

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	Ivan Svetozarevic
Project title	Biodiversity protection through ecotourism development in Djerdap National Park, Serbia
RSG reference	15.02.09
Reporting period	18.06.2009. – 18.06.2010.
Amount of grant	£5900
Your email address	svivan@gmail.com
Date of this report	05.07.2010.

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
To raise awareness of the local communities about forest conservation			yes	Local people had some information about forest conservation, but it was insufficient. Although their understanding was that conservation links to restrictions of their everyday duties, project team succeeded to explain that forest conservation is big advantage for local communities, which is seen through final interviews and public presentation of results of this project.
To explore how natural and cultural heritage could be interpreted as part of the ecotourism offer			yes	Since natural and cultural tourism potentials weren't well recognised in NP Djerdap, project team indicated most valuable potentials for ecotourism development through series of analyses and consultations. When this was defined, project team went one step forward: one ecotourism product was established. Walking/trekking paths were marked some years ago by national park authorities, but didn't have any service or marketing to provide to the tourists. Now, ecotourism offer with ten different paths where NP authorities provides full organisation for tourists exists.
To establish a network of stakeholders for ecotourism development			yes	During the previous activities in national park, main stakeholders were identified. With this project we achieved better communication on eco tourism in national park and formed informal network of stakeholders. The interested parties in the network are: Local tourism organisation, environmental and other NGOs, cultural institutions, local associations, national park authorities, small businesses in the region etc.
To improve tourism marketing			yes	NP Djerdap had promotional material about protected species, but not about sustainable tourism. Project team, after established ecotourism product (waking/trekking paths offer), started to

				work on marketing of this ecotourism product. Map and guidelines with description and photos from all 10 paths was designed and printed.
To spread information about existing international conventions in this area (Carpathian Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity)			yes	In order to present international conventions concerning nature protection and sustainable development (especially those related to National Park Djerdap), project team organised meeting with local population. Since the understanding of the Conventions is a complex and long lasting process, project team gave instructions and recommendations for websites where local population can follow processes.

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

During the project there were smaller difficulties about local people's involvement. Many economic problems in last decade in this area, followed by big unemployment rate, caused that local people became sceptic and close for communication. In many cases local population was betrayed by investors, politicians and local leaders. Therefore, it was very hard to motivate and involve them in the project and make them understand that they are the most important actor in nature conservation and development in the region. The problem was solved when two employees of national park voluntary joined project team. They were better recognised among local community and people started to attend the meetings.

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

Most important outcomes of this project are:

- Established of core group for decision –making process in ecotourism development (members of NP Authorities, Local tourism organisations, environmental NGOs, representatives of local municipalities, local craft and food producers).
- “Strategy for sustainable tourism development in NP Djerdap”. This is the name of the document which project team develop in cooperation with local people and authorities. The document was prepared during the all year. Thanks to this project, this document is approved from NP's Managing Board, and now it is official document of the Djerdap NP Authority.
- Developed, elaborated and promoted special ecotourism product – walking/trekking paths offer. This product is based on previously indentified most valuable ecotourism potentials, and old infrastructure of marked paths. Together with NP Authorities, the offer of ten walking/trekking paths with full service is available for tourists (accommodation in local households (categorised), traditional food and beverage, specialised guides (rangers), information distribution (through NP Visitor centre) network of observation decks)

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

Representatives of local community were involved during the whole period of project duration. They were actively involved in:

- activities concerning strategy development (initial data inputs, comments when strategy was drafted for the first time, and later, when strategy was presented on public consultation);
- activities concerning capacity building (many local representatives participated in the meeting where international conventions were presented);
- activities on development of ecotourism product (walking paths first of all), where consultations with local people were held in order to understand what they can offer to tourists, and later on to make concrete plans for tourism product.
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Local people have many benefits from this project: their knowledge about natural values of the area where they live (national park Djerdap) is improved; local people learned why their community are protected by national law and international conventions; local people better understand how nature can be protected and sustainably used for development; local people are encouraged for cooperation and participation in decision making processes.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Working in this area, we have understood that local people need strong support and that we have to continue working with them. In national park area, especially on Danube river banks, there are plans for mass tourism development which will cause a lot of damage for nature and local community. Our plan is to follow Strategy for sustainable tourism development, and although it is very complex process, to work, step by step, on setting tourism products of local people.

For these ambitious plans, we need a lot of support and continuity in work. Now, when we have support of local community, we can not step back but have to do progress.

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

Experience gained during this project is very valuable and project team will share it with other non-governmental organisations (first of all) and all interested individuals and institutions.

Summary of achievements on the project will be prepared and distributed through email and website (for example web site on Djerdap national park, Young Researchers of Serbia). Since project coordinator (Ivan Svetozarevic) is active member of sustainable tourism NGO groups (e.g. CEEweb working group on sustainable tourism) he will present results of work on this project on meetings, seminars etc.

With the local communities we will share results of this project by sending reports in Serbian language and also we will try to do promotion of this project in local media.

Promotional materials on walking paths for tourists in national park Djerdap will be distributed to tourists in different occasions.

On the website of Young Researchers of Serbia we will also prepare in depth report of the project

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 over a period of 12 months, the actual length of the project.

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.

1 £ = 97, 50 RSD

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Travel costs (bus and fuel)	400	550	+150	During the year fuel price was for many times increased
Lodging and meals	500	350	-150	Sometimes we had free overnights as stakeholders offered us to sleep at their houses
Office supplies	240	240		
Communications – phone	400	400		
Communications- internet/ e-mail	100	100		
Bank fees	60	60		
Brochure (design and printing)	1200	1200		
Refreshments for meetings with stakeholders	400	400		
Personnel salary for project leader	1680	1680		
Honoraria for two technical assistants	720	720		
Moderators for meetings	200	200		
TOTAL	5900	5900		

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

Important next steps are connected with work with local community. With this project we have got the bases for cooperation, we have strategy for sustainable tourism development and support for national park authorities.

During this project we have identified that local people need much more information and knowledge about nature protection (legal and institutional system, role of local community, allowed and prohibited activities in protected areas). To educate local people on nature protection (with the special focus on biodiversity conservation) is the necessary bases for sustainable tourism

development. Local population which knows how to live in harmony with nature will influence decision makers, tourists, and other local communities.

We hope that we will be supported in next period to have a series of educational seminars with local population in Djerdap national park.

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, we printed brochure with walking/trekking paths' map inside where RSGF logo is visible.

RSGF logo is visible in document "Strategy for sustainable tourism development in NP Djerdap".

Also, project team members visited local radio talking about RSG project.

Two web-sites have permanent information about RSG project <http://mis.org.rs/index.php/sr/odrivirazvoj/odzivi-turizam-> www.npdjerdap.org

11. Any other comments?

Thanks to the Rufford Small Grants progress is made in national park Djerdap. The new strategy for sustainable tourism development is small but very important step. Without Rufford's support we wouldn't be able to do it in this year.

It is also important to mention how we really appreciate the procedure RSGF has and are happy that our energy during the project was spent on project activities, not on administrative things (as it is case with many donors).