

Final Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Suman Sapkota
Project Title	Severity assessment of Hunting and Trade of Stream Frogs, and their Conservation in Lower Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal
Application ID	42112-1
Date of this Report	September 2025

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
1. Assessment of hunting and local trade				
1.1 Questionnaire Survey			√	A total of 60 households (10% households) were surveyed to understand the status of hunting and trade in two villages.
1.2 Herder's Interaction			√	<p>Interaction with 12 herders and 8 nomadic corrals were visited to know about the practice of hunting and trade of frogs. The nomadic herders often consume dried frog meat and occasionally sell it to local residents. According to them, the best seasons for capturing frogs are September–October and January–February, with the capture rate being higher during September–October. As discussed, locals frequently inquire about dried frogs with them which are generally preferred during the post-partum period. However, frogs are rarely sold by herder's most of the time, they are offered as gifts to locals.</p> <p>Poster and brochures were also distributed to herders to discourage hunting (see links in section 10).</p>
1.3 Field Survey			√	8 different streams, 2 grasslands, and settlement areas were surveys to know the diversity of frogs. We recorded nine species of frogs including one endemic species listed

			<p>as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List status. A total of 72 individual frogs were recorded, with <i>Nanorana liebigii</i> being the most abundant (n = 30) and <i>Amolops mahabharatensis</i> the least abundant (n = 2).</p> <p>Local markets (including shops, hotels, and other potential outlets) were visited during the monsoon and post-monsoon seasons to understand the patterns of trade and pricing. However, the market survey did not reveal any information regarding the trade of frogs, and no evidence was found of frogs being sold in local markets, either dried or fresh. As the project area lies within a conservation area, such activities are strictly regulated.</p>
2. Stakeholder sensitization and conservation initiation			
2.1 Frog Classrooms		√	<p>Six frog classrooms including 120 students and 12 teachers were sensitized on conservation of frogs.</p>
2.2 Know your frog campaign		√	<p>Two events conducted with 30 participants from schools and community members. Participants hiked to nearest habitat of frogs to better understand the ecology. Conservation brochures were also distributed and identification features shared to discourage hunting of threatened species.</p> <p>Although the campaign was conducted in local schools and communities, we were unable to attract any media attention, as journalists were not invited to the</p>

				event.
2.3	Stakeholders Interaction Workshop		√	A total of 40 stakeholders from two villages participated in one unit of sharing workshop. Results from the project were shared with the chairperson of ward and rural municipality office, representatives from ACAP, CAMC, teachers and other stakeholders. Participants were aware of diversity of frogs and seem to be positive on conservation.

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

a) Diversity and Status of Frogs:

A total of nine species belonging to three families were recorded. An interesting finding was the presence of the newly discovered endemic species – the Mahabharat Torrent Frog (*Amolops mahabharatensis*), which is categorized as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List. The species is found in ACA but was recorded for the first time from Sikles and Tangting. This highlights the ecological importance of the area and underscores the need for further research and conservation interventions in the future.

b) Assessment of Hunting and Trade:

Our survey revealed that each household kills approximately 30–35 frogs annually for various purposes, with protein consumption being the primary reason. An estimated 24,000–28,000 stream frogs are hunted every year in just two villages. Although reliable pricing data was difficult to obtain, our assessment indicates that frogs are sold for NPR 200–500 (1.4-3.5 USD) per individual, whether dried or alive. A major challenge is the seasonal hunting practice, as local communities prefer the pre-monsoon period for hunting, when they specifically target larger individuals. This results in the killing of females before egg-laying. The preferred species for hunting is *Nanorana legibii*, due to its large size and delicacy.

c) Conservation Outreach:

Local stakeholders, including students, teachers, community members, conservation area officials, and herders, were sensitized through conservation outreach programs and sharing workshops. These initiatives successfully conveyed conservation messages and helped discourage the hunting of stream frogs. We conducted a pre-survey with students from Tangting Village, who had not previously received any awareness education related to frogs. A post-survey is planned to be conducted after a year of conservation camps, in December. The findings from the post-survey will be shared with the Rufford Foundation.

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

During the project, several unforeseen challenges arose that affected the implementation. As the project area is located in the mid-hills, unexpected weather conditions such as heavy rainfall, road blockages, and other natural disturbances often posed difficulties for fieldwork. To address these challenges, we consulted with local stakeholders to identify safer periods and alternative routes. While this approach ensured the safety of the team, it led to delays in the overall project duration.

