

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	Enzo Aliaga- Rossel
Project title	Promoting well-managed, educational river dolphin watching as a positive conservation tool and new source of income for Amazon communities. Part II
RSG reference	24994-B
Reporting period	Final
Amount of grant	£9700
Your email address	ealiagar@hotmail.com
Date of this report	17 April 2019

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
Implement our environmental education programme supported by a network of teachers from rural schools				It was not possible to implement the programme as a curricula. As we believe that education is the best tool for conservation, this is a long term programme, so we are and we will continue working on this.
Promote conservation values through local workshops, environmental talks and presentations				At least five workshops directed to adults and authorities were performed. With presentations and conversation and discussion among the assistants.
Collaborate with local authorities to raise awareness about the PAs by involving local people in creating interpretation resources for environmental activities and exhibitions. Encourage authorities to promote good practice, sustainable bufeo-watching				We had constant meetings with authorities. We prepared material for the Interpretation centre of the Rurrenabaque tourist destination (that includes Madidi National Park, Pampas del Yacuma Municipal protected areas) (material attached). Authorities are fully interested in the project and we will continue with encouraging and giving technical support.
Organise workshops for tour operators and field guides to promote responsible behaviour to mitigate impact on the environment and support sustainable ethical wildlife tourism.				We performed several workshops, in large groups, we reprinted some of the material prepared before.
Set up regular meetings with local authority representatives to support the development of PA management plans. Provide the municipal				We were able to have different meetings with local authorities, which are interested in the project. Once again the Vice-Minister of Tourism changed, therefore we need to start once again to approach the authority to explain

<p>authorities with relevant information on habitat use, abundance, threats and environmental needs of bufeos for adequate conservation measures.</p>				<p>the philosophy of the project.</p>
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

One of the main difficulties is to work with authorities. We invest time in meetings and gave them detailed information about the project, its implementation and the conservation impact. They understand and want to be involved, however these authorities are changed or removed from the position, therefore we started once again with meetings to present the project. To continue working successfully we have meetings, workshops and presentations with local guides, tour operators, etc.

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

a) The river dolphin is categorised as endangered; therefore, it is urgent to continue with all conservation actions to prevent to follow other river dolphins that are going extinct. All the project outcomes directly supported the 'National Bolivian River Dolphin Conservation Plan' objectives. Once again, and thanks to the support of Rufford, last year we reached more than 10,000 people with information on the biology, ecology and conservation status about the river dolphins. At least 1000 were kids and young people. We are sure, these people are future leaders and allied for river dolphin conservation. We distributed posters and booklets about the species, their threats, thought education we ask to help them.

b) At least 50 tourist operators and guides are trained with good practices in river dolphin watching. They are teaching and expanding the importance of the river dolphin to indigenous community members during and after the project. People living in Trinidad, Rurrenabaque and Santa-Rosa towns are more aware of the value and conservation needs of bufeos and associated wildlife - the link between healthy rivers and lakes, thriving bufeo populations. I can perceive more people and students interested in conservation and ecotourism.

c) We signed a letter of commitment with three of the most important ecotourism companies (signed letters attached), operating in the two protected areas Pampas del Yacuma and Ibare Mamore. One of the companies is community-based organization. The commitment is to preserve wildlife and the habitat and focusing on the good practices on river dolphin observation.

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

The involvement of local communities and locals is a key component for the program research and conservation of the Bolivian river dolphin. We have good relationship with some authorities, they are slowly changing their perception of the species in the area, and the image of river dolphin is used more frequently in different banners, and other information.

Local communities are constantly visited and informed about the main objectives of the project; we started with small workshops, and an environmental educational campaign. We are planning that more people will be involved and have a bigger participation.

The programme is a long-term project and locals will benefit from different tourism projects – As mentioned in the first part we have indigenous tourist guides, working for local companies; furthermore, one of our allies is the tourism company which is owned by an indigenous family from the area, therefore, many locals are involved with this activity. And indigenous people have already experience in the tourist activity. In the workshops, we included several local field guides that lives in the area and are in every day dolphin contact.

For the expeditions, we hired local guides and motor driver and in the case of Pampas del Yacuma Municipal protected areas, we worked with park rangers; they understand the project and are a good link to the communities and the programme.

We have strengthened community-based conservation efforts and have inspired the next generation of nature conservationists.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The research and conservation programme of the Bolivian river dolphin is a long-term commitment. We have several plans to continue with this project and improving ecotourism as a conservation tool in the area. The long-term objective is that these areas will be recognised as certified areas to cetacean watching. I've been working with river dolphins for around 20 years now, with basic biology and ecology, we found that the threats over the species are continuously increasing this species needs a lot of protection. We need to continue with the promotion of the river dolphin, creating aware about the species and all the threats. We know that conservation is the most important action to take; therefore, we need to work with fishermen, local communities and decision makers.

We need to include the river dolphins in different management plans in protected areas.

