

Project Update: March 2019

Although I have planned only three educational activities (workshops, street exhibitions and beach activities), I have organised a series of educational lectures during the entire project duration. Since there was a high interest in my project after media campaigns, I have dedicated to expand the initially proposed number of lectures/workshops and to visit numerous faculties, schools (both primarily and secondary) and various NGOs across the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Spending time with enthusiastic future generation of researchers and conservationists, and being able to support and educate them was definitely one of the most important part of my work during the project. I have to emphasize one particular event which surprised me the most. There was a high school student in DV, she was following my work for past 2 years (during both RSG project) and she gave me a unique present when I came to their school - a colour drawing of myself and a shark on A0 paper. She said that she is completely inspired by my work and couldn't believe that I am actually coming to their school. Seeing that you are an ideal for someone is the greatest achievement of them all, I believe. It's far biggest then all academic titles, all professional positions and all biographical references.

In order to establish the protection of sharks, skates and rays and their habitats in the marine part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I have joined forces with two other projects „Achieving biodiversity conservation through the establishment and effective management of protected areas and capacity building for nature protection“ funded by GIF/UNEP and „Establishing the first MPAs in Bosnia: Protecting the highly endangered habitats and spawning sites of skates and rays in the Neum bay“ funded by Waitt Foundaton. My project has contributed with proposals from my strategy/action plan and proposed red list so we aim to establish a marine protected area on the outer part of Klek Peninsula and to protect all elasmobranch species in the territorial waters - which is the ultimate goal of both projects! Through the year (not only as planned), I've met with the representatives of the municipality of Neum, Ministry for science and education, Ministry for environment and tourism, United Nations representatives, port authorities, divers and fisherman, and over 10 NGOs dedicated to ecology and conservation. Most important thing is that we all concluded that where is an urgent need to protect certain species and habitats in the Neum Bay, and that all my proposals resulted from both grants were adopted! Even when the project is officially fished, we are still continuing to work on this highly important issue.



Left: Companionship with the primary and mixed secondary school students from Donji Vakuf, Bosnia and Herzegovina, after lectures and workshop, through my 2nd

Rufford project. Right: Lectures for the Medical School and Gymnasium students in Bugojno, Bosnia and Herzegovina, through my 2nd Rufford project.



Left: Lectures for the Medical School students in Gornji Vakuf (Uskoplje), Bosnia and Herzegovina, through my 2nd Rufford project. Right: Lectures "The next step for the establishment of the long-term in-situ conservation of sharks, skates and rays in Bosnia and Herzegovina" within my 2nd Rufford project.