

Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions

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CEPF Grant Proposal 103961

J. Albert C. Uy, University of Rochester

*Establishing a Protected Area in East Makira Key Biodiversity Area to Conserve Biodiversity, the
Solomon Islands*

East Makira, Solomon Islands

Grant Summary

1. **Grantee organization:** University of Rochester
2. **Grant title:** Establishing a Protected Area in East Makira Key Biodiversity Area to Conserve Biodiversity, the Solomon Islands
3. **Grant number:** 103961
4. **Proposed grant amount (US dollars):** US\$84,476.00
5. **Proposed dates of grant:** June 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020
6. **Countries or territories where project will be undertaken:** Solomon Islands
7. **Date of preparation of this document:** May 29, 2018; revised February 13, 2020

The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:

A. Project background

Makira Island, which is included in the East Melanesian Islands Biodiversity Hotspot and the Global 200 Ecoregions, has one of the highest rates of species endemism in the entire Solomon Islands. Unfortunately, this rich endemism is under constant threat from clear-cut logging. Without alternative sources of income, communities throughout Makira are turning to commercial logging for quick revenue, and thus we here propose conservation initiatives that begin to meet these challenges.

For over 10 years, J. Albert C. Uy and his team from the University of Miami (Uy moved to the University of Rochester in Jan 2020) have worked in East Makira, one of the most remote regions of the Solomon Archipelago. Conversations with multiple communities throughout the region during various expeditions indicated that many are either currently engaged in or have signed concessions for clear-cut logging with foreign companies. The large-scale loss of forest and riverine ecosystems, and the resulting loss of ecosystem services, are therefore imminent. At the conclusion of one of our expeditions in search for the Makira moorhen in 2016, elders of the Nasuahu, Kereapena and Napuamarawa (NKN) communities approached our team in hopes of establishing a protected area (PA) [see Figure 1]. The stakeholders have decided to call the protected area as the Yato Conservation Area (Yato means “boundaries” in the local language). This proposed PA in East Makira is over 18,500 hectares, and includes high elevation cloud forests, secondary and climax rainforests, and a major river system that empties into mangroves, lagoons and near-shore marine ecosystems. The NKN communities have resisted logging for years but their customary land is under immediate threat, as neighboring communities are engaged in commercial logging and several men from the NKN communities are now working for logging companies in these neighboring areas. This persistent threat from logging leaves a short window of opportunity to engage the NKN communities in establishing a PA. Without access to programs that can help with the establishment of a PA, it is inevitable that they will turn to logging within the next two years. Our goal, therefore, is to empower the NKN communities to establish then manage a PA, with the aim of preserving continuous tracks of intact ecosystems that is critical for preserving endemic plants and animals, and continued access to ecological services provided by a healthy ecosystem.



Figure 1: [Left Panel] Map of East Makira, showing the proposed Nasuafu, Kereapena & Napuamarawa (NKN) Protected Area (PA) and the Nafinua Station on Frigatebird Island, a small islet off Makira. The area, outlined in yellow, is greater than 180 km² (18,500 hectares) of cloud forest, secondary and climax rainforest, and large river systems that empties into mangroves and lagoons. [Right Panels] Examples of climax forest, riverine, and lagoon ecosystems contained in the proposed PA.

Approach. The ultimate goal of this project is to establish the Yato protected area in East Makira, which will consist of *ca.* 18,500 hectares of climax and secondary rainforests, cloud forests, riparian woodlands, and mangroves [Fig. 1] (Note: the final size of the protected area will depend on the boundaries agreed up by the stakeholders and neighboring tribes). The proposed approach includes a series of activities with clear deliverables. Uy and his UM team will lead this project; however, they will partner with experienced conservation biologists and lawyers from Solomon Island NGOs. Uy is currently exploring options for local partners to aid in the training of the stakeholders, as working with original partner, Ecological Solutions Solomon Islands, is no longer advisable (due to ESSI’s inability to meet the reporting requirements of CEPF). In addition, a lawyer will be hired from the Solomon Islands Environmental Law Association (SIELA) to help navigate through the legal issues involved with declaring a PA. The project comprises 4 major components, with associated deliverables and activities detailed in Table 1 below.

