

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	Mahi Puri
Project title	Prioritizing and identifying opportunities for carnivore conservation in human-dominated landscapes of India
RSG reference	Jane Raymond
Reporting period	October 2018 – September 2019
Amount of grant	£5,000
Your email address	mahi.puri@gmail.com , mpuri@ufl.edu
Date of this report	10 th October 2019

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
Field surveys of carnivores in human-dominated landscape				<p>Camera traps were deployed successfully in the entire study region, with the cooperation of the Forest Department. Local forest guards patrolled camera locations to prevent theft of equipment.</p> <p>Cameras were deployed in a systematic manner, i.e. one range (administrative unit) per month. This allowed for organised checking and management of data.</p>
Questionnaire-based social surveys				<p>All field teams/surveyors were thoroughly trained in conducting questionnaire surveys. Additionally, teams of 2-3 people conducted each survey to ensure robust data collection</p> <p>Prior to conducting individual questionnaire surveys, permission was sought from the village headman/elderly in each village. This ensured cooperation from survey respondents.</p> <p>Four field assistants (FAs) were hired from the local communities. At least one FA was present during each questionnaire survey. This helped in trust and rapport-building among survey respondents.</p>
Prioritization				<p>The objective of prioritising areas for future conservation intervention would be achieved after completing analyses for the above two objectives. Analysis is currently ongoing.</p>

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

Permissions for camera trapping were delayed by the concerned authorities. This resulted in a delay of 1 month in the sampling period. However, I was able to complete the surveys on time within the dry season.

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

- 1) An incredible amount of camera trap data on carnivore occurrence in human-dominated areas has been generated from the surveys. This resource will be extremely useful in providing information on carnivore ecology and distribution outside protected reserves.
- 2) The socio-economic surveys have provided a window into farmer lifestyles, issues and preferences in the region. My target was to survey 400 farmers, however, I managed to interview 600 farmers from varying backgrounds. The local landowners/farmers have for the first time been provided an incentive-based land use alternative, which was something that intrigued many.
- 3) Seven civil society volunteers and four local community members participated in data collection. They were trained in both ecological and social survey methods, use of GPS, and data management. The project provided them with valuable fieldwork experience and knowledge of an understudied system.

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

Local communities were directly involved only as survey participants. At this stage, they have not had any direct or measurable benefits.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Analyses of field data is currently ongoing as part of my PhD dissertation. Based on the results of the study, future recommendations and consequently interventions may take place.

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

Once the analyses is completed, I will publish the results in international peer-reviewed journal, popular articles, and attend conferences on ecology, conservation and interdisciplinary sciences. The results will also be shared with the local forest department.

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 funding received from The Rufford Foundation was utilised for field preparation and surveys from October 2018 – July 2019.

The actual duration of the project is 2 years. There are no additional costs anticipated during the remainder of the project. During this phase, analyses of data will be undertaken at the University of Florida.

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
Equipment and supplies	2600	900	-1700	Costs adjusted with other grants received. Additional in-kind support for camera traps provided by Centre for Wildlife Studies
Vehicle rental and fuel	500	1651	+1151	Overall cost of vehicle hires and fuel was higher than budgeted. In addition to a 4X wheel drive, two bikes were also hired to access difficult areas. Costs adjusted with other grants received.
Food and Lodging	700	570	-130	Costs adjusted with other grants received.
Stipend and wages	1200	1914	+714	The salary of research assistant was higher than budgeted amount (GBP 244), stipends were provided to interns who participated for 2 months duration. Costs adjusted with other grants received.
Miscellaneous		31	+31	Miscellaneous expenditures including costs of postage, phone and internet
Institutional Overheads		267	+267	The proposed budget did not include 5% overheads that were deducted as administrative overheads by facilitating NGO
Total	5000	5330	+330	

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

- 1) Complete analysis of ecological (camera trap) data to examine carnivore distribution and factors driving the same.
- 2) Complete analysis of socio-economic (questionnaire) data to examine farmer willingness and factors driving the same.
- 3) Prioritise areas based on optimisation framework to identify most suitable areas for future conservation intervention and to test the economic viability of the same.

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?

No material has so far been produced in relation to this project. Consequently, the Rufford Foundation logo has not been used. I may be producing few short videos (60 seconds) using camera trap photos for outreach purposes. Rufford's logo would be used and the Foundation will be acknowledged in each video.

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

Dr. Bette Loiselle – Supervisor and Academic Advisory Committee

Dr. Krithi K. Karanth – Academic Advisory Committee

Dr. Elizabeth Peinaar – Academic Advisory Committee

Dr. Miguel Acevedo – Academic Advisory Committee

Dr. Brijesh Thapa – Academic Advisory Committee

Field Team:

Ankur Singh Chauhan	Research Assistant	Aman Bhatia	Intern
Naveen Bomcher	Field Assistant	Gargi Vijayraghavan	Intern
Chetan Hinge	Field Assistant	Ashraf Shaikh	Volunteer
Akshay Adambey	Field Assistant	Yash Khatri	Volunteer
Praveen Thakre	Field Assistant	Vaibhav Sabharwal	Volunteer
Aishwarya Pattanaik	Intern	Faiza Mookherjee	Volunteer

12. Any other comments?

Thank you for your support.