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

So far, we presented the results of this project in national and international meetings and conferences; as example at the Latin American meeting of mammalogy in July 2018, I presented the results of this project but also a research (Titled - When wildlife pays for its own conservation- abstract attached), as well a presentation on abundance and a possible tendency in 10 years of surveys. For the XII Congress of Latin American specialists in Aquatic mammals in November 2018 (presentation: Promoting good practices in the observation of the river dolphin, as a conservation tool- presentation attached).

We are preparing scientific publications to present the monitoring surveys results (Aliaga-Rossel & Guizada. Abundance of the river dolphin in Bolivia, this paper will be presented in a scientific journal).

We have shared the results of our work with project partner organisations, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and we started once again conversation with the Vice-Minister of Tourism.

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

The RSG Grant was used over a period of 12 months, the objectives were fulfilled, and we were able to reach additional and important results that we expected.

This is part of a long-term project; and depending on the funding, we will expand to other rural towns, also is important to strength the result already consolidated with local communities and the relation with the species.

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
Local travel (local fees, rent boat and motor, bus, taxis , 3 people	850	850		This includes fees to entrance to protected areas; boat rent, taxis to and from the airport. Rent of boat and motor
Taxes, bank fees, transaction fees 90 0 90	90	90		Bank fees and taxes in the conversion are high
Communication	55	65	+10	Includes phone cards, faxes to offices. The difference was covered by the participants

Additional person/ people to help implement environmental education (1 month)	200	400	+200	Person was involved 2 months. Difference covered by the PI, and some of the difference from other items
School visits (snacks, material)	130	150	+20	Snacks for school children, it included a juice, a sandwich or cookies
Community workshops budget for travel to the communities, snacks and refreshments, material	300	300		Refreshments for attendants; included juice, sandwiches, chicken and rice. Pen and paper
Material to be distributed in schools, notebooks, pencils, posters	400	400		We have distributed material (colour pencils), however, we have some material that will be distributed later this year in a new campaign of environmental education
Fieldwork material/ equipment (backpack, headlamps)	270	250	-20	It included batteries. For headlamps and GPS.
Local Field Guides and/or driver months	300	300		Local field guides, and driver varied on amounts; generally 80 to 120 (160 to 960 bs.), according the time they spend with the team
Stipend main assistant (1month)	300	400	+100	The assistant was involved more than 6 months, and we used some of the differences to cover it
Stipend PI (5 months)	3000	3000		PI is involved during the entire year, and continue with actions for the conservation of River dolphins
Food in Trinidad/Santa Rosa, other areas 25 days /3 people) (17 day)	1300	1095	-205	Is important to note that food was shared as well with field guides and driver.
Accommodation for team in Trinidad/ Rurrenabaque Santa Rosa- 25 nights/3 people (19day)	1425	1305	-120	There was a cheaper hostel in Trinidad, the difference was small, and used to cover other expenses
6 Air fare to La Paz- Trinidad - La paz x (3 people) 80 £ each way	1080	1386	+306	One-way ticket was 77£ on way, 3 people, 3 trips to the area is a total of 1386 £
TOTAL	9700	9991	+291	

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

The killing and increasing threats of river dolphins in the Amazon is a terrible reality and it seems won't stop, causing their populations decreasing rapidly. Education is a key component to create a different and a positive perception of resources and nature, but also giving them some economic alternative. Therefore, in this programme the next important steps are to continue working with the communities, increasing the awareness and the importance of the bufeos in the rivers of Bolivia, this must be a constant activity.

Ecotourism is a good alternative for conservation and an economics for the communities in the area. We started with the protocol and workshops, we need to consolidate this, this activity has to be a long and continuous, including the participation of the authorities, tourism companies and people around. We need to continue monitoring the populations especially in the local protected areas.

To continue decreasing the number of river dolphin killed by locals and fishermen. And at the same time, improving and supporting park rangers that at least control overfishing.

To continue organising awareness raising activities among community people, activate and improve participation of the indigenous groups, in rural or urban areas.

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, we used the Rufford Foundation logo in all diffusion material elaborated during this project. This material was shown in different meetings and congress (see attached material). We acknowledge the importance of the Rufford Foundation in river dolphin conservation.

The Rufford Foundation received publicity during this project, including presentations with biology students in Bolivia.

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

Luis Guizada; He is the main assistant of the project; he oversees logistics and helps with the data. Also, he is responsible for the organization of the surveys on the monitoring of the Program. Ideally, if he is accepted in a graduate program, he will use all the information generated for his dissertation.

Kiswara Portugal; She is the responsible for the environmental education activities with children. She was also involved with the development of the material, leaflets, etc.

Lorena Zurita; She is the general assistant, helps with the environmental activities with children. She helps with interviews and other activity with local people. She assists with the observations.

We worked with several students and volunteers that help us with different activities related to the program, this include interviews with children and adults, and can participate in surveys.

On the other hand, we have support, and interest of the Department of Beni Government; municipality of Santísima Trinidad.

Park Rangers and the director of the Local Municipal Protected Area Papas de; Yacuma.

12. Any other comments?

We truly thank the Rufford Foundation for its generous support on behalf of the Bolivian river dolphin population and its habitat. We acknowledge the foundation for the conservation initiatives it supports around the world.