

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Tonga Community Development Trust

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Developing Model Species Recovery Plans in Tonga

Implementation Partners for this Project:

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): Jul 1, 2009-Dec 31, 2010

Date of Report (month/year):

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

This project attempts to conserve one of Tonga's rarest land birds known locally as Malau, Polynesian Megapode (*Megapodius Pritchardii*). Malau has a very special conservation value because it was found only on the island of Niuafu'ou, Tonga's furthest island to the north. In the 1990s, research on Malau raised both a national and a global concern because of the dramatic decline in the population of adult bird. It was listed then under the IUCN Red List as a Critically Endangered species of land bird.

One of the main threats and believed to be responsible for the decline of the Malau was overharvesting of Malau eggs by the local people of Niuafu'ou. In order to address a possible extinction of Malau from Niuafu'ou, a translocation program was carried out in the early 1990s to the two volcanic and uninhabited islands of Late and Fonualei in the Vava'u group.

A follow-up survey was conducted in 2003 and confirmed an increase in the number of adult Malau birds surviving in Fonualei island, although none were sighted on Late. It was one of the successful conservation stories of salvaging a critically endangered species of land bird from the verge of extinction in our region. A consequence of this successful translocation program has been evident in the downgrading of the status of Malau in the IUCN Red List, from Critically Endangered to Endangered. Extinction of the Malau may have been prevented by the success of the translocation program but the main threat posed by humans over harvesting of eggs in Niuafu'ou, the original home for the Malau, is yet to be addressed effectively.

Mechanisms to protect the population of Malau in Niuafu'ou will require the active participation of the local community. The strong co-relation between the environment and culture need to be clarified and promoted as well. If the species becomes extinct then it will be a cultural loss for the future generation of Niuafu'ou as the species is deeply entrenched in the islands oral traditions, poems, and songs.

Niuafu'ou being located in between the main island of Tongatapu and Samoa, relatively isolated with limited western influence. However, current development activities in terms of improving communication and contact with the outside world may very well speed the rate of depletion of the exotic environment and cultural uniqueness of Niuafu'ou. There is already a number of signs and indicators of this loss. The people of Niuafu'ou are well known for speaking their own dialect known as "lea faka-Niua" (lit: speak like a Niua) that may not easily understood by those from the other island groups in Tonga. During our survey in Niuafu'ou, we learned from the people that some of them traced their ancestors to the island of Uvea (Wallis and Futuna) located between Samoa and Fiji. This is an interesting part of the history and culture of Niuafu'ou.

However, the inconvenient truth of the matter is that, this unique dialect is disappearing. Some of the traditional terms and names of events and living things are lost. The Recovery Plan is not only aim to protect and recover the Malau, it will also attempt to intricately revive the dialect and culture.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: *To develop a well researched stakeholder owned Species Recovery Plan for the Malau*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
<i>Indicator 1: Long term partnership with at least one research institution is established to ensure ongoing feed back of information to the successful protection and recovery of Malau.</i>	The project approached the University of the South Pacific and Birdlife International both based in Fiji. Unfortunately neither one can do it due to their workload. The World Pheasant Association based at the University of New Castle, Britain was one of sixteen responds to our call for expression of interest. One of the reasons for their selection is their interest in developing a long term working relationship with Tonga Trust in the protection and recovery of Malau.
<i>Indicator 2: Mainstreaming the conservation work on Malau as a priority in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategic Action Plan</i>	The project engaged the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change right from the outset for the purpose of mainstreaming the work on Malau to be one of their key priority. Tonga Trust was invited to be a member of the PoWPA Project Technical Working Group. The aim was for PoWPA to include in their work program the need set up Protected Areas for the Malau. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is currently submitting the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode to the HM Cabinet to be endorsed by the government.
<i>Indicator 3: Sustainability of conservation activities and recovery of Malau.</i>	<p>i. The project aimed not only to complete the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode but continue to fund raise for its implementation. When the survey was completed in Niuafu'ou, the survey team met with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and a team of consultants from UNEP/SPREP that came to develop Tonga's Program of Action under the Pacific Biodiversity Initiative. The Ministry of Environment agreed to focus Tonga's Program on the implementation of some of the key actions from the Malau recovery plan.</p> <p>ii. The World Pheasant Association (WBA) has also drafted an application to the Mohammed bin Zaed Species Conservation Fund (MBZ) to support key scientific research on Malau.</p> <p>iii. WBA is supporting scholarship for a Phd student to conduct long term research on the Malau and feedback the result for the ongoing management and recovery of Malau.</p>

	iv. Lastly, Tonga Trust will submit a Lol for the 4 th round of call from CEPF to support the implementation of the remaining actions.
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Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

The project was a success in terms of achieving the following intended impact objective and performance indicators:

- i. Securing an informal working relationship with the World Pheasant Association (WBA, not only in providing technical input but ability to fundraise for the implementation of the Recovery Plan.
- ii. Mainstreaming the implementation of the recovery plan into the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change strategy
- iii. Sustainability of the project is always challenging but getting the attention of potential donors and fundraising immediately after the completion of the Recovery Plan is a positive sign towards sustainability.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

