

## **The Rufford Small Grants Foundation Final Report**

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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| <b>Grant Recipient Details</b> |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Your name</b>               | Randrianavelona Roma  |
| <b>Project title</b>           | Conservation of Golden Frogs and Orphan Forests in eastern Madagascar   |
| <b>RSG reference</b>           | 32.02.07  |
| <b>Reporting period</b>        | Final report  |
| <b>Amount of grant</b>         | £4999   |
| <b>Your email address</b>      | <a href="mailto:romagasy2@moov.mg">romagasy2@moov.mg</a> ; <a href="mailto:romagasy@gmail.com">romagasy@gmail.com</a> |
| <b>Date of this report</b>     | 12 January 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   |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Field surveys to locate new sites                      |              |                    | x              | We visited 33 sites, 25 of them with <i>Mantella aurantiaca</i> ; 18 of these were new sites to conservation   |
| Assessment of habitat threats                          |              |                    | x              | Main habitat threats were slash and burn to convert forest into agricultural land. The frogs require wetland habitats for breeding and forest for foraging and overwintering – conservation plans should include both of these habitats.   |
| Assessment of conservation options                     |              |                    | x              | We organised 5 workshops to identify and analyse the best options to conserve potential sites.   |
| Data on population size and water chemistry            |              |                    | x              | These data were collected from all 25 sites where <i>M. aurantiaca</i> occurred.   |
| Monitoring programme designed                          |              |                    | x              | We conducted monthly monitoring at one site from December 2007 to June 2008.   |
| Regional network established                           |              |                    | x              | We worked with three regional organisations that manage forest where <i>M. aurantiaca</i> occurs (two NGOs and one mining company). Local community associations and government are also part of the network.  |
| Awareness raised (community, professionals and school) |              |                    | x              | We have raised the awareness of hundreds of people about <i>M. aurantiaca</i> . This was achieved mainly during workshops, at the regional, district and local level, that we organised.<br>We presented a poster about <i>Mantella</i> frogs at the Year of the Frog celebrations in Antananarivo during December 2008. |
| Impact of trade assessed                               | x            |                    |                | The results from this study were submitted to the Madagascar CITES Scientific Authority for Animals. The potential impact of trade still needs to be addressed.  |
| Publication  |              | x                  |                | Well advanced draft in preparation.  |

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

Cyclone Ivan struck Madagascar in February 2008 and we had to suspend fieldwork for 10 days. In addition to reducing the available time for surveys, this may have also affected the abundance of frogs.

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

**Research:**

- Data collected in this project is the first systematic assessment of the golden mantella's distribution. It has revealed new sites to science, which extend its distributional range and make a reassessment of its IUCN Red List status necessary. It located sites west of the main Mangoro River, a waterbody that has previously thought to be a barrier to dispersal.
- We developed standard survey technique that allows a comparison of relative abundance between sites and months. Using this technique, we were able to make recommendations for future monitoring and to design participatory protocols for use with local communities

**Conservation:**

- Sixteen potential sites for *M. aurantiaca* in situ conservation that were identified during this project are now included in a new protected area. This area, consisting of 25238 ha of humid forest, was awarded provisional status on the 17 October 2008 and the challenge now is complete the necessary activities for it to obtain the definitive status of a new protected area. Although many new protected areas have been created in the last five years in Madagascar, this is the **only one** for which amphibians were the driving force.

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

Local community members worked closely with the survey team during the reconnaissance and the subsequent research. In Ambakaona we conducted joint surveys with a local NGO, Argongampanihy-Communication-Culture-Environment, and in Torotorofotsy we worked alongside Association Mitsinjo.

Government-appointed and traditional leaders were involved in every stage of the discussions that led to the request to make a new protected area. We also completed 11 public consultations at the village level where members of the public were able to contribute to the discussions. One remarkable landowner made 70% of the forest on his land available for strict conservation and research.

We have significantly raised the profile of *M. aurantiaca* and its habitats. The new protected area has also achieved a high profile amongst NGOs and government officials in Antananarivo, the capital city. Whilst there were few direct benefits to the communities during the project, this will need to be addressed in the coming years. During the public consultations community leaders always requested new or improved schools for children. We aim to meet this request at sites where communities are committed to conserving *M. aurantiaca*.

