

## 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	
Your name	Zoya Tyabji
Project title	Following shark trails: Assessing biology, fisheries and conservation aspects of sharks in the Andaman Islands.
RSG reference	21010-1
Reporting period	December 2017
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	zoya.tyabji@gmail.com
Date of this report	30th August 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
Collation of published and grey literature on sharks				
Diversity, maturity and stock structure of sharks				We sampled 2914 shark specimens from 273 boat catches across a duration of a year to record species, life history characteristics, gear and fishing grounds.
Collation of knowledge about sharks from stakeholders				This objective will be completed partially funded by the Conservation Leadership Program.
Database of shark sightings				This is an ongoing activity and will continue after the completion of the project.
Awareness building and dissemination of project findings				This is an ongoing activity and will continue after the completion of the project.

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

N/A

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

1. The project generated baseline information on the diversity of sharks, life history characteristics of the most dominant species landed, spatial information on fishing grounds and intensity of gear use for sharks in the Andaman Islands,
2. The project explored the Perceptions and traditional knowledge regarding elasmobranchs; and economic value of shark fisheries of the Andaman Islands by interviews with stakeholders
3. Finally a network of key informants has been formed to help with future monitoring of elasmobranch diversity and landings.

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

The involvement of the local community was vital in the successful completion of our project activities. We interacted with the fisher community on a daily basis; and interacted with dive schools and sports fishers on a bimonthly basis to collect the relevant information and to understand knowledge of these stakeholders about sharks. The very trustful relationship with fish processing units on the island opened a window of knowledge in the role of elasmobranch fishery economics. Through informal discussions and interactions with local communities we collated information on sharks along with sensitising them to the vulnerability of sharks in the ecosystem.

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

We plan to continue the monitoring of sharks at the fish landing sites; and with dive schools in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In the future, I am planning to carry forward this work and study the ecological role of sharks in the reefs of Andaman Islands, and their role both in trophic systems and fishery socio-economics

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

The results of the study were shared with the local community of Wandoor and Port Blair; and with educational programs held at the Andaman Nicobar Environment Team (ANET). Additionally, a research article is 'under review' in Zootaxa, a peer-reviewed international journal and we are currently working on a second paper on diversity, life history and landing characteristics of sharks. In the coming few months, we plan to conduct three more interactive sessions and disseminate a field ID guide to the various stakeholders involved (created via the Rufford grant) for the identification of elasmobranchs found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India.

**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 anticipated length of the project was for 12 months, from January 2017 to December 2017. However, as the budget was exceeding the budgeted amount requirement of the project, we extended the sampling period. The actual duration of the project thus was January 2017 to June 2018.

**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 at £ Sterling 2.89/day for 15 days in a month for a total of 10 months	434	370	64	
Travel - Air travel for 4 trips from Mumbai to Port Blair	485	485		
Travel - Inter-island travel	700	200	500	
Travel - Vehicle/boat hire	600	250	350	
Travel - Fuel for vehicle	115	115		
Travel - Advisors one time visiting cost	200	300	100	The price includes her staying costs at field.
Field accommodation	300	850	550	Due to the extension of field work, the costs for accommodation at field has increased.
Equipment – weighing balance, measuring tape, batteries	115	210	95	Due to the humidity at field, the equipment corroded frequently and had to be replaced repeatedly leading to an increase in the budget costs.
Stationary, data collection, education and awareness material	186	220	34	
Per diem cost at £ Sterling 3.3/day for 12 months	1207	1200	7	
Contingency	408	550	142	Included communication costs (postage, internet, and phone bills).
Administrative cost (5% of the total cost)	250	250		

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

The important next steps are to continue the monitoring of sharks at the fish landing sites, to maintain the relationships with the network of key informants and to continue studying the different aspects of shark biology and conservation with the baseline that has been generated through this project. A dialogue with the fishers on how to sustain shark diversity and stock is vital for the future.

**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?**

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in all outreach materials, presentations and reports.

**11. Any other comments?**

I thank The Rufford Foundation for providing me with this opportunity and invaluable experience. The study has acted as a stepping stone to further my research into this field.

