

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 | Sandy Heather |
| Project title | Understanding local indigenous values placed on biodiversity, through participative mapping of the living landscape in the Pondoland Centre of Endemism |
| RSG reference | 9697-1 |
| Reporting period | November 2012-October 2013 |
| Amount of grant | £5600 |
| Your email address | brash@netactive.co.za |
| Date of this report | 20 th November 2013 |

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 |
|---|--------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Landscape planning and management tool | | X | | This does not yet exist as a single tool. Instead, six different documents have been developed in the past year which now require synthesis: 1). community maps (past funding); 2). Local desires document (this funding); 3). Desktop legislation and policy analysis (this funding); 4). Eco-tourism pre-feasibility (leverage from this funding); 5). Training and research institute concept document (leverage from this funding); and 6). French entomology report and way forward plans (leverage for this funding). Within the last year we have also increased full-time personnel (which was not previously envisaged) in the form of four trainee community para-ecologists who participate in the scientific and social research and now need to play a role in the creation of the single tool. |
| Civil society participation in Local Government planning | X | | | Our local municipality has always been weak. Its oversight has now been transferred by central government to a new District Municipality which has compounded rather than alleviated problems, with relationships with communities deteriorating further through false promises. SANBI (Parastal – South African Biodiversity Institute) was requested by us to intervene but this also failed so it was decided to continue to work 'under the radar' until functionality has been restored at which time our proposals will be presented. |
| Stewardship and eco-tourism as a local development choice | | | X | At a community meeting held at Gobodweni Falls (Baleni village – one of the 'Simbhademe' – the empowerment programme - villages) in August 2013 SWC was mandated to begin a feasibility study for a community botanical space/training & research institute/cultural research and environmental education centre/tourism hub/local economic development micro-project headquarters, as subsequent to the mapping exercises and village meetings this is their agreed development option of choice. |
| Integration of natural and social science | | | X | The French entomologists are currently designing a follow-up trip which will include two |

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|--|--|---|---|--|
| research | | | | anthropologists in a combined research project. The mandate for the para-ecologists is to treat science and society with the same weight. |
| Trained local people | | | X | Four newly employed (on a 3-year contract) para-ecologists in training. Further experience for those already 'trained'. |
| Increased conservation area | | X | | This has happened anyway without SWC's involvement as a developer has negotiated the doubling of the size of the formally protected area across the river and the building of a tourism hub within the reserve. Our mandate from the Baleni community to assess the eco-tourism, training and research options to them opens the potential for linking cross-river and ensures a conservation ethic in an equally sized area on the community (north) side of the river. This may not be plain sailing though as the developer is of the old school and does not understand how to deal with an empowered community who are able to articulate their indigenous biodiversity values and their desires and needs. Whilst the Baleni dream will move forward as it is a bottom-up process, the conventional paradigm tourist lodge in the reserve may not. |
| Indigenous/community knowledge included in scientific research | | | X | Following the learning from the French trip last year 'holistic community-based science' has been embraced by all concerned. A presentation poster on the French trip was created as a tool to feedback to the community so that feedback loops are created, and learning is embraced by everyone. Each member of the French team was given a gift of "Medicinal Plants of Pondoland" a book written by an SWC Director in collaboration with local Herbalists. They will also be investigating the cultural significance (if any) of the insects that they identified on their first trip, on their return. The new para-ecologists are being trained by the same herbalists in the book and will be submitting their cultural story with each specimen sent to the Herbarium. |

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

I fell ill just after receipt of the Rufford funds. Not expecting complications, I requested an SWC colleague to facilitate the scoping workshop between the community and the Environmental Assessment Practitioner whilst I was off sick. He decided that since he did not have experience of the

Simbhademe process (previously held community empowerment workshops and livelihoods projects where the Mapping was initiated) he would have two workshops at the beginning instead of one with the first one being with a smaller group comprised of the Simbhademe facilitators, the EAP, the CEO of a partner NGO and two other SWC Directors, one being from the community. The second was intended to consist of all local role-players as envisaged in my Rufford proposal. At their first workshop it was decided that before an Environmental Management Plan is done for the area it was essential to know what legislation and policy exists relating specifically to this area. Just as a biodiversity inventory has never been done specifically for the Pondoland Centre of Endemism neither has a law and policy analysis been done. This they felt would give a community plan more weight in an already partisan and worsening local government climate.

Since tensions were running high with government not consulting and select business people originally from the community becoming 'entrepreneurs' it was later decided not to have a Simbhademe workshop (2nd workshop) where communities are represented by five members only, but instead to hold full community meetings in each of the six villages where everyone would be involved. The process was therefore split into two (from the original project design): 1). 6 x village meetings; and 2) professional desktop analysis.

The plan was then handed back to me, but I only returned to working health 3 months later which delayed kick-off. However, this was only a problem in my head as I wrestled with changing from an original 3-month plan to a year-plan. Weatherwise it proved to be a blessing as huge summer rains meant that rivers were impassable, so no community meetings were possible anyway and the EAP spent months wrestling with the enormity of her task and how actually to do it.

