

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

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| Your name | Martina Victoria Stephen Paul Anandam |
| Project title | Conserving the Himalayan Grey Langur, <i>Semnopithecus ajax</i> , an Endangered, endemic species of primate. |
| RSG reference | 11331-1 |
| Reporting period | April 2012 to April 2013 |
| Amount of grant | £6000 |
| Your email address | martina@zooreach.org ; mvanandam@gmail.com |
| Date of this report | 16 May 2013 |

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>Baseline Survey of the Chamba district to collect information on distribution, habitat, and conservation threats,</p> | | × | | <p>Surveys were conducted in more than 200 sites across the 6528 km² Chamba District based on cues and information received from the local community on langur presence/sighting and areas with dense forest cover.</p> <p>Data on langur presence/ absence, troop size and character, and morphology were collected where possible.</p> <p>Extensive community surveys through questionnaires were conducted in villages (>80 villages) of the survey area on langur presence/absence, human relationship with langurs, human-langur conflict, and human-other wildlife conflict.</p> <p>Communication with established local researchers, villagers and the forest officials have indicated other probable langur sites where surveys will be conducted.</p> <p>Chamba suffers heavy snow from November to March and monsoon from July to September delivering a number of probable langur sites in the district inaccessible. Plans are underway to cover such regions this summer (of 2013) and surveys to such areas have already been scheduled and are on-going.</p> |
| <p>Community Interviews to understand the community, land use, human interaction with the environment, Human-animal relationship to lay foundation for a stakeholder involved conservation in the region</p> | | × | | <p>Human-animal relationship to lay foundation for a stakeholder involved conservation in the region</p> <p>Community surveys through questionnaires were conducted in more than 80 villages across the 250 areas surveyed in the district. Interviews were conducted in villages and on nomadic shepherds like the <i>Gujjars</i> and the <i>Gaddis</i>.</p> <p>The community surveys will continue alongside foot surveys in</p> |

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| | | | <p>all the upcoming surveys. Where community surveys could not take place either due to lack of time, or due to inaccessibility of the village due to snow or rain, or where the village is migratory i.e. they migrate to lower altitudes, such places will be surveyed this summer (May to July).</p> |
| Stakeholder Networks | | x | <p>A number of stakeholders have been identified such as a local bear researcher and conservationist, local NGOs like Sarvangya Sarvahithkari Manch, Education officers, Education board members, school heads, teachers, and interested youth of the village. These stakeholders have shown interest in the project and its objective of establishing credible information on the Endangered langur Sarvangya Sarvahithkari Manch, a community development oriented NGO has so far helped the team in planning surveys by rendering valuable information of langur presence in areas far and wide in Chamba. The village youth of the village near the base-camp help the team by conveying information of langur sightings and sometimes accompany the team to places nearby. Talks are on-going with schools in Chamba for conservation outreach programmes and to set up eco – clubs. Recently one of the schools in Chamba, Holy Himalayan High School have agreed to host the first Himalayan Grey Langur Conservation Outreach Programme.</p> <p>The team will endeavour and is looking forward to conduct extensive conferences and meetings with these potent stakeholders to identify each of their role in the forth-coming Participatory Conservation and Management Initiative in Chamba.</p> |

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| <p>Education and Outreach involving the local children and community to communicate the project result and sensitize them on the existence uniqueness and significance of the Himalayan Grey Langur and its significance</p> | | <p>×</p> | <p>Plans have been drawn for a long term Education and Outreach Programme in the region. The idea is to establish a Sensitisation Programme which could be built as the project progresses and the researchers advance in the understanding of the people, place, conservation issues and the langur itself.</p> <p>A high school in Chamba, namely Holy Himalayan High School has particularly shown interest in the programme and has volunteered time and other necessary resources to host Outreach Programme at its institution.</p> <p>More schools would be involved in the coming months and interested outreach partners like teachers and school heads would be identified to aid in conducting such programmes.</p> <p>Eco Clubs and Conservation Clubs are expected to be in place once the preliminary awareness programme is complete and the team understands the present knowledge, attitude and environmental behaviour of the children. This understanding is crucial in establishing a locale-centric conservation club that can translate into an environmentally sensitive and responsible behaviour.</p> |
| <p>A long term sustainable conservation initiative in Chamba for a holistic study of the Langur and to establish holistic conservation in the region through identifying a species champion.</p> | | <p>×</p> | <p>Over the year spent in Chamba the team has indeed got inspired to continue working for the Himalayan grey langur and explore more to completely understand the distribution, habitat, behaviour and biology of the langur. Two members of the team have resolved to continue with the research, thereby become species champion(s).</p> <p>Collaborations are underway with international and other Indian, local conservation specialists to</p> |

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| | | | <p>better understand and explore the species, the conservation scenario, and establish a holistic stakeholder run and managed conservation initiative in Chamba.</p> <p>The team is also involved in capacity building and inspiring young conservationists through its Volunteer Programme wherein volunteer interns from around the country spend their summer interning with the team, training on the nuances of field biology and conservation</p> <p>While the team has certainly worked towards identifying key stakeholders and conservation partners, it had to deal with numerous other temporal factors and situational constraints that decelerated the activities. Besides, a thorough analysis and interpretation of the data collected will yield wholesome understanding of the issue in place to establish a conservation issue centric participatory stakeholder programme.</p> |
| <p>Achieving 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Target and setting a Conservation Example for other Alliance for Zero Extinction point endemics</p> | | × | <p>Establishing first hand information on the distribution, habitat, conservation status and the biology of the species helps in bringing to the forefront a little known species, aiding in its sustainable conservation through participatory initiatives, preventing extinction. The project is endeavouring to act as an example for other AZE species conservation and is definitely on track towards achieving and sustaining the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.</p> |

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

Rugged western Himalayan terrain and unpredictable weather, at times, caused major setbacks to surveys. Besides, the variability of the terrains demanded that ample information about a particular site be gathered before hand to facilitate appropriate planning resulting in delays. This issue was addressed by the team in that necessary resources were collected and collaborations were made

with the local Forest Department, Department of Rural Development, and local researchers and villagers who contributed valuable information on time to the team thus facilitating timely planning and implementation.

