

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	Alasdair Harris
Project title	Community-based marine turtle conservation in western Madagascar
RSG reference	10879-B
Reporting period	January 2012 to March 2013
Amount of grant	£11,960.00
Your email address	al@blueventures.org
Date of this report	23/05/2013

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
Over 10,000 people to have heard marine turtle conservation messages through festivals, workshops and radio transmissions.			X	At least 10,000 people have heard marine turtle conservation messages. The real figure is probably closer to 20,000. One final part of educational outreach to occur in May to June 2013 after postponed due to cyclone.
Minimum of 10 community members trained in nest monitoring.		X		Only eight community members were trained because finances and logistics only permitted four islands to be monitored for nesting, with two trained monitors per island.
Nests recorded and protected in the Barren Isles.			X	All nests have been protected on four islands in the Barren Isles where monitoring and conservation activities take place.
Accurate assessment of the traditional turtle fishery.			X	Monitoring of the turtle fishery has continued in two regions in Madagascar.
Monitor and evaluate the project over the last 5 years.			X	Workshops and focus groups have been conducted in two regions of Madagascar to evaluate the changes in the turtle fishery over the last 5 years and how these relate to this project's work. Results show that whilst awareness has increased on the importance of marine turtle conservation, this can also reduce the willingness of fishers to report their turtle catch to community data collectors.

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

There were two major unforeseen difficulties during the project.

Firstly, in the Barren Isles, local government authorities arrested community members found with turtle meat as turtle fishing is illegal. This created a period of confusion and distrust between Blue Ventures and the community as to whether Blue Ventures had been involved in these arrests. However, continuing the nest monitoring and using this as an opportunity to repeatedly meet and talk over the objectives of the turtle conservation project eventually helped to shift attitudes and actually promote additional conservation activities by Blue Ventures.

Secondly, in February 2013 cyclone Haruna directly hit one of the research sites in southwest Madagascar. Whilst this did not impact directly on the overall outputs of the conservation project, all conservation work was paused whilst staff at the research site worked to help the community to respond to the potential health issues resulting from the cyclone (e.g., contaminated water, spread of diseases). All non-essential spending was also paused for a 3-week period whilst transport issues meant that additional funds could not be accessed.

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

Protection of 51 turtle nests in the Barren Isles in the 2012-2013 nesting season (an increase from 27 protected in the 2011-2012 nesting season).

Training of eight community members to monitor turtle nesting and actively promote conservation work in the Barren Isles:

<http://blog.blueventures.org/island-life-monitoring-nesting-turtles-in-the-barren-isle/>

Marine turtle festivals and educational activities held along 400 km of coastline in west Madagascar, attracting thousands of viewers:

<http://blueventures.org/press-releases/marine-turtle-festival-spreads-up-the-west-coast-of-madagascar.html>

<http://blueventures.org/press-releases/celebrating-on-world-sea-turtle-day.html>

<http://blog.blueventures.org/lolo-limelight-fano-festival-andranopasy/>

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

Local communities have been involved and benefitted from this project in several ways:

- Community members are employed as data collectors to record data on turtles landed in their village. This method has been employed for a number of years as a solution on how to record sensitive information over a remote area. Community members are also employed as project assistants.
- Community members have been trained and employed as community nest monitors in the Barren Isles.
- Community members have been part of focus groups to discuss the current status of the turtle fishery and to provide feedback on this project.
- Community members within each village actively help with the organisation and running of educational activities, including festivals.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

There are plans to continue this work. At the present time the current thoughts are to shift the majority of the focus of this work to the Barren Isles where the community nest monitoring has proved to be extremely successful in promoting wider marine research and conservation in the region. Not only do further anecdotal reports of nesting highlight the need to geographically expand the monitoring and conservation project here but the current community team have proved themselves dedicated and keen to gain further knowledge.

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

At present two scientific papers are in preparation on the results of the nest monitoring and the long-term fisheries monitoring. These will be shared with Rufford once published.

Articles and blogs on this project have been continually updated to the Blue Ventures' website and shared with other websites such as IOSEA: http://www.ioseaturtles.org/messageboard_detail.php?id=282.

