

# CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

**Organization Legal Name:** Ilam Co-operation Council

**Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement):**

*Traditional Land Management System and its Impacts on Conservation in the Kanchenjunga-Singalila Complex in Nepal (54804)*

**Implementation Partners for this Project:** NA

**Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement):** February 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

**Date of Report (month/year):** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2010

## II. OPENING REMARKS

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

This project was implemented since February 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010 with the long term goal to conserve biodiversity of community based - traditionally managed land within Kanchenjunga Singalila Complex (KSC) by resolving the conflict of land ownership through reconciliation of traditional practices with current legal provisions and government policies for management of land resources and maintaining forest integrity through improved coordination of *Kipatiya* and *non Kipatiya* communities in management of land resources. The objective of the project was to reconcile traditional and customary practices of indigenous people (Limbu ethnic community) with current forest management system incorporating the strengths of Kipat and community forestry system. The project area comprised of 5 VDCs namely Falaicha, Chyangthapu, Memeng, Prangbung, and Sidin of Panththar district and 3 VDCs viz. Pyang, Jamuna and Mabu of Ilam district. The project area is a part of Kanchenjunga Singalila Complex and Kanchenjunga biological corridor.

Kipat system (formally ended but still in local practices) in the project area is important issues viz. land ownership, traditional and customary practice of Kipat system and mismanagement of the Kipat owned forests in order to achieve effective conservation of flora and fauna in key parts of the KSC. For that, reconciled strategy incorporating the good practices of Kipat system and current management practices i.e. community forestry would be the practical alternative strategy to conserve the biodiversity of that area. The project is linked with strategic direction 2 of the Eastern Himalayas Ecosystem Profile and investment priorities-2.3 that support traditional and resource use practices ensuring conservation of priority sites and corridor. The traditional land and resource management practices of Kipatias are important aspects to minimize the risk of conservation projects due to conflict in land tenure rights among local communities and conservationists where local communities are using such Kipat land for generations as traditional and customary rights. The outcomes of the project are to resolve conflict in land ownership through reconciliation of traditional practices with current legal provisions and government policies for management of land resources and to maintain forest integrity through improved coordination of *kipatiya* and *non Kipatiya* communities in management of land resources.

The project comprises of two phases namely study on Kipat system and current forest management to draw the reconciled frame of conservation and management and implementation of pilot program recommended by the field study. The document of field study has been separately attached (Annex-1).

### III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

**Project Purpose:**

*To reconcile traditional and customary practices of indigenous people with current forest management system incorporating the strengths of both system*

#### Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<b>Purpose-level:</b>	
<p><b>1. Traditional and customary good practices for conservation of key flora and fauna restored</b></p>	<p>1.1 After documentation of traditional and customary good practices under Kipat system through field study (research), the outcomes of study (traditional and customary good practice of Kipat system) were disseminated among Kipatiya communities in two forest groups (one community forest of Chyanthapu and one Kipatiya forest groups-religious forest of limbu community in Falaicha).</p> <p>1.2 The traditional and customary practices comprise of keeping inventory of land and forest resources, governance of land use system, method of selecting traditional leader, fine and penalties for misuse and degradation of resources, judiciary system under Kipat system, determining the forest users, taxation under Kipat system, access to forest resources, culturally significant flora and fauna in various cultural and religious events, household uses system in Kipat system, herbal use of flora and fauna, traditional forest management system under Kipat system, understanding the biodiversity and perception towards current management practices.</p> <p>1.3 Some of the respondents were seen in favour of Kipat system for effective conservation of flora and fauna while some of them were in against of the continuity of the Kipat system. Those who were in favour of Kipat system pointed out the weak governance, lack of transparency, poor participation and access to current management and land ownership issues as drawbacks of current management practice. They were reported as lesser knowledge about biodiversity and its importance during field study. Some the Kipatiya respondent demanded the resurvey of land to resolve the problems of land ownership.</p> <p>1.4 Local community of project area are agreed to restore traditional and customary good practice of Kipat system for conservation and management of flora and fauna of their area. Pilot program implementation in Falaicha (religious forest of Kipatiya) was completed. So, it is expected to restore these good practices for biodiversity conservation in future. As the project was implemented for very short period, the visible outcomes of restoration of these good practices are still to be recorded from that area.</p>
<p><b>2. Reconciled strategy/model will be practiced by local communities for forest</b></p>	<p>2.1 After completing the filed study comprising Kipat forest and community forest in the project area, reconciled</p>

<i>management</i>	<p>model/strategy incorporating the good practice of both systems was implemented in one Kipaiya religious forest group and one community forest group.</p> <p>2.2 Local community initiated the practice recommended by the new strategy in that area keeping the conservation of biodiversity as focused activity.</p>
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**Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.**

The project was successful to realize the traditional and customary good practices under kipat system and provisions of current management system to achieve conservation outcome in the area by documentation and initiation towards restoration of these practices. Several interaction and discussions were organized to identify the issues, gaps and conflicts of Kipat system with current management practices which will contribute to conserve biodiversity in that area in future.

