

The Rufford 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	Boris Davidov
Project title	Population research of Danube salmon in Una river, with notes to conservation
RSG reference	18153-1
Reporting period	12 months
Amount of grant	£4429
Your email address	boris_davidov1988@yahoo.com
Date of this report	6.11.2016

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
Research expeditions of catching and collecting data on the population of Danube salmon			X	The team has conducted a total of 48 expeditions for the researched area designated by the team. Expeditions were conducted during all seasons and included the best periods for fishing in order to maximise the chances to catch the fish. For all caught specimens the data has been taken which includes body length, body mass, length of the head, male or female determination, location of the caught specimen and photograph for individual identification of each fish. We also took time to monitor spawning areas and found several locations and also found this year juvenile fish at the end of June.
Lectures and workshops for general public, fishing society and students.				The lectures and workshops for students were organised according to the plan and the lectures for fishing society and general public was moved to 3rd September 2016 since we took a bit more time for filming the fishes for our short movie. Also, team thought it was a better idea because it would influence more people if we had some underwater footage of wild salmon.
Short movie for general public				As the project started we also filmed fishes and the nature around. We have not filmed just the species itself but also the beauty of the river and other wildlife. During the filming we were invited by our friend Anes Halkic who keeps a protected area for Danube salmon upstream Una for over 15 years. Mr Anes called us to come and to dive with him. I took the time and the camera and we filmed Danube salmons in their natural habitat underwater with footage no one has seen before. We dove on two occasions

				(13 th June and 15 th August 2016). The movie was shown during the lectures for the general public and fishing society at Novi Grad and after that it was published on you tube channel with over 3,5k views. We named the movie "Kraljica Smaragdne Rijeke" (Queen of the Emerald river).
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

Our project went well, we did all we planned to do and had no difficulties to do the research, expeditions, lectures or movie. We got just slight changes in timescale of expeditions since we didn't want to stress fishes while the spawning period occurs so we stopped fishing however we looked onto spawning areas. Our decision was to move expeditions during the 2 spawning months to earlier in December and January since those months are the probably best periods in the year to catch them.

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

1. We managed to get the data about the distribution of the Danube salmon inside the researched area and the data showed that this population is critically endangered and that there is a great chance that these fish will disappear from this part of the river in near future.

2. Photographing the fishes for individual identification will help us to do non invasive monitoring of the species by re-catch technique. The data gathered is used for making a database for each individual fish and each fish has its own serial number and name which will help us to monitor the migrations and other data like size changing if its recapture occurs one day. In total we caught 11 fishes.

3. The one of the most important outcomes we witnessed during this project happened while diving with the Danube salmon in protected area of Una located upstream of our research location. We were diving in the place where Danube salmon are protected for 15 years. For the first time we were able to see how the healthy population of this fish looks like. It will shed everything the general society knows of this fish. We knew that this fish has schooling behaviour but the number of wild fishes inside those schools were simply amazing. This data will be used as a base

for healthy population which we will use for our basis of conducting the population trend and degree of vulnerability of the species for our area of research.

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

During this project we didn't get any help from the fishing society or any community. The corruption of the fishing society and reckless guiding of the water area led to the overfishing and illegal fishing which in term almost wiped out most of the population of Danube salmon in this area.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We think that it's necessary to continue the research and to influence general public more if we are to save this amazing animal in this part of the river Una. The data that we gathered are not promising and it is our moral obligation to continue this work and leave this river and its native fishes to the future generations. Therefore we will try to apply for the 2nd Rufford Small grant for the season 2016\2017 and if it passes continue our work.

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

We are sharing our results through publications, mass media, lectures and there will be a new 90+ minute conservation movie about Una River which will be open for public in 2017 and will include some of the footage we filmed during our project. We informed scientific community trough out our conference in Banja Luka that was held on 21st and 22nd March 2016 with our abstract:

Davidov, B. (2016). Assessment of the current state of population of Hucho hucho L. (Salmoniformes; Salmonidae), in the midstream and lower reaches of the Una River, with the reference of the degree of vulnerability of the species. Nature knows no boundaries. Rufford Small Grants conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 21st -22nd March, 2016, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Abstract Book. Pp 36-37.

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

The Rufford Foundation grant was used during the period of 12 months (November 2015 - November 2016). The period was enough to do and finish every activity we planned.

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
Go pro Hero 4 Black	375	445,5	-70,5	Buying the camera did not include Mem. SD micro card 64Giga so we had to include that to. Funds were transferred from the fee of the Leader of the project and from the money left from buying a wetsuit.
Scuba pro wetsuit everflex hooded	254	224,35	+29,65	By the time we went to buy the suit in December the price has dropped and we got it cheaper since we paid with cash.
Rent a Boat	750	750	0	Fully spent
Fishing Experts	1000	1000	0	Fully spent
Fuel	600	687,95	-87,95	The cost for fuel during our project passed our designated limit. We covered the expenses of fuel with the money that was left from the media support and from the Leaders fee.
Workshop for students and lectures	300	300		Fully spent
Media	50	0		To our surprise everything we needed from media support we got from our friend from Novi Grad to use it for free since he supported our cause and lend us projector and projection screen for free.
Volunteers	100	100		Fully spent
Leader of the project	1000	921	+79	A bit more money that we needed to buy memory card for go pro camera and for extra fuel was used from my fee to make sure everything is accomplished.
TOTAL	4429	4427	+0,2	

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

For me and the team the most important next steps are to continue field expeditions to gather more data about the population trends, spawning and feeding behaviour, migrations hopefully by re-catch and also continue to influence general public about the problem this fish is facing in Una River and how to protect it for future generations.

Since the number of specimens we caught tells us the population is critically endangered in this part of the river it is therefore necessary to continue the monitoring and gather as much data as possible for the conservation to occur.

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?

The Rufford Foundation logos were used for making posters for the lectures and movie. The publicity of The Rufford Foundation has been following us through the entire project, mostly on social media like (Official NGO pages on Facebook, DIZB official webpage, Facebook groups like Mladicari, I love Una page and Una Discovery page), we also had our several short articles published in online newspapers about our work and our project and filming (ABC.ba and Krupljani.BA).

The links are attached bellow:

1. <http://dizb.weebly.com/vijesti4.html>
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_UDImQcayY
3. <http://www.abc.ba/novost/46162/mladica-u-srednjem-i-donjem-toku-rijeke-une-video>

11. Any other comments?

I would like to thank The Rufford Foundation for this great chance that was given to me and my team. We send you one warm greeting and sincerely hope that this will not be the end and that we will continue our collaboration.