

**Social Assessment**

**Date 15 March 2022**

**CEPF Grant 111921**

Fauna & Flora International

**Community-based protected area management; Myanmar Primate  
Conservation, Phase II**

Mann Wildlife Sanctuary and Imawbum National Park

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grantee organization.

*Fauna & Flora International (FFI)*

2. Grant title.

*Community-based protected area management; Myanmar Primate Conservation, Phase II*

3. Grant number.

*CEPF 111921*

4. Grant amount (US dollars).

*\$240,000*

5. Proposed dates of grant.

*1 July 2022 to 31 Dec 2024*

6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken.

*Myanmar*

7. Date of preparation of this document.

*15 March 2022*

8. **Indigenous People affected:** This section will describe the Indigenous People in the project area.

### **Imawbum**

Indigenous Kachin ethnic groups, Law Waw, Lecik, Lisu, Rawang (approximately 20,000 people, adjacent to Imawbum National Park). All ethnic groups depend on shifting cultivation and collection of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). However, all cultivated/fallow land, and forests important for NTFP collection, are located outside the National Park.

### **Pauk Sa**

Ashok Chin (approximately 3000 indigenous people, adjacent to the protected area). The indigenous Chin people depend on shifting cultivation and limited NTFP collection. However, some have already established perennial crops, such as coffee and pepper. All shifting cultivation areas, fallow land and NTFP-collecting areas are located outside the protected area.

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.

The project's target species for primate conservation in Myanmar are the Myanmar snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus strykeri* - CR) and the Western hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock* - EN); both are priority species for CEPF investments. The main threats for the Western hoolock gibbon are shifting

cultivation (resulting in habitat loss and fragmentation) and hunting for bushmeat. The Myanmar snub-nosed monkey is threatened by hunting and wildlife trade, driven by its proximity to the Chinese border, and the degradation, loss, and fragmentation of its habitat from illegal logging and shifting cultivation. Based on the Myanmar Hoolock Gibbon Conservation Status Review (FFI 2013) and the Myanmar Snub-nosed Monkey Conservation Status Review (FFI/ DPZ 2017), two KBAs have been identified based on their importance for core populations of both species: Natyekan and May Hka.

During the first phase of the CEPF funded project (Participatory Gazettement of KBAs for primate conservation in Myanmar, April 2018 to June 2021), FFI successfully built local conservation constituencies at both sites. Community-based patrol and monitoring teams were equipped and trained for SMART patrolling and are now actively carrying out operations. FFI facilitated a participatory protected area gazettelement process for both sites, through conducting a free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) process. Through the sustained efforts of FFI and the local communities, both sites are now fully protected under Myanmar law, with Imawbum National Park legally gazetted in March 2020 and Mann Wildlife Sanctuary (Natyekan KBA) gazetted in December 2021.

To secure the effective long-term conservation of the two core populations, this phase II project will facilitate the community-based development of collaborative management systems and plans for both Mann Wildlife Sanctuary and Imawbum National Park. While the management plan will make provisions for the allocation of government staff and protected area management budgets, they are unlikely to be sufficient, particularly in a place as remote as Imawbum National Park. Therefore, the collaboration of local communities, particularly with community-based patrols, is essential. These need to be supported with sustainable livelihood investments to incentivize support for park management and to reduce local threats to the target species through conditional Voluntary Cooperation Agreements (VCA), signed between project beneficiaries and FFI.

During the Phase I project, FFI successfully piloted gibbon and biodiversity-friendly agroforestry systems, for coffee, in two villages on the border of the proposed Mann Wildlife Sanctuary. This was done as proof of concept for livelihood diversification from shifting cultivation, which threatens the remaining primary forest and, as soil fertility decreases, generates increasingly poor returns for local people. As part of the initiative, local farmers signed VCAs and received technical and material support to grow the crop, supported by a local social enterprise, Genius Coffee, which committed to purchasing coffee beans.

In the Imawbum National Park landscape FFI has successfully provided community development grants for walnut plantations, wet rice cultivation, and livestock-raising, providing incentives for the

protection of remaining primary forest and to stop in-discriminatory hunting practices, such as trapping and snaring, and the hunting of protected species such as the Myanmar snub-nosed monkey, also based on community conservation stewardship agreements.

This phase II project will upscale this approach (replicating it in at least 11 villages bordering Mann Wildlife Sanctuary and at least 10 bordering Imawbum National Park), while creating a sustainable financing mechanism through the development of improved value chains, in collaboration with private sector partners. Without this project, the now-unsustainable practice of shifting cultivation will likely lead to further poverty in the area, through diminishing returns, while damaging habitat for primates and leaving the area open to other threats, particularly illegal logging. This, combined with hunting, could lead to genetic isolation and ultimately the extinction of the species.

**10. Potential impacts:** This section will assess expected project impacts (both positive and negative) on Indigenous People.

The project will facilitate local civil societies in participatory zonation of the community-managed landscape in the buffer zone surrounding Man Wildlife sanctuary, and community-based zonation of Imawbum National Park based on biodiversity science, traditional land, and forest use, and FPIC principles. In addition, the project will build the capacity of local civil societies to undertake community-based conservation of primates and other threatened species, and organizational management.

**Potential negative impacts:**

- Reduced access to primary forests for the hunting and extraction of threatened (IUCN Red List)/protected species and for illegal logging.

