

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	Samuel Ojelel
Project title	Empowering the local community to conserve an Endangered and endemic <i>Encephalartos macrostrobilus</i> , Scott Jones & J. Wynants cycad in Madi Opei, Uganda
RSG reference	19943-1
Reporting period	Final project report
Amount of grant	£5,000
Your email address	sojelel@cns.mak.ac.ug
Date of this report	18 th July 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
Conduct population survey of <i>Encepharlatos macrostrobilus</i>				Manuscript of findings ready for submission to Cycad society newsletter
Raise community awareness on conservation of <i>Encepharlatos macrostrobilus</i>				The community is now knowledgeable about the cycad.
Train 20 community resource persons on cycad seedling multiplication				Hands-on practical training conducted for 20 persons. They are the ones who raised the seedlings
Raise and plant at least 1200 seedlings of <i>Encepharlatos macrostrobilus</i>				Raised 746 seedlings from seeds

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

There was difficult terrain in accessing the site of cycads. This meant a change from the earlier anticipated use of a motorcycle to a four wheel motor vehicle.

There was a huge demand for handouts from the community. This is because the community in this area has just come out of conflict and the people are poor. This was handled with the help of local leaders who explained the scope of the project

There was a short fall in the project funds caused by currency fluctuations. This resulted in a deficit to some activities.

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

- For the first ever, community awareness on the conservation value of *Encepharlatos macrostrobilus* has been realised. The community was very inquisitive about the cycad given that outside people (outside Uganda) had gone to collect the species for unclear reasons
- Through this project, an up to date survey has been carried out to ascertain the population status of *Encepharlatos macrostrobilus*
- The project has successfully raised *Encepharlatos macrostrobilus* seedlings from seeds for community planting. Although the target was 1200, this project managed only 746 due to limited time to collect seeds.

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

The community nominated three members (youth) who participated in the cycad survey. The project also incorporated the forest ranger and the field assistant. This has created cycad resource persons in the community

After the survey, the leaders from Lamwo district Local Government (Natural Resources department), Agoro Sub County and the National Forestry Authority (NFA) were involved in sensitising the community

The local community nominated 20 persons to undergo training on cycad seedling multiplication. These people thereafter collected seeds, raised and managed the nursery. In addition to acquiring the knowledge, the project facilitated them with cash for every seedling raised

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Absolutely yes. Already the group that raised the cycad seedlings is being registered at Agoro sub county, Lamwo district as a community based organisation

I have also approached Cousins S. R. (PhD student) at Withwatersrand University, South Africa for a collaborative project on this cycad and he has expressed optimism

The community group is now working jointly with Agoro-Agu Collaborative Forest Management Platform to advocate for cycad conservation

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

As already alluded to in question one above, a manuscript for submission to the Cycad society newsletter has been prepared. The abstract is herein attached (Appendix 1)

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

Twelve months. The project was completed within the stipulated time frame

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.

Note: Local exchange: 1£ =4,600 Uganda shillings

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Project launch	261	260	01	
Kampala-Lamwo travel by bus	313	300	13	A reduction in the bus fares due to a fall in fuel prices
In-land travel in Lamwo	326	726	400	Change from motor cycle to motor vehicle due to difficult terrain (hilly)
Cycad population survey	760	560	200	Spent less days than anticipated earlier
Production of 200 leaflets	43	43	0	
Production of 80 posters	87	87	0	
Community sensitization meetings	467	360	100	The communities were living in aggregate centres
Radio talk shows	619	619	0	
Establishment of 2 school clubs	130	0	130	No club was formed but cycads were planted in Lotuturu Primary School
Training on cycad propagation	580	580	0	
Establishment of one community nursery bed	98	98	98	
Nursery bed management	300	356	56	Community needed more money to offset opportunity costs
Seedling distribution	102	102	0	
Stationery	37	37	0	
Monitoring and evaluation	251	246	5	
Stipend for project leader	626	626	0	

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

It is very pertinent to consolidate the gains that have been achieved through this project. For example, there is need to continue deliberately propagating the seedlings for community planting.

There is need to profile the activities carried out by this local community as a basis for conducting awareness elsewhere.

There is need to demonstrate the socio-economic value of the cycads to the community. This can be through establishment of eco-tourism site.

There is need for adaptive management of cycads (learning by doing) with regards to fire. This is an area of research that I have proposed to Mr. Cousins of Withswatersrand University, South Africa.

There is need to come up with bye-laws and the district ordinance which stipulates how the cycads are managed

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?

Absolutely yes. All letters, posters about the project has the Rufford logo. Some of the posters are displayed at the district headquarters and National Forestry Authority (NFA) Northern Uganda regional office up to now

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

Mr Desmon Anywar. This was my field assistant and acted as a gate keeper in the community. He was instrumental in carrying out project activities given that he speaks the local Acholi language of the community where the project was implemented. Demon is a graduate of environment science and was volunteering with Lamwo district natural resource department

Mr Owali Joseph is the forest ranger who helped us to navigate through the bushes to search for cycads

The project co-opted 20 members (12 men and 8 women) to raise the nurseries

12. Any other comments?

I am grateful to Rufford for awarding me this grant. It has enabled me to put my conservation skills into action/practise. I hope to continue working with Rufford Foundation in the future

Appendix 1: Abstract of article from this project

Status of an Endangered *Encephalartos macrostrobilus* (Scott J. & Wynants J.) In Uganda

E. macrostrobilus is an endemic, Endangered and CITES Appendix 1 cycad species found in Agoro-Agu Central Forest Reserve in Lamwo district, Uganda. The available information indicated that an estimate of only 200 individuals existed by the year 1997. It is on this basis that this project sought to (i) assess the current population status of *E. macrostrobilus*, (ii) establish the threats facing this species and (iii) ascertain any ecosystem functions played by the species. Belt transect sampling (20m) was carried out in January and February 2017 following environmental gradients. All the individuals within the plot were then enumerated. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 50 community household heads. The results indicate that the population size is approximately 1,500 individuals. The major threats are illegal collections by people outside the community (mostly foreigners), indiscriminate cutting by the residents, habitat loss caused by illegal settlement and cultivation in the forest reserve and wild fires. There was evidence of female cone and seed predation by baboons, beetles and ants. It was also found that the dead stems were eaten by antelopes. There was no known local use of this cycad within in the local community. This population recorded here is higher because the previous survey was not exhaustive due to the armed conflicts and also the fact that some individuals have been added by natural regeneration. However, this population remains greatly in danger given that it is endemic, the habitat quality is declining and the resultant peace has allowed human penetration to areas that were previously inaccessible. There is an urgent need for the National Forestry Authority (NFA) to relocate the forest encroachers, sensitize the masses about the conservation value of *E. macrostrobilus*, regulation of bush burning, assessment of the male-female ratios in the population and exploration of propagation potential for seedling multiplication.

Key words: Endemic, Endangered, *Encephalartos macrostrobilus*, Uganda