In addition a film on this project entitled 'Giving turtles a chance' has been put together and promoted through the Blue Ventures' website and through social media: <http://vimeo.com/52847644>.

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

RSG funds were used between January 2012 and March 2013 as anticipated. One project activity related to this project (a marine turtle festival in Maintirano) took place in December 2011 to coincide with certain logistical constraints. One project activity, a village educational tour, will take place in May-June 2013 as it was delayed due to the cyclone in February 2013. Match funding outlined in the original application budget will be used for both activities.

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.

Exchange rate used: 1 GBP = 3,502 MGA

Item	Budgeted Amount (RSGF)	Actual Amount (RSGF)	Difference (RSGF)	Comments
Salary for project assistant, Andavadoaka.	£696 (£0)	£1,381.64 (£472.62)	£-685.64 (£-472.62)	Assistant expenses underestimated.
Data collection trips in Kirinde Mite region.	£1,400 (£200)	£775.92 (£236.75)	£624.08 (£-36.75)	Data collection reduced in this region due to fishers being banned from islands that were previously part of the monitoring.
Travel, accommodation and food during data collection in Velondriake region.	£360 (£0)	£666.28 (£215.60)	£-306.28 (£-215.60)	Increased number of data collection trips in order to increase data checking.
Salary for data collectors.	£2,880 (£880)	£1,866.22 (£1,113.33)	£1,013.78 (£-233.33)	Reduction in numbers of landings, thereby reducing these costs.
Travel from London to research site for Project Leader.	£1,550 (£450)	£2,034.50 (£686.55)	£-484.50 (£-236.55)	Increase in flight prices and internal flight costs.
Field rate per diem for Project Leader.	£450 (£50)	£41.56 (£41.56)	£408.44 (£8.44)	No comment.

Equipment for fisheries monitoring.	£410 (£310)	£673.99 (£673.99)	-£263.99 (-£363.99)	Replacement of a number of cameras and SD cards required.
Per diems for community nest monitors.	£1,538 (£1,288)	£953.43 (£478.42)	£584.57 (£809.08)	8 members trained instead of 10.
Data collector's salaries for nest monitoring.	£6,250 (£5,000)	£5,674.02 (£5,041.53)	£575.98 (-£41.53)	8 members trained instead of 10.
Data supervisor.	£547 (£547)	£274.93 (£274.93)	£272.07 (£271.95)	Training completed in less time than budgeted.
Equipment for nest monitoring.	£664 (£664)	£684.09 (£196.11)	-£20.09 (£467.95)	No comment.
Consumables.	£241 (£241)	£257.60 (£185.07)	-£16.60 (£55.56)	No comment.
Workshops/festivals on turtle education and conservation.	£1,500 (£750)	£1,147.45 (£458.57)	£352.55 (£291.43)	One final part of educational outreach to occur in May to June 2013 after postponed due to cyclone.
Printing and distribution of education materials.	£1,060 (£680)	£1,396.13 (£194.43)	-£336.13 (£485.57)	Cost of t-shirts slightly higher than expected.
Production of film of activities.	£300 (£300)	£300 (£300)	£0.00 (£0.00)	No comment.
Travel and per diem for social marketing coordinator.	£800 (£600)	£776.66 (£596.91)	£23.34 (£3.09)	No comment.
Total	£20,646.00 (£11,959.06)	£18,904.41 (£11,166.37)	£1,741.59 (£792.69)	

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

An important next step is to capitalise on the successful nest monitoring project in the Barren Isles. This is the only place along the 400 km section of coastline on western Madagascar where regular nesting at this level is known to occur. The Barren Isles are also highlighted as a priority region for protection as a marine protected area because of their biodiversity, and should receive temporary protection later in 2013.

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?

The RSGF logo has featured on t-shirts produced for educational festivals in Madagascar. Over 1,000 t-shirts have been distributed in Madagascar and are extremely popular.

The RSGF logo also appears at the end of the film, 'Giving turtles a chance in Madagascar' (<http://vimeo.com/52847644>) that highlights the work of the turtle conservation project.