The shy and elusive langurs of whose ranging pattern or behaviour is very little known made tracking them very difficult. Collaborations with the local community helped the team tackle the issue as the villagers phoned the team every time they sighted the langurs and whenever possible (i.e. when the village was in an accessible distance and altitude) the team was able to be there to record details and observe.

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

Baseline Information: Extensive surveys across the mountainous Chamba district has yielded first hand information on the distribution point locality of the Himalayan langurs, their habitat, and conservation threats

Stakeholder Network: A number of potential stakeholders such as local researchers, community heads, Educational heads, Forest officials, local community development NGO's and local newsagents have been identified. These stakeholders will be involved in the near future and will aid in building a Community involved Conservation initiative and monitoring initiative in Chamba.

Species Champion: Of the three researchers who started with the project in May 2012, two have opted to stay on and carry out studies and conservation research in Chamba to help build a sustainable environment for the little known Himalayan langur. The researchers are also into inviting and training more volunteers who can help in conserving the langur or take up other conservation activity in the region in the future.

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

The community played a major role in helping the team gather baseline information on the langur through:

Community interviews: Almost all the local communities in various sites around the region participated and cooperated in community interviews answering various queries about langurs, land use, forest resources usage and conflict issues. Aged community members of the community also contributed historical anecdotes on langur population, sighting frequency and human-langur relationships. The team developed a good rapport with the community establishing cordial relationship laying the foundation for building stakeholder involved conservation and monitoring initiative in the region.

Informers: The community plays an irreplaceable and a significant role as informers where they inform the team as and when they sight langurs in the village or the adjacent forest. This information is invaluable as the langur movement is unpredictable and this information saves time and resources enabling researchers to go to the place of sighting as and when information is received.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. The project will continue and more funds will be raised in the near future for the same.

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

- Talks and presentations in local gatherings such as ladies clubs, Panchayat gatherings and carnivals such as the internationally acclaimed and historically significant *Minjar Mela* and *Sui Mela*
- Popular articles in local and national newspapers and magazines both in local language, in Hindi and English.
- National and international scientific and conservation conferences
- Scientific publications in national and international scientific and conservation journals.

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

The RSG funds were used over the period of May 2012 to March 2013, which is about 90% of the actual length of the project. Most of this period was spent on field surveys, community interviews and identifying stakeholders to build stakeholder network and lay the foundation for a community involved conservation in the future. The outreach and education program to be instituted and conducted across the district will be implemented in May and will be done with the aid of the funds from Conservation Leadership Program and Mohamed Bin Zayed Funds.

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 |
|---|-----------------|---------------|------------|--|
| Supplies | 63 | 109 | -46 | Certain supply needs weren't realised while the initial budget was drawn and hence the difference |
| Accommodation for team members and local guides | 1345 | 1287 | 58 | |
| Food for team members and local guides | 1424 | 1417 | 7 | |
| Travel and local transportation | 3168 | 3220 | -52 | New field sites that weren't in the initial survey plan were also surveyed thus justifying the extra money spent on fuel and other local transportation. |
| TOTAL | 6000 | 6033 | -33 | |

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

The Principal Investigator and her team have come to know well of the field site, the local culture, language, and the community in relation to the natural environment. The project has helped realize:

- The need for taxonomic studies on the morphologically indistinct Himalayan langurs to establish the identity of the species i.e. studies to corroborate the existing taxonomic

understanding or to challenge it and draw new conclusions thus laying new foundations for a conservation initiative based on credible science.

- 1.1 Extensive taxonomic studies in the region through DNA analysis, morphological studies, and museum studies
2. The need for extensive research on the distribution, biology and behaviour of the langurs and their role in the western Himalayan ecosystem.
 - 2.1 Extensive surveys to study distribution, home range, behaviour and feeding ecology and general biology of the langurs
3. The need for conservation in the region in light of the existing issues such as encroachment, agriculture and horticulture expansions, population growth and sophistications that might usher in habitat degradation and developments in Chamba, the type locality of the Himalayan grey langur.
 - 3.1 In depth research on cultural and economic dependence on natural resources, alternative livelihoods, and other eco-friendly alternatives that minimizes human impact on langur habitat.
 - 3.2 Community and Stakeholder Involved Conservation Initiative fully managed and monitored by the involved parties thus creating sustainable living for both the langurs and the human community.
4. The need for an extensive sensitization program of the Himalayan langur and its significance both locally and globally.
 - 4.1 Extensive and continuous sensitisation programme locally and globally creating a sense of pride and responsibility towards the Himalayan langur.

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?

- RSGF logos were used in
- Bi-monthly reports submitted to the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department.
- Activity Report Submitted to Wildlife Information Liaison Development
- As far as publicity is concerned,
- The RSGF logo was used in project presentations in the Conservation Leadership Programme's Conservation Training conducted in Alberta, Canada.
- Logo is on display on the Organization's Webpage as a funder.
- The RSGF is mentioned as a funder on the Project Page of the Organization (WILD) http://www.zooreach.org/ZOO_WILD_Activities/2012/6Apr2012_Semnopithecus_ajax_HP.htm

11. Any other comments?

The Principal Investigator and her team thank Rufford Small Grants for the generous help that has helped initiate an important conservation project on a little known species like the Himalayan grey langur. The project experiences will be shared with other RSGF recipients from India in the forthcoming conference in Bangalore.