Through my enforced extension of the timing I was able to leverage other projects to tie in, with the landscape planning and management tool that will ultimately be produced being a far superior product to the one envisaged. The additional time has also allowed for far more community meetings around a variety of issues which has encouraged them to make deeper considerations of the relevance of healthy ecosystems and their desired outcomes from 'development'.

The employment of the local p-ecologists which happened in March means that local Indigenous values placed on biodiversity becomes a distinct research focus for the next 2 years as opposed to a short project. We believe that we have captured sufficient information to create the planning and management tool in the meantime, but this can always be added to in the future as the para-ecologists provide us with more information.

As with most things viewed over the longer term, the unforeseen difficulties which seemingly massively problematic and worrying at the time turned into unforeseen positives!

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

a) Leverage creating a holistic approach

As this project took longer than the envisaged 3 months, the community needs became more complex as events snowballed over the course of the year. With these funds being small and the outcomes required by the people growing and growing it was important to get as much leverage out of these funds as possible. The people had recently given the go-ahead for the investigation of a 'storage and spreading place' for indigenous and ecological understanding - Iziko. The concept

document for this was written. The South African National Biodiversity Institute was persuaded to use a small grant which they had received on brokering a relationship between the local people and local government. When this fell apart and, on our advice, SANBI used these funds instead to do a pre-feasibility eco-tourism study of the area with this having been decided by the communities as the most ecosystem responsible type of development. The Baleni people requested a meeting with 'expert outsiders' to hear their ideas and a feasibility study is planned around these. This may well intersect with the Iziko concept. All of this has been seeded by the community mapping; the fact that people are listening to each other, the deep trust that has developed and the consequent dreaming and planning that is happening. The landscape planning and management tool will be all the stronger.

b) Evidence of the people's desire for community-based eco-tourism as their 'development' option

Emerging out of the last 5 years of interaction has been the growing desire for local economic development to follow local desires of community-based ecotourism. Stated more correctly it has probably been my understanding of those desires that has grown and not the desires themselves – they have probably always been there. But the last year's work has provided an actual document articulating those desires. As with all cross-cultural work – it is us westerners who require this documentation and not the indigenous people whose world does not exist in the written form. But this document acts as evidence in the western world and is essential as a tool to broker an understanding between west and indigenous. It is the 'empirical evidence' that we need to 'prove' that the people are not wanting a destructive industrial form of development in their biodiversity rich area.

c) Deep research

This came not only from a scientific perspective but also that of community. Adding the social/cultural component to the French research trip gave the scientists as well as the work an added dimension and brought indigenous biodiversity values into everything they did. The poorly educated (most are illiterate) community has a deeper understanding of what science is and 'science' has learned to operate in a social milieu. This has carried through to the training of the para-ecologists who are not treating science in isolation. With regard to the Local Desires Development document it is wonderful to understand how integral 'ecology' is to the cultural thinking and the depth of analysis that came through in the preparation of the document. I accredit much of this to the type of facilitation being used in the Simbademe workshops which allows local thinking to emerge and not external thinking to be imposed.

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

This is a community driven and led initiative with the community of the greater area being the sole beneficiaries from a holistic perspective of ecology, society, culture, economics and science. The project leader and the consultant were the only non-local people involved. The community are striving to be heard regarding their development wishes being supported by documentation that they can use for a variety of purposes.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Since a single planning and management tool was not finally produced, this still needs to be done. Although some of these documents have already been used by lawyers acting on behalf of the community, the six newly developed documents need to be collated into one. This is not a job for a single person and will best be done by relevant experts and local leaders getting together over a couple of days to synthesise the information.

In recent discussions with SANBI it has been decided that the local role-players who have led the process so far will be networked with a wide range of stake holders such as the provincial environmental department, low key municipal officials, SANBI itself and other NGOs operating in the area. The community will then decide who they would like to attend a workshop to create the single document. SANBI has agreed to match funding that I/SWC can find for this process.

This will then be presented to local government as and when they are functional but in the meantime it will be used by community representatives, lawyers, scientists, SANBI and NGOs in perusing community/private/public/NGO partnerships to bring environmentally sound development to the area.

The French entomologists intend to return adding two anthropologists to their team. As well as further research in the field they will do training with the para-ecologists who will then be able to collect samples on a long-term basis for the French research.

Livelihoods projects linking into community-based eco-tourism will be expanded with or without local government assistance. All desires expressed in the Local Desires document that are not dependent on local government will be advanced where possible using the legislation and policy analysis as leverage.

