

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. 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	Abishek Harihar
Project title	Understanding the response of wild ungulate prey to livestock-mediated competition in western Terai Arc Landscape, India: implications for developing management strategies to restore corridors
RSG reference	48.09.09
Reporting period	February 2010 to January 2011
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	harihar.abishek@gmail.com
Date of this report	20 April 2011

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
Map wild ungulate distribution and identify areas of overlap with livestock		√		GIS based analysis is currently underway
Assess the impact of livestock grazing on wild ungulates			√	
Evaluate the dependence of local communities on wild prey habitats			√	
Develop management strategies to restore corridors without undermining the interests of local communities		√		A policy document is currently being developed in collaboration with the Uttarakhand forest department.

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

Though we had expected to analyse forage selection and dietary overlap between wild ungulates and livestock we were unable to complete this sub-objective. We have been broadly able to characterise the food habits of various species (using micro-histology). However, the inability to identify various species of family Poaceae has limited our inference.

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

- a. Through our assessment, we have generated prey availability data from both within and outside protected areas. The lack of well-stratified data has always been recognised as a major impediment in extrapolating data to show conditions for tigers in corridors.
- b. From our survey we infer that the increasing proportion of fawns among chital is indicative of population recovery, which suggests improved recruitment among chital in areas where livestock densities are lower. These results have important implications for the management of livestock grazing both in our study area as well as across wildlife habitats in India.
- c. Our interviews with the *Gujjars* revealed that most households were willing to relocate from the forests. These results, in the context of the recent amendment to the Indian wildlife protection act of 2006 are crucial in prioritising and restoring critical habitats without undermining the interests of local communities.

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

During the course of our interviews with the *Gujjars* we were able to inform households of the better veterinary options and compensation schemes available to them. Most households were not aware that compensation was available if predated upon. Through our work we were able to liaise between the forest departments and relevant local NGOs.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. As fallout of our work, we will now be continuing the research by assessing:

- The factors influencing the decision by *Gujjars* to relocate, employing choice experiments.
- Fodder biomass and quality within protected and unprotected forests in the landscape to suggest habitat improvement measures

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

The results of our work are currently being used to develop a policy document in collaboration with the Uttarakhand forest department towards managing forest habitats. Our results have been particularly helpful in assessing the quality of habitats outside of protected areas which require active management to ensure safe connectivity for large mammalian species.

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

The anticipated length of the project was from February 2010 to January 2011. However, owing to other funding commitments the project commenced only in July 2010.

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
<i>Research scholar stipend (1 @ £216 pm)</i>	1296	1296	0	
<i>Assistance@ £38 per month for 12 months (2 people)</i>	684	684	0	
<i>Vehicle hiring@ c. £400 per month for 3 months</i>	2724	2925	+200	Hike in fuel prices caused an unexpected rise in the amount spent
<i>Base camp expenses</i>	300	100	-200	
<i>Provisions/rations</i>	200	200	0	
<i>Batteries and cells</i>	310	190	-120	
<i>Chemicals for micro-histology</i>	61	180	+119	
<i>Report publishing</i>	200	200	0	Currently in press
<i>Posters and pamphlets</i>	225	225	0	Currently in press
Total	6000	6000		

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

Given the results produced by the project we now hope to:

- Prioritize areas that require immediate management interventions in terms of habitat management.
- Liaise with local NGOs and implement recommendations suggested in the policy document.

- c. Initiate further research to help suggest habitat improvement measures across the landscape.

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.