

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Center for Environmental and Rural Development, Vinh University
Project Title:	Creating conservation leaders for the West Nghe An Biosphere Reserve
Date of Report:	30 th July 2015
Report Author and Contact Information	1) Dr. Cao Tien Trung – Director of Center for Environment and Rural Development Email: trungctbio@yahoo.com 2) Nicholas Wilkinson – Cambridge University Email: Nicholas.mwilkinson@gmail.com

CEPF Region: Indo-Burma

Strategic Direction: Direction 8; primarily to 8.2: “Provide core support for the organizational development of domestic civil society organizations

Grant Amount: \$19,991

Project Dates: 30th June 2014 – 31 July 2015

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

Two protected area management boards (Pu Mat and Pu Huong) sent two field staff to work with CERD and supported all paperwork for an international expert working in the area

The People’s Committee of Nghe An province and the relevant ministries (MONRE and MOET) were provided with information for future conservation work by the results of this project.

We conducted three seminars with different groups of conservation experts in the UK through three regular university-based seminar series (the Geography and Zoology Departments at the University of Cambridge; the Durrell Institute at Kent University; and the Cambridge Conservation Forum)

We also contacted the major foreign consultants involved in the SFNC and Danida FPWM projects and received strong expressions of interest in providing us with their perspectives, and helped us find the relevant documents.

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

Strategic Direction 8; Objective 8.2: “Provide core support for the organizational development of domestic civil society organizations.”

Through this project, CERD has built up its understanding of how to implement conservation in the province. Review of the failure and successes of past projects has given us an understanding of options for the future. We have also developed our capacity for international collaboration and built contacts. The unexpected opportunity to work in the new reserve of Pu Hoat has given us a

better understanding of that area, including the potential for PES-based work there in future, and we have developed a relationship with the reserve director and his staff.

Based on the improved understanding and capacity developed under this project, we will go ahead to implement new conservation work in the Nghe An Biosphere Reserve which we hope will be sufficient to meet the challenge of conserving the CEPF priority species found there.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

We have gathered knowledge about the past community-based conservation initiatives in the West Nghe An Biosphere Reserve, namely the SFNC project in Pu Mat and the Danida-funded FPWM project in Pu Huong. Reports of these projects, which were scattered and inaccessible, have been largely collected in our library. We have gathered information and opinion from local people around the areas of both projects on their long-term impacts. We have therefore developed an understanding of how these projects were conceived and why they ultimately failed to deliver sustainable conservation.

We have developed this understanding through engagement with international experts and literature on conservation and developed a strategy for future work in the province.

We have also trained our staff and associates and hired new local staff to undertake work in villages.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):

Creating a clear strategy to support community-based conservation work in the Reserve, supported by the opinions of key provincial and local stakeholders and by evidence from Nghe An and elsewhere

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

A strategy has already been outlined based on potentially complementary approaches of: 1) securing resource use rights at a local scale; 2) setting up local patrol groups and possibly; 3) Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) from hydropower dams. This strategy was outlined in June 2015 after the UK seminars and is currently being drafted.

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):

Enhancing capacity of CERD staff to work with both local community based organisations and international conservation experts to conduct effective conservation.

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

CERD has formed a model of operating through locally-hired short-term contractors to gather information from communities. The director, Cao Tien Trung, has also gained experience of presenting issues to a wide panel of international experts and students and receiving their feedback.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected:

Species Conserved:

Corridors Created:

Not relevant

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Project Components

Project Components: *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

Component 1 Planned: CERD staff have increased capacity to implement conservation projects, working with both local community-based organizations and international conservation experts.

Activity 1.1: Hire and train two field staff (preferably ethnic Thai, with at least a bachelor's degree), who will be responsible for implementing field work activities

Activity 1.2: Hire an international consultant to assist with research, reporting, and proposal writing

Activity 1.3: Organize short (approx 2-week) courses for CERD staff and Vinh University Masters' students in community mapping and interview/data recording techniques, with technical support from international consultant

Activity 1.4: Organize a visit by the Centre's Director to attend conservation training seminars at the Universities of Cambridge and Kent, UK

Component 1 Actual at Completion: Complete

Activity 1.1: Two field staff hired and trained

CERD-signed 6 month contracts with two teachers at Mon Son (Pu Mat NP) and Dien Lam (Pu Huong NR) communes: Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Anh and Lang Van Dung. Contracts were closed in February 2015.

Activity 1.2: International consultant hired

CERD signed a 2-month contract with Nicholas Wilkinson from Cambridge University. Nicholas visited Vinh University and conducted two training courses at Vinh from 28th August to 28th September, 2014 and 26th March to 10th April, 2015. The contract was closed on 30 June, 2015.

