

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. 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. 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	Prosper Kwame Antwi
Project title	Sea Turtle Conservation: By-Catch Handling and Release Practices for Fishermen in Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site, Ghana
RSG reference	13699-2
Reporting period	2 nd September 2013 to September 2014
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	antwicus@yahoo.com
Date of this report	9 th September 2014

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
Increase knowledge of fishermen on best practices for Sea turtle handling and release			x	Workshop was organised for fishermen and their capacities built in best sea turtle handling and release practices. There was one-on-one and group education at landing sites were respective groups were practically taken through handling and release methods. Also, radio programmes sought to broaden the scope of the awareness creation and education process to the larger community.
Trainer of trainee's capacity building programme			x	20 fishermen were strategically selected using a fishing group and community criteria. They were specifically given intensive training to act as future trainers for emerging groups and other programmes. This special group will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the programme.
Supply of supporting tools to enhance sea turtle handling and release			x	Using community fishing group numbers as criteria, groups were supplied with tools and equipments to enable them practice best handling and release procedures. Groups were supplied with line cutters, nets (for mending when destroyed by turtle catch), pliers, mono-cutters etc

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

The projects' initial projected number for fishing group was rather low. With rather high number of fishing group actors, the distribution of support materials became an issue. Through a consultative medium involving different community leaders, Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site officers and the project team, a criteria was developed using community population and group numbers in each community for item distribution. The groups became calm after the procedure of distribution was outlined.

The local currency performed abysmally against major currencies (GBP and USD) from the period January 2014 to date. This negatively affected the project delivery, as costs of implementing the project became extremely higher than anticipated. This was coupled with the continuous increase in fuel prices (Ghana is currently using the automatic adjustment cost mechanism) as well as other operational costs. However, the project managed to cope with the situation by integrating elements and also counting on A Rocha Ghana in some instances.

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

About 100 fishermen from different fishing group's capacities have been built in best practices of handling and releasing trapped sea turtles. Trainees are also to report and/or call the attention of the Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site officers to any incidence beyond their ability. This action is expected to positively influence the survival of turtles caught in fishing nets and/or hooks.

20 recruited trainers of trainees from selected fringing communities' capacities have been built in best practices for sea turtle handling and release. These trainers have been given intensive training and are to train emerging fishing groups in the area. They are also to act as backups for the Ramsar site officers for related serious incidences beyond the ability of the fishermen. They therefore serve as actors for the long-term sustenance of the project.

Through group dynamic processes, different supporting materials (line cutters, nets (for mending of nets when destroyed by turtle capture), pliers, mono-cutters) for best handling and release practices have been distributed to 55 different fishing group members. This is to motivate and facilitate the intended acceptable action from the fishermen.

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

The success of a project of this nature depends heavily on the involvement of local communities. From the commencement of the project, the project team appreciated and recognised that indigenous local communities have a great deal of knowledge about their environment, and that this information is accessible through a number of research techniques. Local community members were involved in several aspects of the project from the formulation of the project concept, participation in actual project activities such as identification of priority support items that will facilitate the handling and release of sea turtles. More importantly, communities were also involved in project monitoring as well as coming up with recommendations for future activities and plans. They have been made aware of the positive impacts that, the long-term persistence of turtles would have on their livelihood

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

This is ongoing work and forms part of the combined efforts towards finding the long-term solutions towards conserving sea turtles and their habitat, as well as fostering and/or engendering community collective action within the study area and beyond. Plans are underway to mobilise resources (mainly financial) and involve more stakeholders' in order to have a holistic approach towards the continuity of the work and other interrelated linkages. As much as possible, we will avoid duplicating of roles particularly within the focal area.

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

Several visibility actions are being explored including the use of presentations at schools. We anticipate continuing collaboration with the Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site office and Community Unit Committees to share results through the community information centre. We will also use our magazine, website and articles in local newspapers.

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

The project team ensured that the funds were spread even throughout the entire project period.

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 £1= GH¢2.9

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Training Workshop/ Materials/ Food and Snack /Accessories	1992	1992	-	
Turtle Handling and Release Support Materials	3463	3763	300	Fuel price hike increased cost of items
Vehicle running cost	257	415	158	Fuel prices went up dramatically because Ghana introduced the automatic adjustment system
Education and Awareness creation Radio/T -shirts	288	288		
TOTAL	6000	6458	458	

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

Several targets and key activities need to be planned and implemented. The following has been deeply thought through with actors:

Specific activities

- Develop a restoration plan and initiate action for a depleted mangrove area. These areas serve as breeding ground for fishes and would increase fish yield if restored. This will also help minimise use of turtles for sale and consumption.
- Design and build a community owned turtle ecological centre to regularise and educate tourists. It will also oversee all related processes for long term sustenance.
- Continue work on the establishment and updating of turtle database, analyse data and feedback information to all stakeholders.

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 was used in all printed material for the project as well as T-shirts used for project related activities

11. Any other comments?

I would like to thank the Rufford Small Grants Foundation (RSGF) for sponsoring this project. Also, we are very grateful to the Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site office, community members especially the fishermen group for the numerous support in all ways.