

Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions

A. Project background

The "Cat Ba Langur Conservation Project" is a distinct species-focused conservation program that aims to prevent extinction of the Cat Ba or Golden-headed langur (*Trachypithecus poliocephalus poliocephalus*) and to contribute to the conservation of the overall biodiversity of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Cat Ba Archipelago. This langur species is probably the most endangered of the Asian colobines and has been included in the "Top 25 Most Endangered Primates" since this list was first published in 2000 by IUCN and CI. The langur occurs only on Cat Ba Island in the Gulf of Tonkin, northeastern Vietnam. The area is nationally and internationally recognized for its importance to biodiversity conservation. Furthermore, *Hopea chinensis* as well as many other protected and endangered species (e.g. Serow and Keeled Box Turtle), can be found on Cat Ba Island. Recently, a new gecko species, the Cat Ba Tiger Gecko (*Goniurosaurus catbaensis*) was described as a result of a ZGAP funded survey by Dr. Roswitha Stenke (former project manager of the CBLCP), Nguyen Quang Truong (Institute für Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR, Hanoi) and Dr. Thomas Ziegler (Cologne Zoo, Germany).

According to reports of local people the entire island of Cat Ba (140 km²) and some smaller offshore islands were previously densely populated by langurs. Hunting has been the sole cause for the dramatic and rapid population decline from an estimated 2,400-2,700 in the 1960s to only 53 individuals by 2000 before the project was started in November 2000. However, according to interviews with local people and especially former hunters (who are now working as langur guards for the project), hunting had never contributed to local livelihoods, but the langurs rather were bycatch of hunting for macaques and trapped by chance or were just hunted as a leisure activity and then mainly used for trade in traditional medicines. The more the number of langurs decreased, the more attractive they became for poachers as a rare commodity. The last langur was reported to have been poached in 2001. Due to low population numbers, it is not possible that langur-hunting has been a major contributor to local livelihoods for more than a decade.

The CBLCP was originally designed at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Since the end of 2000, it is being implemented in partnership and cooperation with Hai Phong Province, Cat Hai District, Cat Ba National Park, Cat Ba Archipelago Biosphere Reserve, and six Cat Ba National Park buffer zone communes. Due to the strict protection measures, the langur population increased to current 60-70 individuals. Based upon the survey at the start of the project according to which 53 langurs existed on Cat Ba at that time, the CBLCP was able to confirm the births of 19 offspring in total, while only five losses occurred during the runtime of the project (the last case of poaching was reported in 2001, two weak young did not survive, and two adult langurs died of old age).

Although the growth of the population is encouraging, the overall status of the species is most critical. As a result of habitat fragmentation, the remaining population is now divided into eleven groups in seven isolated areas, only four of which include both sexes, while the others are non-reproducing social units. The total reproductive output in this species is accordingly low. Efforts to effectively conserve the langurs and their habitat face major obstacles due to the need to better address the local community's aspirations for development, and due to the steadily increasing human population, besides persistent, severe deficiencies in law enforcement. As elsewhere in the region, poaching is driven by increasingly attractive commercial gains in satisfying the immense local and regional demand for wildlife and animal parts.

Despite these still existing deficiencies, major achievements by the CBLCP were the establishment of a strictly protected langur sanctuary, increase of ranger patrols, implementation and maintaining of protection measures that were specifically adjusted to the protection deficiencies and options in the areas of the different sub-populations, involvement

of local people (and also former hunters) as langur guards, regular monitoring by rangers and langur guards (and thus reliable information about langur numbers (as any change is verified immediately by the CBLCP), regular (at least monthly) information exchange of all involved persons and an anti-wildlife trade campaign aimed at owners of restaurants, hotels and transport services to be educated about the existing laws (according to Vietnamese laws, all plants and animals within a National Park are protected – irrespective of their classification according to the IUCN Red List or CITES – and any possession of firearms, any wildlife trade or even advertisements are prohibited and offences will be punished by a fine). Recent interviews with local people on Cat Ba Island (owners of restaurants, members of the langur and forest protections groups, local authorities etc.) indicate that the Cat Ba langur is indeed a symbol for the island and that any poaching is expected to be prosecuted rigorously.

