

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	Ben Davis
Project title	Protecting the Endangered Wildlife of Phnom Tnout Community Forest, Cambodia
RSG reference	20902-1
Reporting period	January 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018 (14 months)
Amount of grant	£5,000
Your email address	ben@betreed.com
Date of this report	28 September 2018

1. 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
Environmental Education Sessions Conducted in 3 villages involving at least 150 community members				Four sessions were conducted in four villages that surround the wildlife sanctuary/community forest. These were conducted with cooperation from the Provincial Department of Environment of Preah Vihear Province involving approximately 600 people.
175 days of community patrols (4 pp per day) conducted over a period of 1 year (resulting in confiscations of chainsaws, transportation equipment, weapons and prosecutions				The project resulted in approximately 720 person-days of patrolling by both community-based rangers, and towards the final few months, included some government Provincial Department of Environment rangers.
Report on key animal species encountered during patrols and database contributing to biodiversity study				Camera trapping and observation/reporting were made throughout the period. There were some issues with camera traps failing – at the beginning of 2017 we had 11 camera traps but by June, about 50% had various malfunctions.

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

A change in government partners in the middle of the project resulted in a delay in community extension activities of the project and the approach to be used:

Community Education sessions were initially to be implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Administration (MAFF/FA) however by mid-year the government had changed jurisdictions for the conservation area that we are working in and thus our new partner ministry became the Ministry of Environment (MOE). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in July 2018 with the MOE. This meant that the education sessions were not conducted as planned (originally it was to be done early in the year however the MAFF/FA were not as committed to the process or certain about their conservation work generally due to the uncertainties posed after all the changes were instigated). Two meetings were held in Tabos and Tazine villages in October 2017 and two more in February 2018 in Pa Ouk and Meric villages. These four villages all typically access the community forest and the newly

zoned Wildlife Sanctuary and so there were many issues to ensure that communities were aware of these changes as well as general environment protection issues. Each of the meetings had a sizable proportion of the households represented with an estimated 600 people attending (approximately 75% of the HHs). Key topics addressed included introducing the new zoned areas to the communities. The Phnom Tnout and Phnom Pok Wildlife Sanctuary was gazetted on August 31, 2017 and is 42,000 ha encompassing the 6,443 ha of Phnom Tnout Community Forest. And as a wildlife sanctuary, the rules for accessing resources are technically different to other vacant forest land. Therefore, issues were discussed such as boundaries, land usage, prohibition of hunting, logging and clearing of land for new fields. Other community issues were discussed such as how to work with the existing landowners who were farming in the area already and what allowances can be provided for them.

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

Community patrolling activities conducted throughout the year resulted in the following:

- Reduced logging significantly – chainsaw logging within the original 6400 ha area has almost completely ceased. We estimate only 9-12 live trees were cut January to December 2017 period by chain saw and 2-3 with axes. This is down from 10-20 trees per day in 2015 plus the trees destroyed by clearing more than 20 ha that year. (2016 proved less destructive than 2015 but there was still significant forest loss that year too).
- Hunting, especially by snaring was greatly reduced in 2017. A similar number of snares were confiscated (1102 snares), in 2017 as in previous years but the difference was that most of the snares this year were freshly laid and had not had opportunity to catch any wildlife when they were picked up. Another important thing is that most of the snares this year were not laid in the core zone but rather on or very near the boundary. This represents far less threat to the wildlife as these areas are not primary habitat for endangered species. While far less rifles were confiscated in 2017 than 2015-16, this was because there were very few poachers willing to risk hunting in the protected area knowing that there was almost always a patrol team out and about.
- The local communities have begun to accept that this protected area really is a protected area and those working to protect it are serious about it. This may be the most important outcome of all, and it has come from a combination of community education and the rangers that have been patrolling constantly to let poachers know that we are serious about long term conservation and we are not giving up. Thus, the habit to hunt in this area has been replaced with a habit of going elsewhere which, if maintained should lead to positive results in the long term. There are still issues and there will continue to be as long as the value of natural resources such as timber keep rising. The area is large however and the small team of community rangers is continually challenged to keep on top of the problems. The community know that we are serious about protection of the area but perhaps a larger law enforcement effort is needed to maintain effectiveness.

Patrolling efforts (1 January 2017 to 28 February 2018) resulted in the following:

- Chainsaws confiscated: 29 of these, nine were later redeemed after negotiations with local authorities and specific situation.
- Hand Tractors and Oxcarts confiscated (logging): 21. These are also all redeemed after negotiations with local authorities. All perpetrators sign agreements to stop the illegal activities.
- Homemade guns confiscated: 18.
- Detained poachers: two.
- Snares collected 1,102.
- Battery fishing stopped: seven events.

