

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. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other 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. 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. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. 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	Ricardo de Lima
Project title	The impact of changing agricultural practices on the endemic birds of São Tomé (São Tomé and Príncipe)
RSG reference	50.04.09
Reporting period	November 2009 – February 2011
Amount of grant	£4,600
Your email address	rfaustinol@gmail.com
Date of this report	March 2011

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective				Comments
	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	
Understand São Tomé's avifauna response to agroforestry intensification.			X	The number of bird species increases in more intensive land-uses. However, this increase is mostly attributable to widespread birds, since the endemics decrease both in species and individuals. Thanks to the high forest cover, most endemic species are still dominant across the island. The lack of high definition geographical information for São Tomé makes it difficult to analyse interactions between land uses, but landscape context seems to have a strong effect within each land use. Therefore, further intensification is likely to have pervasive effects across land uses. The drier lowlands seem to be the most prone areas to land use intensification and consequent loss of endemic bird species.
Analyse intra-annual variations in the bird communities.		X		These data were collected and are currently being entered for subsequent analyses.
Involve local stakeholders in this project			X	Field work was conducted in contact with the "Ministério dos Recursos Naturais, Energia e Ambiente" and the "Óbo National Park". Two field assistants (Nelson Nana and Leonel Viegas) from the local NGO "Monte Pico" were employed fulltime for 8 months. First, they helped taking the characteristics of the sampling locations, and then were trained and conducted bird point counts autonomously.
Increase awareness and local capacity on environmental issues.			X	Besides punctual contacts with local communities during field work, I managed to get extra funding from APLORI and BirdLife International to conduct a training course on ornithology and conservation. This 4-week course allowed 14 people from local relevant stakeholders to increase their knowledge on these subjects. Furthermore, it had a very good coverage by the Santomean media (national television and radio stations, plus three newspapers).
Disseminate findings to relevant stakeholders		X		I had envisaged writing a report to pass to the local relevant entities in April 2011, but since much of the data are still on analyses this report is likely to be delayed. Meanwhile more stakeholders are being identified (namely Cafedirect, Kaoka, and other big investors in the island's agriculture).

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

My arrival at São Tomé was delayed for 2 months (from November 2009 to January 2010) and point count characterisation was also more time consuming than predicted. Therefore, to assure that both dry and wet seasons were sampled, field work had to be postponed and finished in February 2011 only.

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

Firstly, we have engaged and improved the capacity of strategic Santomean entities to assure that the future conservation actions can be increasingly led by its inhabitants.

Secondly, we have gathered knowledge on the current status of the island's bird communities and on how these might react to further land use changes.

Finally, we have also learnt more about the current threats, relevant stakeholders and obstructions to the future implementation of conservation actions in São Tomé.

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

The field assistants were the most direct local beneficiaries, by having received 8 months of paid experience in conducting a scientific bird survey. This not only gave them knowledge about the techniques, but also about the bird's ecology and the different ecosystems of the island. They will very likely keep on taking direct advantage of this experience as they frequently guide tourists and scientists in the island.

The local government will gain knowledge on how to tackle threats to the unique biodiversity of their country, as these findings can be used as a reference situation for further studies (specifically for environment impact assessments, which are compulsory for big investments but still poorly implemented) or even as guidelines for future conservation actions.

This knowledge can also be used by agriculture investors to promote environmentally friendly products. Being an island, Sao Tome has been having very serious competitiveness problems, which market niches such as Fairtrade and organic products have recently proven to overcome.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, this grant was a support to pay for the field work expenses of my PhD, and although the field work is nearly finished, I have collected plenty of data that still needs analysis. The results will then be translated into scientific publications and a guideline report for relevant stakeholders. There is still the possibility that my PhD work will be the base of a wider project of the British Trust for Ornithology, depending on the success of ongoing funding proposals.

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

As said previously, I'll disseminate the results of this project in two distinct directions: scientific literature and reports to local stakeholders. I will analyse the data collected during this project to write my PhD thesis (due in June 2012), and submit at least a couple of papers to peer reviewed scientific journals. Meanwhile I will also write a brief guideline report in Portuguese, to send to the identified stakeholders in Sao Tome (NGOs, government, public institutes and agricultural investors).

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 between January 2010 and February 2011, which represents a two-month delay when compared to the anticipated length of the project. However, the 14 months' extent was kept.

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
1 return flight to ST	1200	1345.66	145.66	
Travel expenses in ST	2800	2654.34	-145.66	I had mechanical problems with my car, so far exceeded this amount. However, the extra expenses were paid with my PhD subsistence grant.
Material for Monte Pico	600	600	0	The maps and GPSs were cheaper than budgeted, so the remaining was given to "Monte Pico".
Total	4600	4600	0	

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

During the time spent in Sao Tome, I've realised both the current high levels of threat and the difficulties in putting in action any future conservation measures. There is still a general unawareness of the Santomeans towards the biodiversity value of the endemic species of the island, and about the great threats that they are currently facing. However, while the common citizen was very willing to learn and share knowledge, most people with some kind of authority were usually much less open to discussions. Any future work in Sao Tome should take this into account and, as I believe that the biodiversity in Sao Tome can only be saved by Santomeans, emphasis should be put in simultaneously raising environmental awareness for the general public and pressuring local entities to improve, follow and enforce conservation actions in the country.

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, I'll be presenting a poster at the Students Conference on Conservation Science (Cambridge, 22-24 March 2011), in which RSGF is acknowledged. I'm also working on scientific publications for my theses, in which RSGF will also be acknowledged.