The proposal for the next years has been consulted about with Cat Ba National Park, Cat Ba Archipelago Biosphere Reserve, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the People's Committee. The National Park requested an intensification of the mobile group, and the proposed Conservation Management Assistant will act for both the CBLCP and Cat Ba National Park as a link and particularly be responsible for the implementation of the ranger guidelines. All decisions will be submitted to and discussed with DARD. Regular meetings with partners/ stakeholders are planned; the collaboration has proven successful for many years. Therefore, the risk of non-collaboration is minimal; the risk of corruption is dealt with by the project manager being permanently on site, release of funds only at short-term and in rather small amounts as well as continuous monitoring and evaluation of implemented measures. Nevertheless, the CBLCP is permanently working upon the expansion of the friendly relationships to receive crucial and often unofficial information as well as the cooperation with the management of the Biosphere Reserve, the border guards, and relevant organizations (Woman Union, Youth Union etc.). There are no ethnic or religious minority groups on the island.

The CBLCP cooperated with the the U.S. Embassy as well as the Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP) in the project "Biodiversity Conservation - Cat Ba National Park" (completed in June 2007). Additional partners are more than welcome, but currently no other international NGO is working in the field of biodiversity conservation or environmental protection on Cat Ba Island and even not in the province. Therefore, the CBLCP has to act as technical expert for all environmental issues in the province. Rather informal exchange still occurs with personnel of other international NGOs and respective discussions regarding cooperation have been held (e.g. with DED). However, at the moment none of them is able or willing to spend financial resources on Cat Ba Island or in the province – mostly due to other areas of specialization or regions of interest. (see also Ashley Brooks' report 'An evaluation of the effectiveness of ten years of internationally funded conservation and development projects in and around Cat Ba Island National Park, Vietnam' at http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/conservation/publications/pdf_files/vietnam/Cat%20Ba%20presentation.pdf).

B. Participatory implementation

About 33 % of the remaining langur population inhabit areas that are located adjacent to three rural communes. Hunting, trapping and wood-cutting were intense in those areas, threatening the survival of the langurs. An alternative approach to langur protection needed to be taken here. The core feature of this programme was the involvement of local people in forest and wildlife protection, thus, the establishment of a community-based langur protection programme. In the three communes mentioned, local people are now in charge to monitor and protect single langur groups occurring in their areas. These so called 'langur guards' are also responsible to educate people in their communes and to exchange the collected data with the CBLCP regularly. Some of the 'Langur Guardians' had, in the past, been successful

langur hunters. However, being faced, almost daily, with the rapid decline of this species, they have since become dedicated langur conservationists. Their profound knowledge of the Cat Ba langur, and other flora and fauna is of invaluable help for conservation work on Cat Ba Island.

To protect the forest close to the langur groups, forest protection groups (BVR) in two communes were established which are responsible to clean the forests from traps and to assess the human impact in these areas. Because these two communes are actively involved in wildlife trade, the members of these groups are also essential as informants in the fight against wildlife trade. Additionally, particular sensitive areas and rare animal and plant species are under strengthened control through seasonal increase in the frequency of patrols in cooperation with National Park rangers.

Furthermore, six forest protection clubs (FPC) under the supervision of district rangers with the CBLCP as a supporter were initiated to protect the forests outside the National Park. Apart from that the FPCs are also responsible to fight against forest fires, to organize loudspeaker education in their communes and to visit households of well-known violators to educate them on their crime and the impact it has on the environment. A special task of the FPC in Cat Ba Town is the fight against wildlife trade. Since 2008, an instruction of the People's Committee in Hai Phong outlaws every kind of wildlife trade. However, law enforcement represents still a great challenge, amongst other things due to existing connections between traders and influential persons.

