

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. 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. 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	Paras M Acharya
Project title	Status of Otter Distribution in Narayani river, Chitwan National Park
RSG reference	25.05.08
Reporting period	Aug 31, 2008 – July 30 2009
Amount of grant	£ 5000
Your email address	otterofhimalayas@yahoo.com
Date of this report	March 2010

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
Determine distributional status of otter in the area			√	Species identification was possible through footprints.
Generate awareness and education			√	Increase awareness through their active involvement in stakeholders' meetings, cluster level meetings, and field surveys; review and monitoring of such activities would be beneficial in strengthening otter conservation activities as well as enhancing public awareness
Review and develop understanding of otters as an aquatic indicator species		√		Low numbers of signs of otter might be because of industrial pollution and high human disturbances in the river and indicator status is achieved partially. To confirm indicator status would be possible only after undertaking detail ecological study.

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

Not at all.

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

- I) Baseline information on otter distribution, key otter bearing areas and GIS data layers on distribution and habitats of otters in Narayani river has been established.
- II) Increased awareness and education among the stakeholders e.g. Local forest users, fishermen, local communities were aware for otter conservation.
- III) The interaction between Park personnel and study team was beneficial towards otter conservation like ongoing conservation of crocodile in CNP.

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

During the study period they involved to provide various kinds of services e.g. boating, visits to study area, and also, they were also involved in scat collection. They developed the skills to identify indirect evidence of the species. They gained a level of attitude, perception and education about the importance of otters and are willing to establish a community-based otter conservation group.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The next phase of the research will be required to determine the indicator status and monitoring of otter habitats and population.

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

I am planning to share the results of my work to International otter colloquium, 2010, which will be held in Italy and would also like to publish in any international scientific peer reviewed journal. I would like to disseminate results to protected area managers by providing research reports and arranging discussion and paper presentation.

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

RSG was used for a period of twelve months (August 2008 to July 2009). The submission of final report was not possible within the 12-month period. Field investigation was little bit extended for familiarization of research findings to key stakeholders to derive their inputs.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures are in £ sterling.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Professional Services	1,660	1,660		
Field Expenses	1,130	1,130		£ 95 was allocated to 1 bachelor student of SchEMS to support thesis on habitat mapping of otters in Narayani.
Capital equipment	1,715	2,515	800	Four automatic cameras rented, aerial photographs purchased, renting cost for rubber boats and field gear was exceeded.
Workshops, training and meetings	1,705	1,230	475	Budget allocated for workshop and training was merged into awareness activities such as in consultation stakeholder meetings and cluster level meeting with fishermen Cost to otter group was not used.
Report preparation and publication	285	285		
Communication	235	235		
Stationary	235	235		
Miscellaneous	235	235		

Total	7,200	7,525	275	
Seep water contribution	2525			Rest of the additional expenditure was supported by Seep Water.

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

Follow up of the research recommendation through continuation of this research.

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

Yes, RSG logo was used in GIS data layers and banners of consultation meetings.

11. Any other comments?

Research grant was most helpful to disseminate the importance of otter species in local communities.