

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Thinesh Thangadurai
Project Title	Repopulate Coral Communities at Degraded Sites Without Compromising Genetic Diversity in India
Application ID	28913
Date of this Report	31-07-2023

1. 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
To enhance natural coral recruits by providing suitable settlement tiles through artificial structure where larval supply is available.				As we mentioned, we have deployed proposed number of tiles in at unprotected areas. Our actual proposed sites were not granted permission from forest department. So, we selected other sites outside national park after appropriate approval from Rufford committee.
To rear 1000 recruits (13 coral genera) through retrievable tiles from ARs (Donor site) every year.				We found few corals recruits, <i>Acropora</i> , <i>Porites</i> , <i>Goniopora</i> in our deployed tiles along with many benthic communities. We also found diversity of fishes around our deployed sites. Observed benthic communities are including sponges, molluscs and seaweeds. We wanted to have two more visit to quantify the actual abundance of each taxon and the recruitment stability.
Transplant 3000 recruits of 13 coral genera at degraded site and increase live coral cover and diversity around Tuticorin island within 3 years.				Though our plates are showing few recruits, we need to monitor for 2 more years to see if there are stable recruits. Stable recruits then can be transplanted after proper permission again from forest department along with appropriate funding.

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- a) Revealed the corals and other marine organisms' recruitment pattern in our deployed sites.
- b) Revealed how other sessile organism in unprotected area prevent coral recruitment.
- c) Created awareness to school students and local fisherman communities.

We are planning to visit this site one more time to take complete data. Which will be published in the scientific journals along with all the details.

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

- a) Forest department permission denied to carry out work inside the marine national park due to: i) Covid condition while my Research Advisory committee reviewed projects for permission, and ii) short duration of the project to work with corals, which comes under schedule 1.
- b) Though the permission was not granted to work inside the park, we selected an unprotected area and deploy our tiles to look at the recruitment pattern after appropriate approval from Rufford committee.

4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

Local fisherman people engaged in the deployment of tiles and monitoring support along with researchers (photos shared). While engaged in the project, they have been exposed to corals and their importance.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, once I get a stable recruit from the deployed tiles. Will apply for another grant to transplant it in the degraded area.

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

Through publications and presentations in scientific conferences.

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

Continuous monitoring of the deployed tiles in the near future with the other grants. Once I get the good number of stable recruits, will transplant them after appropriate permission with forest department.

Like to do this inside the park again through another project/continue grant. I believe this method will be a model for future transplantation in Indian Reefs.

8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, have presented many guests lectures in universities and created awareness programmes in the school programmes through presentation.

Also, stickers with Rufford logo have been distributed among school and college students.

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

Name	Position	Role
Subu Ram	Ph.D Student (Manonmaniam Sundaranar University)	Monitoring and data collection
Sahaya Rian	Ph.D Annamalai University	Monitoring and data collection
Aswin	Dive Instructor and conservationist	Monitoring and data collection
Saqib Hassan	Researcher	Research discussion and field support

10. Any other comments?

Thank you very much for the research support during the important stage of my carrier. Though I could not achieve all of my objective this enable me to understand the recruitment pattern of corals and other benthic communities outside the protected area.

In India corals are comes under schedule 1, Finding difficulties get a permission for small grant projects with one year duration.

Conservation manages (Wildlife warden) prefer the project to have at least three years along with good funding, particularly dealing with scheduled animals.



