

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Zhaskairat Nurmukhambetov
Project Title	Continuation of monitoring of vulture supplemental feeding sites and assessment of vulture populations status in Mangistau Region, Kazakhstan
Application ID	24624-2
Grant Amount	£5,000
Email Address	zhaskairat-84@mail.ru
Date of this Report	2019.05.03

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
Supplying the feeding sites with offal and other animal by-products. Monitoring at feeding sites with the use of camera traps (April-October 2018);				From April to October 2018, every 2 weeks on each of the three feeding sites with mounted camera traps we laid out about 20 kg of meat by-products from the slaughterhouse. During the project, we received some thousands of photos, including – unique photos of the live Persian leopard for the first time in Kazakhstan.
Questionnaire survey with PA staff and hunters				80 questionnaires were distributed among the target groups. However, we haven't received new information about nesting of vultures at other areas.
Conducting a vulture nest counting survey at the territory of Mangistau Region (May-June 2018);				Last year a vulture nest counting survey was carried out at the whole territory of the Ustyurt reserve and at the section of Kaplankyr Chink (escarpment) in the southern Ustyurt (about 50 km). In addition, part of Donyztau Chink (about 40 km) on the northern Ustyurt was examined for the presence of vultures and their nests. We managed to survey the Western Chink of Ustyurt outside the reserve only partially (about 60 km). Four living nests of the black vulture and two living nests of the Egyptian vulture were found on the territory of the reserve.
Contacts with media to publish an article about vulture populations in the reserve and outcomes of our project. (May-October 2018)				Reports about our project and the unique detection of the leopard during the implementation of our project are widespread in the network.
Preparing and				3000 copies of pocket calendars with

distribution of printing material on the vultures of the reserve among local community(October-November 2018);				vultures were printed and distributed among local communities.
Preparing a project report and scientific articles on the results of the project (November-December 2018).				The article about the project is being prepared for publication. In addition, two articles on the first finding of Persian leopard in the reserve (in print) have been prepared.
Finding partners and resources to continue the project				We managed to find partners to continue monitoring of rare wildlife species: in November 2018, in the frame of the Central Asian Desert Initiative (CADI) project, additional 17 camera traps were set up at the territory of the reserve and about 60 kg of offal was deposited at feeding sites.

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

It turned out, that effectiveness of the questionnaire survey of inspectors of PAs and hunters to identify the facts of vulture nesting outside the reserve was zero. Therefore, we had to use only our own data.

Unfortunately, we have not yet managed to find partners to continue our vulture project. However, thanks to the discovery of the Persian leopard during our project, we found potential partners to continue monitoring and protecting the biodiversity of the Ustyurt reserve:

Central Asian Desert Initiative (CADI) project <http://cadi.uni-greifswald.de/en/home/>
 Ilbirs Foundation (Kyrgyzstan) <http://ilbirs.org/>

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

- a) Supplementary feeding of vultures at three feeding sites was provided: from April to October more than 600 kg of offal in total was deposited at the sites and utilised by birds of prey (including vultures) and mammals.
- b) By means of camera traps at the feeding sites, several thousand pictures were obtained, most of which were informative – they contain images of vertebrates. Among them, numerous photos of Egyptian vultures, and a few photos of a black vulture and a griffon vulture were received. The undoubted highlight was photographing of a live Persian leopard- this is the first record of this species in Kazakhstan.

- c) In the course of the project, the issues of popularisation of vultures and conservation issues of the Ustyurt reserve were addressed: 3000 pocket calendars with vultures were distributed among local communities; three articles have been prepared for publication; information about the project was posted on the site of the Ustyurt reserve and the site of Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK).

