Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Rebecca Borges
Project Title	Making space for conservation: how relationships and perception can guide science communication and zoning for ecosystem services on the Amazon Coast
Application ID	36897-2
Date of this Report	July 20th 2024

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
Identify and synthesize gaps in local spatial knowledge about marine protected area (MPA) management tools			x	A databank with spatial information for the region was developed. We also analysed the data collected during the first field phase.
Prepare awareness-raising material for social media (YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp) about the MPAs, spatial knowledge, and how these two topics connect			x	To support the preparation of the awareness-raising material, we organised the first MPA Integrated Management Forum in May 2023. This forum brought together the relevant stakeholders in protected areas and commemorated the 18th anniversary of the creation of these MPAs. We prepared an infographic as a product of the forum, which was shared with stakeholders. In addition, a social media workshop for capacity building of local actors was

| | | | | organised in September 2023 to help them develop social media materials.

We presented preliminary results regarding the social network analysis. We discussed possible communication activities to enhance collaboration between the actor groups investigated at retribution events with the users' association in May 2024.

In June 2024, a short animation was finalised. The animation aims to spread information regarding the MPAs and their management.

Finally, a network was formed via collaboration with local organisations, universities, and institutions to share the animation and the other materials produced throughout the project on their social media platforms in the months after the official end of this project. |
|---|---|---|---|---|

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

a) INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT - Via the MPA Integrated Management Forum, a social media workshop, and resulting awareness-raising materials, our project fostered connections among key stakeholders in MPAs and strengthened community-based leadership in these territories, helping consolidate the co-management of local mangroves and their biodiversity;

Figure 1. Local government leaders present at the Forum. Photo by Mariana Trindade (project partner).

b) TAILORED OUTREACH - During the activities, we identified stakeholder groups of importance at the community level. We identified key communication and collaboration aspects of MPA management that need to be strengthened and discussed at the retribution events. We discussed strategies to enable knowledge exchange and enhance ocean literacy regarding MPAs and the biocultural biodiversity that they hold.

Figure 2. Presentation of results and discussion about avenues for integrated co-management of the protected areas in Bragança, Pará.

c) CAPACITY BUILDING FOR DIGITALIZATION- We promoted capacity building in the production of content and management of social media, amplifying the local action regarding MPA and helping attract younger generations to the management of MPAs and protection of mangrove biodiversity that these MPAs help foster.

Figure 3. Youth discussing the management council of the protected areas to elaborate outreach material at the social media workshop.

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

The coastal communities along the Amazon face challenges such as a lack of digital culture, low digital literacy, and a need for more proper equipment necessary for effective digital management MPAs. Consequently, in response to these obstacles, post-pandemic behaviour has shifted towards a preference for in-person meetings. This is why we had to find a balance between encouraging online tools and organising in-person events.

Additionally, these MPAs still need to advance in implementing essential tools, such as management bodies. During the duration of our process, the MPAs were in the long and often delayed process of consolidating their deliberative council. This was an opportunity for our project, and we used it to draw attention to the need for integrated management to be considered in forming these councils. However, this also meant that we had difficulties establishing who the key local groups were. Group interest in the MPAs is dynamic, temporally and spatially, and changes significantly over time. We had to assume a broader range of actors that could potentially have a stake in the management of these areas. Still, during the project, and via the social network analysis, we narrowed down and focused on the relevant groups.

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

The communities actively engaged in this project. Local stakeholders participated in the early stages, such as the refinement of activities to be developed, which was done during the forum. They also kindly agreed to participate in the interviews, which offered data to support the next stages of the project. Local associations and other groups supported the social media workshop and helped us select the youth who joined the event.

Figure 4. An overview of the Forum in May 2023. Photo by Ana Célia Costa (project collaborator).

Local communities were consistently informed and consulted about the project during its implementation, providing valuable feedback for the activities. At the retribution events, MPA associations, representing resource users from these local communities, were informed about the network analyses. These results provided an essential basis for discussing integrated management and the steps to improve MPA management and, consequently, the protection of biodiversity and these communities' traditional ways of living.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

This project aimed to give a first step in digitising governance strategies that directly impact biodiversity by curbing overfishing and overharvesting of wood, for example. We have identified the digitisation processes as being key in further developing conservation initiatives where local human populations play such a significant role.

Digitisation is a crucial tool to help bring stakeholders together in the face of the emergence of online platforms and social media, especially considering the long distances and insufficient funding for transportation costs in the Amazon region, which should be provided mainly by Brazil's federal government. The need for digitisation became more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, when in-person gatherings were avoided.

