

**The Rufford Foundation
 Final Report**

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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	Anna Asatryan
Project title	Identification of the Important Plant Areas of Armenia for Conservation of Plants and Habitats Diversity.
RSG reference	1079-P
Reporting period	April 2014 – April 2016
Amount of grant	£19,500
Your email address	crocus@post.com
Date of this report	7 April, 2016

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
<p>To produce the final list of the IPA</p>			+	<p>32 Important Plant Areas are identified in Armenia. Eight of them coincide with existing protected areas, 13 contain protected areas, adjacent or overlap with protected area. 11 of the selected sites are out of any protected area.</p> <p>For each IPA we identified threatened rare and endemic species, listed in global and European red lists (IUCN, Bern Convention, and Habitats Directive), European threatened habitat types and threatened and rare habitat types in Armenia. Data on human influence and threats and other collected for each IPA too.</p> <p>Our IPA network's flora includes 61 of 71 species of Armenian flora under "threatened" categories listed in IUCN Red List and 365 species (80% of total) listed in the Red Data Book of Armenia. The IPA network represents also all the 27 threatened habitat types from Annex 1 of Habitats Directive, which are found in Armenia.</p>
<p>The data for joining the global IPAs database is submitted to Plantlife International</p>			+	<p>We filled data sheet for each of the selected IPA with the following information: location, area, general description of the site, botanical significance, conservation status, threats, threatened species listed in global (IUCN Red List), European (resolution 6, Habitats Directive, Annex 1, Bern Convention), European threatened habitat types, representing on the IPA (Annex 1, Habitats Directive), botanical richness information and other and submitted to Plantlife for the global IPA online database http://www.plantlife.org.uk/</p>
<p>Awareness raising</p>			+	<p>2-day long botanical education events have been organised last year in four towns of Armenia: Ashotsk (25-26 July 2015, Shirak region), Stepanavan (1-2 August 2015, Lori</p>

			<p>region), Kapan (7-8 August 2015, Syunik region) and Ijevan (19-20 September 2015, Tavush region). The events were organised in collaboration with “Young Biologists Association” NGO and hosted by the local Aarchus centres. In total 64 participants took part: high school and university students, teachers, local conservationists and protected areas staff members. The program included presentations related to the biodiversity/plant diversity of Armenia in general and of the particular region, IPA programme and other plant conservation initiatives introduction, relevant publications (including the outputs of this project) have been distributed among participants. Field trips for the participants towards the local IPA have been organised in all four locations, where they could learn about plant species and see some rare representatives of local flora in their habitats. Valuable contributions were made by Invited speaker from Vanadzor University, as well as “Dilijan” national park and “Shikahogh” reserve staff members.</p>
<p>Promotion of monitoring, conservation and management of the selected IPAs</p>		<p>+</p>	<p>The results are shared with colleagues, NGOs, education organisations and other locally and internationally. The training in the regions helped to spread related knowledge and skills among local naturalists and conservationists as well as to find new contacts and strengthen the old ones. A comprehensive document on the project results, containing the data on the IPAs with recommendations for their further management and conservation of plant diversity is prepared and after some final professional expertise in the Institute of Botany will be submitted to the Ministry of Nature protection of RA. The data may be used in establishment of new protected areas and clarification of borders of existing ones as well as to promote further research, monitoring and conservation activities on the selected sites. Some preliminary proposals on further research and conservation of particular IPA and rare species have been developed on the basis</p>

				of this project results.
Promotion of integration of Armenia into global/European conservation programs and initiatives			+	<p>The project updates, progress reports and results as well as the published material have been represented both to local and international community of researchers, conservationists and other public, it was done also on the 7th Planta Europa conference in Crete (21-24 May, 2014), International conference dedicated to the jubilee of Yerevan Botanical Garden (5-9 October 2015) and on the workshop on building capacity to identify IPA in Georgia (Batumi, 16-19 February 2016). By joining the online IPA global database we integrate into the global plant conservation initiatives and demonstrate our readiness for collaboration.</p> <p>The IPA of Armenia project contributes directly to the target 5 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), which calls to the protection of at least 75% of the most important areas for plant diversity for each ecological region; the program contributes also to the target 7 – at least 75% of known threatened plant species conserved <i>in-situ</i>. Our work has relation to Targets 9 (protection of wild crops and other socio-economically valuable plants genetic diversity), target 14 (communication, education and public awareness for conservation) and target 16 relating to establishment and strengthening the national, regional and international links and networking for plant conservation.</p>

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

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

1. The final list of IPA for Armenia was prepared, it contains 32 sites of botanical significance and conservation importance. The data collected on each of the sites will be used for further conservation and management of the selected IPAs.

