

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: University of Florida

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Country-wide Conservation and Management Assessment of Critically Endangered Amphibians in Honduras

Implementation Partners for this Project: Instituto Regional de Biodiversidad (IRBio), Centro Zamorano de Biodiversidad.

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): 1 January 2008 – 31 January 2009

Date of Report (month/year): September 2009

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

- In late 2008, the national-level resource management authorities were re-organized in accordance with the new forestry, protected areas and wildlife law (Ley Forestal, Areas Protegidas, y Vida Silvestre, Decreto 98-2007; enacted 14 February 2008 with one year for agencies to come into compliance). All structures of AFE-COHDEFOR, including the Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre (DAPVS), were dissolved and reformed under the new Instituto de Conservacion Forestal (ICF). Therefore, references to AFE-COHDEFOR and/or DAPVS in indicators will now refer to ICF in outputs.
- The ICF created a Seccion de Monitoreo, which began reviewing existing protected areas management plans in February 2009. We met with the new head of Monitoreo in March 2009 and began coordinating implementation of project findings in management and monitoring plans.
- In late June 2009, the expulsion of the elected President of Honduras by the Congress, courts, and military destabilized the political situation in the country and interrupted coordination and lines of communication with ICF officials. Intermittent coordination continues, albeit at a much slower pace. All involved parties believe situation (as related to this protected areas management) should return to normal after scheduled elections at end of November 2009.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose *Influence protected area design and management authorities in Honduras to account for the country's remarkable diversity of critically endangered amphibians.*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level: Influence protected area design and management authorities in	

Honduras to account for the country's remarkable diversity of critically endangered amphibians.	
1. Honduras, including Administración Forestal del Estado-Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal (AFE-COHDEFOR), Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre (DAPVS, AFE-COHDEFOR), and Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA).	Coordination and implementation of findings with ICF (see comments in Section II) and SERNA underway; tempo of coordination currently reduced due to political climate.
2. Endorsement of findings by national and regional stakeholders and agencies, including representatives of Instituto Regional de Biodiversidad (IRBio), Administración Forestal del Estado-Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal (AFE-COHDEFOR), Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre (DAPVS, AFE-COHDEFOR), and Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA).	Coordination and implementation of findings with ICF (see comments in Section II) and IRBio underway; tempo of coordination currently reduced due to political climate.
3. Make recommendations for a National Amphibian Action Plan to the IUCN Honduras Amphibian Specialist Group.	Draft Honduran ACAP being revised; lack of active head of IUCN Honduras Amphibian Specialist Group needs to be addressed; otherwise report will be submitted directly to IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) for comment and revision.

Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

The project is achieving the intended impacts, albeit at a slower pace than planned. All final objectives will be achieved, albeit after closure of planned timeframe.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: Honduran protected areas system supported or improved to manage the country's endemic and Critically Endangered amphibians.	
1.1 Produce a strategic plan for the conservation and management of Critically Endangered amphibians in Honduras, with the input of local, national, and regional partners.	Strategic plan (AKA National ACAP) in draft stage and being evaluated by collaborators. Revised plan will then be submitted to CEPF in time for October meeting in Guatemala, followed by distribution to Honduran authorities and IUCN ASG.
Output 2: In-situ condition of Critically Endangered amphibian populations in Honduras assessed.	
2.1 At the end of the project, submit a final report and executive summary summarizing the results of each site visit, an assessment of remaining habitat for critically endangered amphibians at each AZE site in Honduras, and an evaluation of the conservation status and management recommendations for the Critically Endangered and Endangered amphibians of Honduras.	Final report in draft stage and being evaluated by collaborators. Revised report will then be submitted to CEPF in time for October meeting in Guatemala, followed by distribution to Honduran authorities. Report will contain all outputs delineated in Purpose Indicators below.

