

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	Temur Shvelidze			
Project title	Conservation Actions of Cetaceans in the Georgian Black Sea			
Amount of grant	£5,000			
Your email address	temur.shvelidze.1@iliauni.edu.ge			
Date of this report	06.08.2018			



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
Assessment and mitigation of bycatch rate				We faced a big problem collaborating with fisherman. They promised us to implement pinger devices inside their fishing nets but after that, they refused and cancelled the activity. So, we left behind of the project act-schedule and that's why we needed more time to get some results. We also changed some methods due to this obstacles.
Assessment of spatial and temporal distribution of cetaceans – identification of core areas				We analyse recent data and plus our data of dolphin observation and we identified core areas in the Georgian territorial waters.
stranding monitoring (collect and examined carcasses to identify injuries and probable cause of death)				We monitored strandings of dolphin once in a month in 2017-2018. We also develop new tools for autopsy and put together the data in one database.
Creation of online database for developing stranding network				Environmental agency created online database of stranding in Georgian Black Sea coast. So, when somebody finds a stranded carcases they will call hotline (153) and there will be a response group which react on the call.

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

The main difficulties were fisherman whom we asked to implement pinger device inside their fishing nets. In most cases they realised the problem but in fact they were hiding from us. So, we tried to find a local person who was a trustee for the fisherman. This person helped us to meet only three fisherman. But we can't implement pingers in the nets because we need more time to dealing with those fisherman.

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



1) First attempt to assess accosting warning system pinger influence on Black Sea cetaceans.

2) Identified core areas for dolphins in the Georgian Black Sea.

3) Involvement of stakeholders and local people in stranding network. The interest from the government has been rose in dolphin mortality.

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

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Definitely there are plans to continue this work and there it's really important because we need to achieve our first objective fully and implement pinger device inside the fishing nets. For that we need more time to get trust of the fisherman. They are afraid of everyone due to they have a huge penalties for the dolphin by-catch.

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

We presented our work at Rufford Small Grants conference in Montenegro and in Georgia 2018. Also our work will be promoted on University webpage.

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

Rufford Foundation Grant has been used From April 2017 – June 2018. Due to the unforeseen difficulties and finding fisherman we used more time as we planned. But we have some results and first objective has been achieved partially.



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. Exchange rate – 1 GPB = 3.14 GEL

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Food for team members	260	465	+205	We had three team members from the start of the project, but more two people were added, due to field trips it's really hard to cover the whole area for three people.
Room rent in Grigoleti and in Tbilisi	400	600	+200	The price of the room has changed after the 4 month of the project so the price become twice higher.
Pingers	2600	2100	-500	Due to the conservation project and we were students, the Pinger company take all of this into the consideration and gave us sale on the price
Car rent	840	840	0	
Photographic equipment	400	495	+95	We bought it from US and added money is for transportation. Georgian companies always change the fare for transport due to the variable currency exchange rates.
Binoculars	250	250	0	
GPS	250	250	0	

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

According to our results next important steps will be collaboration with government and fisherman. Local people and stakeholders stared to communicating with us. They did not make any crucial decision yet Due to this was first conservation project for cetaceans we took most our time to bring the knowledge to the people in terms of dolphin conservation.



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 did not use Rufford logo in any printing material. Our team organised Rufford conference in Georgia and there we printed a conference banner were logo was used.

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

Davit Dekanoidze – his role in this project was to analyse field data and make it in database.

Levan Ninua - his role was autopsy and stranding monitoring.

Nana Devidze – her role was to photograph stranded dolphin and to analyse recent observation data.

Annex 1



Figure 1. Stranding in Georgia from 2010 - 2018





Figure 2. Stranding of Common Dolphin on the coast during 2010-2018



Figure 3. Stranding of Harbour porpoise on the coast during 2010-2018





Figure 4. Stranding of Bottlenose dolphin on the coast during 2010-2018



Figure 5. Core areas of dolphins in the Georgian territorial waters. Pink polygons are represented the areas that are important for dolphin feeding and reproduction.







Figure 6. Environmental agency hotline stranding dolphin database statistic in 2016-2017





Figure 7. Common dolphin whistle spectrogram recorded via hydrophone during the pinger monitoring





Figure 8. Bottlenose dolphin whistle spectrogram recorded via hydrophone during the pinger monitoring.





Left: Stranded Harbour porpoise. Right: The stomach of the Harbour porpoise.



Left: Autopsy in the field. Right: Take tissue samples for Genetic studies.



Left: Common dolphin during the motorboat observation. Right: Common dolphin during the motorboat observation.





New stranded Harbour porpoise.



Gill net stripes on the body of Harbour porpoise by-catch evidence.