

Final Project Evaluation Report

Your Details	
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Project Title	Understanding and mitigating bushmeat hunting and consumption in Malawi
Application ID	25760-1
Grant Amount	£4118
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Date of this Report	27/11/2019

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
1. Investigate the prevalence of bushmeat hunting and consumption around 4 protected areas in Malawi				We were able to successfully conduct over 1500 interviews with households around four national parks in Malawi (Nkhotakota, Nyika, Vwaza Marsh and Majete). We used these household interviews to generate prevalence of both bushmeat hunting and consumption. This research has been published in the journal <i>Biodiversity & Conservation</i> (Impact factor 3.142). These results were also presented to stakeholders (see objective 4)
2. Understand the main socio-economic variables related to the prevalence of bushmeat hunting and consumption within Malawi				Following on from the above objective, we were able to successfully link socio-economic variables to bushmeat hunting and consumption based on the household interviews. We found which variables were important for each of these activities in each protected area of study. This work was published in conjunction with the above in a publication in <i>Biodiversity & Conservation</i> .
3. Understand community perceptions and responses to up to six possible future interventions used to reduce bushmeat hunting or consumption				Apart from the above, we conducted an additional 250 interviews with households to discuss their responses to six different programmes, including micro-enterprise, skills training, park-based products and livestock donation programmes. We published these findings in the journal <i>Biological Conservation</i> (Impact factor 4.71). These findings were also presented to stakeholders (see objective 4)
4. Facilitate decision-making among stakeholders relating to interventions to reduce bushmeat hunting and consumption in a				We were able to successfully hold a workshop in Lilongwe, Malawi, in November 2019, where we presented the results of the previous three objectives to key stakeholders in Malawi. These stakeholders included

participatory setting				the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Malawi, African parks, Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. We also used this workshop to generate a system map for both bushmeat hunting and consumption in Malawi, based on expert knowledge. The results have been accepted for publication in the journal <i>Ecology & Society</i> , currently in press.
5. Combine the above objectives to develop an action plan to combat bushmeat hunting in Malawi, with specific reference to which interventions are most sustainable and effective				This work was collated into a final project report, which was sent out to all relevant stakeholders in May 2020.

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

We were able to complete most of this highly challenging fieldwork without too many difficulties, barring some mechanical problems with our fieldwork vehicle. We were able to complete the required repairs without too much fieldwork time lost. We also had to train a new enumerator to work in the final month of data collection as the previous enumerator had a health problem. Finally, when we conducted the stakeholder workshop, we had some last-minute cancellations, which affected the number of people attending the workshop. We were still able to have a very fulfilling discussion and also had full representation of the organisations. We will tackle this by ensuring all representatives who were invited get a full report of proceedings (objective 5).

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

1) We were able to provide the very first reliable estimates of bushmeat hunting and consumption in Malawi and also link these activities to socio-economic variables, allowing us to understand what important variables need to be accounted for when designing future community-based programmes in Malawi

2) We were able to provide vital information to government and park management about the problems with potential programmes used to reduce bushmeat hunting and consumption, as well as which programmes may provide the best solution for each of these illegal activities. By providing recommendations based on this

interrogation of assumptions, the Malawian Government can better plan for future interventions.

3) We were able to initiate significant capacity-building in Malawi, in that we provided significant employment for four local enumerators and trained them in the use of social surveys for conservation. Further we also established a vital link between an Australian University and a Malawian university, which is already being used for future collaborations, and were able to provide diverse local stakeholders with the opportunity to network and discuss the bushmeat issue in a collaborative setting.

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

We worked closely with local communities for the collection of this data, and during fieldwork were able to discuss the issues and concerns of more than 1500 households, allowing them an opportunity to give feedback to the protected areas in an anonymous and safe format. We will then be able to include these issues and wants into our final report to Malawian conservation organisations. This will hopefully allow better collaboration between parks and communities. We also provided information booklets to the community managers of the parks to distribute to the Village Natural Resource committees (VNRCs) of each park, to inform the communities of the results of this research.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We are currently working on a proposal to expand the survey used in this research and investigate some of the findings in more detail. We expect to apply for further funding end 2020 and use this as a basis for the lead research to take up a post-doctoral position.

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

I have been able to publish three scientific papers from this research, based on objectives 1-4. Additionally, we have already completed a workshop sharing the results of this research with key stakeholders in Malawi in November 2019 (see objective 4). I have also produced a final report for all stakeholders, which is now publically available on the internet. This work was also publicised in a popular news article in "The Conversation", Africa edition, which was read over 8500 times.

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

We completed the primary fieldwork for data collection between June and November 2018. We then completed a final stakeholder meeting in November 2019. By mid-2020, all results had been written up for publication in high-ranking journals. This compares favourably with our expected timeline, where we said:

1) Surveys conducted from end May-end October 2018, a period of 5 months.

- 2) Follow-up stakeholder meetings and workshops will be conducted over a period of 1 month in September 2019.
- 3) Publication submission and final report (December 2019-January 2020).

We are therefore well on track with our expected timeline. The final report was delayed because some funds were used to pay for open access fees for one of the publications, which has now been completed.

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
Assistant wages (MWK 901,614.00 Malawian kwacha)	948	948		All of the funding was spent on paying assistants as indicated
Accommodation (MWK 2,330,121.00 Malawian kwacha)	2450	2450		All of the funding was spent on accommodation as indicated
Fuel for vehicle to conduct fieldwork (MWK 684,770.00 Malawian kwacha)	720	19	-701	Another source of funding was applied for and granted before the outcome of this grant was known and as such this expense was almost fully paid for by another grant
Other expenditure: publication fees for open access journal article	700	700		This item received approval from the grant's manager Simon Mickleburgh for this use, given the surplus in funds. This money was spent on paying open access fees for the journal <i>Ecology and Society</i> , relating to objective 4. The receipt for this expense is available.
TOTAL	4818	4117	-701	

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

We feel that the most important next step would be to complete further investigation of potential programmes to reduce bushmeat hunting, specifically piloting micro-enterprise or livestock donation programmes and monitoring the effect of such programmes on bushmeat hunting/consumption. An investigation into

urban consumption of bushmeat in Malawian cities is also necessary, as this trade is expected to be significant but has not been studied as of yet.

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?

Yes, I attended two conferences during the course of the project and used the Rufford logo on the acknowledgement's slides. These conferences were:

- Student Conference for Conservation Science (SCCS), Brisbane, 3 -10 July 2019. Oral Presentation.
- International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB), 21-25 July 2019. Full-length oral presentation.

I also produced an information booklet for stakeholders in Malawi and a final report, and Rufford was acknowledged as funders here.

Further I write a blog about this research project, and Rufford and its logo are on this blog, acknowledging funding. Finally, in any and all tweets relating to the project, Rufford is tagged as a funder of the research.

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

Dr Boyson Moyo: Dr Moyo acted as the primary in-country advisor on the project, and helped with developing the survey tools, training enumerators, piloting-testing and helped with implementation problems during fieldwork. He is a co-author on three of the publications.

Dr Duan Biggs: Dr Biggs acted as the primary project supervisor, and helped with designing the project's aims and objectives, designing the survey and is a co-author on three publications.

Prof. Kerrie Wilson: Prof. Wilson was involved in designing the survey tool and contributed towards the analysis of data and conceptualization of results for two of the publications.

Dr Emma Stone: Dr Emma Stone provided vital advice regarding the implementation and management of the data collection in Malawi.

12. Any other comments?

None.