

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. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. 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. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. 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 | Hoang, Thi Phuong |
| Project title | Status of Potential Tiger Prey Population in Chu Mom Ray National Park in Vietnam Central Highland |
| RSG reference | Rufford Small Grand |
| Reporting period | October - November, 2012 |
| Amount of grant | £5973 |
| Your email address | phuongnfs@gmail.com |
| Date of this report | November 26th 2012 |

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 |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|---|
| Tiger prey status | | | X | Five important tiger prey species were identified. |
| Probable tiger prey distribution map | | | X | Three probable distribution maps were created for the three important tiger prey species sambar (<i>Cervus unicolor</i>) wild boar (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) and gaur (<i>Bos gaurus</i>). |
| Conservation strategies | | X | | Conservation strategies were presented to the park management board. The board will be responsible for their implementation. |
| Identifying priority protection | | | X | Grassland was identified as a key area for ungulate conservation. |
| Staff and local people training | | X | | Local people were integrated by hiring them as field guides. However, only a few staff members could be motivated to join this project. |
| Benefit of local people | | | X | The local people joining the project as field guides were paid from the project budget. They were also educated about the threatened status of tiger prey species in the park, and informed about the economical benefits of nature conservation. |
| Contribution for mammal record database | | | X | The status of tiger prey species was reported to the mammal database of Chu Mom Ray National Park. |
| Sharing information of tiger prey status | | X | | The scientific report will be publicised and send to national and international Non Governmental Organisations (e.g. WWF, IUCN, ENV (Education for Nature Vietnam), etc). |

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

Direct sighting of ungulates and other large herbivores was difficult and nearly impossible. The methods were then changed to identify hoof tracks by using sign count and sign identification criteria. Additionally, heavy rainfalls regularly washed out animal tracks quickly, making signs identification relatively difficult in the field. This problem was solved by recording, measuring and photographing the signs immediately, whenever possible. When heavier rainfalls occurred, the field data collection date was changed to observe closer plots (instead of the planned plots). Thirdly,

individual local people usually were not willing to join us in staying inside the forest. So I always invited two people for guiding us at once. Moreover, they sometimes missed their planned appointment. In order to reduce dependency on individuals, contact with more than one local group should be established for future field work.

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

1. Tiger prey species found: Five ungulate species were recorded during the study period. These are sambar (*Curvus unicolor*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), gaur (*Bos Gaurus*), banteng (*Bos javanicus*) and muntjac (*Cervinae muntiacus*). The signs of muntjac, banteng, wild boar, sambar and gaur were recorded in all three forest types. They were most commonly found in grassland with tuft, shrubs mix timber. Muntjac and banteng signs were the rarest.
2. Mapping of possible species presence: Possible presence was mapped for the three species sambar, boar and gaur based on their signs recorded within 50 plots in five beats. The maps showed the area of high and low possible distribution of the target species, indicated by the rainbow colour. These maps will be the basis for further ungulate research in Chu Mom Ray National Park.
3. Recorded human disturbances and promising strategies for protection and management of grasslands as key ungulate habitat: Very high human disturbance levels were recorded in the study area, particularly in the grassland. Disturbance signs include poachers' traps, clearings in forest and bamboo stands, people encountered in the forest, and other human activities. Current grassland protection activities include ranger patrolling, as well as removal and destruction of traps. Also, the park management board tries to prevent the loss of ungulate habitat by regularly ordering the clearing of forest that has been expanding into the grassland.

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

Nine households in local communities of the HMong were interviewed. 10 local villagers were hired as field guides. Partially making a living as hunters and gatherers, local people at Chu Mom Ray National Park possess a very good knowledge of the National Parks' forest fauna, yet they constantly undermine conservation efforts by reducing tiger prey populations through trapping and hunting. In order to raise their interest in wildlife research and conservation, all aspects of the fieldwork conducted were explained to the local guides. During the talks, the economical importance of wildlife conservation was highlighted, e.g. by explaining the advantages of the field guide profession over the (illegal) poacher profession. In the end, local guides received payments for their services and were simultaneously provided with a first incentive in wildlife conservation.

The outcomes of this project will be included in a brochure about Chu Mom Ray fauna which will be produced for the National Park staff, and if possible published in Germany, in order to raise awareness and promote sustainable development and wildlife conservation in the buffer zone communities of the park.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The potential distribution of major tiger prey species is listed and shown on the raster maps. The importance of Chu Mom Ray grasslands as key habitat of ungulates in the park was highlighted. The

recording of tiger prey species will be kept up for the given plots of study. Especially, the grassland will be frequently monitored and protected by park rangers from human disturbances such as poaching and trapping (e.g. mammals and birds). The next project will focus on the target ungulate behaviour, population structure by observing grassland and given plots, according to seasons and other genetic methods analysis.

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

A scientific report will be submitted to NGOs active in conservation in Vietnam and Southeast Asia (which I have been contacting earlier). These include WWF, IUCN, GTF (Global Tiger Forum), ENV etc. I also plan publish my results in a scientific magazine.

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

The preparation stage started at the beginning of January 2012. Beginning of the fieldwork was on 26th of February, and the end on 31st of October 2012. The project report will be submitted on the end of December. Due to unexpected weather severities (heavy rainfalls resulting in dangerous flash floods) and health problems (sinus inflammation) the field work stage took three months longer than planned (Planned time: from March to August, 2012).

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 |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---|
| Travel cost | 1,788 | 1,790 | 2 | |
| Purchase of equipment | 1,536 | 1,536 | 0 | |
| Field supply for partners (3 people x 21 days/month x 6 months) | 2,062 | 2,344 | 282 | Due to payment for more than one local guide (the local people were not go to forest without their selected group). |
| Stationary for reports and documents about target species | 303 | 303 | 0 | |
| Contingencies 5% | 284 | 284 | 0 | This amount has been used to pay for extra planned purposes (e.g. payment for another local partner). |
| Total | 5,973 | 5973 | 0 | |

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

The estimation of the major tiger prey populations should be conducted by using the genetic analysis method. Habitat modelling should be taken into account for future important key tiger prey species and their habitat conservation.

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, all of my documents related to the project were showing the RSGF logo, including the presentation held during the meeting with the National Park Board and the final report. I will mention the RSGF in my further publication, and in the report that I will send to the NGOs.

11. Any other comments?

The best time for field data collection on tiger prey populations is the dry season starting from October to May annually.