

**The Rufford Foundation  
 Final Report**

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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<b>Grant Recipient Details</b>	
<b>Your name</b>	Cristina C. NUNEZ GODOY
<b>Project title</b>	More than Cashmere: Engaging herders and buyers in Wildlife-Friendly Certification to help save endangered Andean Cat in Patagonia
<b>RSG reference</b>	17811-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	2015
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£ 3,807
<b>Your email address</b>	cristinang@ufl.edu
<b>Date of this report</b>	June 6th, 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
Engage with local cashmere producers that participate and do not participate in the certification scheme			X	We engaged communities and they showed high willingness and interest in participating in this project. It allowed us to gather all the planned information.
Understand the perceived benefits and motivations of local producers and provide useful information for creating project incentives that retain current herders as well as incorporate others			X	We were able to fully achieve this objective. This understanding regarding certifications schemes directly associated to wildlife conservation will serve as a source to establish new lines of work
Engage with local and regional manufacturers to better understand buyer preferences and the buying process of cashmere fibre			X	We were able to interview all manufacturers even when the total number of interviewees was lower than what we anticipated. Buyers showed high willingness and interest in participating in this project.
Generate insights and guidance regarding buyer attitudes and preferences to more effectively target buyers, improve products and services, and expand WCS project directors' knowledge base in the field of markets		X		We felt that the expansion of WCS project directors' knowledge base in the field of markets is a long-term objective and our project is moving us toward achieving this goal. This project involved an exploratory study of a new certification scheme and we believe more information and experience from new certified communities will be needed.

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

The most relevant unforeseen difficulties were related to logistics and unplanned ticket expenditures. Last year, after Chile Volcano's ash moves into Argentina in concurrence with rainy season in Neuquén, interviews in one study site were suspended. It resulted in an additional trip to Buenos Aires and reschedule of interviews. In-country partnerships helped with the reschedule of interviews. Personal funds cover unplanned in-country tickets not included in the budget.

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

1) This project allowed us to increase our understanding of: a) motivations and factors that influence herder's participation in wildlife-friendly certification, and b) willingness of local markets to demand wildlife-friendly certified products and influential factors. Across certified and non-certified communities men seem to be more engaged in cashmere production than women. Certified communities with predominance of male seem to perform more livestock activities. The non-certified community performed more off-farm activities (government aid, wages salaries, and pensions) than certified communities. Communities listed a total of 29 positive and 17 negative aspects. One of the certified communities perceived a similar number of positive and negative aspects associated with the certification, while the other (with female predominance) perceived three times as many positive as negative aspects. Two positive categories regarding certification common to all certified and non-certified communities were 'income' and 'opportunity to invest in farm'. Buyers showed concern for fair price paid to producers, low damage to wildlife, low environmental impact, and production of long fibers reportedly positively influenced purchasing decisions by manufacturers. Majority of interviewed buyers were willing to pay a higher price for certified cashmere (around 10%). Buyers with high awareness of wildlife-friendly certification schemes were willing to pay a 10%-15% increase.

2) This project generated scientific information that will contribute to the successful implementation and promotion of certification schemes that involve the conservation of nature and development of local communities. Currently, a manuscript is being written to publish our findings in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. This manuscript will contribute to the growing body of knowledge related to market-based strategies for wildlife conservation and will serve as a basis for future investigations.

3) To share our project results and engage in collaboration with local university research groups (e.g., National Research Council and Comahue University) and

NGOs (e.g., WCS). This will encourage research groups to bridge across organisations and disciplines to explore market-based strategies as a tool for wildlife conservation from multiple perspectives. Our goal with this activity is to increase the number of transdisciplinary conservation studies over the long run

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

Given the nature of this project, local communities were highly involved. Goat breeding is part of the survival and cultural identity of herder families in Neuquén. Maintaining engagement and expanding this market-based strategy could be crucial to preserving herder's livelihoods and culture. Certified communities voluntarily participated in this project because wildlife-friendly scheme represents a viable opportunity for them to raise their income, while maintaining their traditional way of living. Additionally, the project required travelling to communities located in isolated places. In these occasions, local services (e.g., accommodations and meals) were hired contributing to local economic situations.

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

This project is part of a larger effort of WCS to continue working with wildlife-friendly certification and expansion of this community-based initiative in Patagonia. The main plan to continue this work is to conduct further studies on new areas of Patagonia that had adopted wildlife-friendly certification (e.g., Peninsula Valdez with certified merino wool) to provide complementary information about the factors that encourage or discourage its adoption.

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

a) A poster has been presented at the University of Florida during: 1) the Latin American Studies Field Research Clinic of the Tropical and Conservation Development Program, and 2) the Graduate Student Symposium of the School of Forest Resources and Conservation. Additionally, this poster is in exposition at the School of Forest Resources and Conservation's building. Also, future poster presentation will take place in international conferences.

b) A copy of the thesis will be available online at the University of Florida's library.

c) A manuscript is being written and will be submitted to a peer-reviewed scientific journal that will include research methods, results, and discussion of findings.

d) With the support of the UF's Tropical Conservation and Development Program through their Practitioner Grant, dissemination of research results will be shared with my partner organization, WCS-Argentina, as well as government agencies working with goat-herders (e.g. National Institute of Agricultural Technology-INTA), the

Neuquén centre for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and animal-fibre buyers. I will present results to the WCS leadership in Buenos Aires and INTA in Neuquén (with emphasis in the contributions of this certification to conservation) and the Neuquén SMEs and buyers (with emphasis in the economic opportunity for producers).

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

Field surveys in Neuquén and Buenos Aires were planned for 12 weeks. Besides logistical difficulties in Neuquén that were solved thanks to our in-country partnership WCS, we were able to re-schedule field surveys in both studies sites to meet the planned timescale.

**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
Transportation (Neuquén)	£ 126	£ 140	- £ 14	Price of bus ticket increased
Transportation (Buenos Aires)	£ 252	£ 220	£ 32	Taxi and toll from airport was less because airplane from USA arrived to Aeroparque instead Ezeiza airport
In-country transportation tickets	£ 171	£ 272	- £ 101	An extra round trip Buenos Aires -Neuquén was needed because of survey reschedule
Meals (Neuquén)	£ 420	£ 420		
Meals (Buenos Aires)	£ 630	£ 650	- £ 20	Prices increased
Lodging (Buenos Aires and some towns in Neuquén)	£ 1890	£ 1860	£ 30	Trips Buenos Aires – Neuquén save me some hotel nights
Health Insurance	£ 180	£ 180		
Equipment	£ 138	£ 138		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 3807</b>	<b>£ 3880</b>	<b>- £ 73</b>	Cover with personal funds

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



Important next steps would be to review the certification's incentives to retain current herders as well as incorporate others and improve certified products based on buyer preferences to effectively target them.

**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 all poster presentations during the Latin American Studies Field Research Clinic and the Graduate Student Symposium of the School of Forest Resources and Conservation. In those activities RSGF received publicity. In addition, future talks in seminars and dissemination of results will show The Rufford Foundation logo.