**Potential positive impacts:**

- Shifting cultivation requires a high level of physical effort, with crops typically located away from the villages; communities welcome the opportunity to apply alternative agriculture practices.
- Reduced extraction of forest products by non-indigenous outsiders through community-based patrolling.
- Increase livelihoods of local communities through the development of improved value chains of local, biodiversity-friendly products, in collaboration with private sector partners.

- Increase capacity of local civil societies on organizational development and community-based conservation.

**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.

**Imawbum:** In January 2022, FFI facilitated a meeting with Ban Bin Conservation Group and representatives, primarily farmers and village leaders, of five village conservation groups (30 people; M-17, FM-13). Participant numbers were limited because of Covid-19 restrictions. This involved a discussion on the proposed interim zonation process and on the development of value chain agroforestry products, as well as on conducting regular wildlife monitoring and patrolling at the distribution area of Myanmar snub-nosed monkey. All participants verbally agreed, in principle, to both aspects of the project during the meetings. In addition, the FFI team met with the Lisu Literature and Culture Association team (5 youth committee members) who recommended to initiate a full consultation process for community based land use mapping and zonation in Lisu customary land, overlapping with the National Park, ensuring full access to the eastern part of Imawbum National Park.

**Pauksa:** A series of seven meetings was organized in January 2022 to discuss the process for developing village land-use plans, as well as the development of improved value chains for locally produced coffee. A total of 78 people, primarily farmers (Male-61, Female-17) from 11 villages joined the meetings. Participant numbers were limited because of Covid-19 restrictions. At the meeting the FFI team presented the biodiversity value of Man WS, the objectives and process of village land-use and zonation planning for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The team also presented the coffee value chain project for livelihood development and sustainable agriculture practice. The participants expressed an interest in collaborating on the project activities, as presented. On 15 February 2022, an additional meeting with the Asho Chin Coffee Association (ACCA) was also conducted to discuss the establishment of biodiversity-friendly coffee plantations and community-based conservation to improve the income of coffee farmers through coffee value chain, and to support the conservation of the Pauksa mountain forest complex. A total of 40 members of ACCA (Male-34, Female-6) from 11 villages joined the meeting. All members agreed to collaborate with the project for coffee value chain and community-based conservation of threatened species and their habitats.

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

Access restrictions only apply for illegal or unsustainable extraction of natural resources, such as hunting and trade of protected species, or illegal logging. This project will reduce dependence of communities on the natural resources. Therefore, there are no negative impacts expected on the livelihoods of indigenous people at any of the project sites. In fact, the zonation and buffer zone management plans will increase legal access to forest areas to those communities currently dependent on illegal extraction. FFI is actively supporting community forestry rights in the buffer zones of project sites and has co-financing to support sustainable livelihoods and accompanying benefit-sharing mechanisms to ensure equitable distribution.

- 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.

The project will develop a stakeholder engagement plan for the zonation and management plan at the village level. Stakeholder consultations will be undertaken according to the plan and all engagement with community stakeholders (including issues discussed, who present, date, agreed outcomes, etc.) will be recorded. All trainings and meetings on biodiversity-friendly agriculture and value chains for civil societies will be documented through minutes of meetings and training reports. The results of the meetings and training sessions will be included in the technical progress reports to CEPF and/or the Regional Implementation Team.

- 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 or the CEPF Secretariat.

The project intends to use the stakeholder engagement process to avoid any conflicts before they arise from the project implementation as much as possible, however, if the matter is beyond the capability of direct project partners, an intervention of respected local leaders such as elders and religious leaders will be sought. These key local authorities will be engaged from the start of the project and their overall support to the project will be sought through regular updates.

A grievance mechanism will be established to enable the receipt, review, and addressing of communities' concerns and complaints. Any person or group who feels disenfranchised - most likely as it relates to community access to specific forest areas has a right to raise a grievance, and the project proponent has the responsibility to respond within a reasonable time.

As part of the grievance mechanism, the project will distribute leaflets in all consultation meetings, and have posters/signboards in all village tracts surrounding the protected areas, informing stakeholders of

the objectives of the project the existence of the grievance mechanism, the process through which people can report a grievance, and the procedures undertaken to address a grievance. These will include office address, email addresses, and contact phone numbers of FFI Myanmar Yangon office, Myitkyina office and Pauksa Office (at the project site), and the CEPF Regional Implementation Team as well as IUCN National Coordinator Office. In extreme situations, where a complainant cannot access a telephone, computer or field office, they can approach their village leaders to reach project staffs.

The project will include the following text in these leaflets and posters/signboards:

“We will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the CEPF Regional Implementation Team (RIT) at IUCN, and the CEPF Secretariat. within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to: CEPF Regional Implementation Team (RIT) at [CEPF-INDOBURMA@iucn.org](mailto:CEPF-INDOBURMA@iucn.org) and IUCN National Coordinator (Myanmar) at +959799732699. They may also submit to the CEPF Secretariat the confidential hotline: +1-866-294-8674 and the confidential web portal: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>.”

**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.

- Village consultation meeting on zonation: 2,500 USD (CEPF funded)
- Training for livelihood development: 4,000 USD (CEPF funded)
- Livelihood grant: 20,000 USD (CEPF funded)