

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. 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. 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	Nicephor Pius Lesio
Project title	Conservation of black rhino (<i>Diceros bicornis</i>) in north-eastern Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania
RSG reference	25.09.07
Reporting period	December 2008
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	tawiri_kwrc@yahoo.co.uk
Date of this report	December 2009

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
Assess the distribution and estimate abundance of black rhino in north-eastern Selous Game Reserve		✓		Estimate of abundance could not be done because of the dwindling of the rhino signs. Spoor were seen on a trail that was used only once. Other signs are of grazed bushes (cannot be used to estimate abundance). In fact, it can be documented that during the study period only scant rhino sign was sighted in the study area, although the area is designated as 'Critical Rhino Zone'.
Develop capacity of stakeholders on rhino identification and monitoring techniques			✓	The persons that participated in the field were trained on rhino monitoring techniques including seven students from University of Dar es Salaam that were posted at the centre for their field-practical training. Others included two Game Rangers, who were not included in the proposal. They learned the survey techniques and saw a few encountered old signs. We think the study has stimulated research spirit to all who participated. Furthermore, we think that the search should be done in other places that are adjacent to the study area, for monitoring the habitat and shifting patterns of the rhino population of the area.
Raise awareness among stakeholders on rhino conservation	✓			This has not been implemented entirely because of the poor results of the rhino signs in the field. Nevertheless articles are being written for publication in the local printing media and the detailed report for the field work will be written for wide circulation.

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

Three unforeseen difficulties arose during the study period: (i) during the wet season visibility of the field area was poor, coupled with some floods occurring. This not only posed security risks relating to animals' injury but also difficulty in mobility. To overcome the problem a delay was made to undertake a field work in mid dry season; (ii) There was a time when there was an outbreak of poaching, including attacks of game rangers by poachers, thus making life of the researchers in a high risk. To overcome this, the project activities were rescheduled to tourist hunting season,

because during the hunting time risks of attacks by poachers are minimum; and (iii) Costs of food and fuel rose unexpectedly higher. This led to using personal financial resources to augment the grant from RSG.

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

First, affirmation of the clues on the rhino presence especially south of Rufiji River that was given for some time by patrolling rangers in the area. Researchers in the field confirmed the Rhino presence through the signs, even though they were dwindling as the study proceeded.

Second, the project has demonstrated the need for further study of the rhino in the general area as the dwindling signs of the rhino during the study put a need to extend the size of the study area especially toward the southern part, bearing in mind the conservation status of the species. Extension of surveys towards southern part of the study area is proposed because in the western and northern parts there is Rufiji River which poses a barrier for rhinos to move into those directions, while eastern areas are typical of Miombo woodlands, that are very open and without reliable water points and rhino hiding places. In addition, there are unconfirmed reports of rhino signs in the southern part of the study area

Third, from the study, we think that the rhino does not permanently occupy an area, and criteria for changing existing sites are not known. The experience by this survey calls for an urgency to continue searching for the rhinos and continuously monitoring for sometimes to discover criteria for their behaviour that will lead to designing conservation strategies.

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

Not relevant.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, especially to search for the rhinos in further southern location of the current study area. This is because of the unconfirmed reports of rhino's signs in southern areas that are to be verified by researchers.

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

Sharing of the results will be through publication of articles and scientific report in the local and international journals, newspaper and magazine. In addition, the results and recommendations will be directed to the management authority for their necessary action.

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

The RSG was used during the whole time of the implementation of the project activities; however, the anticipated length of the project was transcended because of the field work logistics.

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
Fuel for the vehicle movements	1095.6	1147.82	1095.82	During disbursement of grant exchange rate was lower than one used for estimate during proposal preparation.
Vehicle maintenance and repair	695.7	1002.06	306.36	Maintenance cost increased due to prolonged time of study and change of exchange rate.
3 Equipment:				GPS and binocular units were borrowed from within the institute.
i. Stationery	52.2	54.68	2.48	
ii. GPS	330.4			
iii. Binoculars	173.9			
iv. Scat collection bags	21.7	22.77	1.07	
v. Batteries for GPS and Camera	152.2	159.42	7.22	
4. Subsistence				In the first two trips 13 people were involved in each, while five people participated in the last trip. In the proposal only three would participate per trip
i. Meals	782.8	2118	1335.2	
ii. First Aid kit	21.7	22.77	1.07	
5. Cost of outsourced staff and materials	87			The maps have not been made. They will be included in articles that are being written for publication in the local printing media.
Mr. Honori Maliti from TAWIRI, Arusha Payment for digital maps production	521.7			
Costs for DNA extraction and storage				No samples for DNA extraction were found
6. Awareness:				No awareness activity was done, instead, seven students and two game scouts were invited to participate in the project as part of research training.
Awareness on rhino conservation and identification	347.8			
Presentation of research results in the TAWIRI Annual Scientific conference	187			
Leaflets	478.3	100.21	(378.09)	
				Presentation in the Scientific conference was not done because field work was in progress.

				Only 200 record sheets were produced and circulated
TOTAL	5,012.7	4627.73		

Amount remitted £4987 exchange rate: £1= Tanzanian shillings 2195.47022, February 18, 2008. (359.27)

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

To continue with search for rhino signs in other areas as an extension from the current studied area (that is spared as a Critical Rhino Zone). This will help to predict whether the rhinos that exist elsewhere are those that were in the study area in the recent past or not, and therefore ability to follow their sequential movement (shift of an area). The outcome of this study will help to determine the realistic boundary for the present Critical Rhino Zone in the area.

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

Yes. The logo was used in the information collection forms that were produced and distributed to rangers for collection of information in case of encounters of any rhino or rhino signs. However, no publication was sent to RSGF during study.