

Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions

Date: 25 March 2022

CEPF Grant: CEPF-112688

Grantee: People Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF)

Project Title: "Strengthening co-management in the François' Langur Conservation Landscape and promoting the measure to policy level"

Project Location: Sinh Long commune—Na Hang district; Thuong Lam and Khuong Ha communes-Lam Binh districts, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam

Grant Summary

1. Grantee organization: People Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF)
2. Grant title: Strengthening co-management in the François' Langur Conservation Landscape and promoting the measure to policy level
3. Grant number: CEPF-112688
4. Grant amount (US dollars): USD 249,995
5. Proposed dates of grant: 01 Jun. 2022 to 31 May 2025
6. Countries or territories where project is located: Vietnam
7. Date of preparation of this document: 12 March 2022

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

The project target site is within the proposed Community-based Francois' Langur Conservation Area, in the Lam Binh/ Sinh Long conservation landscape, within a larger conservation landscape referred to as the 'Ba Be / Na Hang Limestone Forest Complex.' The site comprises a watershed area with high-value karst limestone forests that once covered most northern Vietnam and southern China. It forms part of an approximately 250,000 ha expanse of forest located outside Vietnam's protected areas network. It holds high global biodiversity significance, particularly primate species, and many other endemic taxa.

Straddling the district boundaries of Lam Binh and Na Hang, in Tuyen Quang province. One of Vietnam's poorest mountainous provinces, the project works with communities of Tay, Dao, Nung ethnic minorities with 2,132 households (9,891 people—2021 Dept of Statistics data) who live near the high conservation-value watershed forests. Twenty-two villages adjacent to the Lam Binh and Sinh Long watershed forests focus on PRCF's previous and ongoing work. Initially, in 2010, PRCF began initiatives to support local villagers' engagement in community-based conservation management, targeting collaborative management and co-management of forests and habitat to Vietnam's last known viable population of the globally endangered François' Langur. Through PRCF work, local communities are gaining better options to negotiate their position for impartial decision-making (co-management) towards natural resources management and conservation governance.

PRCF Vietnam Program activities at the site seek to establish a community-based conservation area linked to community-led conservation of high-value forests home to the François' Langur

and other threatened species. Previous work by PRCF has, among other things, established Village Co-Management Committees—VMCs, which support management responsibilities and benefits brought from links between conservation and development in the landscape. To support local livelihoods, Village Self-Help Groups-VSHGs have been established to help improve socio-economic conditions in the village. Under this project, the VSHGs will be linked to agriculture and agroforestry training and on-farm demonstrations by Key Farmers (selected by villagers under pre-determined criteria).

Building on past and current momentum, the project benefits the conservation of endangered François' Langur, its habitat, and associated species. It supports community-based conservation governance in the conservation landscape. It supports target stakeholder communities in their village socio-economic development by establishing and strengthening self-reliant village measures. The project promotes a community-based conservation model at the Tuyen Quang site. It establishes a successful precedent and provides opportunities to exchange experiences and information through project partners and stakeholders, local, provincial, and national government agencies.

B. Participatory implementation

The project is fully participatory; it works with 22 stakeholder communities, with 2,132 households and 9,891 people (refer to table 1) living near the high conservation value forests. Most project activities are participative and are led by villagers themselves, receiving technical support and guidance from the PRCF and implementation partners. A 40% women involvement is a pre-requisite across the project and its activities, with a ratio which in fact stands at M4.1:W3.6 (or 46% Women).

Most project activity planning takes place via the participation of Village Co-Management Committees, represented by seven villagers from each village. However, not all members participate in all planning sessions, but tailor their representation as per the planning subject matter. Monitoring of socio-economic impact, safeguards, and review of project performance and monitoring of its various field components is conducted by community members, after training and under guidance by ORCF staff. Forest conservation patrolling and monitoring, together with François Langur before and after surveys, are conducted by the local Community Conservation Teams, which include local villagers. Planning of activities to support conservation management based on threats analyses

C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

We conduct thorough socio-economic surveys at each village. From these point out those households who are most at risk/ vulnerable, keeping at least ten households under this group for resurveying each year, and comparing data to determine changes. To select these most at-risk/ vulnerable households, we consult before surveying with the Head of Village and Head of Women's Union. The ten most vulnerable (poor) households are selected for baseline surveying and periodic update surveys thereafter.

D. Measures to assist the affected persons

Our Village Self-Help Groups target poor, vulnerable, and most at-risk households by giving them priority access to VSHG loans for agriculture and agroforestry work, including their training involvement.

