

**Social Assessment**

**Date:** 28 February, 2018

**CEPF Grant** 66518

**Grantee** Diana Fisher, University of Queensland

**Project Title:** Assessment and Awareness of Biodiversity in the Kunua and Mt Balbi regions, Bougainville

**Project Location:** Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grantee organization. **The University of Queensland**
2. Grant title. **Assessment and Awareness of Biodiversity in the Kunua and Mt Balbi regions, Bougainville**
3. Grant number 66518
4. Grant amount (US dollars).
5. Proposed dates of grant. **1st June 2018 – 31st June 2019**
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken. **Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea**
7. Date of preparation of this document. **28 February 2018**
8. **Indigenous People affected:** This section will describe the Indigenous People in the project area.

This proposed project will include the indigenous peoples of Kunua Plains and the Mt Balbi areas who are culturally related and geographically situated in the eastern and western hinterlands of Bougainville. In each of these two areas there are approximately 6000 people comprising 12 major clans who reside in ~ 3000 households.

9. **Summary of the proposed project:** This section will describe what you plan to do and how you plan to do it, with a particular focus on activities implemented in areas inhabited and/or used by Indigenous People.
  - We will conduct baseline surveys of biodiversity to increase knowledge of species conservation in communities in the Kunua Plains and Mt Balbi KBA, decision makers in the Autonomous Bougainville Government, and other stakeholders. The ultimate aim is to improve biodiversity conservation on Bougainville.
  - Before surveys, we will consult with communities to raise awareness on the importance of the study and its conservation aims, and to gather information on the cultural context of endangered species.
  - We will record plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and insects along elevational gradients from lowlands to highlands. Some specimens may be collected if they appear to be new species, to further identify or scientifically describe them.
  - After the surveys, results will be compiled and shared with the communities. One of the important contributions of this project will be documentation of results in local students' dissertations.
  - We will help to establish the Kunua Conservation Network (KCN) – a local community-based organization that can collaborate with those in other areas of Bougainville, such as Rotokas Ecotourism and the Kainake project.
10. **Potential impacts:** This section will assess expected project impacts (both positive and negative) on Indigenous People.

### **Positive**

Information collected in surveys will promote the protection of remaining pristine forests, rivers, and cultural sites from exploitation and proposed mining activities, which will increase food security and continuation of sharing natural resources across entire communities.

Communities will benefit economically from the survey by participating as field assistants, guides, and buying local produce, accommodation, and other services. Capacity building and training of community members, especially young adults and school-aged children, will be beneficial in the long term. Talks at primary schools will also encourage students to value environmental education.

Establishment of Kunua Conservation Network (KCN) will benefit communities and the District by helping them to apply for further funding themselves, and initiate more projects in conservation, education and food security.

People of Kunua and Mt Balbi areas are heavily dependent on the forest for their cultural and livelihood activities. One of the cultural rituals which are significant to the people of Kunua and Rotokas is the practice of wearing a traditional woven hat known as the 'Upe'. Upe is worn by young men during adolescence before they are initiated into manhood in the high elevation forest. This traditional hat is depicted on the Bougainville flag. With their high regard for nature, cultural practices and beliefs, this project will add value by preserving the natural environment and these cultural sites. The majority of these people are already supporting conservation as evident during the consultations.

This project is a first phase required to prepare for eventual threatened and harvested species management plans, but at this stage there will be no proposed restrictions on hunting or access.

### **Negative**

There will not be any major impacts, however, precautionary measures will be taken if they arise. One of the potential impacts would be conflicts over the recruitment of clan members who will participate in surveys. We will make sure that all clans that have land boundaries in the study site are included in the study mainly as guides and field assistants. The recruitment process will be fair and guided by clan members or community leaders.

Another negative impact if it occurs would be disputes over land boundaries. However, clan leaders, Council of Chiefs and members of the Teua Community Government will take a leading role in resolving land disputes or any other related issues that may arise during the study period. Associated with this impact would be land access to sacred sites. Again clan members will be consulted before any access happens.

