as registration fee to attend international conference and present work (With prior permission).
Contingency	1000	952	48	-
Consumables	500	430	70	Depending upon necessity we purchased required things.
Events and associate programmes	1000	694	306	We are in process of finalizing small pocket book (300 – Yet to be utilized).
		4483	517	

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

As next step we would like to proceed to develop Chaukul as model village to show conservation practices. As people are coming forward to understand conservation, ecotourism, sustainable use, etc. it's very important to encourage them to develop some strong strategies for conservation.

### 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 have used logo in material produced such as

1. Pamphlet.
2. Pocket book (In process).

We have used Rufford foundation logo in

1. On banner which was prepared during workshop.
2. Poster presentation at – International Botanical Congress China 2017 and in International Conference and Annual Meeting of Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy 2016 (Kolhapur, India).
3. Oral presentation – International Botanical Congress, China 2017 and annual meeting of Indian Association for Angiosperms Taxonomy 2017 (Delhi, India).

4. Gifts given to four partners (pen stand).
5. On certificates.
6. T-shirts used while presenting posters.
7. Acknowledgements in research papers research papers. (One has been published in Journal of Threatened Taxa and one has been communicated)

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

As work progressed number of team members increased progressively.

**Prof. M. K. Janarthanam** – Mentor of this project. He has given suggestions, comments and guidance. Wherever required he has provided us permission letters or reference letters as authority.

**Dr Sharad Kambale** – He has guided me to give basic training of angiosperm taxonomy and in planning of work. He was assessing work throughout project. In addition to this his role was giving ideas, comments and suggestions.

**Partners**

- Department of Botany, Goa University.
- Malabar Nature Conservation Club, Amboli (MNCC) – local NGO.
- Chaukul Grampanchayat and villagers.
- Chaukul High school, Chaukul.
- Forest Department, Amboli.

We worked as partners in this project. All partners actively participated during course of project. **Mr Kaka Bhise (MNCC); Mrs Rita Gavde** (Sarpanch); **Mr and Mrs Suresh Gavde** and his team, **Mr Rupesh Gavde** (Villagers), **Mr Dhond** (Senior teacher, Chaukul High School); **Mr Shivram Gavde** (Forest Department, Amboli) were main contributors from Chaukul. They provided all necessity help including stay, arrangements of program, planning of field work, advises, etc.

**Mr. Rahul D. Prabhu Khanolkar** (Mhadei Research Centre, Goa)  
Arrangements of workshops and during trails he guided students on fauna part.

**Mr Suryakant Gaokar** (Vivekanand Environment Awareness Brigade, Goa - VEAB)  
He is an artist. He gave hands on training for school students on floral arrangements, preparation of arts using natural resources, etc.

Research Students – **Mr Anup Deshpande, Miss Prabha Pillai**, etc. (Department of Botany), **Mr Kiran Gavde** (Department of Zoology) of Goa University. Photography, field tours, data analysis, arrangements of workshops, etc.

## 12. Any other comments?

I am thankful to Prof. Varun Sahni – Vice Chancellor of Goa University and Prof. Y. V. Reddy – Registrar of Goa University for their permission and support to conduct this project. I am also grateful to Prof. Vijaya Kerkar – Head of Department of Botany, Goa University and Prof. Bernard F. Rodrigues former head of Department of Botany, Goa University for their help and support throughout the project.