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

As mentioned earlier, at the end of September 2018, a live Persian leopard was recorded for the first time on a camera trap on the territory of the Ustyurt reserve. New records of the same leopard that we received in November and December 2018 confirmed that this amazing animal still lives in the reserve and looks very good. In February 2019, employees of the Ustyurt reserve summarised the results of competition of the children's drawings of the leopard. More than 70 children took part in the competition. Participants were also asked to choose a name for the leopard: with unanimous decision of the jury, the name "Tau Sheri" - "Spirit of the mountains" was chosen for the leopard. Through social networks, hundreds of thousands of people in Kazakhstan learned about the discovery of the Persian leopard in the framework of the project on vulture feeding.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

During the implementation of the project, we have collected up-to-date data not only about vultures, but also about predatory mammals, including the caracal and the Persian leopard. In the future, we are planning to continue monitoring of rare birds of prey and mammals listed in the Red book of Kazakhstan and IUCN. Thus, the range of activities of our project will be expanded.

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

Information about the project results is available on the website of the Ustyurt state reserve: <http://ustirt.kz/>

Three articles have been prepared for publication in the following journals and newsletter: "Raptors Conservation", "Selevinia" and IUCN/SSC Cat News. They were submitted to the editorial office and will appear in the next issues of these publications.

Three thousand of pocket calendars with photos of vultures were published and distributed among local communities.

Information about recording of the Persian leopard in the Ustyurt reserve was widely presented in the media and social networks:

https://www.lada.kz/aktau_news/ecology/68013-leopardu-v-ustyurtskom-zapovednike-dali-imya-tau-sher.html

<http://ekois.net/leopard-v-ustyurtskom-zapovednike-poluchil-svoe-imya-i-chuvstvuetsya-horosho/>

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

The grant was used within the period stated in the project. Camera trapping and supplemental feeding in November 2018- February 2019 was carried out at the expense of our partners.

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
Travel expenses	900	900	0	–
Per Diems	1800	1800	0	–
Camera traps	500	540	+ 40	2 camera traps X 270 £ = 540 £
Offal/other animal by-products	950	800	-150	600 kg x 1,33 £ = 800 £
Fuel	500	400	-100	Some fuel was provided by the reserve.
Printing material	100	180	+80	3000 pocket calendars x 0,06 £ =800 £
Miscellaneous	250	380	+130	Batteries, memory cards for camera traps and etc.
Total	5000	5000	0	

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

We will continue to inform the public about the results of our project and search for partners to continue conservation work on rare species of birds of prey and mammals in the Mangystau region (Kazakhstan) and the primary task is to increase the number of camera traps for deployment in the Ustyurt reserve up to 20-30.

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?

We used the Rufford Foundation logo on the pocket calendars with vultures of the Ustyurt reserve and we have always referred to the Rufford Foundation in the course of our project, in all publications and public speeches.

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

Zhaskairat Nurmukhambetov – being a coordinator, I was fully engaged in all activities: expedition work, vulture feeding, data analysis, participation in writing of the report and articles, contacts with the media.

Aktan Muhashov is a staff scientist of the Ustyurt reserve: expedition work, vulture feeding.

Mark Pestov is a project consultant (PhD): data analysis, writing of the report and articles, expedition work (partly), search for potential partners, contacts with the media.

Vladimir Terentyev is an ecologist with some experience in biodiversity conservation and research projects: translation of all project materials into English, participation in writing of the report and articles, expedition work (partly).

12. Any other comments?

In our opinion, the second stage of the project on monitoring of vulture supplemental feeding sites and assessment of vulture population status in Mangistau Region was successfully implemented in 2018. The most interesting and unexpected result of our work were records of the Persian leopard *Panthera pardus saxicolor* (Pocock, 1927), obtained by camera trapping on feeding sites out of three sites two established during the project. This is the first confirmed case of the appearance of a live leopard in Kazakhstan (previously it was known about three reliable facts of illegal killing of this species in Kazakhstan).

As a result of our work, we have prepared proposals to expand the territory of the Ustyurt reserve and its buffer zone, as well as to introduce the Persian leopard in the Red book of the Republic of Kazakhstan. These proposals were submitted to the relevant government bodies for consideration and approval. We sincerely grateful to the Rufford Foundation for supporting our project and look forward to continued successful cooperation.