At the conclusion of the proposed CEPF project and the establishment of the protected area, Uy will continue to work with the NKN communities to seek funding to maintain the PA, which include fund raising with private companies and grant proposals with other NGOs. To date, Uy has engaged a private donor to directly benefit the NKN communities by providing scholarships for their youth, seed money for sustainable businesses, and access to better health care. Uy will take advantage of University of Rochester’s (UR) Development Office, who expressed strong interest in securing long-term funding for this project, including establishing student-led initiatives that leverage social media (e.g., a proposed voluntary carbon tax program targeting UR students, staff and alumni).

Detailed below in Table 1 are the 4 major components, and associated activities and deliverables of this project.

Table 1: Description of components of the proposed project establishing the Yato PA (updated Feb 14, 2020)

Component	Deliverables	Activity and Description
1. Secure project endorsement from stakeholders & outreach (YEAR 1)	1.1. A draft of consent letter template by August 2018. This deliverable is complete.	1.1.1. Community meetings to discuss the partnership with NKN communities by July 2018. This activity has been conducted.
		1.1.2. Development of a letter of project endorsement by August 2018, as implemented by Uy with input from the NKN communities. This activity has been conducted.
	1.2. Establishment of management committee to oversee the overall goals and implementation of this collaborative project with Uy's team by Aug 2018. The management committee will endorse the project by signing the consent letter. Achieved in Dec 2018.	1.2.1. Meetings with community elders of the NKN communities to establish a management committee by July 2018. This effort builds on the existing Conservation Committee established by NKN elders and will facilitate communication between Uy and the stakeholders. This activity has been conducted.
	1.3. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism developed and implemented, with input from the stakeholders by August 2018 (achieved in June 2019)	1.3.1. Meetings with the management committee to develop and establish the conflict resolution and complaint mechanism. The mechanism will be implemented and publicized throughout the three communities by August 2018. This activity has been conducted.
	1.4. Endorsement of project and complaints system through signed letters by the management committee by Aug 2018. The committee posted the notice for the complaint system in June 2019.	1.4.1. Uy will meet with the communities to discuss the CEPF project and the final draft of the support letter. Uy met with the stakeholders during an official project launching event in June 2019
		1.4.2. Uy will meet with NKN elders and management committee to receive endorsement of the project by August 2018. This activity has been conducted.
	1.5. Outreach program, which includes materials for outreach, to reach and inform over 200 NKN community members of the goals of the project by December 2018. Because of the remoteness of the NKN communities, we have opted to start the outreach by sponsoring an official launching event at Baghare Community High School in June 2019. The event was attended by community members, and provided us an opportunity to interact with interested stakeholders, including answering questions they may have regarding our program. We will continue to develop materials for more general outreach.	1.5.1 Development of powerpoint and oral presentations to provide 1) a primer to conservation and climate change, and 2) details of the goals of this CEPF project for our outreach program by August 2018. This activity has been conducted.
		1.5.2. Implementation of outreach program to provide 1) a primer to conservation and climate change, and 2) details of the goals of this CEPF project by December 2018. Each of the 3 communities will be visited at least once. Because of the remoteness of the NKN communities, we have opted to start the outreach by sponsoring an official launching event at Baghare Community High School in June 2019.
		1.5.3. Administration of survey to 100 community members (33-34 from each community) to measure conservation attitudes using the New Ecological Paradigm before and after exposure to our outreach program by Dec 2018. Because of the remoteness of the NKN communities, we are still devising ways to more effectively reach the stakeholders.
	1.6. A workshop, based on documents (e.g., reader) and powerpoint presentations, to be held at the Nafinua Station to introduce 10 stakeholders to	1.6.1. Develop and execute a workshop on conservation and the steps required to declare a PA by December 2018. This single workshop will be held at the Nafinua Research Station, and will