NA

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs:

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1 : Research and Information Collection	
<i>Indicator 1.1: Reports on previous protection and recovery action, ecological requirements, lessons learned, current population, threat level, and locations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The desk review of previous protection and recovery action was done by Tonga Trust. It was challenged by limited information forwarded by members of the Technical Team and those that were available on internet. However, the review exercise provided good baseline information for public awareness raising, as well as, improve planning and coordination of the upcoming species and community-based survey in Niuafu'ou. ii. Calling for expression of interest to conduct the species survey and drafting of the Recovery Plan was circulated widely through the internet. About 16 applications were received and three were shortlisted and the World Pheasant Association from New Castle University, UK was selected as the successful bidder. iii. The research survey and information collection expedition to Niuafu'ou was initially planned to be carried out between January and March of 2010. It was delayed to September due to a number of reasons, including inconsistent air and sea transportation from Tongatapu to

	<p>Niuafu'ou and also the availability of the leading researcher from the World Pheasant Association. The survey was successfully completed in October 2010.</p> <p>iv. The survey had two components. The first was focused on the species of Malau, observing and finding the locations of where they live, where they lay eggs, environmental conditions, and potential threats. The second was a community-based attitude survey which was carried out concurrently during the two community awareness workshop carried out in Niuafu'ou. The analysis of the survey is included in the Recovery Plan.</p> <p>v. The species survey planned for Fonualei and Late islands in Vava'u were cancelled due to bad weather.</p>
<p>Output 2: Communication and Awareness Program.</p>	
<p><i>Indicator 2.1:</i></p> <p><i>i. Communication and social marketing strategy</i></p> <p><i>ii. Awareness and Promotional Materials</i></p> <p><i>iii. Media Programs</i></p>	<p>i. A draft communication and social marketing strategy was produced at the end of 2009. It helped to reconfirm the target audience, relevant messages, type of medium and who to deliver the message. However, the survey expedition confirmed the appropriate approach to communication strategy. Media is limited to Tongatapu only as it is not accessible to the people of Niuafu'ou. A more direct and participatory form of communication, like community meeting, workshops, school presentation and forming a Malau club at school can be more appropriate. In terms of social marketing, the survey also helped to reduce the target audiences to the 4 active eggs collectors. The general populations in Niuafu'ou are not engaging in eggs collection and have limited knowledge about the behavior of Malau.</p> <p>ii. The Executive Director of Tonga Trust participated at the 4th Birdlife International Meeting held in Melbourne, Australia in October 2009. A good opportunity to raise the project profile as well as networking.</p> <p>iii. Tonga Trust is a member of the PoWPA Technical Working Group. About five meetings were conducted in 2010 which provided a good forum to raise awareness and strengthen networking relationships with relevant stakeholders, such as, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Food and Fisheries, and Crown Law.</p> <p>iv. Tonga Trust also participated in the PoWPA awareness workshop and survey to the outer islands of Vava'u and Ha'apai in July 2010. There were five workshops conducted in Vava'u with different focus groups and three in Ha'apai. The community-based workshops provided an opportunity to raise people's awareness about the Malau. It was disappointing to learn that very few people in Vava'u know that Malau has been successfully translocated from Niuafu'ou to Vava'u. It is a new introduction not only to the</p>

	<p>environment but also the culture of Vava'u and it may take time together with increasing awareness for the people of Vava'u to fully appreciate and be proud of the Malau. On the other hand, foreign tourist operators based in Vava'u are more aware about the Malau introduction to Vava'u though we have not heard of any guided tour to see Malau in Fonualei. However, there is already a Bar and Restraunt in Vava'u called Megapode. Polynesian megapode is now a potential attraction for nature tourism in addition to whale watching and bird watching in Vava'u.</p> <p>v. A media release was issued through the local media (television, radio and newspaper) and through major conservation network, such as IUCN, Birdlife International, Pacific Invasive Species, and it helped to raise the profile of the outcome of the survey on the Malau. We received lots of interest and enquiries from different parts of the world, including the organization from Germany that funded the translocation of Malau eggs in the 1990 who wanted to re-establish working relationship with the Tonga Trust.</p>
Output 3: Capacity Building	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Indicator 3.1:</i></p> <p><i>i. Trained locals on technical methods of research</i></p> <p><i>ii. Communities are trained on monitoring</i></p>	<p>i. One TCDT staff and two staff from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change were trained on technical methods of research during the expedition. It was clear that the limited time and capacity hampered a complete achievement of this indicator. The project tried to recruit a University student from USP to participate in the survey and to take up further study on Malau but we were unsuccessful in getting one.</p> <p>ii. There was a slight change in approach when we learned from the community workshop that not many local people dig up Malau eggs. The survey found out there were only 4 active eggs digger. During the survey, two local men from Niuafou'ou were trained on reviving and monitoring of harvesting sites.</p>
Output 4: Recovery Plan	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Indicator 4.1:</i></p> <p><i>i. Species Recovery Plan</i></p>	<p>i. The Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode was completed in December 2010 and was submitted to the Government of Tonga for formal endorsement by the Cabinet.</p> <p>ii. Funding proposal is also underway to the following potential donors: (a). GEF - PAS Island Biodiversity Project (UNEP/SPREP); (b). Mohammed bin Zaed Species Conservation Fund; and (c). CEPF. It is envisaged that the implementation of the Conservation Action Plan will be underway as soon as these proposals are endorsed by donors.</p>

