

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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#### Grant Recipient Details

<b>Your name</b>	Saloni Bhatia
<b>Project title</b>	Strategy for facilitating human-carnivore coexistence in a high-altitude landscape
<b>RSG reference</b>	23221-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	September to August 2018
<b>Amount of grant</b>	4896
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:saloni@ncf-india.org">saloni@ncf-india.org</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> September 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
Provide baseline data on livestock losses and conflicts from an understudied region				We conducted a depredation survey to assess the number and species of livestock lost in 15 villages in the Rong valley. We also recorded the key threats to livestock in the landscape, apart from the snow leopard and wolf.
'Hotspot' map to mark out areas where carnivore impacts are high, and tolerance is low				We have created hotspot maps for all of Rong valley (eastern Ladakh), parts of Sham valley and Kargil (western Ladakh)
Understand how different factors influence peoples' relationship with carnivores, the gaps in peoples' tolerance as well as strengths imbued by their culture				We found that for snow leopards the economic and psychological dimensions of living with the predator mattered most to the community. For wolves, the social and psychological dimensions were important. Cultural factors, though they provided a backdrop for human-predator interactions, were not salient in influencing peoples' attitudes and behaviours.
Conservation strategy for practitioners working in the landscape				Based on our findings, we discussed a conservation strategy that would involve modifying some of NCF's existing outreach and conservation programmes to strengthen communications/ relationships with the community and alleviate their perceptions of risk from predators.

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

We had proposed to survey the entire Leh district but couldn't do so as the resources, effort and time required to carry it out would have been unfeasible. We, therefore, chose to focus on the Rong valley, which, in our experience, is a prime wildlife habitat and an area that NCF has been working to conserve for nearly a decade.

We surveyed along the entire valley (15 villages) but couldn't visit one of the villages as it was extremely remote and difficult to get to because of a landslide.

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

a) We now have a better understanding of the gaps in conservation as well as potential convergences with other agencies working parallelly in the landscape. For example, several governmental departments and non-governmental organisations are already working to enhance the well-being of people and livestock. These can be natural allies to conservation.

b) We also managed to document wildlife folklore from the region which will be used in NCF's outreach activities with children, youth and adults.

c) We have been able to identify villages within the valley which require greater conservation attention owing to the magnitude of depredation here.

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

Communities were involved throughout the project. We built our understanding of the conservation challenges by interacting with nearly 200 individuals across Rong. During this exercise, we also identified local conservation enthusiasts who we hope to encourage as conservation leaders/ local champions. We have incorporated the lessons into NCF's plan for the landscape, which aims to engage in socially just and culturally sensitive conservation. While the change may be slow to trickle down to the communities, we do hope that through our efforts, in the long run, people are willing and able to tolerate damage-causing predators better.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes. I have been working in the high altitude regions for the past 7 years and hope to continue working on human-wildlife dimensions.

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

We plan to disseminate the results through presentations and reports with relevant and interested stakeholders.

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

One year. This project was a part of my PhD research that looks at several other components in addition to the ones listed in the grant proposal. However, NCF's engagement with communities has been ongoing for nearly a decade and will remain strong in the future as well.

**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
Distribution of the report	170	0	170	
Report - design and development	360	0	360	
Stay and food for two people for seven months of fieldwork @ GBP 200 per month	1400	1400	0	
Field assistant stipend @ GBP 150 per month x 7 months	1,050	1530	500	
Travel to villages - information dissemination - GBP 85 for each car hire x 15 hires	775	805	30	
Travel to villages - information gathering - GBP 85 for each car hire x 15 hires	775	775	775	
Flight to field site x 2 round trips @ GBP 366 per trip	366	366	366	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4896</b>	<b>4896</b>		

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

The next step would be to find ways of working with organisations and government departments that have goals that are complementary to ours. Apart from this, engaging with the youth who we feel are the most underrepresented, would be crucial as they are the future conservation leaders. Designing programmes to interlink the positive aspects of local traditions to conservation would also go a long way in developing tolerance. Finally, more research is needed to better understand the psychological dimensions of living with damage-causing predators, e.g. the role of emotions like love, awe, fear, hatred when it comes to wildlife.

**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. In future, any written material that makes a reference to this project will have the Rufford logo.

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

**Saloni Bhatia** – Study design, data collection and analysis, and final report

**Sherab Lobzang** – Community interaction

**Dr. Charudutt Mishra** – Intellectual input

12. Any other comments?

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to explore linkages between people and wild predators in this much ignored landscape.