	concepts in conservation, and the processes involved in declaring a PA by Dec 2018. This workshop was ran in Dec 2018.	last for 5 days and involve 10 stakeholders. This activity has been conducted.
2. Boundary and habitat mapping (Year 1)	2.1. Complete field data set (e.g., GPS coordinates, site descriptions, altitude) for boundary mapping, and mapping of habitats, settlements and culturally relevant sites by February 2019. The initial data were collected in June 2019. In addition, we met with community elders who marked the proposed boundaries of the Yato Conservation Area on a 1:500000 map from the SI Ministry of Lands.	2.1.1. Uy's student & 2 rangers from the Manutage will work with 8 stakeholders for 21 days to complete data collection for mapping by Feb 2019. Mapping activities include taking GPS and altitude data of landmarks to establish boundaries, habitats and sites. This activity has been conducted.
	2.2. A physical and digital map containing placement of key habitats, settlement and culturally relevant sites within the NKN PA by May 2019. After collecting data and information in June 2019, we are currently constructing a digital map using ARC GIS. The map should be completed by the end of Feb 2020, and will be presented to the NKN communities in March 2020.	2.2.1. Uy and his UM student will combine field data with remote sensing data to construct the digital map of the diverse habitats, settlements and culturally important sites within the proposed PA's boundaries by May 2019. This activity is in progress.
		2.2.2. Production of physical maps with the habitats, settlements and culturally relevant sites mapped within the proposed NKN PA to be shared with the NKN communities by August 2019. This activity is in progress
		2.2.3. Participatory meetings with stakeholders to seek their input regarding the map, especially its boundary by August 2019. Map will be revised as needed. This activity is planned for March 2020.
3. Biodiversity Survey (Year 2)	3.1. Complete field data set for plant and animal species diversity surveys at 8 permanent study plots within the NKN PA by December 2019. Due to delays with Uy's recent move and the need to change the local partner, we plan to start this survey in June 2020.	3.1.1. Uy, hist team and local collaborators will train 8 stakeholders in in biological survey techniques, and plant and animal species identification for 10 days by December 2019. This activity is planned for June 2020.
		3.1.2. Uy's student & 2 rangers from the Manutage will work with 8 stakeholders for 21 days to complete biodiversity surveys at 8 permanent study plots by December 2019. The team will collect abundance and distribution data for several taxa. This activity is planned to start in June 2020. We will identify and engage with a local partner to help with training the stakeholders in survey techniques by March 2020.
	3. 2 Establish permanent study plots of long-term surveys of diversity and habitat quality (across years) by December 2019. Due to delays with Uy's recent move and the need to change the local partner, we plan to start this survey in June 2020.	3.2.1 Eight permanent study plots will be established for diversity surveys (two each in cloud forest, primary rainforest, secondary rainforest and mangrove habitats) by December 2019. The 8 plots will be monitored every other year. This activity is planned to start in June 2020.
		3.3. A powerpoint presentation and document detailing the results of the diversity survey by Feb 2020. Results of the surveys will be summarized by Dec 2020. Note, however, that we have published a paper that includes a survey of bird diversity of the proposed protected area (Mittermeier et al. 2018)
	3.3.2. Uy & his student will create a document that summarizes the results of the surveys by Feb 2020. The document will include a discussion on the relevance of each habitat, and their relative	

		value in conservation, which is critical for the PA proposal. This activity is planned after data is collected from the study plots.
4. Declaration of protected area (Year 2)	4.1. Draft of PA proposal by October 2020.	4.1.1. Uy consult with SIELA lawyer about PA proposal and presentation to NKN communities by March 2020
		4.1.2. Community/stakeholders meeting with Uy, his team and SIELA lawyer to discuss the process of declaring a PA by October 2020
		4.1.3. The management committee with Uy and SIELA lawyer will draft a PA proposal by Dec 2020. The PA proposal will contain details about the boundaries of the PA, the restrictions on resource harvest by stakeholders and governance.
	4.2 Posting of Public Notice regarding the PA proposal and community/landowners meeting discussion by Oct 2020	4.2.1. Public notice about the meeting to discuss the PA proposal is posted by Oct 2020. The public notice needs to be up for 4 weeks.
	4.3. Land owner consultation meeting and endorsement of PA proposal by Oct 2020	4.3.1. Uy and his team will hold a meeting with the NKN landowners to discuss the details of the draft PA proposal, the boundary map of the proposed Yato PA, and nomination of management committee (if changes are desired) by Oct 2020.
		4.3.2. Elected management committee signs and endorses the PA proposal by Oct 2020
	4.4. Letter indicating intent for the proposed PA will be written and sent to relevant Ministries and Provincial Government by Oct 2020	4.4.1. The Management Committee, in consultation with Uy, his team and the SIELA lawyer will draft a letter to relevant federal Ministries and the Provincial Government indicating the intent to establish a PA, including the PA proposal by Oct 2020
		4.4.2. The Management Committee will present the letter of intent to establish a PA and meet with relevant federal Ministries and Provincial Government by Oct 2020
4.5. Consultation with four neighboring communities (Wanahata, Iaru, Notorara and Bagarei) and Ward 17 Council of Chiefs regarding the boundary map and general support by Oct 2020	4.5.1. Meetings with neighboring tribes & the region's Council of Chiefs to discuss the boundary map, as well as the NKN communities' goal of declaring the PA, by Oct 2020. We will ensure that all neighboring tribes are consulted and the map revised accordingly	
4.6. Draft a management plan for the NKN PA by Oct 2020	4.6.1. The management committee will develop and draft a management plan for the NKN PA (e.g., vision, restrictions of resource use, governance) in consultation with Uy and the SIELA lawyer by Oct 2020	
4.7. Declaration of the NKN PA by July 2021 (the timing will depend on approval by the SI government)	4.7.1. The management committee of the NKN communities, in consultation with Uy and a lawyer from SIELA will submit the PA application to the Ministry of Environment to register the NKN PA through the Protected Area Act 2010 by July 2021	
5. CEPF financial and programmatic reports	5.1. University of Rochester submit annual project audit to CEPF by Dec 2020	5.1.1. External project audit submitted for June 2018 to May 2019 period, in July 2019 (under advice from CEPF, we are conducting the audit in 2020 with the University of Rochester)
		5.1.2. External project audit submitted for March 2020 to Dec 2020 period, in Dec 2020
	5.2. Baseline and final evaluation of the gender tracking tool (GTT) applied for University of Miami by August 2018 and May 2020, respectively	5.2.1. Baseline evaluation taken of University of Miami in first project quarter for Gender Tracking Tool by August 2018
		5.2.2. Final evaluation taken of University of Rochester in first project quarter for Gender Tracking Tool by June 2020

