

Kwaio Project, Social Safeguards Assessment

Because the project will implement activities in areas with Indigenous Peoples, a Social Assessment is prepared to demonstrate how the project will comply with CEPF's Safeguard Policy on Indigenous Peoples as follows:

- (i) identify Indigenous Peoples in the project area;
- (ii) assess expected project impacts (both positive and negative) on them;
- (iii) describe how free, prior and informed consultations have been carried out with affected communities during design of the project (i.e. prior to submission of the LoI);
- (iv) outline measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits;
- (v) explain how these measures will be monitored;
- (vi) detail a grievance mechanism;
- (vii) provide a map of the area of work.

(i) Indigenous peoples in the project area: As noted in the main proposal, we are seeking funding for a second phase of a project that was funded by seed money from CEPF. The indigenous people involved are the Kwaio, consisting of approximately 10,000 people in east/central Malaita. The mountain Kwaio are the largest group of non-Christians in the Solomon Islands, while coastal Kwaio belong to several different Christian denominations. Many Kwaio are illiterate, but an increasing number of young people are attaining higher education and, unlike in many places, many of them are anxious to work with their home community, especially toward preserving cultural knowledge that is in danger of being lost. People from all of these diverse groups are participating together in the project.

(ii) Project impacts on them: This project has had and will have no adverse impacts on the Kwaio people, while its positive impacts are many. Culturally appropriate benefits include its building of capacity in conservation management that uses Kwaio language and emphasizes Indigenous knowledge about the environment and biodiversity. Its benefits will be directly, culturally appropriate for Kwaio people.

One notable positive impact will be to strengthen community integration, facilitating and encouraging members of the different groups within Kwaio to work together in pursuit of shared goals grounded in Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, and practices. This is particularly important in Kwaio because at times the community has been divided by religious and other rivalries. The current project and others it overlaps with are already having a palpable impact in bringing people together and fostering community solidarity.

This project is building a shared skill set that will greatly benefit the Kwaio people beyond this specific project's parameters. Building capacity in conservation management will dovetail with other ongoing projects in the area in which many of the same Kwaio leaders and people are involved. These include:

- (a) The Kwaio Archive. This archive, for which a permanent building has now been constructed, is located at the Kwainaa`isi Cultural Centre, at 3000 feet a.s.l. in the interior. Most of the archived material is in digital form, accessed by laptop computers powered by the Archive's solar system. Archive work is on-going, and its formal opening will be the first week in August. We plan to eventually expand it across multiple satellite centers in the east Kwaio area. This is, to our knowledge, the only community-run digital archive in the Solomons and, more broadly, is exceptional in its scope in terms of Melanesia as a whole. The Archive will be a key community depository for materials generated by the project under consideration.
- (b) An updated and importantly Kwaio-authored version of a Kwaio dictionary. This will build on a dictionary published by anthropologist Roger Keesing in 1975, and extensively expanded over the last 37 years by one of our international project leaders, David Akin, in collaboration with Kwaio people. The compilation and production of the new dictionary will be largely in the hands of several young Indigenous Kwaio people who have recently earned tertiary degrees, working together with linguistically knowledgeable people, and with Akin. Botanical terms and taxonomies are one of the most extensive and endangered aspects of the Kwaio language, and botanical and related terms collected by this project will be an outstanding feature of the new dictionary. The dictionary will be made available without cost in digital and hard copy form at the Kwaio Archive sites, and also in institutions in Honiara and elsewhere.

These two projects will assure that knowledge and material gathered by this project will be disseminated throughout Kwaio and easily accessible by all Kwaio people. This is very important to the participants.

(iii) Consultations: The design of this project is the latest phase of extensive, long-term collaboration and discussion about traditional knowledge, conservation and medicinal and food plants over several decades. It demonstrates the enthusiasm for continued collaboration between the Kwaio community, Indigenous community leaders and international partners. The two international project leaders – Drs David Akin and David MacLaren – have long worked with the broader community and with local leaders, including extensively with the three local project leaders Laete`esafi, Kekeubata and Waneagea, to document traditional knowledge about cultural practices, ecological process and use of rainforest plants for medicine and food. Akin has spent some six years living and conducting research in the Kwaio mountains since 1979, and MacLaren over four years living and conducting research in both coastal and mountain communities since 1992. Additional to the Kwaio Archive and dictionary projects described above, projects have included a community-run school, an arts cooperative, a trip by a traditional dancing group to international Indigenous arts festivals in Australia, projects to improve area health services, and projects geared toward research capacity building. When MacLaren informed the three Indigenous leaders about the potential of submitting an application to CEPF, they were keen to be involved in leading the project. Each is a traditional land owner and community chief. This enables the project to be integrated into ongoing collaborative projects, ensuring feasibility and sustainability. The current project is thus a continuation of a long-term research and development relationship between the project leaders and the Kwaio community, and an outcome of extensive consultation with the community regarding Kwaio people's goals and means through which they can attain them, including community meetings specifically about this project.

(iv, v, and vi) Measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits; monitoring; and mechanisms for grievances: The project has been, and will continue to be, steadily monitored, including through regular visits by MacLaren and Akin and regular community meetings organized by the local project leaders. Decades of experience have taught that regular discussion with project groups and associated communities, a dedication to transparency, and openness to both local ideas and grievances are all crucial to the success of any project in Kwaio. Also key is that any project's results be rendered in media and forms easily accessible to Kwaio people—on this see Kwaio Archive and Kwaio dictionary projects in (ii).

Project management training will provide skills in human resources management, financial management, project milestones, risk management and monitoring project outcomes and outputs. These will all be implemented in the 'learn by doing' approach to the project with the support and mentoring of the international project leaders. The widespread usage of mobile phones and recent availability of the Internet at Atoifi Hospital at Uru Harbour (and limited but we hope soon to be expanded in the mountains) make instant communication with international leaders possible, including via Skype or related platforms. This sort of regular connection would have been impossible just a few years ago. The project will also have several mid-term and end-of-project evaluation workshops which will review project activities and outputs and make changes according to the lessons learned to date. The project leaders will ensure that the project complies with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies which will be monitored and reported to IUCN. Contact information for both local and international project leaders, James Cook University and CEPF will be provided in project information produced for community members in the instance that local-level grievance mechanisms described above are unable to resolve any project-specific grievance. Any grievances raised with the project team or third party contact will be documented on paper and 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). The Regional Implementation Team can be contacted via phone on +679-331-9084 or email on cepfeastmelanesia@iucn.org and lysa.wini@iucn.org or via post on c/- CEPF Regional Implementation Team, PMB 5 Ma'afu St, Suva, Fiji.

To date, however, no such situations have arisen, and we do not expect them to.

(vii) Map showing area of work: The maps of Malaita (both on one page) that accompany this safeguard statement are taken from a recent book by Akin. The small map in the file's bottom left corner shows the location of the Kwaio language area, amongst Malaita's other languages. The larger map shows Malaita as a

whole, and can be magnified to show places in eastern Kwaio, most importantly Kwainaa`isi, the site of the Kwainaa`isi Cultural Centre and its Kwaio Archive. The one place mentioned in our proposal that is not shown on this map is Atoifi Hospital, which is located on the southern side of the northernmost harbour in east Kwaio, Uru (which is shown on the map).