

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	Ahmad Samim Ayobi
Project title	Establishing Conservation Management for Paghman Stream Salamander (<i>Afghanodon mustersi</i>)
RSG reference	21296-1
Reporting period	Final Report
Amount of grant	£4994
Your email address	samim.ayobi@gmail.com
Date of this report	November 28, 2018

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
Provide knowledge about the current availability of the species in its habitat				The project succeeded to detect the species in its habitat and produce knowledge about the presence of the species.
Identification of potential habitat				The project could find the species in other sites out of Paghman Stream which is a big achievement for conservation of the species.
Conservation awareness education				Education and public awareness were the main objectives of the project, that with collaboration of different institutes and schools we could transfer the knowledge about the species, its importance and conservation to students in universities and schools as well as to the public.
Habitat characteristics				From the project we could study the characteristics of the species habitat, which then from its characteristics we could find the similar places with presence of the species.
Conservation management				The project team was able to produce a scientific paper about the species presence in different places, environmental condition and the disturbance for the species and will be published in national journals by which will enable conservation stakeholders to take conservation initiatives and strategies.

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

1. The project site is far from the city in a valley, where the Taliban insurgency cannot be ignored and someone has to be careful. This was the most hazardous problem we had in our project and several times we cancelled our visit to the site and postponed it.

2. Harsh weather conditions during winter causes choking of the roads to the project site due to heavy snowfall and it was impossible to visit the site at the time of snowfall which we postponed our winter visit of the site.
3. Disaffiliation of localities near the project site and non-assistance of line government department have caused in some extent disturbance of the project. The localities were even disturbing in site and preventing research team to enter the site and they were asking for money.

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

1. The project found that the species is still available in its habitat.
2. The project found further places where we can find the species out of Paghman in Panjsher and Parwan provinces.
3. The project provides a research paper about the presence of the species in its habitat and its distribution in different places of Panjsher and Parwan province.

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

The project was planned to with the local communities as they see these salamanders during their daily activities. So at the beginning of the project we launched a pre-research survey with a questionnaire that contained the photos of the salamander and from the survey we found the exact places where to find the species. Besides the information about the surrounding environment and habitat of the species were collected from local residents who had the knowledge about available plants and animals and disturbance in the habitat.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The species is still available in its habitat in Paghman stream as well as in some other places like Panjsher, Salang and Ghourband valleys. The disturbance activities for the species are very high especially in Paghman stream and it needs more researches about the population of the species and in-situ conservation measures. I and my team are eager to continue the project with providing of proposals not only for Rufford but also for other international organisations as well as for those governmental departments which work for nature and wildlife conservation.

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

The outcome of my project work is prepared both in national language (Dari) and English as a research paper which is going to be published in our national journal and also I have plan to publish the paper in international journals. Besides the result of the project will be shared with WCS-Afghanistan and National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA) to take further steps and strategies for protection of the Species.

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

The project was designed to be completed in 13 months, but due to some problems in field our team was not able to complete it in anticipated time. We used the grant for further 5 months (18 months) than the expected time scale.

During the public awareness programmes, we got to know from students that the species is found in Paghman in Parwan and Panjsher provinces. Then the team members decided to search for the species in Paghman before sending the final report to Rufford Foundation.

In the last 3 months of the project (August, September and October, 2018) the team travelled four times to different places of Parwan and Panjsher Provinces to the species, which was successfully completed and we found the species out of Paghman stream. These four-time travel expenses were paid by team members.

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
Salary	980	1150	170	The salary payment was daily wage for team members which they were paid 940 AFN (£11.5)/working day for four persons including team leader. Which there was 25 working days till end of July, 2018.
Travel Cost	420	580	160	We had more travels to the field and more places for public awareness than expected travels in proposal.
Accommodation	500	450	-50	The team members were taking the food & other needs from city than the research site, so it was cheaper.
Campaign and public education	400	550	150	We had more public awareness campaigns than the planed campaigns in proposal.
Multi parameter tester	114	70	-44	I asked my friend to buy and send to me from Japan which was cheaper than Afghanistan.
Binocular	20	37	17	It was more expensive than

				expected rate.
GPS system	270	255	-15	It was cheaper than expected rate.
Field gears like Gumboot and Neoprene suits	150	200	50	These gears were planned for 3 persons, but we prepared for four field workers including team leader.
DSLR camera (Canon EOS 700D)	420	680	260	I asked my friend to buy and send to me from Japan which was More expensive than Afghanistan.
Field equipment	620	430	-190	They were cheaper than expected rate.
Data processing	400	150	-250	
Printing posters, leaflets and caps	500	220	-280	We had less printing materials than the planed program in proposal.
Stationary	50	200	150	They were more expensive than the expected rate.
Contingency	150			
Total	4994	4972		

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

From the project we found that the species is not only found in Paghman stream but also in Panjsher valley and Salang Valley of Parwan Province. According to some students of Parwan University, the species is possibly in Ghourband Valley of Parwan which due to security problem our team was unable to survey.

The next most important step for Paghman steam salamander is to determine the exact habitat of the species in Ghourband beside Panjsher and Salang.

Further the species need more study about its population, and distribution all over Afghanistan for further conservation measures.

There is need for vast research about the population, distribution and protection measures from an authentic international conservation organisation.

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

From the beginning till the end of the project, all the publications had the logo of the Rufford Foundation. Besides we printed the Rufford logo into the caps for team members and they used to wear it during the field work as well as in public awareness campaigns.

During the public awareness campaigns our team had speech about the provider of the grant and how the Rufford support the nature and provide grants for nature and wildlife conservation. We encouraged young active youths and students of

universities to apply for nature and wildlife grants.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Meerwais Meerzaey, Plant pathology lab- technician and now master's degree student of Kabul University in Agronomy field. He was one of the most active team member with good knowledge of laboratory and handling lab tools. He use to collect the data and measurements about the detected Salamanders and also he was collecting data about the natural habitat of the species.

Ahmad Omaran Khwajapoor, now Master's degree student at Kabul University in the field of Agronomy. He was the team member with good knowledge about different types of plants available in the area. He was hard working and versatile member of our team.

Ahmad Zahed Ayobi, Bachelors of Engineering, member of the team with high interest in wildlife and nature. He used to handle the species after catching for measurement and photography.

12. Any other comments?

Paghman stream salamander is a monotypic endemic evolutionarily distinct and globally endangered species exist in Paghman Mountains, Panjsher Mountains, Salang valley and Ghourband valley of the southern slopes of Hindukush Himalaya.

It is declared as as a protected species by Afghani Government in 2009, and regarded as critically endangered by IUCN.

The Project of "Establishing Conservation Management for Paghman Stream Salamander (*Afghanodon mustersi*)" which was granted by Rufford Foundation is the latest activity accomplished for re-detecting of the species in its habitat after the study of the biology of the species by S.M Reilly in 1983.

The project was able to have valuable achievement in detecting of the species, Identifying of potential habitat, habitat characteristics of the species, and conservation awareness campaigns about the importance of the species and its habitat.

The most outstanding achievement for the species was finding out the species out of its habitat in Salang valley of Parwan and Panjsher valley of Panjsher provinces.

We were able to find out the species at elevation of 2114 m asl between 35°11,731`N and 69°15.984`E in Panjsher Valley. And also it is seeb at elevation of 2042 m asl between 35°14.30`N and 69°12.27`E in different areas under shaded vegetation and in springs.

The species is least studied and need more researches and studies about its biology, population, habitat characteristics and conservation measures.

We recommend to all national and international nature and wildlife conservation organisations to take part in conservation of this threaten species and proceed conservation programmes for it.