- 11. Participatory preparation:** This section will describe the participation of affected communities during the project design process (i.e. prior to submission of the full proposal), and explain how Free, Prior and Informed Consent was obtained.

Junior Novera, who is part of this project and a local member of the community has been conducting extensive consultations since 2015 with the communities in Kunua District. A total of three consultation meetings have been conducted so far in Kunua with the local people. At each consultation, the District Manager, Chairman of Council of Chiefs or Chairman of the Teua Community Government convenes the meeting. A scribe is always appointed to record the minutes. One of the achievements of these consultations was the signing of an agreement by the elected members of the Teua Community Government on behalf of the community to fully support this research in Kunua (see attached). Again, during the recent visit by members of CEPF to Kunua last November reaffirms the blessing of this project by distinguished members of the community. We also have begun collaboration with the Rotokas Ecotourism team led by Junias Repiriri to expand our study sites and partnership in the KBA which is positive for the overall outcome of biodiversity conservation on Bougainville.

- 12. Mitigation strategies:** This section will outline measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits.

The wish to protect areas of intact forest and to promote sustainable management and education by forming a conservation network organization comes from local people, and elected local government members representing landowners and villages in the KBA. Our collaboration with all clans, and inclusion of local students who speak indigenous languages should help to avoid conflicts over hiring. We will provide some benefits that are targeted to children and the whole community, e.g. school materials. Mitigation measures will be based on cultural values and norms and based transparent dialogue amongst all parties as agreed in the agreement (above).

- 13. Monitoring and evaluation:** This section will explain how compliance with the safeguard policy on Indigenous Peoples will be monitored, and reported to CEPF and/or the Regional Implementation Team. Monitoring and evaluation methodologies should be adapted to the local context, indicators, and capacity.

Both before and after wildlife surveys, we will have ongoing consultations with all communities involved, in order to gather feedback, and to monitor the range of perceptions of people (positive or negative) in relation to the outcomes of the project. Community forums open to all, discussions with local leaders, and face to face interviews will be carried out as part of this process. We will ask specific questions on how the communities perceive the project and provide a platform to address issues and exchange thoughts. We will record who is involved in these discussions to ensure fair and representative participation. We will include this information in reports to CEPF.

- 14. Grievance mechanism:** All projects that trigger a safeguard must provide local communities and other relevant stakeholders with a means to raise a grievance with the grantee, the relevant Regional Implementation Team, the CEPF Secretariat or the World Bank.

This grievance mechanism must include, at a minimum, the following elements.

- Email and telephone contact information for the grantee organization.
- Email and telephone contact information for the CEPF Regional Implementation Team.
- Email and telephone contact information for the local World Bank office.
- The email of the CEPF Executive Director: [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)
- A statement describing how you will inform stakeholders of the objectives of the project and the existence of the grievance mechanism (e.g., posters, signboards, public notices, public announcements, use of local languages).
- You should include the following text, exactly, in any grievance mechanism: “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](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.”

Following the guidance above, describe the grievance mechanism that you will use.

We will inform communities of the objectives of the project and the existence of the grievance mechanism directly at community forums in Pidgin and the local Kunua language (Rapois), and with public notices in Pidgin and English. We will encourage people to register any grievances either in Pidgin or English: 1) Directly at community forums, or 2) Through a third party contact with the CEPF regional implementation team, or 3) Via a comments / grievance book that will be

left with community leaders to be filled in between trips. Dispute resolution between local groups will include the local village paramount chief or council of chiefs (the usual accepted channel). We will supply email, telephone and postal address contact information for UQ participants, CEPF Regional Implementation Team, and the World Bank office. Any grievances raised with the project team or third-party contact will be communicated to the CEPF Secretariat and the Regional Implementation Team at IUCN within 15 days, together with a plan for remedial action (if any required). 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](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.

**15. Budget:** This section will summarize dedicated costs related to compliance with the safeguard policy on Indigenous Peoples. These costs should be incorporated into the budget of the CEPF grant and/or covered by co-financing.

The cost of materials and travel to comply with this safeguard policy is included in our overall project proposal: the first activity will be consultations and providing information on the grievance procedure.