5.3. Prepare, sign, implement and monitoring Professional Service agreements with SIELA and local counterparts in compliance with CEPF policies. (July 2020). This deliverable will be updated once we secure a local counterpart (by March 2020)	5.3.1. Prepare Terms of Reference for SIELA and local counterparts by July 2020. This activity will be updated once we secure a local counterpart to replace by March 2020.
	5.3.2. Prepare and sign professional service agreements, which includes detailed deliverables, reporting schedule, financial management requirements for project reimbursement and CEPF flow down provisions, between University of Rochester and the local partner for the biological surveys by June 2020. This activity will be updated once we secure a local counterpart.
	5.3.3. Prepare and sign professional service agreements, which includes detailed deliverables, reporting schedule, financial management requirements for project reimbursement and CEPF flow down provisions, between University of Rochester and SIELA by July 2020
	5.3.4. Ensure compliance of professional service agreements, in July 2020, to ensure local partner for biodiversity surveys is compliant, to include completion of deliverables and approval of University of Rochester financial staff of submission of all receipts.
	5.3.5. Ensure compliance of professional service agreements, in July 2020, to ensure SIELA is compliant, to include completion of deliverables and approval of University of Rochester financial staff of submission of all receipts.
5.4. Safeguard policies for Indigenous Peoples and Involuntary resettlement implemented and monitored to ensure full compliance with CEPF policy throughout the project duration	5.4.1. Complaints system developed and disseminated to project partners and beneficiaries by August 2018. This was accomplished in June 2019.
	5.4.2. Permission from the NKN communities formally obtained and sent to CEPF in support of project activities and objectives by August 2018. This was achieved in Dec 2018.
	5.4.3. Safeguard policies for Indigenous Peoples and Involuntary resettlement implemented and monitored, to include submission of compliance report to CEPF on July 30 and January 30.
	5.4.4. Final impact report submitted 60 days after project close (December 2020)
5.5. Final impact monitoring report completed and submitted by July 2020	5.5.1. Monitoring systems established and implemented by UR to measure project impacts and CEPF indicates throughout the project.

B. Participatory implementation

The impetus for this CEPF project comes almost exclusively from the NKN communities. After our team conducted surveys in the NKN tribal lands to search for the Makira Moorhen, elders of the community approached us seeking help in declaring a conservation area. As such, the entire project is based on voluntary participation of stakeholders and its success will depend on their commitment. In fact, our first activities were meetings with stakeholders in the implementation of this project, including signing a letter of endorsement (including aspects of the Free Prior and Informed Consent process), establishing a management committee and developing grievance mechanisms. In short, the project was implemented after agreement was freely given.