2.2 <i>Final report shared with Administración Forestal del Estado-Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal (AFE-COHDEFOR), Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre (DAPVS, AFE-COHDEFOR), and Secretaria de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA), as well as CEPF.</i>	Final report in draft stage and being evaluated by collaborators. Revised plan will be submitted to ICF and SERNA authorities following submission to CEPF and final translation into Spanish.
Output 3: All AZE sites and AZE Trigger Species in Honduras evaluated.	
3.1 <i>At the end of the project deliver a preliminary report to AZE and CEPF presenting recommendations for the revision of the existing AZE site list and Trigger Species list.</i>	Recommendations for AZE list revisions presented at AZE symposium at SMBC Congress in El Salvador, November 2008. Recommendations will also be included in full final report.
Output 4: Project results disseminated to scientific and conservation communities and general public.	
4.1 <i>One workshop in Honduras near the beginning of project to announce the project and generate interest among Honduran students, conservation practitioners, scientists, and media.</i>	Workshop held April 2008 at Parque Nacional Cerro Azul Meambar Visitor's Center. Materials presented and attendee feedback available on request.
4.2 <i>Attend, participate, and present at the Sociedad Mesoamericana para la Biología y la Conservación (SMBC) and meetings in November 2007 and November 2008.</i>	Results presented in two presentations at 2008 SMBC meeting.
4.3 <i>Number of media stories relating to project that are written and broadcast in Honduras during 2008.</i>	Front page article in La Tribuna (Honduras) reporting project discovery of new species of snake; press release carried in outlets throughout Latin America. Second print story on conservation of target site published in September 2009, reporting discovery of two new species and elevated conservation status of target site. Third series of articles on endemic amphibians and cloud forest conservation set to appear in September/October 2009.
4.4 <i>Attend, participate, and present preliminary project results at the 6th World Herpetology Congress in Manaus, Brazil, during August 2008.</i>	Costs of traveling to and present in Brazil was prohibitive; instead presented at Congress of Latin American Herpetology in Cuba in November and National Council for Science & Environment in Washington DC. Presentations included comprehensive project results and series of recommendations for improving conservation of amphibians in Honduras.
4.5 <i>Write and publish an affordable, full-color, bilingual field guide to the herpetofauna of an AZE site and Honduran national park, to help showcase a critically endangered Honduran cloud forest fauna at the local, national, and international levels.</i>	"Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Cusuco National Park, Honduras/Guia de los Anfibios y Reptiles de Parque Nacional Cusuco, Honduras" published in Summer 2008.
Output 5: Capacity building in Honduras.	
5.1 <i>Through workshops and networking, recruit students from Honduran universities to participate in project fieldwork, thus providing hands-on research experience</i>	Students have participated in presentation of results nationally and internationally, including presenting coauthoring talks and posters at University seminars in Honduras as well as international meetings.
5.2 <i>Establish continuing collaboration with student participants from Honduras, to facilitate their growth as professionals in their chosen field of study and encourage research in Honduras by Hondurans.</i>	Contact continued and exchanges facilitated through phone, email, and social networking (e.g., we created Facebook group "Biodiversidad de Honduras", now with over 230 members).
5.3 <i>Provide training in project-related sampling and monitoring methods to Honduran students, park guards, and park managers participating in the project.</i>	Training provided by way of April workshop and participation of students and parks personnel at all field sites.
5.4 <i>Distribute Spanish-language reference material</i>	All materials distributed.

<i>on amphibian conservation and monitoring in Honduras to under-resourced students, park guards, and park managers.</i>	
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Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

With the exception of on-time delivery of final written products, project outputs were delivered successfully and in some cases exceeded original specifications. A network of biologists, conservation practitioners, university professors and students, and local community-based actors has been established in Honduras that will allow the long-term pursuit of project goals far beyond the end of CEPF support.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

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.

In hindsight, given the ambitious nature of this project (carrying out on-site assessments of all AZE and all critically endangered amphibian-supporting sites), the timeline for completion of all objectives was unrealistic. The complete overhaul of the legal and institutional framework involving the management of protected areas and wildlife in Honduras further slowed the process of dissemination and implementation of project results/recommendations, although in the long-term the new ICF framework should be positive development and allow for results/recommendations of this and future projects to be implemented more directly and efficiently.

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

Honduras is a challenging country in terms of logistical planning and execution, especially for a project that sought to visit literally all of the most remote montane forests in the country. By planning the project to work site by site, with limited revisits, we were able to effectively manage resources and visit nearly all target sites as well as a number of additional sites containing critically endangered amphibians. One site, Pico Bonito, was scheduled for visit in September 2008 but could not be accessed due to a weather-based national emergency that caused major flooding in the northern and central parts of Honduras. Planning amphibian-based projects in Honduras can be difficult in terms of scheduling; by their amphibians are most active during the wettest time of year, however the wettest times of year are also the most difficult in terms of transportation in rural areas. Future project should avoid attempting work in remote areas that need to be accessed by vehicle from late August until the end of October.

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

***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.

Protected areas prioritized by this project will be the primary focus of continuing work in the near term, and the next level of research related to the critically endangered amphibians in Honduras will be focused on continued survey and systematic work, environmental education and training at the community level, and participation and support in national-level monitoring programs currently being designed by ICF. The Project Director (Townsend) and a project participant and graduate of the UNAH biology program (Ileana Luque Montes) the International Collaborators for Honduras for the proposed SALTA (Scientific Alliance for Latin American Threatened Amphibians) network, proposed for funding through the NSF's PIRE program. The Project Director is in the final stages of his PhD and will pursue conservation and investigation of the Honduran amphibian fauna and their habitat, and the subsequent development and training of Honduran biologists and conservationist practitioners, as the primary focus of his career.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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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