

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Sunetro Ghosal
Project title	Investigating the relationship between humans and large mammals in Changthang, eastern Ladakh, India
RSG reference	5754-1
Reporting period	August 2013-August 2014
Amount of grant	£6,000 (INR 541,634)
Your email address	uncia_nebulosa@yahoo.com
Date of this report	17 October 2014

**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
Investigate relations and variations across the region		?		The relations were documented and many variations are evident in the data. This needs further investigation to understand these variations and also to explore others.
Complex network of relations		?		We were able to sample some of the complexity and dynamics of the relations between different groups. The data collected in this regard now serves as a good starting point for deeper investigation.
Reflexive relations		?		This aspect has been covered extensively in the fieldwork, especially in terms of behavioural observations and perceptions (ethno-ethology).
Institutional frameworks		?		Several different formal and non-formal institutional frameworks have been identified, which influence relationships between humans and large mammals in Changthang. Further research is needed to identify other frameworks.
Document current work being done by managers, government agencies and NGOs		?		An overall picture of this work has been documented, which are now being transcribed and analysed. New activities are also being initiated by some agencies in the area, which need to be investigated.

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

- a) Changthang has been declared a wildlife sanctuary, which means that permission from the Wildlife Protection Department is now required for research in the area. There has been a delay in receiving this permission from the office of Chief Wildlife Warden for Jammu and Kashmir. The Chief Conservator of Forests for Ladakh exercised his authority and issued temporary permits, which allowed the fieldwork to proceed as planned.
- b) A sudden surge in the currency exchange rate in the second half of 2013 had an impact on many expenses. Two specific aspects were especially affected by the currency exchange: purchase of the camera and travel expenses to and from Ladakh.

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

1. The most important outcome is data on the complexity of relationships between groups, including people and mammals. The data provides insights in the reflexivity and dynamism of

these relations and the influence of institutionalised norms and practices. These insights can play an important role in managing interactions between humans and large mammals.

2. Another important outcome from the project is to identify and document various narratives regarding the environment. Many of these narratives are based on Traditional Ecological Knowledge systems, which have been tested over time. These narratives are being eroded with devaluation of these knowledge systems, especially amongst the present generation and youth.
3. A third important outcome of the project has been involvement of local researchers, with an interest in related topics. In addition, the research was carried out in close partnership with the Department of Wildlife Protection, which is responsible for the formal management of the area. This ensured that the research was embedded within local communities, while also serving as a bridge with management agencies.

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

- a) Local communities were an important source of information and data. In addition, research assistants were drawn from local communities, which helped mentor their skill and encourage their interest. These individuals were active participants of the research process and subsequent analysis.
- b) In addition, local communities provided logistics during the fieldwork, for which they were reimbursed. This was done to ensure that the research project also provided material benefit to local communities.
- c) Lastly, the project has helped initiate documentation of narratives from Traditional Ecological Knowledge systems. Once published, these narratives will become accessible to other community members and also related communities in other regions, even while ensuring the narratives remain the property of the relevant community members.

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

Yes, we are drawing up plan to build on the insights gained through this phase of the project and carry out further investigation using the same research model.

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

There are several plans to share and communicate the results of this project.

- a) One is to write a write research papers to be published in peer-reviewed journals to participate in ongoing dialogues and discussions on human-wildlife interactions and conservation.
- b) Articles for a more general audience will also be written to communicate the findings of this research and its relevance.
- c) A report is also being compiled with the findings of this research along and possible recommendations for use by local managers. This report will be part of an ongoing discussion with managers on the challenges of conserving a multi-use landscape like Changthang.
- d) Various talks and presentations are planned, especially directed at members of different communities that live or use Changthang, conservation practitioners and policy-makers.
- e) The findings of this project will be used to set priorities and generate resources for further research.

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

The RSG was used over a period of 13 months. This accounts for the entire length for this phase of the research. The overall project is estimated to take approximately 5 years of intensive fieldwork and analysis.

**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
Research station	300	420	+120	The rent and running costs of the research station increased in the course of the year owing to different factors.
Travel and stay in Changthang	2,500	2,300	-200	
Camera	1,100	1,300	+200	The high dollar exchange rate at the time of purchase meant that the price of the camera was higher than anticipated.
Solar charger	100	0	-100	The solar charger was not available. We used solar panels used by locals to charge our batteries.
Travel Ladakh-Mumbai	800	1,300	+500	Different factors contributed to high prices for travel on the Delhi-Leh sector.
Research assistant	1,000	1,000	0	
Miscellaneous	200	150	-50	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>6,470</b>		

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

The following are important steps that need to be taken to build on the gains from this project:

- Nurture individuals from local communities with an interest in this kind of research. This can be done in several different ways; involve them in the analysis and resulting publications, provide support in terms of resources and skills to enable them to carry out relevant research, and provide support for them to acquire skills and qualifications to pursue their own independent research.
- Follow up on stories narrated by community elders. Some of the interested youth can be deputed to document and illustrate these stories for publication in print and maybe even in the form of animations (depending on the target audience). It is important that these individuals are acknowledged as the authors of these stories and the community remains the rightful owners of these stories.
- Conduct additional research on the insights generated by the current project. The findings of this project will be useful in prioritising future research and to frame appropriate questions.

**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?**

No, the RSG has not been used yet as no documents have been published as part of the project. The data generated from this project is currently being analysed.

**11. Any other comments?**

Thank you to the RSG team for the speed with which they processed the initial application and their subsequent support as and when required.