Further, once the management committee was formed, we will held a special 5-day workshop providing additional training and education, as the committee will be instrumental in leading the project and

communicating with our team and CEPF (see Activity 1.6.1 in Table 1). The management committee will be explicitly involved in the implementation of the project, and in discussions with government officials and lawyers as the Yato PA is registered.

Finally, the ultimate success of this project will depend on strong support from the general community. As such, we will develop and execute outreach programs to provide 1) background in conservation and sustainable living, 2) details of the project goals and activities, and the 3) potential impact of the project for Makira and beyond (see Deliverable 1.5 in Table 1). We engaged the entire community by holding an official project launching event in June 2019. The event was held at Baghare Community High School and was attended by all interested stakeholders. This event provided us with an opportunity to engage the communities as a whole and answer any questions they may have regarding the project. Having support of the community will ensure the success of each of the components of this project, and thus we will seek their input in project implementation.

C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

The project focuses on protecting areas currently not in direct use by community members as settlements or agricultural sites. The formal mapping of the customary NKN lands will provide a clear idea of which areas are currently in use, and which areas will be designated as part of the protected area (see Component 2 in Table 1). The decision to include an area as part of the protected area will be made in consultation with community elders and the management committee (see Deliverable 1.2 in Table 1). That is, community elders and the management committee will decide on which areas of the NKN tribal land map will be set aside as the protected area, taking special care to avoid active settlements and agricultural sites. If, however, specific families or households are directly affected by the restrictions of declaring a protected area, any project implementation will only occur after the affected families have agreed to the project's overall goals and activities.

Community membership of individuals will be determined solely by community elders and the Council of Chiefs. Community members who breach community agreed rules for the proposed PA will be assessed for exclusion from the project, under the guidance of the management committee and specific members of the Council of Chiefs (*i.e.*, NKN elders). Individuals who are not part of the NKN communities will not be eligible for participation in this project.

D. Measures to assist the affected persons

As much as possible, we will avoid negatively impacting households or families (e.g., avoiding areas that are used for agriculture). If, however, individuals are affected by the project, we will prioritize their inclusion in income generating activities. For example, affected individuals will be given priority to join the boundary mapping or biodiversity survey teams, as participants of these activities receive monetary compensation for working on these projects. Of course, the ultimate choice of participants will be determined in consultation with the management committee.

E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism

We have finalized a conflict resolution and complaint mechanism with input from stakeholders, especially community elders and the management committee (see Deliverable 1.3 in Table 1). In general, the grievance mechanism will allow individuals to contact us directly. Below is a copy of the public notice that will be printed, laminated then distributed in March 2020.

The public notice will state the following (which will be translated into Pijin):

This project to establish a conservation or protected area in your tribal land is sponsored by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. If you have any grievances or questions with the project or project management please contact:

Grantee, University of Rochester: J. Albert C. Uy, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627, USA; Telephone contact: in USA +01 585 273 1309; in Solomon Island 7406580; Email contact: al.uy@rochester.edu

CEPF Regional Implementation Team: Helen Pippard, RIT, CEPF East Melanesian Islands Hotspots, Oceania Regional Office, IUCN, Private Mailbag 5, Ma'afu Street, Suva, Fiji Islands. Telephone Contact: +679 331 9084. Email contact: Helen.PIPPARD@iucn.org

CEPF Executive Director: cepfexecutive@conservation.org

We will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at cepfexecutive@conservation.org or by surface mail.

F. Implementation Arrangements

This proposed project was initiated by the NKN Communities, who approached our team to express their interest in partnering to form the NKN Protected Area. Uy has had three general meetings with the communities prior to submission of this proposal, in which stakeholders expressed their strong desire to establish a conservation area. As such, because the impetus for this work originated from within the community, the likelihood of conflict and complaints is reduced.

To provide information to stakeholders on the goals, scope and proposed activities of this CEPF project (and overall goal of establishing a PA), we will distribute leaflets and posters throughout the communities (in progress). Importantly, we conducted an official project launching event in June 2019, where community stakeholders, chiefs and the conservation/management committee interacted with Uy and his team. This transparency and explicit attempts to publicize the scope of the work should help manage stakeholder expectations, while reducing the likelihood of conflict during project implementation (see Component 1 in Table 1).

Finally, we will hold regular meetings with the management committee, and the community as a whole to provide updates, and a venue to express concerns to be shared and resolved in a transparent manner. These open meetings and periodic updates should reduce conflicts among stakeholders.