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

We will survey a small number of additional sites in 2009 that we were unable to visit in 2008. We will continue to work with partners for *M. aurantiaca*, especially CITES authorities, communities in the new protected area and Association Mitsinjo at Torotorofotsy. There are additional research questions that need to be answered and we need to provide permanent references source on *Mantella* frogs to regional government. We also intent to create *wildlife clubs* in seven schools in the new protected area, with *M. aurantiaca* as the flagship.

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

1. Survey results and conclusions presented to local leaders, NGOs and government officials in the Alaotra Mangoro Region between July and September 2008
2. Colour poster presented at Madagascar's Year of the Frog celebration in Antananarivo in December 2008; 100 copies of this will be distributed in February 2009.
3. I will present this work at a scientific meeting on amphibian conservation due to be held in Antananarivo in February 2009.
4. I have received a bursary to present these results at the Student Conference on Conservation Science in Cambridge in March 2009.
5. We are preparing a peer-reviewed publication.
6. We submitted a report to the CITES Scientific Authority for Animals in December 2008.

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

The main activities occurred within a 12-month period as originally planned. However, following an unexpected funding opportunity in July 2008 we received an additional grant which allowed us to complete the request for a new protected area, thus extending some of the activities into October 2008. Whilst maps were created during the project, we are only now preparing the scientific publications.

## 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   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|--|
| <b>Equipment</b>                      |                 |                |               | Some equipment used is less expensive than previous. Less computer consumable also was used. |
| Boots                                 |                 | £43.94         |               |  |
| Back pack                             |                 | £42.25         |               |  |
| Electronic balance                    |                 | £30.99         |               |  |
| Tape measures                         |                 | £14.65         |               |  |
| Stationery                            |                 | £9.58          |               |  |
| Computer consumables                  |                 | £9.01          |               |  |
| <b>Total:</b>                         | <b>£225</b>     | <b>£150.43</b> | <b>£74.57</b> |  |
| <b>Photocopies and documentation:</b> |                 | £5.85          |               | Articles, reports and maps were photocopied.   |
| <b>Total:</b>                         |                 | <b>£5.85</b>   | <b>-£5.85</b> |  |

|   |              |  |          |   |
|---|--------------|--|----------|---|
| <b>Subsistence (battery,)</b><br><b>Total:</b>  | <b>£1884</b> | £1810.59<br><b>£1810.59</b>                                | £73.41   |   |
| <b>Medical supply (antiseptics, disease prevention product, medicines,):</b><br><b>Total:</b>                                     |              | £110.51<br><b>£110.51</b>                                  | -£110.51 | As chytrid fungus is now one of main cause of amphibian disappearance, we used preventive principle even if its occurrence in Madagascar still unknown. We used the excess from equipment and subsistence budget to buy those products. |
| <b>Transportation and accommodation:</b><br>Vehicle running cost<br>Domestic travel<br>Bicycles<br>Accommodation<br><b>Total:</b> | <b>£1850</b> | £962.62<br>£78.96<br>£173.24<br>£459.83<br><b>£1214.81</b> | £175.36  | We used bicycles because some sites couldn't reach by car. Hence, we spent less on transportation than previously calculated.   |
| <b>Personnel costs</b><br><b>Total</b>  | <b>£1040</b> | £1186.14<br><b>£1186.14</b>                                | -£146.14 | We need a local assistant in every site we visited.   |
| <b>Communication and administration expenses (phone cards,):</b><br><b>Total:</b>   |              | £61.28<br><b>£61.28</b>                                    | -£61.28  |   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>£4999</b> | <b>£4999.44</b>  | -£0.44   |   |

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

1. Survey additional sites where *M. aurantiaca* may still occur.
2. Update the IUCN Red List for *M. Aurantiaca*.
3. Design and implement local conservation action plans focused around *M. aurantiaca* breeding ponds.

#### 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?

We used the RSGF logo in all presentations, posters, and reports and we will continue to do so for any results from this project. Someone in Madagascar asked me by email about how to apply to the RSG after finding my project on RSG website.

#### 11. Any other comments?

This project improved the synergy between our NGO and decision makers and brought myself and my colleagues closer to key people in Antananarivo.