Beside this, several other issues related with Kipat system and current management system which are important to conserve biodiversity in that area were identified and sensitized. Some of them are to be realized and resolved by the government and political consensus and intervention as well. Land ownership issue is very prominent agenda to be resolved in the future.

Another achievement of the project is development of reconciled conservation strategy incorporating the strengths of Kipat system and current forest management system (community forestry) for that area. Similarly, awareness among local communities for biodiversity conservation is now raised through pilot program implementation.

**Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

As the project is more focused on the field study and documentation of traditional and customary practices of Kipat system, identification, exploration and documentation of key issues, gaps and conflict with modern (current) management system and to develop new strategy reconciling the strengths of both system, field implementation was very limited in term of coverage and time. Some of the agendas related to Kipat system need political resolution and government intervention such as resurvey of land, providing alternative to livestock herders, and amendments in the community forestry act. Due to time limitation, restoration of traditional and customary practices under kipat system which are important from conservation point of view could not be achieved. However, community initiated the practices of restoration at their area.

**IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS**

**Project Outputs:**

**Planned vs. Actual Performance**

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<b>Output 1: Practices of forest management under traditional (Kipat) system explored and documented</b>	
<i>1.1. Traditional and customary good practices under Kipat system in forest management documented by year 1</i>	Traditional and customary good practices under Kipat system in forest management were documented from Kipat practiced forest of 5 VDCs (Falaiacha, Chyanthapu, Memeng, Prangbung, and Sidin) of Panchthar and 3 VDCs (Pyang, Jamuna and Mabu) of Ilam district.
<b>Output 2: Key issues, gaps and</b>	

<b>conflicts of Kipat system with current management practices identified</b>	
<b>2.1. Policy recommendation document of key issues gaps and conflict prepared by year one 1</b>	Key issues, gaps and conflicts of Kipatiya forest groups with current legal provisions, and forest management system were documented and policy recommendations were developed in order to reconcile them with current management system. For that, issues of community forests and Kipat forest management practices and past lessons were explored.
<b>2.2. Advocacy on policy recommendation, key issues, gaps and conflict of kipat system initiated at local and national level by year 1</b>	After preparing the policy recommendation documentation on key issues, gaps and conflicts with current management system, advocacy on reconciling these issues and incorporating the good practices of Kipat system and key issues of community forests initiated at local level through piloting of the findings of field study. Due to time and resource limitation, national level advocacy could not be achieved. However, ICC will take this initiative in future. Stakeholders have become more alert in this issues while taking initiative towards biodiversity conservation and forest management in this area.
<b>Output 3: Reconciled resource management strategy /model designed and implemented</b>	
<b>3.1. Reconciled forest management strategy will be initiated in one site by year one of the project by year 2</b>	Reconciled new forest management and biodiversity conservation strategies incorporating the traditional and customary good practices of Kipat system and strengths of community forestry system was designed and initiated to implement through piloting of the findings at two sites (Faliacha and Chayangthapu) of Pancthar district. The reconciled design has been separately submitted within final research report of this prject.
<b>3.2. Traditional and customary practices of forest management come under legal framework through reconciled strategy by year 2</b>	Local communities managing forests of two sites (Faliacha and Chaynathapu) have initiated to come under legal framework (modern management system-community forestry and religious forestry practices). Forest groups of other project area are also agreed to practice newly developed strategy for biodiversity conservation.

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

Traditional and customary good practices under *Kipat* system were explored and documented that will contribute to achieve successful conservation outcomes in the project area. Key issues, gaps, and conflicts of Kipat system with current legal framework for forest management and biodiversity conservation were identified and documented. Based on the documentation, advocacy to incorporate these issues, gaps and conflicts for reconciled new conservation and management strategies were completed at local level. Similarly, new and reconciled conservation and forest management strategy was developed and implemented in two sites (one religious forest with Kipat practices and one community forest converted from Kipat) of project area through piloting of the finding. Local forest groups both religious and community forests initiated the new management and conservation strategy in these sites. As the project was more focused on development of document on the basis of field study, field study report was prepared that gives the clear picture of possible intervention for conservation where Kipat practices are still practicing. It is expected to minimize the gaps and conflicts of Kipat system forest with current legal provisions and management system in the project area in future.

