

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	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sengdeuane Wayakone
Project title	Population status and conservation of the Critically Endangered Siamese crocodile (<i>Crocodylus siamensis</i>) in Khammouane Province, central Laos.
RSG reference	19170-1
Reporting period	March 2016 - March 2017
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	s_wayakone@nuol.edu.la
Date of this report	28 March 2017

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
to provide information on the structure and spatial distribution pattern of the local population				
to collect key information on habitat suitability and protection				Three lakes were found in this area. Two of them were recorded to be inhabited by the Siamese crocodile.
to identify the threats to the population				Before establishing the protected area, main threats (in the dry season) were burning trees for agricultural activities, wood logging and fishing.
to raise awareness for conservation and train forest rangers				
To provide recommendations for species conservation in order to establish a provincial protected area				One protected area (Khammuane Siamese Crocodile Conservation Area Ban Soc) consisting of 2007 ha was established in December 2016 for conserving the Siamese Crocodile population.
to the evaluation of the biodiversity value and conservation status of the area				One new gecko species was discovered in Ban Soc by our working group.

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

None

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

- Evaluated the population status and collected faecal samples of the Siamese crocodile in Ban Soc for genetical analyses and to propose future conservation measures.
- Established the newly protected area "Khammuane Siamese Crocodile Conservation Area Ban Soc" with a total of 2007 ha.

- Local people from Ban Soc and Ban Ka Cham as well as forest rangers participated in a training course dealing with environmental awareness and the importance of the Siamese crocodile population and its local conservation.

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

- Local people and forest rangers participated in field surveys with our team.
- They helped us to identify the survey sites and assess the distribution of the Siamese crocodile in the area.
- We explained the importance of biodiversity and nature conservation in the training course and further meetings with local people.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Further surveys on the population status of the Siamese crocodile in Ban Soc as well as extended biodiversity research in the newly protected area will be crucial for monitor the population status and identify still existing populations of endangered wildlife for adequate subsequent conservation measures.

Interviews with local people led to another potential Siamese crocodile population in the nearby Ban Kha Cham; this area will be in the focus of further surveys as another region housing the endangered crocodile could be protected and a network of protected sites be established

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

First results and project activities were published in newspapers in Laos and Germany (see below).

A new gecko species (*Cyrtodactylus bansocensis*) discovered in the area was named after the type locality, Ban Soc limestone forest, to underline the importance of this area for biodiversity and nature conservation. The scientific description was published in the peer-reviewed, international biodiversity journal *Zootaxa*:

Luu, V.Q., Nguyen, T.Q., Le, M.D., Bonkowski, M. & Ziegler, T. (2016b) A new species of karst-dwelling bent-toed gecko (Squamata: Gekkonidae) from Khammouane Province, central Laos. *Zootaxa*, 4079 (1), 087–102.
<http://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.4079.1.6>

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

We have conducted four field surveys in the crocodile site in February 2016, August 2016, December 2016 and February 2017. By doing several surveys all over the year we intended to achieve the most reliable data on the population status. In general, survey days were in accordance with the proposed plan of the project, although field work was not conducted in one part, as originally proposed.

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
Domestic travel (Car rental from Vientiane to Ban Soc village, Bualapha town, Khammouane Province and travel within field sites)	£500	£800	£300	Supported by Principal Investigator
Wage for a field assistant (from NUOL): 60 days x £15/day	£900	£900	0	
Accommodation for a field assistant (from NUOL): 60 days x £10/day	£600	£60	0	
Wage for a local person and a forest ranger for guide in the field survey (2 people x £15/person/day x 60 days)	£1800	£1800	0	
Accommodation for a local person and a forest ranger for guide in the field survey (2 people x £10/person/day x 60 days)	£1200	£1200	0	
Total	£5000	£5300	£300	

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

We are currently identifying purebred individuals of the Siamese crocodile in captive facilities in zoos in Laos and Vietnam which could serve for subsequent restocking measures of captive hatched individuals to the wild to support the last remaining, shrinking population in nature.

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

Yes, RSGF logo was used in the poster prepared for and presented at the occasion of the 20th Anniversary Celebration of National University of Laos (NUOL) Foundation", and the RSGF was acknowledged in the publication of the aforementioned peer-reviewed journal.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

12. Any other comments?

Finally, we would like to thank to the RSGF for the kindness and support of this important research and conservation project, both for the Critically Endangered species and for biodiversity conservation in Laos in general.