In total, approximately 140 local people are daily involved in the various protection programs of the CBLCP. Thereby, the local people are not only observers of the CBLCP, but are actively involved in the conservation measures. Moreover, although the langur areas and populations are still too sensible at the moment, sensitive eco-tourism may be a long-term goal for local income in the future from which the local communities would benefit.

So far, all protection and education programs on Cat Ba Island were aimed at adult inhabitants. With the support of the Biosphere Reserve and the People's Committee of Cat Hai, the CBLCP was asked to educate teachers on Cat Ba Island in conservation measures and provide support for respective lecturing material. In addition, regular presentations for school children are given with the aim to get younger generations interested in their forests and its protection. Besides, lectures upon strategies in environmental protection and their implementation are given by the CBLCP project manager and the deputy project manager to students of the Forestry University of Viet Nam (Hanoi).

C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

According to Vietnamese laws, all plants and animals within a National Park are protected – irrespective of their classification according to the IUCN Red List or CITES. Hunting, wood cutting, turning of forest into agricultural land, animal keeping and environmental pollution are prohibited on Cat Ba (Decision 08/2001/QD-TTg). Wildlife trade, advertising of wildlife, illegal keeping of wildlife and even the possession of guns are as well prohibited on Cat Ba (Instruction 15/2008/CT-UBND). Thus hunting and killing of any wildlife clearly is illegal.

The CBLCP is only giving support in the implementation process. It is not planned to compensate wildlife poachers or other offenders. The local communities view the Cat Ba Langur as a symbol for their island. They are in no way affected negatively by the strictly protected sanctuary, but in contrast actively take part in the actions of the CBLCP. The CBLCP improves the people's livelihoods by providing regular allowances and creates means of livelihood for future generations by supporting a sustainable use of natural resources.

D. Measures to assist the affected persons

Since only wildlife poachers and other offenders may be affected by the actions of the CBLCP and the local communities even benefit from it, it is not planned to assist "affected persons" in any way. The level of poverty on Cat Ba Island is not so low that poachers and other offenders are relying on their illegal activities for survival; it is merely for cheap luxury supplements of their diet, ornamental purposes or profit.

E. Conflict resolution

The langur guards are authorized to remove poachers from the langur sanctuary by local authorities.

Conflicts with the local communities are not expected to occur since none did occur in the past nine years of the project. However, possible conflicts can be assumed to be easily resolved due to the good relationships between the CBLCP and all relevant authorities as well as local communities.

F. Implementation Arrangements

Dr. Martina Raffel is the Curator for in situ Conservation of Allwetterzoo Münster. She acts as Project Coordinator in Germany and is responsible for fundraising, reporting, public relations, homepages and is the technical advisor for the project team in Vietnam. Daniela Schrudde is the Project Manager in Vietnam who is responsible for project management and implementation on site. Pieter Levelink is the Deputy Project Manager in Vietnam and responsible for project management and implementation on site. Mr. Pham Van Tuyen is the Assistant Conservation Officer on site and Mr. Tran Van Lan acts as a Project Officer for the Forest Protection on site.

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The proposal for the next years has been consulted about with Cat Ba National Park, Cat Ba Archipelago Biosphere Reserve, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the People's Committee. All decisions will be submitted to and discussed with DARD. Regular meetings with partners/ stakeholders are planned; the collaboration has proven successful for many years. Nevertheless, the CBLCP is permanently working upon the expansion of the friendly relationships to receive crucial and often unofficial information as well as the cooperation with the management of the Biosphere Reserve, the border guards, and relevant organizations (Woman Union, Youth Union, Farmers Union etc.).

Local people are involved in the conservation measures as so called 'langur guards', members of the forest protection groups (BVR) or of the forest protection clubs (FPC). In total, approximately 140 local people are daily involved in the various protection programs of the CBLCP.

Addendum:

As indicated above, there is no need to assist the "displaced" persons for their illegal activities, agreed upon Vietnamese laws. The CBLCP simply seeks ways to improve law enforcement, raise local awareness and is looking into ways to motivate local people to protect and conserve their forest and wildlife through community based protection. Thus, we do not think that the requested development of a plan of action during implementation does apply.