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

There were not any such unrealized outputs of the project. However, several other issues of Kipat system and gaps and conflicts with current management system were explored. These issues will

provide further basis for detailed study and policy intervention through government side. Some of the agenda are of political base and governance system such as resurvey of the forest area, resolving the land ownership issues and incentives to declare Kipat practicing forest as community forests. Due to lack of enough time to implement the findings of the project, the adequate feedbacks and impact of the new and reconciled management and conservation strategy could not be found. Besides this, there were not any other unrealized outputs which affect overall impact of the project. At least Kipatiya and non- Kipatiya forest groups are agreed and understood the value of biodiversity and realized to conserve them at local level.

## V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

Kipat system was formally ended in Nepal but there are still in practices of Kipat system in various parts of eastern Nepal including the project area. There are conflict between traditionally practiced Kipat forest and current legal management system regarding the land ownership, resurvey of the kipat land, access to forest resources and incentives for livestock herder who are staying within Kipat practiced forest from generations, participation and role of Kipatiya in forest management and benefit sharing etc. Some of the Kipat lands were registered (Land revenue office) and occupied under Kipat system by livestock herders (kharkeli), Thari, & Mukhiya from Kipatiya. However, these lands were not surveyed under current legal system (Land Reform Act 2021). This resulted conflict between Kipatiya & community forest. Some legal and political issues are associated to the Kipat system. These issues should be settled to achieve long term conservation outcome in the area. Effective coordination and reconciliation among stakeholders are necessary to develop. All of these are policy issues directly related with political governance and intervention in the area. In the other hand, the traditional and customary good practices of Kipat system are key to achieve successful conservation in that area and to meet the interest of Kipatiya and non-kipatiya communities. These issues are to be resolved through policy reform and addresses. Until and unless these issues are dealt by the formal policy amendment and political reconciliation, conservation outcome can not be achieved properly. Community forestry act and guidelines alone can not address these issues without revising the existing provisions. Now, Kipatiya communities have realized the value of biodiversity and need of conservation that should be resolved through policy reform. Similarly, livelihood and benefit generating programs, incentives to livestock herders and resolving land ownership issues through scientific and practical survey for demarcation of forest land are imperative to do in that area. These positive interventions will contribute to achieve effective conservation and management of the forest and biodiversity in that area.

## 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.***

The lessons learned during the implementation of the project are as following;

- Kipat system has both good practices (forest monitoring, customary laws and order, consumption pattern, forest product trade restriction, fine and penalties for misuses etc) weaknesses (lack of participatory decision making, planning etc.) as well. Good practices can play positive role on biodiversity conservation and forest management in the area. Biodiversity conservation of the area is principal objective, so best practices of Kipat system can be incorporated in forest management through policy revision.
- The tendency of resisting to convert Kipat land in to community forest may be due to the poor participation, inclusion, and benefit sharing of Kipatiya communities in to community

- forests. There are some governance gaps and weaknesses of community forestry system. These gaps should be addressed by policy institutions and government. The improved and good governance within community forest should be ensured.
- Some legal and political issues are associated to the Kipat system. These issues should be settled to achieve long term conservation outcome in the area. Effective coordination and reconciliation among stakeholders are necessary to develop. The better understanding of ILO 169 and biodiversity value will also motivate the local communities to conserve and manage their forest more effectively and efficiently.
  - Local people are demanding the resurvey of the area, so that the forest area and cultivated and private land can be separated. This will contribute to convert Kipat forest in to community forest by providing incentives to local communities. Land ownership issues and conflict should be resolved through new scientific and practical survey of existing Kipat forest area with taking consensus of Kipatiya and non-Kipatiya communities.
  - Traditional and customary good practices of Kipat system in forest management and biodiversity conservation should be incorporated and addressed by the formal legal provisions. Inventory of flora and fauna in limbu language as well will be positive towards the conservation such species at the area. This should be resolve through revised forest operational plan.
  - Relation and model of community engagement for better conservation outcomes and improvement of livelihood of local people are very important from conservation point of view. Community based tourism, forest based income generation programs, NTFP farming and agro-forestry practices may be the alternative strategies to cope with the conservation threats and forest management challenged to reconcile the community interest and conservation needs.

