

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	Tshering Choki
Project title	Assessment of habitats, anthropogenic threat and conservation of Indian pangolin (<i>Manis crassicaudata</i>) in Critical watershed areas of Dagachu, Central Bhutan
RSG reference	20923-1
Reporting period	1 st March 2017 to 30 th March 2018
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	Tsheringchuki88@gmail.com
Date of this report	29 th March 2018

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
<i>Assess the habitats preferences and distribution of India pangolin in critical watershed areas of Dagachhu,</i>				We conducted a field assessment where there was a sign of occurrences and sighting of pangolin. Flora composition of habitat was also recorded for trees, shrubs and some familiar grass species, along with the anthropogenic threat such as developmental works and grazing threat. Sightings of pangolin were found mostly near human settlements, presumably preferring the paddy cultivation site of warm broad leaved forest of Dagachu critical watershed areas such as in Pangserpoo, Pangna and Jurugang of Drujegang and Kana Geog, Central Bhutan.
<i>Assess the people perception towards Pangolins and conservation threats</i>				Elder people, especially males know the existence of species in the locality, whereas the women and younger generation mistakenly identity or compared species to the turtle or different species of porcupine.
<i>Incorporate the information gathered from objectives 1 & 2 to build habitats model for preparing the conservation action plan for Dagachhu Critical Watershed Management Plan (DCWMP</i>				Set up the farmers groups to reduces conflicts between human and wildlife, such as the construction of 4.5 km electric fencing at lower Petakha and pangserpo areas.

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

Following are the difficulties that were faced while implementing the projects:

1. **Restriction for data collection:** Restriction from the relevant organisation, in order to collect data regarding the human perception on pangolin, as it coincided with an election period in Bhutan. This was, however, collected through the Focused Group Discussion (FGD), without involving large masses of community.
2. **Projects is too ambitious:** Since pangolin is an endangered species and it is rarely sighted in its natural habitat. Therefore, direct interferences with species and studying the habitat preferences is a big job requiring huge resources in terms of capacity and financial support. However, the existence of species in the locality of critical watershed publicised through the use of images that were captured and the general public was educated about the significance of the species, thus reducing anthropogenic threat in its natural habitat.
3. **Data analysis is left:** Field data on habitat preferences and anthropogenic threat analysis were through the assessment of floral composition and social survey. However, the data were not analysed. Therefore, currently, we cannot determine and say confidently the habitat preferences of species. However, from a location, we sighted and rescued a pangolin. This had further triggered our interested on pangolin conservation work in the locality, as the species had attracted about 100 of visitors to see this cryptic species.

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

1. Awareness on the presence of species in the locality, as they are not aware of the species,
2. Students know the status of pangolin and the importance that it plays in the community in reducing pests and diseases
3. Local people can now identify the pangolin and report the sightings of pangolin to nearest forest office. Further, the reporting system was enhanced between conservationists and local residents in the habitat areas
4. Pangolin conservation plan to be incorporated to watershed management plan.

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

Local people were presented with the picture of the species and can now report the incidences of sighting to relevant organisation rather than trying to kill when sighting, thinking of bad omens.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we are in the process of capturing the species and will track them with GPS; this is to study the movement and habitat range of particular species. But the tracking or sighting of pangolin in winter season is very rare or low chances of sighting in winter season.

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

I reported the pangolin sighting reports to forest range office and in turn published in local forum of MoAF. There is coordinate of location and translocation. Further, NCD are informed regarding the occurrences of species in the region and prevalent in the areas along with Indian rock python.

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

It was used maintain during the winter season, in which people were freed from normal farm works. Used for gathering social information and perception of species to people. In order to study the habitat used of the species It will take more times especially in summer time.

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
1. Procurement of field equipment such as				Expenditure was adjusted from the other budget head such as from sign boards installation and leaflet production.
1.1. DSLR Cannon		750		
1.2. GPS		300		
1.3. Four men tent		200		
1.4. Lenovo Laptop (Thinkpad x220)		350		
	1050	1600	+550	
2. Capacity development and field works				
2.1. Surveyors capacity development on survey protocol		400		
2.2. Field data collection/field survey		1530		
2.3. Transportation charges		600		
	2130	2530	+400	
3. Advocacy program/results presentation				Used for procuring survey materials and equipment
3.1. raising awareness on species		800		
3.2. training material and poster publication		200		
	1070	1000	-70	
4. Data Compilation/ Analysis				
4.1. Hiring charge (Expert for analysing data)				
4.1. Publication				

	750		-750	
Total	5000	5130	+130	£130 was used from personal saving, equivalent to Nu. 10790(£1=Nu. 83)

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

Continue with data collection, focusing mainly on habitat inventory. The team will continue searching or capture the pangolin and insert the radio chips, this will facilitate in studying the temporal and spatial information collection of the species.

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?

Yes, banners and sign boards. Made a stickers for equipment procured from Rufford funding such as in laptop and camera.

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

Tshering Choki - Team leader

Ugyen Dechen - Field leader, Forestry Officer, Trashigang Territorial Forest

Karma Lhendup - Forestry Officer, JDNP.

Passang Tshering - Field Guide, Deputy Chief Agriculture Officer

Sonam Dorji - Forest Range Officer, Drujegang Range

Tshering Phuntsho - Environmental Officer, Dagachu Hydro-Project Authority

12. Any other comments?

I would like to thank Rufford foundation for funding me the projects. Although it was my first major funding for conservation works, I am already committed to raising awareness on the pangolin to the locality. The very purpose is to mitigate the anthropogenic threat to endangered species in its native habitat.



Left: Forestry Official handling a Pangolin after rescuing from nearby human settlement in Drujegang, Dagana, Central Bhutan. Right: Pangolin in its defensive position.