Another significant challenge was collecting reliable data on frog hunting and trade. Many respondents were initially hesitant to share information. To overcome this, we engaged a local resource person who acted as a facilitator during the survey process. This approach helped build trust within the community, making data collection smoother and encouraging respondents to provide accurate information.

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

Local communities played an active role throughout the project. Initial approval and permission to conduct the project were obtained from the local ward office, ensuring community engagement from the very beginning. During field surveys, three local guides were hired which not only supported the project but also generated local interest and increased awareness about the diversity of frogs in their area. Besides, a Research Officer from FON Nepal participated in the field surveys and conservation camp.

Students were engaged through activities such as the *Frog Classroom* sessions and the *Know Your Frog* campaign. These initiatives broadened their understanding of frog species and highlighted practical ways to contribute to conservation efforts.

Additionally, a sharing workshop was organized with the participation of the ward chairperson, rural municipality chairperson, representatives from ACAP, community-based organizations (CBOs), Conservation Area Management Committee, and local leaders. This platform successfully raised awareness among community members about the frog species found in their locality, particularly the importance of protecting endemic species.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are clear plans to continue and expand this work. The next phase will focus on identifying breeding grounds, assessing threats, and studying vocalizations and other key ecological parameters of the endemic and threatened frog species found in the area. In addition, we plan to incorporate the use of bioacoustics sensors to better understand the communication patterns and behavioural ecology of stream frogs. These efforts will contribute to more comprehensive knowledge and inform effective conservation strategies in the future.

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

The initial findings of the project have already been shared with stakeholders through a dedicated sharing workshop. In addition, the project results were shared through a dissemination workshop with representatives from ACA, the ward chairperson, and relevant stakeholders. Updates and results of the project will also be shared through the official Facebook page of Friends of Nature (FON), Nepal once the report is approved from the Rufford Foundation.

The final project report will be formally submitted to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and the Annapurna Conservation Area Project. Furthermore, following detailed analysis of hunting and trade issues, the findings will be prepared for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal to reach a wider academic and conservation audience. The record of *A. mahabharatensis* has been shared with ACAP officials and incorporated into their publication *Herpetofauna of ACA*. As I will also be representing the Amphibian Red List Assessment team for Nepal, this update will be shared during the assessment process.

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

The following steps are considered critical for building on the achievements of this project and ensuring long-term conservation of stream frogs:

- **Assessment of Breeding Ecology:** Conduct detailed studies on breeding behavior and identify breeding pools of endemic frog species.
- **Threat and Habitat Analysis:** Undertake a comprehensive threat assessment of stream frogs and map habitat hotspots to prioritize conservation actions.
- **Community Engagement and Capacity Building:** Strengthen local community involvement in amphibian conservation by providing training and necessary equipment for long-term monitoring.
- **Awareness and Sensitization:** Continue sensitization programs to discourage hunting and trade, while promoting frog-friendly practices within communities.
- **Integration of Bioacoustics:** Utilize bioacoustics tools to better understand frog vocalizations, activity patterns, and spatial distribution, laying the foundation for developing a frog call library.

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, The Rufford Foundation logo was used in conservation awareness materials, banners, posters, brochures and presentations. The foundation was acknowledged during workshops and awareness programs. The project was also shared on social media and conservation networks, further highlighting The Rufford Foundation's support.

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

Suman Sapkota- Project leader, responsible for research design, species identification, conservation materials design, and overall implementation of the project

Bikash Ghimire- Assisted in finalization of conservation materials and data sheet

Raju Acharya- Provided insights on data collection of hunting and trade, facilitated on questionnaire preparation and finalization

Prabal Bir Jung Rana- Assisted in field visit and questionnaire survey

10. Any other comments?

We have also published a storybook for children in the Nepali language, highlighting the importance of frogs and sharing interesting facts about them. This activity was not included in the original project plan but has been developed as an additional outreach initiative. The storybook will also feature the logo of the Rufford Foundation (along with other logos) in recognition of their support.

Booklet link: <https://fonnepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/World-of-Frog.pdf>

Poster link: <https://fonnepal.org/posters/>

Brochure link: <https://fonnepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Stream-Frog-Brochure.pdf>

ANNEX – Financial Report
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Dried frogs for future use



Presenting results during sharing workshop



Nanorana legibii: preferred frog for hunting