

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	Dhirendra Bahadur Chand
Project title	An eco-social approach to minimize human-leopard conflict in Tallosorad area of Far-west Nepal.
RSG reference	23766-1
Reporting period	2018-11-25
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	dbchand@yahoo.com
Date of this report	2019-06-27

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
Camera traps				
Conflicts assessment hotspots modelling				
Radio programs				A total of 15 episodes were broadcast.
Awareness Campaigns				Poster Production and Distribution. Posters were distributed to school students, local people and conservation stakeholders.

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

The major difficulties arose during the project was that the project could not be completed during the specific time due to political instability of the country, no electricity facility in these VDC, local peoples' time for involvement in the project and remoteness of the project. Two of our camera traps were stolen. We lost some data from those camera traps. To get data from those areas we had to re-install new sets of cameras that delayed the completion of the project on speculated time. The project was however successfully completed taking additional time.

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

This project focused on empowering local people to reduce human-leopard conflict. The two most important outcome of this project are briefly summarised.

Identification of level of conflicts and hotspots of leopard attacks in Baitadi district

Awareness programs among school students and local villagers

- ❖ They got knowledge about the role of leopard in the ecosystem and necessity of its conservation for the sake of our secured future.
- ❖ They knew the essential precautionary measures to be safe from leopard attack.
- ❖ They were fully committed to actively participate in conservation activities and they wanted to carry out awareness activities through the eco-clubs in the future.

Dissemination of importance of leopard conservation:

Conducting research and involvement of students have empowered the future generation to be involved in conservation. Importance of leopard conservation has been disseminated through different media i.e. individual, group and mass media.

With contact key professionals, coordination of different stakeholders, dissemination work has been more effective and widespread

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

People received the knowledge on human-leopard conflict from the project. Mainly people from remote area are unknowingly involved in hunting of wildlife so during our conservation programme we aware them about the rules and regulation of Nepal regarding wildlife conservation. People's involvement in hunting is supposed to be minimised. School teachings were conducted in four schools, two in each highly affected VDCs i.e. Bishalpur and Shivanath. In each school teaching, there were ~70 students from grade 3 to 8 hence, 276 Students were directly benefited by getting knowledge about the components of ecosystem and their role for the survival of each other, importance of conservation of biodiversity for the sake of humankind. Similarly, they became aware about the precautionary measures to be safe from leopard attack. Local assistants were trained in the field. This project gave them opportunities to learn about setting up camera traps, handling GPS and identification of wild animals and plants. Beside this local guides were used during fieldwork.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

After completing this project, the conflict mitigation measures in such areas was carried out. We concluded that illegal felling of trees, hunting of deer, rabbits, wild boar and other prey species of leopard have been causing habitat deterioration of this carnivore species within forest area. Due to these reasons, leopards have been facing scarcity of prey species within forest area. Similarly, people frequently go to the forest to collect timber, fuel wood, fodder, fruits, medicinal herbs etc. So, they are often disturbing this solitary creature. I am planning to continue the works of habitat restoration of leopard and its prey species within community forest area and awareness generation to control poaching and for achieving ultimate goal of human-leopard coexistence where both people and leopard can live without interfering each other's' habitat.

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

I made many oral presentations at district, regional, national level workshops about the activities I carried out in the support of RF. Further, only conducting some activities keeps less meaning to make project more effective. Sharing and dissemination of project output and learning will be helpful to attract allied agencies to make responsible in human-leopard conflict mitigate with encouragement of local people. I published many popular articles in local news media about the human-leopard conflicts, their causes, effects and mitigation measures. I am analysing the socio-economic and scientific data. The results will be published in the scientific journal as the research paper.

So, the result of this work will be shared through web, publication and other media (international and regional level web and scientific article, national workshop. Seminar and paper, local papers, final report will be submitted to Department of Forest and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation of Government of Nepal.

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

Regarding the time scale of my project, it has taken a longer time than what was anticipated. Due to remoteness of the project area, loss of camera traps which were re-installed in second round of field visit and personal causes, the project has been delayed by 6 months. But it was still a successful project for its output.

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
Travel cost	1200	1000	-200	
Food cost	800	950	+150	
Living cost	600	600		
Research equipment (digital camera, GPS, Camera traps)	1500	1800	+300	
Prepare conflict awareness, teaching materials (Poster, Banner etc.)	300	350	+50	
Radio programs preparation and broadcasting	600	680	+80	
Total	5000	5380	+380	

Apart from the budget provided by RSGF, local institutions like Nepal Biodiversity Research Society (NEBORS), District Forest Office (DFO) of Baitadi have been very helpful and supportive in conducting this project. NEBORS supported with the infrared cameras and other field equipment. DFO Baitadi granted the research permission, provided the secondary data on human-leopard conflicts and assisted in establishing the relationship with community forest user groups of the Tallo Sorad area. Their support in kind has been taken without which this project would not have been so successful. I have also collaborated with other researchers and conservation workers with similar activities to make the full use of the limited budget.

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

Considering the above-mentioned situations, I feel following works / steps are crucial to conduct, so I am planning to apply for second Rufford grant to carry out these activities.

- a. Habitat restoration of herbivore prey species of leopard (removal of unpalatable species, promotion of palatable species, control burning, and seed sowing of nutritious grass species).
- b. Develop action plans and/or strategic plans to address human-leopard conflict.
- c. Installation of solar streetlamps in "sensitive areas and human-leopard conflict hotspots.
- d. Waterhole construction and maintenance within forest area.
- e. Awareness generation activities through the workshops and FM radio programmes against poaching. Informing local people about the provisions of law regarding penalty and imprisonment in case of wildlife crime.
- f. Formation of eco-clubs and conservation committees at village level, their capacity enhancement and mobilisation.
- g. Develop an understanding on ranging and habitat use patterns of leopard in human landscape by using robust tools as radio-collars.
- h. Monitoring leopard and prey population in Tallosorad area and surrounding forest. Annual or periodic monitoring to assess the population sizes of leopard which would be vital to understand the dynamics of human-leopard conflict in Baitadi.
- i. Maintain photographic database of leopard IDs which are captured and rescued. It will help identifying whether same individuals are repeatedly being captured in the landscape. Identifying conflict animals is effective and helpful in minimising conflict.
- j. Checking encroachment and degradation of forest or adjacent areas with infrastructure development.

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?

Of course, I used The Rufford Foundation logo in awareness generation posters. I developed / printed. Similarly, I used it in the banners of school teaching programme and awareness generation workshops. Likewise, I aired awareness messages and broadcasted programs through local FM radios. In such programmes, I acknowledged the RF.

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

Tapendra Bist: Field works including camera traps setting and monitoring, awareness programs, radio program development and broadcasting.

Dhirendra Bist: Camera traps setting and monitoring

12. Any other comments?

Poor and helpless people in the remote villages of Baitadi Nepal have been suffering from the leopard attack resulting human and livestock death. On the other hand, many leopards have been killed by local people on the retaliation. The project funded by The Rufford Foundation has become instrumental to cope with this problem to some extent. They become committed to habitat restoration of leopard within forest area. Similarly, project educated and motivated school students about ecosystem and biodiversity conservation. Hence, project became successful to achieve its anticipated objectives. So, I would like to express my cordial thanks to The Rufford Foundation from my side and on the behalf of people of project area providing grant for this project. I also wish for co-working in future through the support of RF.