The challenges of digitisation are pervasive in Brazil and likely in other countries in the Global South. Though still a challenge in the region, digitisation is slowly becoming a reality, especially with the various NGOs and increased money flow to the area. We noticed, however, that it is now important to look for places in Brazil where there is a funding gap in Brazil, both in terms of the geographical areas and type of conservation initiative. While the Amazon is likely to start receiving funding related to blue carbon payment for ecosystem services schemes, other regions on the coast, where forests are not anymore part of the coastal landscape, will be neglected regarding funding for biodiversity conservation schemes. Therefore, while still working on coastal regions in Brazil, the project coordinator (R. Borges) will likely turn her attention to other areas in the country, where financial means for conservation are of greater need.

Another challenge in continuing this project in this specific region is that we are not connected directly to a particular local NGO. Several NGOs are starting to work in the area, including one that the Rufford Foundation also finances. We have partnered with this Rufford Project - Mangrove Observatory: Building Knowledge for the Mangroves We Want[1] - in our activities, especially disseminating the awareness-raising material produced so far. The applicant (R. Borges) will look for an NGO where the project can be nested for the next project round.

---

[1] https://www.rufford.org/projects/indira-angela-luza-eyzaguirre/mangrove-observatory-building-knowledge-mangroves-we-want/

Figure 5. An example of a social media post is disseminating the main outreach material produced.

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

The material produced by this project, including in its previous round (the 1st Rufford Small Grant), is currently being circulated via social media by partner organisations and projects. These include brochures and virtual material (videos and photos). The partners are producing cards and texts for these posts on their social media platforms. These partners, which include the Mangrove Observatory project, LABPEXCA[2], LAMA[3], and RARE[4], are also helping distribute some physical material produced with these two rounds of Rufford grants, including brochures and maps.

These are the most recent posts by our partners:

"Resex Marinhas: entre as raízes do mangue e a preservação pela vida"

https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8zmrDzuLy6/?igsh=YmZlcW5uejNlcDRj

https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8z-pIrMbsF/?igsh=MTJsYWl6aGU5bGGQ3OA%3D%3D

The databank produced can be accessed here: PROJETO REDES RUFFORD

---

[2] https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLbhV4TXBbf7cUk_T8s-H8A
[3] https://ufpa.br/orgaos/laboratorio-de-ecologia-de-manguezal/
[4] https://rare.org/

We also aim to produce and share a policy brief, mainly as part of the project coordinator's research project. This brief will be disseminated online but mainly in an infographic print-out format. Also, scientific papers are being produced that touch upon the topics approached in this project, such as the analysis of social networks and transboundary protected area governance.

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

Regarding the integration and digitisation of conservation management, it is crucial to continue the process of capacity building and empowerment of local agents, especially young and women groups. A forward-looking approach that reflects a commitment to inclusive community development is necessary. Additionally, it is essential to consider direct collaboration with established management bodies. This strategic alliance ensures the utilisation of their expertise and local insights, fostering sustainable initiatives.

It is vital to continue to engage both governmental and non-governmental partners to ensure the sustained continuity of MPA forums, fostering an environment conducive to capacity improvement among stakeholders. Collaboration with universities to enhance and maintain the databank built, aiming to improve digital MPA management, is also important. Additionally, a focus on acquiring funding to foster community-based leadership and enhance the effectiveness of the digital management process remains essential.

The project successfully developed the databank used in the network and governance analyses. Now, it would be crucial to think of how to expand this databank, keep it up-to-date, and put it in a format that is accessible by a larger audience.

As for the continuation of support for the management of mangrove biodiversity and the ways of living of traditional populations on the Brazilian coast, the next steps for the Rufford project will be, as previously mentioned, to shit the geographical focus of the project, while adapting the content and goals to the new local reality. However, partnerships will be preserved that will continue to connect this project to the Bragança region, allowing for a broader alliance of different project areas and the exchange of lessons learned.

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?

All materials produced, including posters, maps, videos, etc., included the Rufford logo. Please note how the logo was displayed in most photos that we took. In all presentations and materials produced, the logo was always given a prominent space. We always mentioned and acknowledged the fact that the project was funded by The Rufford Foundation.

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

Rebecca Borges - project coordinator/applicant
Prepared the application for the grants obtained so far, in collaboration with Prof. Roberta Barboza, supervised the project activities, made the payments, and managed the budget in cooperation with the AWI, where she currently works. I (R. Borges) wrote this report and continue to coordinate the dissemination of the materials produced. I will write the policy brief mentioned above and is responsible for the scientific publications related to this project (in preparation).

Bruna Maria Lima Martins - project coordinator on the field
Organized the field activities, and hired and coordinated the activities of people on the ground. Participated in the design of the outreach materials and the preparation of the present report.

Prof. Roberta Barboza - project advisor
Supervised the writing of the application proposal. Her lab, LABPEXCA, gave logistic support for the field activities. She also helped with the mobilization of local communities on the ground and advised on the project activities.

Daniesse Kasanoski - project advisor
With research and fieldwork experience in the region, Dr. Kasanoski gave expert advice on the project activities, including the preparation of the outreach material.

10. Any other comments?

The contents produced in the social media workshop and the awareness material can be accessed here: Produtos