

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	Jaime Ernesto Rivera Hernández
Project Title	Towards A Strategy Of Environmental Education And Communitarian Ecotourism In San Juan Teponaxtla, Oaxaca
RSG Reference	05.02.08
Reporting Period	April 2008-March 2009
Amount Of Grant	£3135
Your Email Address	Rivalcan@Gmail.Com
Date Of This Report	March 5 th , 2009

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
Ethnobiology studies			x	Some ethnobiological data are currently being analysed at the University of Kent as part of a doctoral dissertation titled "A comparative study of Cuicatec and Zapotec ornithology, with particular reference to contextual variation in a time of environmental and social change in Oaxaca, Mexico" by Graciela Alcántara-Salinas.
Biological studies			x	All the data about mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and plants have been gathered successfully and used for two undergraduate thesis in Biology, one completed and one forthcoming.
Ecotourism training			x	We carried out an environmental education and ecotourism course where local people were trained on these topics.
Ecotourism Workshops			x	Several workshops have been conducted successfully. Men and women gave main ideas to generate an adequate ecotourism strategy based on their local requirements.
Ecotourism strategy document		x		The final document is currently in process.

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

None

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

- We monitored the entire research area collecting considerable amounts of biological information on mammals (tracks), amphibian, reptiles and birds (census, trapping and releasing) and plants (herbarium samples). We obtained data on traditional biological knowledge within Cuicatec culture through the use of participant observation, qualitative (open and semi-structured) interviews, structured interviews (including questionnaires, free listing, pile sorting exercises) and communitarian workshops and focus groups. We have been developing an ecotourism guide as a tool for the ecotourism programme, based on biological and ethnobiological data. We have received financial support to allow us to publish this guide by July 2009.
- We have actively involved local people, training them and involving them as the main protagonists in the ecotourism programme. By means of consensus agreement, local people

selected three teams to develop the following activities. 1) **Ecotourism committee** (11 members) include men and women in charge to develop embroiders, rattans and handicrafts women groups. Other activities such as the recovery of their traditional dress and training as ecotourism guides have also been included. 2) The **environmental education committee** undertook responsibility to collect and instruct how to manage all inorganic waste such as plastic bags, cans, pet (plastic) and batteries. Also, as a team (medical staff, this committee (5 members) and us), we will develop a strategy of environmental education within village. 3) The **Cuicatec language committee**. During the 1950's Cuicatec people were actively discouraged to speak their language, and the language has consequently suffered a serious decline. The remaining Cuicatec speakers are very worried about its possible extinction. The Cuicatec language committee is taking a proactive role to recover, promote and teach Cuicatec language, enabling elderly people as teachers. Cuicatec lessons are been planned especially for children and all people interested in the village.

- Finally, and based on data collected from the ecotourism course and communitarian workshops, we have gathered all necessary data to construct an ecotourism strategy. Potential places to set the ecotourism (four places), complementary activities (embroiders, rattans and handicrafts women groups) and priority activities (environmental education programme and recycling programme) have been identified. These priority and complementary activities must be carried out before the ecotourism programme will be executed. We hope the strategy will be finished by July 2009.

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

The local community is completely involved in the project; we have been working with the community all the time. We are now developing the ecotourism strategy together. We can mention four main benefits than local people have got from this project:

- 1) We noticed that local people have started working as a team. They always have reached goals through their leaders, but now, in addition, most people in village (including women, children) have taken an active role in the project, working together with initiative.
- 2) The village can get a document which includes all biological data obtained in local (Cuicatec) and scientific terms (scientific names, diversity indexes, etc.), and this will mean a powerful tool to ensure this region as one of the most biological rich places to conserve in the world.
- 3) All the economical benefits implied by this project consider everyone in the village, not just one particular sector.
- 4) The most valuable benefit for local people is that children and youth are reconsidering the value of their indigenous lineage and language. While most people are no longer Cuicatec speakers they are interested in attend Cuicatec language and getting involved in traditional aspects.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Most certainly, yes. We have been working in conclude the ecotourism strategy and the ecotourism guide by July 2009. After that, we will be ready to work with all the complementary activities described in point 3 before to undertake the ecotourism programme.

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

First, two undergraduate dissertations and one PhD dissertation will be produced as a result of the project. In addition, we have written a final report of our project in Spanish, which is widely available and which we have sent to different governmental and non-governmental offices. We hope soon have our website to put this report in it. Finally, we are preparing some papers to be published in specialised journals with all our biological and ethnobiological studies, and the most important, it will be the ecotourism guide and final document with the Ecotourism strategy to the community.

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 for six months, between April and September, 2008. This timescale is as the original planned, no changes were in it.

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
Petrol	360	360		
Accommodation	405	405		
Meals and feeding	900	900		
Truck's maintenance	300	300		
Salaries of researchers	480	480		
Salaries of community people	360	360		
Stationery	100	100		
Biodiversity material	100	100		
Specialised books	135	135		
TOTAL	3,135	3,135		

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

The most important next steps will be 1) to conclude the ecotourism guide and ecotourism strategy outline by July 2009, 2) to embark on all the priority and complementary activities with local people, and 3) to implement the ecotourism programme.

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?

We have used the RSGF logo in our final report in Spanish and we will use the RSGF logo in the Ecotourism guide that will be published by July 2009. We hope write our final report in English language very soon, which will we send as soon as it is ready.

11. Any other comments?

We would like to inform that we have got additional support for our project from University of Veracruz (£400) to fieldwork and from Culture and Arts National Council, government of Mexico (£2,500) to publish Ecotourism guide. Thank you very much for your support.