Wildlife Report Summary

- Presence of following endangered species confirmed by photos or direct observation in 2017:
 - Banteng (camera traps) ENDANGERED
 - Silvered langur (direct, photos) ENDANGERED
 - Pileated Gibbons (direct, photos) ENDANGERED
 - White Winged Ducks (thought extinct in the area but sighting reported of 5 individuals) CRITICALLY ENDANGERED
 - Pangolins (camera trap photo) CRITICALLY ENDANGERED
 - Green Peafowl (direct, photos, camera traps) ENDANGERED
 - Otters (not endangered but previously not identified here – three sightings)
 - Sambar Deer (camera traps)
 - Long Tailed Macaques (camera traps)
 - Red Muntjac (camera traps)
 - Wild Pigs (camera traps)
 - Siamese Fireback Pheasant (camera traps)
 - Birdlist 146 species confirmed
- With the current MOU signed with the MOE, other organisations are able to partner with us including Angkor Centre for Conservation and Biodiversity who have made two sets of animal releases here including pythons (reticulated and Burmese), a leopard cat, slow loris, monitor lizard and two serpent eagles and one changeable hawk-eagle.

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

The local community members have done most of the patrolling work. Furthermore, most of the community members have contributed by NOT hunting and logging in the protected area. It is significant that the majority of the hunters encountered this year were from outside the local area. This is a positive thing as they are much easier to deal with than local villagers. Local villagers have been able to continue collecting NTFP's such as honey, resin and mushrooms, to name a few, as a source

of income. Also, more income from the ecotourism was allocated to community development rather than spending all of it on patrolling. Approximately \$4,000 of tourism earnings was allocated to fix 3 km of road as well as plant 1500 rosewood seedlings.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We are here in this area working to preserve the environment for the long term and will continue patrolling and working to educate the community.

Another major change that has validated our work here has been that the MOE in August 2017 created a new Wildlife Sanctuary around and including the Community Forest where we are working. This is 42,000 ha of mostly forest land needing significant protection. We are trying to work in the original 6,400 ha of Community Forest (now named Community Protect Area under the MOE's guidelines) however this enlarged area is needing more assistance. The MOE has become a major supporter (not financially however) of the work and have proven invaluable in negotiating some of the more difficult community issues faced.

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

The results will be reported to the Ministry of Environment. The completed wildlife survey will be shared via our website for wide access.

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

This report covers January 2017 to February 2018 (14 months) compared the originally planned 12 months (January to December 2017).

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
Village Environmental Workshops	£915	£436	£479	Contracted with Provincial Department of Environment to conduct general village meetings
Patrolling	£4085	£4613	£-528	Savings in workshops applied to patrolling efforts
TOTAL	£5000	£5049	Over £49	
1GPB=USD1.183 Based on amount received on bank transfer				

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

This report is being completed 7 months after the official ending date and therefore is written with the perspective of this additional time.

Between April and the National Election in July, 2018 there was an overall breakdown in law enforcement activities generally and especially in regards to natural resource management. This took the form of increased logging, poaching and land clearing within the greater Wildlife Sanctuary. It was also coupled with a lower fear level of the community patrol team (who do not have weapons) by the offenders. It became increasingly difficult to patrol safely and apprehend offenders with some people becoming more aggressive in their defiance of the environmental laws. The faction in the community who were profiting from harvesting timber and poaching also openly protested our conservation efforts here. This was met with firm resolve on the part of the Ministry of Environment to support our work and our continued presence here at Phnom Tnout. They intervened and the protest was stopped.

At the same time, we approached Wildlife Alliance to assist with improved law enforcement and they supplied a professional ranger team comprising military police and environment rangers from May to June full time and since then on a part time basis. This has been particularly effective with 14 offenders imprisoned with 12 fined. These offences include land clearing, logging and poaching. The only way to continue to effectively protect the area is with such a ranger team working, and so we are looking for ways to continue to fund such an operation. Without this protection, it is impossible to maintain a safe area for wildlife to continue to exist. Thus a very strong emphasis on law enforcement in the future, we feel is necessary to continue the conservation work here and will be the focus of future fundraising activities.

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

There were no materials produced by the project however partners at the Provincial Department of Environment staff/directors were informed that Rufford had provided funds for the community workshops and patrolling.

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

Ben Davis: project coordinator and team leader

Ear Sokha: Provincial Department of Environment, Director (Counterpart)

Chim Vichhay: Provincial Department of Environment, Station Leader – organised the community workshops

Sim Thory: Community Patrol Team member – conducting patrols

Siv Somneing: Community Patrol Team member – conducting patrols

Lim Sap: Community Patrol Team Member– conducting patrols

12. Any other comments?

I wish to thank Rufford for considering us for this grant which has helped during a key period for the conservation work in Phnom Tnout. During this time, the ecotourism activity which will hopefully fund conservation efforts in the future is growing steadily however not at a fast enough rate. In the meantime we have partnered with a local NGO to continue additional conservation efforts here and that will likely continue into the future. This small grant from Rufford has been integral in protecting the wildlife here during this period.



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