

The Rufford Foundation Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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	Dr. Abdul Wakid
Project title	Securing the future of Gangetic dolphin in Brahmaputra river system (India) through local community engagement and empowerment
RSG reference	1072-P
Reporting period	January, 2014-March, 2015
Amount of grant	£25,000
Your email address	wakid@aaranyak.org
Date of this report	25-01-2016

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
<p>To enhance local community participation and capacity in dolphin and ecosystem conservation across 30 priority dolphin habitats (DCN sites) in Brahmaputra river system</p>			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of the targeted 30 DCN sites, total 22 DCN Units were formed in 22 DCN sites with a total 220 DCN Unit members. In these DCN Unit members, there are 24% students, 19% conservationists, 18% CBO workers, 13% teachers, 8% women, 7% fishermen and 6% community leaders. • Developed Independent double observer based capture-recapture method as the best approach for land-based dolphin and habitat monitoring by the trained volunteers (DCN Members) of local communities residing in and around important dolphin habitats. • We conducted our first community based dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring training from 21st-24th January 2014, followed by second training from 21st-27th May 2014. First training was attended by 32 DCN Members from 18 DCN sites. Second training was attended by 54 DCN Members from 27 DCN sites. At the end of second training, dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring equipment set (each set consisted of one GPS, one binocular, one camera, two field guides, one monitoring protocol and one field bag) were provided to each trained DCN Unit. After that, the trained community youths (DCN Members) conducted extensive land based dolphin and habitat monitoring in DCN sites using independent double observer based capture-recapture method. With this new monitoring method, DCN Members conducted total 31 days dolphin and their habitat monitoring in 28 DCN sites in 7 months, where total 668 km transect lengths were monitored.
<p>To bring dolphin mortality in Brahmaputra river system to</p>			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols for fishermen on release of accidentally caught dolphin in fishing net

<p>minimum level</p>				<p>developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total of 105 active and professional fishermen were trained on releasing of entangled dolphin from fishing net. • We trained total 54 DCN Coordinators from 27 DCN sites on potential alternate livelihood on their areas in a day long training programme by three experts on water hyacinth based product development, aquaculture, and sustainable agriculture. • Total 150 bin community fishermen were provided alternate of dolphin oil for 5 months (November 2013 - March 2014), from where the fishermen earned about £2500 in free of cost and got the confidence of alternate oil use.
<p>To increase general public awareness on dolphin and ecosystem conservation</p>			<p>X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total 84 awareness campaigns were conducted in total 82 river side villages of Brahmaputra, Kulsi and Subansiri River through 'Dolphin Yatra', where total 11,167 people participated. • One poster, one booklet and one drama on dolphin and ecosystem conservation were developed.
<p>To develop sustainable fishery in DCN sites</p>			<p>X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54 DCN Members from 27 DCN sites were trained in a day long training programme on fisheries resource management by the officials from the Fishery Department of Government of Assam. Also, linkages were developed in between DCN Coordinators from 22 DCN sites with their respective District Fishery Development Offices (DFDO) during the fishery awareness campaign in 2014. • Awareness campaign on sustainable fishing was conducted in 33 riverside villages of 22 DCN sites from June-July 2014 in collaboration with the Directorate of Fisheries of Assam Fishery Department where total 2267 fishermen participated. Total 28 Fishery Officers from 13 District Fishery Development Offices participated in this awareness campaign. During this campaign, we did insurance coverage for 2441 fishermen under the scheme of Government of India.

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

Although we assumed that we would be able to start the community based dolphin and habitat monitoring process after the first DCN training in January 2014, however, we observed that most of the DCN Members were not able to properly operate the equipments (mainly GPS) and data collection protocols due to their complete inexperience in the equipment specially GPS handling during the first training in January 2014. On the other hand, some of the DCN members were unable to participate in that training camp due to sudden unstable political situation in Assam during that time. Therefore, we couldn't start the land based dolphin and habitat monitoring after the first training. Therefore, we organised another extensive 8-day residential training camp, where a total of 54 DCN Members from 27 DCN sites participated. During this training camp, the participants were made comfortable in monitoring equipments and protocols handling, followed by monitoring equipments were handed over to them. Accordingly, we were able to start the land based dolphin and habitat monitoring from June, 2014.

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

- Extensive training on river dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring was provided to community youths from 30 different DCN (Dolphin Conservation Network) sites through a total of 10 days of residential training camps.
- First ever scientifically correct community based Ganges river dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring were conducted in total 668 km transect length in 27 most important dolphin habitats in Brahmaputra river system in 7 months, where total 54 trained community youths (DCN members) participated. Independent double observer based capture-recapture method was standardised and followed in this monitoring process.
- Alternate of dolphin oil, prepared from fish scraps, were provided in free of cost to 150 Bin community fishermen, who earned about £2500 and got good confidence on alternate oil use to replace dolphin oil use in oil bait fishing.

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

- Local communities residing in and around 30 important dolphin habitats (DCN sites) were extensively engaged in this project. Total 220 community people participated in the formation of 22 DCN Units. A total of 54 trained community youths participated in river dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring in 27 important dolphin habitats for 7 months. A total of 150 Bin community fishermen were engaged in alternate oil use in dolphin oil bait fishery for 4 months. A total of 2267 fishermen participated in the fish and fishery awareness campaign in 22 riverside villages. A total of 11,167 river side community people participated in 84 awareness campaigns on dolphin and river ecosystem conservation.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

- Yes, we are planning to continue these works to get a long lasting impact on Ganges River Dolphin conservation in Brahmaputra river system.

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

- Through publications in local newspapers and journals.
- Seminar presentations in different forums.

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

- Project was completed in 18 months (Jan, 2014-June, 2015), whereas the project duration was originally proposed for 18 months (Oct, 13-March, 2015).

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
Staff salary	3000	2999.58	0.42	
Boat fuel and maintenance	5400	6394.39	-994.39	More field days than estimated
Vehicle fuel and maintenance	1300	1246.77	53.23	
Fieldwork operating cost	4000	4515.06	-515.06	More field days than estimated
Education materials	600	464.83	135.17	
Fieldwork travel and subsistence	2500	2241.14	258.86	
Equipment	2500	1916.95	583.05	
Training and Workshop	4400	4701.64	-301.64	
Contingency	1300	520.02	779.98	
Total	25000	25000.38	-0.38	

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

- Continuing community based dolphin and river ecosystem monitoring processes to protect important dolphin habitats.
- Continue the support to Bin community fishermen by providing alternate oil in free of cost.
- Continue the fish and fishery and dolphin conservation awareness campaign among the river side communities.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

- We used RSG logo in our published materials (booklet and posters).

11. Any other comments?

- I offer my sincere thanks to RSG for providing all the 5 grants of RSG, through which me and my team were able to provide important contribution to the conservation of Ganges river dolphins in Brahmaputra River system from 2004-15.