Nicholas worked on proposals for Synchronicity Earth (with ZSL), CEPF and SW fund

Activity 1.3: Two courses organized, with at least 16-20 participants per course

-Two short courses were conducted by Nicholas and Dr Trung during August to September, 2014

- **Community mapping course:** Classroom from 29th Aug to 3rd Sept at Vinh and fieldwork in Pu Huong NR from 5th to 12th Sept, 2014. The course had 16 participants: 4 staff from CERD, 8 master students and 4 forest rangers from Pu Mat and Pu Huong NR

- **Ungulates last sighting interview course:** Classroom from 15th to 17th Sept at Vinh and fieldwork in Pu Mat NP from 19th to 23rd Sept, 2014. The course had 20 participants: 6 CERD staff, 12 master students and 2 forest rangers from Pu Mat NP

Activity 1.4: Minutes of three conservation seminars, including recommendations by UK-based experts on strategies for community-based conservation in Vietnam

Nicholas supported Dr Trung for two weeks to visit the UK from 1st to 14th June, 2015 to attend conservation training seminars at the Universities of Cambridge and Kent, UK (Geography and Zoology Dept. Cambridge University; DICE seminar, Kent University). A summary document of points raised at all three seminars and in subsequent discussions with academics was prepared.

Component 2 Planned: Lessons-learned from past community-based conservation initiatives in West Nghe An Biosphere Reserve are synthesized, as a basis for future action

Activity 2.1: Create a library of relevant reports and datasets generated by past work in the Biosphere Reserve (including past SFNC and Danida projects)

Activity 2.2: Translate further key texts relevant to conservation theory and social science field techniques into Vietnamese

Component 2 Actual at Completion: Complete

Activity 2.1: Database established, and populated with relevant literature. GIS data on official land use categories, and other land use data collected

- Collected almost all relevant documents and reports produced by the SFNC and DANIDA projects.

- Catalogued and stored the documents at the Vinh University Library (Nguyen Thuc Hao library), for use by Masters students studying conservation.

Activity 2.2: Key texts were translated, producing Vietnamese versions of English manuals and presentations produced by past Darwin-funded work

Completed translation of three manuals:

- Community mapping manual (written by Trung and Nicholas)
- Saola Interview manual (written by Trung and Nicholas)
- "Ungulate last sightings" questionnaire manual (written by Samuel Turvey, Nicholas and Trung)

The manuals were uploaded to the Cambridge and Vinh Universities websites

Component 3 Planned: A clear community-based conservation strategy for the Reserve is created, informed by input from key provincial and local stakeholders, and field research findings.

Activity 3.1: Carry out community mapping of forest use in at least 5 target villages, using techniques piloted by previous work in the region

Activity 3.2: Hold village workshops in target villages, to understand what kind of interventions or support would be welcomed by community members

Activity 3.3: Survey members of target villages, on perceptions of results of previously-implemented conservation projects (including SFNC and Danida-funded projects). Analyze how these perceptions differ from intended project results

Activities 3.4: Use the results of our work to write a strategy for community-based conservation in Nghe An, with project outlines endorsed by relevant stakeholders

Component 3 Actual at Completion: Largely Complete

Activity 3.1: GIS data showing intensity of use of various forest products, and other land uses was generated.

- Community mapping was conducted in five villages:

Xieng village – Mon Son commune

Trung Chinh village – Chi Khe commune

Cuom and Xop Hoc villages - Dien Lam commune

Pong Village - Nam Giai commune

- Data from community maps on forest use and forest product distribution, and local opinions about flagship animal species populations, were collected and entered.

Activity 3.2: Two community workshops were organized on the 25th April and 12th May, 2015 at Na village, (Chau Khe Commune, Pu mat NP) and Chao village (Dien Lam commune, Pu Huong NR)

Activity 3.3: Survey report, including discussion on differences in perception.

A summary report of the information collected by Mr Dung and Ms Kim Anh was prepared. It became apparent from this research that 95% of the activities implemented by the SFNC and DANIDA projects had not been sustained and had stopped once the projects had closed.