PRCF measures to avoid adverse impacts on vulnerable households include periodic village meetings and consultations to learn about emerging socio-economic or otherwise issues and surfacing concerns from communities regarding project impact. This is superseded by social assessment meetings every six months and yearly workshops to discuss and resolve grievances through offset mechanisms, such as inputs into forest livelihoods, agriculture livelihoods, or small-scale business development activities annual assessment of changes in socio-economic standing of vulnerable and most-at-risk households from the established baseline and six-month safeguard monitoring for issues and grievances.

E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism

At its onset, the project will initially discuss with all village stakeholders to present its aims and objectives towards biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development, clarifying its participatory monitoring procedures and safeguard measures, including grievance redress mechanisms.

Through its implementation, the project will produce a series of information posters and establish and update information boards that provide information such as project aim, objectives, geographical scope, and ways for local stakeholder communities to contract project management if it is needed of grievance. All grievance redress posters and information boards will include information for direct contact with PRCF project management, the CEPF Regional Implementation Team, and the CEPF Secretariat. Contact information is as follows:

PRCF Asia Secretariat (Hanoi)

Email: PRCF@prcfoundation.org

Telp: Vietnam +84 (0) 243 7185677 USA +1 213 4780484

CEPF Regional Implementation Team

Email: CEPF-INDOBURMA@iucn.org

Vietnam National Coordinator, Nguyen Duc Tu +84 913 247 551

CEPF Secretariat

Conservation International Ethics Hotline

Website: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>

Telp: United States +1-866-294-8674

The following text will be included in all information posters and signboards holding grievance redress purposes in Vietnamese as follows:

Chúng tôi sẽ chia sẻ tất cả các thắc mắc khiếu nại và các giải đáp đề xuất với Nhóm thực hiện Vùng và Giám đốc tài trợ CEPF trong vòng 15 ngày. Nếu người khiếu nại không hài lòng với các phản hồi đề xuất, họ có thể khiếu nại qua đường dây nóng của Tổ chức Bảo tồn quốc tế (đường dây điện thoại miễn +1-866-294-8674 / trang web: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>)

The above text translates to English:

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 via the CI Ethics Hotline (toll-free telephone line: +1-866-294-8674 / secure web portal:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>

F. Implementation Arrangements

Project activities will help strengthen local community involvement in conservation management of natural resources and biodiversity in the François' Langur Conservation Landscape while simultaneously helping stakeholder villages retain the access and use of resources. However, protection measures, defined by local communities in liaison with the Forest Protection Management Boards and the Provincial and District Forest Protection Departments, will apply to the karst cave and forest habitat areas critical to the survival of the François' Langur population.

The project includes community development work to support and complement conservation activities, most of which have conservation-support links and measures. The project focuses on strengthening community-based conservation measures and proposed to bolster village-based institutions to advance co-management initiatives in the landscape.

Annual socio-economic assessments and six-month safeguard assessments will show any changes in socio-economic and access to resources from baselines established at project onset. Socio-economic reviews will examine the impact of a shift in socioeconomics to the most vulnerable households via pre-determined surveys. We do not foresee any negative impacts from the project to the local communities; we envision benefits and increased ownership of their surrounding natural resources, including a strengthened voice towards governance and sustainability of natural resources.

Notwithstanding the above, and although the project proposes increasing local communities' decision-making voice for managing biodiversity and natural resources in the conservation landscape, several resource-use restrictions will occur. These we see are of two types: (i) Restrictions that relate to voluntary illegal, unsustainable, and destructive activities, and (ii) Restrictions that are involuntary in nature and relate to non-damaging access to resources.

Restrictions to damaging activities - Through the establishment of a community-based conservation area, and in the meantime by putting into place conservation-based restrictions on forest use, although these are placed by local communities themselves and thus foreseen to be managed by local communities, the project will result in the strengthening of measures that will restrict access to watershed forest areas for wildlife hunting and trapping, timber logging, and unsustainable harvest of non-timber forest products. In effect, however, these activities are already prohibited by Vietnamese law. The site is a watershed protection area, and some of the species within, such as the flagship François Langur, are protected in Vietnamese.

Restrictions to non-damaging activities - The proposed protected area, comprises karst forest areas offering little forest resources to the neighbouring villages. Still, some non-damaging

extractions do take place, particularly for non-timber forest products and some animal species that are not strictly protected by Vietnamese law. By establishing the protected area, although to be managed by local communities, access to some of these forest products will be restricted.

The project will measure the impact of both types of restrictions upon the local community by establishing a baseline on present 'legal' and 'illegal' benefits from the Lam Binh and Na Hang forests and measuring changes on a six-month basis. Further, a grievance box will be placed at each of the nine village centers to receive any villager complaints, concerns, or issues regarding the imposed restrictions. These will be collated and presented in the annual participatory social monitoring workshop to review the situation, see solutions, and assess CEPF social safeguard policies compliance. Grievance notes and process results will be reported to CEPF on a six-month basis.