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

As per the original plan the Queen has been kept apprised of the progress of this project by myself even though the final document is not yet ready. Community reps will still present the final document to the Royal House. It will be sent to the lawyers representing the community for use in their court case (they have already used the Local Desires document). It will be presented at Komkhulu (seat of traditional leadership) as was the results of the French research trip. Probably most importantly of all it provides the ACCODA Trust (the trust representing the community) with a development process and document beyond their wildest dreams, to use as a negotiating tool. It will be known to and hopefully used by all role-players from the synthesis workshop. All documents will be housed on SWC's website for free use by any party.

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

Although this was intended as a 3-month project, it has taken a full year to reach our outcomes as explained under 2.

This funding came through later than originally planned which meant that the French scientists completed their taxonomic research before the scoping workshop designed for step 1 of this project (originally planned for September 2012 but taking place at the beginning of December) took place. So, the final workshop planned (for end of November 2012) to merge the scientific and social research did not happen whilst the French scientists were in South Africa. This did not present a problem however as not knowing whether funding was going to be acquired for this element (this has now been nicknamed the 'Rufford Element') I had incorporated a strong social/cultural focus into the French scientific expedition which I coordinated. In other words, the activities listed in the proposal did not happen in the sequence proposed but this had no effect on the final outcomes.

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.

The original calculation of R13 to the Pound was used

| Item | Budgeted Amount | Actual Amount | Difference | Comments |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---|
| Workshop – local travel | 138 | 385 | 247 | As no community workshops were held, this money was used to transport the ACCODA Trust Trustees and Simbhademe facilitators to each of the five village meetings. The sixth village meeting has not yet been held as there were local political problems which has to be resolved first. This will happen after the rains and funds have been ring-fenced for this. |
| Workshop - catering | 269 | 462 | 193 | Catering at individual village mass meetings. |
| Workshop – sitting fee | 231 | | 231 | None, as no workshops were held. |
| Workshop - logistics | 77 | 154 | 77 | I claimed the equivalent of organising for two workshops as there was far more organising with the new design but the balance of the time was donated. |
| Workshop - facilitation | 231 | 385 | 154 | Facilitation of individual village meetings took more time than one workshop for the local facilitators. |
| Workshop - facilitator's travel | 46 | | 46 | This was combined with the local travel amount to fund the travel to six meetings |
| Workshop - EAP travel & accommodation | 123 | 64 | 59 | EAP donated much of her costs |
| Workshop – venue hire | 77 | | 77 | This was donated |
| Translation | 769 | 769 | nil | |
| EAP fee | 1538 | 1538 | nil | This task took far more time than originally budgeted for but the EAP agreed to donate the balance of her time. |
| Travel to Royal House | 138 | | 138 | A one-on-one meeting was held between Sandy and the Queen as the King passed away and the Queen is |

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| | | | | bound by cultural norms not to attend large gatherings for a year after the King's death. This trip was co-funded by another project which was discussed at the same time to conserve funds, but it is also the reason for the overspend on the items below. |
| Project leader travel | 232 | 615 | 383 | Increase in AA rates. Two trips instead of one |
| Project leader accommodation | 154 | 168 | 16 | Two trips instead of one |
| 1 further workshop | 1115 | | 111 5 | Only one workshop was held. This further workshop money was transferred to the spend on village meetings as the design changed |
| Project admin | 462 | 269 | 193 | This money is ring-fenced for website design to include the Rufford project. |
| Total | 5600 | 4809 | 789 | |

If the underspend does not have to be returned, it is earmarked for the sixth village meeting, presentation of the final document to the Royal House and SWC web design. The balance remaining will be put towards livelihoods projects as per the Local Desires document.

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

- a) Stakeholder workshop to synthesise the documents.
- b) Expansion of small-scale local economic development projects according to the Landscape Planning and Management tool so that local people receive affirmation of their hard work.
- c) Development of the Baleni mandate to investigate a research/biodiversity/training/cultural/environmental education centre in conjunction with the Iziko concept - if this does not also get resolved in step a.
- d) Return of the French entomologists with anthropologists (matched with local South African researchers) to continue the taxonomic/socio-cultural research and pass skills onto the par-ecologists and other community leaders.

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, both documents carry the RSGF logo.

Neither Rufford nor SWC were mentioned in the actual village meetings as it was more meaningful to highlight the involvement of the local Trust – ACCODA - as this opportunity of funding village meetings was used to simultaneously introduce the new Trustees to the community. At a strategic level and in strategic meetings this is called the Rufford Element.

With apologies, I did not provide feedback for the RSGF website.

11. Any other comments?

An aside – coming from an education background, I see ‘outcomes’ and ‘objectives’ as 2 distinctly different things. I wonder if other grantees have this dilemma. There would be more clarity for me if the same words had been used in both the proposal and report templates. Since I outlined ‘outcomes’ in the proposal, I have reported on these ‘outcomes’ under the ‘objectives’ heading in this report.

Rural community work can only be done effectively if the local needs of the moment take precedence. This means that nothing can ever be predicted, and it is most gratifying to have a funder who understands the need for flexibility. This project delivered far more than could have ever been envisaged because of this.