2. Important is the international, regional and national contacts obtained during the project work. Some initial collaboration plans and further joint development ideas were born during the work.

3. A very important outcome of this project is a huge professional experience I have gained and useful practical skills I obtained. These created a good base for further conservation work and aroused some new ideas and proposals for development new projects on research and conservation of particular IPAs, monitoring of threatened species populations and more education.

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

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The further plans are the following: to continue data collection on populations of the threatened rare and endemic plant species found on the IPA network and to make an updates in the IPA database upon obtaining any new information. Also, we will work on fundraising towards more detailed research of particular IPA and promotion of their conservation. Community based activities and education will remain one of our priorities.

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

Presentation of the project’s final results will take place in the Institute of Botany NAS RA this month. I’ll continue spreading of the published materials – outputs of the project. I will also share the results through articles, presentations and networking.

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

The grant used during the project anticipated and actual length: from April, 2014 to April, 2016 (24months).

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
Local travel (fieldwork)	13,900	14,615	715	Because of some unexpected weather changes we had to revisit some sites again to catch particular rare plants in bloom.
International travel	610	780	170	The airfare was higher at the time of ticket purchase
Equipment	710	652	58	The prices were some lower than expected
Publications	1,010	2,058	1,048	As the botanical calendar had a success we decided to print more copies using the money saved from the meetings (done with preliminary request to the RSG)
Meetings	2,400	900	1,500	I had planned the budget for this category more, but in fact we

				spent less money for the meetings: and somehow also due to volunteer help from the hosting organisations.
Stationery, postal services, accessories	870	495	375	Certain amount of published material had been brought and distributed on conferences/meetings, so it made less postal expenses and we made it cheaper with stationery.
Total	19,500	19,500		

The exchange rate 1£=680AMD

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

The important next steps are to work on fundraising in order to carry out detailed studies on particular IPAs and to strengthen motivations for their conservation. To carry out monitoring of populations of threatened rare species, first of all threatened national endemics. To develop capacity for popularisation of botany and arising interest towards plant learning and conservation among local communities and decision makers. To motivate them for that and contribute towards the above mentioned goals through development of botany tourism, involving Important Plant Areas.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in publications – outputs of the project: Botanical calendar of Armenia 2016 and the leaflet. Also, in my presentations given on the 7th PE conference, Greece and the IPA workshop in Georgia as well as progress and final reports in the Institute of Botany, NAS RA.

One paper is published, another one is in print now (see below) and at least one more is planned to be represented on the 8th Planta Europa conference to be held in Kyev, Ukraine next year.

An article on my IPA project and its results is submitted to Plantlife International for publication its magazine's summer issue.

Publications:

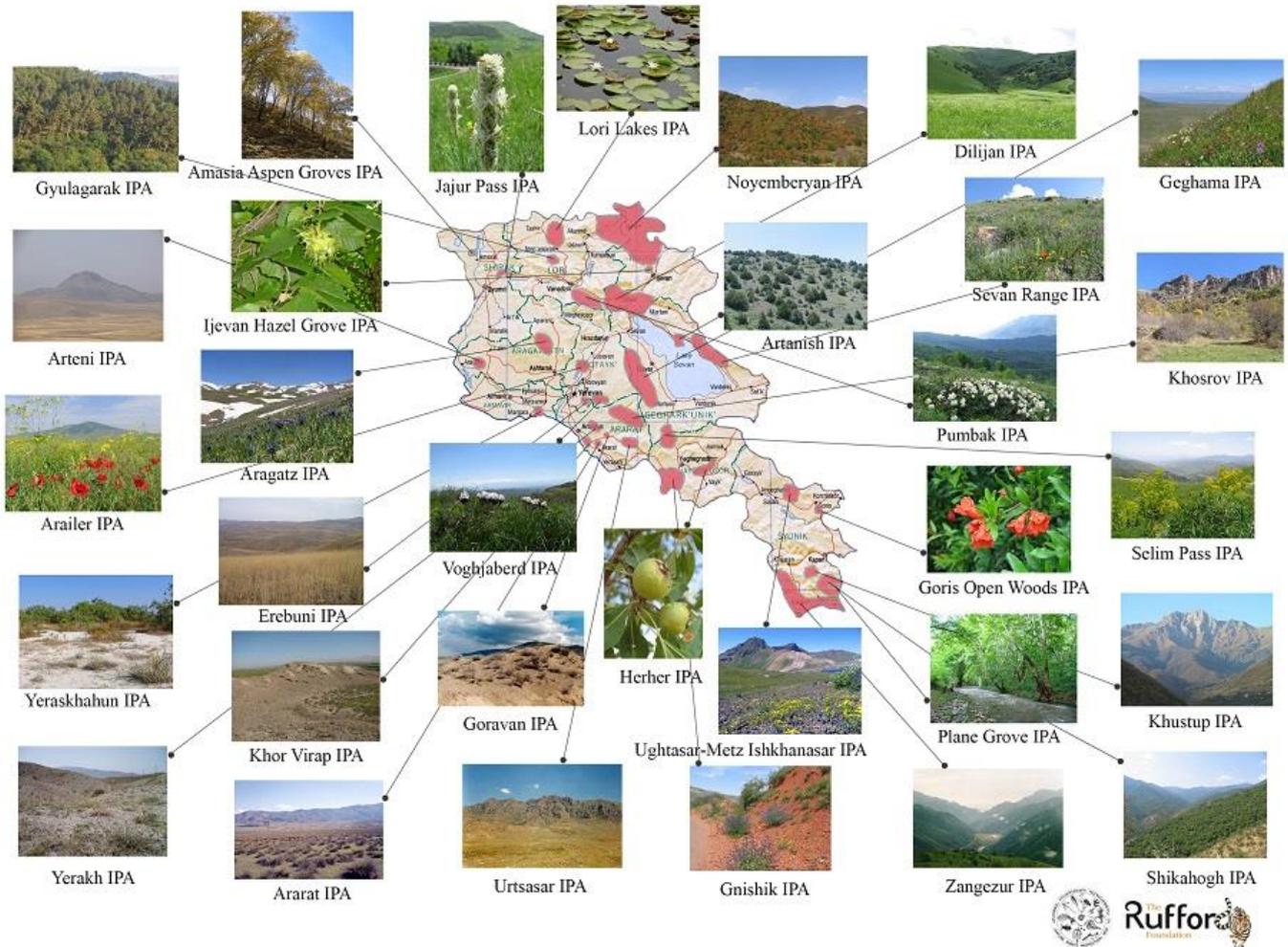
Asatryan A.T. Important Plant Areas of Armenia Project: the Progress Report, "Plants for People, People for Plants", proceedings of the 7thPlanta Europa conference, Chania, Crete, 2014. P.124-125, Horizon Research Publishing, USA.

http://www.hrpub.org/download/Planta_Europa2014.pdf

Asatryan A.T. Aspen forests of Armenia, Takhtajania (vol.3), Yerevan. (In print)

<http://www.flib.sci.am/eng/takhtajania/Frame.html>

IMPORTANT PLANT AREAS of ARMENIA



11. Any other comments?

I am full of gratitude to the RSG for continuing support of this project and having the final results I can state, that now I can clearly see what should be our next steps to push forward plant research and conservation in Armenia and what we can do to make this more effective. It has been an exceptional opportunity for my professional growth and so, a valuable long lasting contribution as I am going to move on in this field with the knowledge, experience, contacts and inspiration gained during the project work. I want to say big thanks to all the project referees, the team members and all those organisations and individuals who have somehow contributed to the implementation of this project.