

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Judit Elisabet Dopazo
<b>Project Title</b>	Developing Control Tools for Chytrid Fungus in Amphibians of Southern Pampas, Argentina II.
<b>Application ID</b>	ID: 27971-2
<b>Grant Amount</b>	£5000
<b>Email Address</b>	juditdopazo@gmail.com
<b>Date of this Report</b>	24/02/2022

**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
Test the effectiveness of colloidal silver as treatment against chytrid fungus.				We conducted an experiment with colloidal silver on wild toads. However, the chytrid fungus levels were too low to obtain conclusive results. We also conducted a successful experiment using colloidal silver on chytrid cultures.
Manage breeding ponds to reduce or eliminate the presence of chytrid fungus in the Reserve and neighbour areas.				We fenced ponds to reduce the stress and damage caused by horses and donkeys. The recovery of the vegetation improved the health of the toad population.
Raise awareness within young generations regarding the importance of sustainable natural resource use to the benefit of amphibians and their habitats				Many talks were cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdown. We plan to finish this task during the 2022 scholar year, once children's come back to school.

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

- The selected species, the blackish Darwin toad showed a low prevalence of chytrid fungus. We must change the focal species, and we experienced a significant delay in obtaining the permit. An extreme drought occurred in early 2021, and the field site was completely dry. We failed to find the frog species.
- COVID-19 lockdown seriously affected most of our activities during 2020 and 2021. Our field visit to Patagonia was delayed, delayed the lab activities at the university (we were able to work on the lab in late October 2021) and limited the educational activities.

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

- We tested the efficacy of colloidal silver for the treatment of chytrid fungus.
- We fenced a key reproductive site for the threatened blackish Darwin toad.

- We gave virtual talks explaining the importance of conserving amphibians and their habitats.

**4. What do you consider to be the most significant achievement of this work?**

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

The fenced key reproductive site in the Sierra del Tigre Natural Reserve is a new sanctuary for the reproduction of the blackish Darwin toad. This site is also a great opportunity to involve the local community on amphibian conservation. We strengthened the relationship between the academia (the local university) and the main local protected area (Sierra del Tigre); and we contributed to improve the effectiveness of the protected area.

Building capacities among students, staff and professionals from the local university and the local conservation NGOs about the threats affecting the amphibians and the conservation management alternatives.

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

Yes.

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

Several publications are being prepared to be featured in scientific journals (e.g. Conservation Evidence or similar) and conservation newsletters (e.g. Amphibian Ark newsletter), we plan to write at least three journal articles: one article that describes the benefits of keeping livestock out of amphibian breeding ponds, as an amphibian sanctuary; another with the data obtained on the chytrid infection in the Sierra del Tigre Nature Reserve and a third that documents the findings found in the different amphibian species in Meseta de Somuncura in relation to the load of chytrid fungus.

**8. 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 from May 2019 to December 2021, since that was the time when we completed the fencing of the pond and managed to perform the analyses of the samples obtained from the experience. COVID-19 lockdown delayed all the project's activities: fieldwork, access to the university laboratories, and access to the protected area. The project duration was longer than expected and it was necessary to look for solutions to reach the objectives.

**9. 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
Educational activities.	480	180	-300	
Chytrid Management Plan.	520	200	-320	
Chytrid analysis	330	2250	+1920	The local university provided the difference.
Gas and maintenance	850	1200	+350	
Fencing	680	1400	+720	The Reserve provided the difference.
Fieldwork for monitoring amphibians	1300	1500	+200	The Valcheta Frog conservation project contributed with logistics and some field expenses.
Habitat restoration at fenced sites	840	980	-140	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>7710</b>	<b>+2710</b>	<b>Local exchange rate used: 1 £ sterling = 76.42 Argentine Pesos (October 2019, www.xe.com)</b>

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

We plan to fence more reproductive sites in the reserve, generating new sanctuaries for the blackish Darwin toad. We are also working on an ex-situ recovery project (Amphibian Ark) aimed to provide individuals for translocations. Finally, we will continue with the chytrid fungus monitoring. We plan to conduct an awareness program which includes a series of talks, workshops and other educational activities aimed to reach the local community.

**11. 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, we used the Rufford Foundation logo in all materials produced in relation to this project. Yes, The Rufford Foundation received publicity during the course of our work.

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

**María Luz Arellano** joined me in sharing her experience with the chytrid fungus.

**Estefanía Paz** assisted me in fencing and pond restoration activities thanks to his expertise.

### **13. Any other comments?**

The Rufford Foundation has allowed me to be introduced to and delve deeper into this exciting world of conservation, for which I will always be very grateful.