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

The successes of the project in terms of delivering the intended output are as follows:

- i. The desk review of previous activities was completed and was particularly useful for upcoming activities, such as, logistical planning for the upcoming species and community attitude survey in Niuafu'ou, and also in providing information for public awareness raising;
- ii. The combined species and community attitude survey was successfully carried out in Niuafu'ou. The information from both surveys complements each other;
- iii. A draft communication and social marketing strategy was completed and helped communication activities to be more targeted;
- iv. A number of awareness raising activities were successfully carried out at both the national level in Tongatapu and also at the community level in Niuafu'ou;
- v. Limited capacity building activities were made available and local staff and local community members took advantage of it;
- vi. Completion of the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesia Megapode in a timely manner;
- vii. Discussion with potential donors and partners for the implementation of proposed actions from the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode began immediately after the survey.

Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

The species survey planned for Fonualei and Late islands was cancelled due to poor weather. However, it did not affect the overall impact of the project.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

NA

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/failure)

It was clear from the beginning that the project will be challenged by lack of local Tongans with the scientific knowledge and technical expertise about the Malau. One of the options for the project was to seek available regional experts. An informal technical team was set up with one staff from Birdlife International and a researcher from the UK. Both provided tremendous amount of information and technical advise during the project design phase. The lessons is that, it will be most helpful if CEPF sets up a group of mentors or technical advisors and made available for projects to seek advises from at any time during the project cycle. If not, than project may have to do it based on liasing with the right people and organization based on willingness and vested

interest. These advises can make lots of difference and contributed to the successful design process.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

The best way to recruit the best people with the appropriate expertise to carry out a particular task is to call for expression of interest. We initially approach a pool of experts for availability to conduct the species survey. Since none were available, we then circulate widely through regional and international network a calling for expression of interest. The result exceeds our expectations when we received 16 applications from different parts of the world. The competitive edge among the bidders provides the best value for your money.

VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount US \$	Notes
EU Sustainable Harvesting Project	B	15,000	Tonga Trust is a member of the National Water Safety Committee which responsible for surveying the Sustainable Rainwater Harvesting status and options in the outer islands, including Niuafu'ou. The follow-up action is the distribution of 150 water tanks in the surveyed islandss and about10 new plastic water tanks (10,000 litres) are planned to be sent to Niuafu'ou at the first quarter of 2011.
Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations programme (MORDI)	B	30,000	Tonga Trust is Chairing the Project Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC) for MORDI and recently endorsed a number of community projects to upgrade damaged water tanks in Niuafu'ou, organic vegetable gardening, hall and road construction.
Program of Work on Protected Areas (POWPA)	B	5,000	Tonga Trust is a member of the PoWPA Technical Working Group. PoWPA supported the cost for 2 staff of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to participate in the survey expedition to Niuafu'ou.
Tonga Community Development Trust	B		Two of Tonga Trust projects were exposed to the people of Niuafu'ou: The Amatakiloa (Women in Development) and Disaster Preparedness.

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

A Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)

B Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)

- C Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

This project will continue in the future, especially focusing on the implementation of the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode. Funds are yet to be secure, though discussions with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and the GEF-PAS Biodiversity Initiatives reached an agreement in November 2010 that they will fund activities from the Conservation Action Plan close to US\$25,000. In addition, the World Pheasant Association is lodging an application to the Mohammed bin Zaed Species Conservation Fund of another US\$25,000. WBA is also seeking financial support for a Phd scholar to conduct long term study on Malau in Niuafu'ou. Tonga Trust is drafting a Lol to be submitted to the fourth round of CEPF to supplement the implementation of the remaining activities of the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode. It is envisage it would be close to an extra US\$50,000 per year for the next three years and a total cost of about US\$150,000.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
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The successful development of the Conservation Action Plan for the Polynesian Megapode could not have been materialized without the financial support of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. CEPF has provided the seed funding to strategically look at how we can conserve the Polynesian Megapode and prevent from possible extinction from its original home in Niuafu'ou. Informal partnership has been developed between Tonga Trust and the World Pheasant Association and this relationship will be very instrumental in the implementation of the Conservation Action Plan.

Eventhough there have been some initial discussion with potential donors on funding the implementation of the Action Plan, funding commitment is yet to be secured. Other donor such as MBZ is lined up as a potential source of funding. Lastly, the CEPF fourth round has recently opened and we would recommend submitting a Lol for the implementation of the remaining actions in the next three years.

VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

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