Activity 3.4: We were unable to produce a strategy for community-based conservation in Nghe An within the timeframe of this project. Instead, we conducted a stakeholder workshop with DARD Nghe An, VFD project on 27th May, 2015. The purpose of this workshop was to analyze lessons learned from implementation of the SFNC and DANIDA projects, to determine key stakeholders for co-management, and to identify solutions for future community-based conservation work west of the Nghe An Biosphere Reserve

Component 4 Planned: Further funds are made available for implementing community-based conservation work in the Biosphere Reserve

Activity 4.1: Research a list of potential donors, including local and national government sources and national and international non-government sources

Activity 4.2: Develop proposals for community-based conservation work in West Nghe An, aimed at least four different funding sources

Component 4 Actual at Completion: Complete

Activity 4.1: Some potential donors have been identified (see below)

Activity 4.2: Four proposals were written:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| - Vietnam Forest and Delta Fund: | Successful |
| - Synchronicity Earth Fund: | Successful |
| - Whitley Award Fund: | Applying |
| - M. Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund: | Applying |

Were any components unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

The only project component that was not completed successfully was the community-based conservation strategy for Nghe An (Activity 3.4). This was due to not having sufficient time or funds to complete this to a satisfactory standard. In order to complete this properly, we have applied for additional funds from other donors (including the Darwin Initiative). With hindsight, this activity was probably too ambitious for this project.

Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

The manual is available on the Cambridge University website.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The project design was flexible, consisting of various capacity-building components each of which contributed to the overall aim but none of which were essential to overall functioning. This contributed to success in that this project was not only as strong as its weakest component.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

Hiring of local staff in Pu Mat and Pu Huong greatly facilitated the collection of information, gave us an effective way of interacting with communities and reduced travel costs. However, it did mean a greater amount of work was needed to interpret and write up their findings. Because we chose this model, it did become more difficult to carry out some of the reporting tasks which we originally intended would be completed by the new staff members.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

We have learned several lessons from our review of the SFNC and Danida-FPWM projects, which we believe will be of wider interest. We hope to publish a review of this work later this year or in 2016.

Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Vinh University	A	\$3,000	
Ministry of Education and Training	A	\$10,000	

****Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A*** *Project co-financing (Other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)*
- B*** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)*
- C*** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

Nature conservation and management should be viewed as a social issue. When animal and plant populations were abundant, hunting and trading were widespread and the non-sustainable use of populations was not regarded as important. Because of this disregard, populations are now seriously depleted.

Current management regulations are not very effective for nature conservation: local support for nature conservation is required. The relationship between local communities and forest resources should be recognized as it has existed for a long time.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

The villages in which we worked were all near to roads and had regular contact with the town. All the villages were ethnic Thai. We ensured that all staff staying in the villages were also ethnic Thai.

Staff did not record the names or details of interviewees in order to ensure confidentiality. Staff also informed interviewees that their names and details would not be recorded

No negative responses were received to our results about the extent of local people's forest use, either from FPD, PA or local media. But more work will be done with the results, so we have to remain careful.

We prepared an information sheet about our project and about CERD. We used this to introduce ourselves in group meetings in all villages.

Information we collected about ethnic Thais that might not have been appropriate to be shared with others was treated confidentially.

Attention was paid to getting 'Free Prior Informed Consent' in village meetings. The UN-REDD programme guidelines for gaining FPIC in Vietnam were followed.

As explained in the project proposal, we aimed to develop strategies for future conservation work through consultation with local communities. Because our staff spent considerable time (months) in focal villages, we worked on a realistic timetable for gaining truly informed consent. Work was facilitated by our staff who are ethnic Thai people from the area, and the work built on existing strong relationships with these communities. The UN-REDD programme has issued a factsheet on gaining FPIC in Vietnam, and government guidelines may be issued soon.

The main challenges to FPIC were in taking account of the opinions of less powerful members of the village communities, including the views of women and in working with ethnic groups other than the Thai. We addressed this challenge by ensuring a balance between men and women, and including all community members when carrying out the mapping exercise.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

It is necessary to consider the potential for community-based conservation as a part of community development work. Community-based conservation in the Nghe An Biosphere Reserve could become a vital component of its long-term conservation based on a philosophy of joint sharing of resources.

Defining the role of community members at the village level is required. This could be undertaken alongside the continuing development of Wildlife Conservation Clubs based on the Danida-FPVM model.

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

Name: Dr Cao Tien Trung
Organization name: Center for Environmental and Rural Development (CERD)
Mailing address: trungctbio@yahoo.com
Tel: +84383.855697/0383592409/+84903446646
Fax: +84383.855269
E-mail: trungctbio@yahoo.com

Name: Nicholas Wilkinson
Organization name: Geography Dept. Cambridge University
Mailing address: Nicholas.mwilkinson@gmail.com
Tel: +447565694796
Fax: +84383.855269
Email: Nicholas.mwilkinson@gmail.com

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved during the grant term (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	No			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No			

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table