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

In deed, the project is research based. So, the project followed the stages of field research. The project was developed with the adequate consultation with Kipatiya and non-Kipatiya communities and institutions related to Kipat system. The project comprises of various steps of literature review, field questionnaires designing, selection of project area and respondents, field survey, data compilation, analysis, drawing findings and piloting of major finding in key sites of the project area. Kirat Yakthung Chumlung (KYC), umbrella organization of Limbu communities was a partner during project implementation. Good rapport building with respondents and Kipatiya communities via KYC and its village chapters was possible. Focus group discussions and key informants selection was appropriate. Local level facilitators play vital role during data exploration. Coordination among research team members and well information about the field area and works were keys to success the project in that area.

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

Kipat system even if the formally ended with the existing law of Nepal, it is still in the practices in several areas of eastern Nepal. Kipat system is associated with sensitive and political issues as well. The differential understanding of ILO 169 was another challenge during project implementation.

The weaknesses of community forest governance were another threat to reconcile the local Kipatiya community to adopt formal legally recognized forest management practices. Rapport building at field level with Kipatiya community was another sensitive issue to make better understanding of the project intervention at that area. However, ICC made the following measures to mitigate the challenges;

- ICC selected Kirat Yakthung Chumlung (KYC), an umbrella social organization of Limbu communities as project partner for field implementation made us easier to build good rapport with local communities through its village chapters and well coordination.

- ICC organized several meetings with stakeholders at local and district level to make better understanding about the value of biodiversity, need for conservation and effective management of forest under Kipat system ensuring the access and benefit sharing of Kiaptiya and non-Kipatiya communities.
- ICC worked in the field with proper consultation and participation of the local stakeholders and discussed with the project findings and future implication of the project.
- The project findings reconcile the best practices of both forest management system i.e. Kipat system and current management practices (community forest, and religious forest)

## 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	Notes
Civic Institute	B	\$ 1500.00	Promoting sustainable Use of Wetland Resources in Reference to Maipokhari Wetland of Ilam.
CMIASP	B	\$2000.00	Social Mobilization of Community Managed Irrigation Project in two sub Schemes of Ilam

***\*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.***

The project is based on the field study to draw the recommendations of intended objectives and outputs. The finding of the research should be addressed in future by making other projects as per new and reconciled conservation strategy in the area. One religious forest group was registered under current legal frame which will works for the conservation and better management of the Kiapt forest in the project area. Beside this, the existing community forests were strengthened through piloting of the findings. The major task of the project was to developed field research documents which gives the future implications and insights to conserve biodiversity in the area.

## VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project was successfully completed. Traditional and customary good practices which are directly and indirectly related to the successful conservation initiatives and community engagement for better forest management were documented. This is the success of the project. The gaps, issues and conflicts of Kipat system with current legal provisions and modern management practices were documented. This project gives very important findings and facts to develop the biodiversity friendly strategies reconciling the best practices of Kipat system and community forest management. That is new reconciled conservation and forest management strategy. The field study report was developed which will work as guide to do future conservation works in the area. Some policy issues have been raised by local communities i.e. resurvey of the Kipat land forest, resolving the land ownership issues, and community engagement alternatives etc. These should be resolved in future. The details of finding and recommendation are included in the main research report (Annex-1). The piloting of the major finding in two sites of project area gave us the practical lessons that would be the milestone for the effective conservation initiatives in future. The major recommendations of the project are as followings;

- The traditional and customary good practices in favour of conservation and effective management of the forest should be incorporated within current legal provisions and guidelines of forest management and biodiversity conservation.
- It is necessary to develop scientific database regarding the land ownership and Kipat forest and land resources in project area. Resurvey of the forest and land area in the project area is necessary.
- Relation and model of community engagement for better conservation outcomes and improvement of livelihood of local people are very important from conservation point of view. Community based tourism, forest based income generation programs, NTFP farming and agro-forestry practices may be the alternative strategies to cope with the conservation threats and forest management challenged to reconcile the community interest and conservation needs.
- There are many of natural ponds and lakes in the project area that have cultural and religious importance with Kipatiya communities should be restored and conserved to protect key habitats of flora and fauna.
- Newly developed reconciled conservation and forest management strategy should be addressed by the legal framework and laws. For that, national level policy advocacy is necessary.
- The findings of the field research should be extensively implemented in the project area.

## 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](http://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.

**Please include your full contact details below:**

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