

## CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

<b>Organization Legal Name:</b>	World Wide Fund for Nature
<b>Project Title:</b>	Co-management of Freshwater Biodiversity in the Sekong Basin
<b>Date of Report:</b>	13/9/12
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**CEPF Region:** Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot

**Strategic Direction:** CEPF Investment Priority 3.1 Support Civil Society Efforts to Analyze Development Policies, Plans and Programs, Evaluate their Impact on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and Propose Alternative Development Scenarios and Appropriate Mitigating Measures.

**Grant Amount:** US\$200,000.00

**Project Dates:** 1 Jun, 2010-31 May, 2012

**Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):** Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF) - the national agency within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) responsible for fisheries, aquaculture and livestock development. The role of the DLF is to coordinate with line agencies at the provincial level on implementing the national policies and legal frameworks under its mandate. During this project period the DLF coordinated with WWF and provincial line agencies on disseminating and implementing the new fisheries law, veterinary law and other strategies and policies related to the project work plan. The DLF was also represented as chair of the project steering committee to oversee and monitor the progress of implementation. As such the DLF was a key agency in linking project outcomes to national policies and strategies of the government. This was a key factor in the project's success towards CEPF Investment Priority 3.1, where analysis of national development policies and plans, via project activities, was coordinated in partnership with a key department (DLF) within the Ministry.

The Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFOs) in Attapeu and Xekong provinces (the provincial line agency of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)) were represented on the project steering committee (two from Xekong, two from Attapeu) to monitor the progress of project activities. PAFO nominated staff from each province to act as provincial coordinators for project implementation. The provincial coordinators liaised with project staff within WWF, target villages, District line agencies and counterparts, to implement activities. The provincial coordinators were also responsible for reporting on project progress to PAFO and the DLF. The role of a government staff as provincial coordinators ensured that project objectives and progress were communicated effectively to government decision makers, thereby contributing towards CEPF Investment Priority 3.1 on evaluation of development plans on ecosystem health and biodiversity, and how project activities guided government partners towards possible solutions and alternatives to mitigate impacts to natural systems.

### Conservation Impacts

**Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.**

- Facilitated the setting up of a further 24 Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs) in the Sekong Basin.
- Contracted Maurice Kottelat to undertake a fish taxonomy survey of the Upper Xe Khaman, tributary of the Sekong. Five species new to science discovered. Report already with CEPF.
- *Hemibagrus wyckiodes* was reported as increasing in population by Attapeu province— a valuable outcome, since this species is on the Fishery Law protected list, level II; the same applies to

*Wallago micropogon* which has the same level of protection and was seen as increasing in Sekong province.

- The Landscape Manager participated in the CEPF Lao profiling workshop to update the CEPF ecosystem profile with regard to priority freshwater species and landscapes.

**Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.**

**Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):**

Stronger institutional arrangements and legal frameworks for Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) are supporting biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in Lao PDR

**Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:**

Progress was made during the 2 years of project funding which itself built on the work done under a previous aquatic resources and livelihoods project in the basin. BUT post project the stronger institutions within the provincial governments is uncertain unless WWF succeeds in getting more funding. However to counter that, it is expected that the fishery management committees at village level will continue, as we have seen elsewhere in Laos.

**Planned Short-term Impacts – 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):**

- Extension of the fisheries co-management network to include at least 25 additional villages implementing regulations for freshwater protected areas in the Sekong Basin
- Formal collaboration and exchange of information on best management practice is established between relevant agencies in the Cambodian and Laos side of the Sekong
- Improved understanding of value of the freshwater biodiversity of the Sekong Basin, including the quantity of the fish catch (kilograms of fish sold) and the role in household food security (nutrition)
- Greater scientific knowledge of fish species of the Sekong Basin (current total of 166 known fish species in the Sekong drainage) and clearer understanding of species status, distribution, threats, trade and utilization.

**Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:**

- The first target was just missed, with only 24 additional villages being achieved
- This second one proved to be challenging but WWF continues to try achieve better collaboration between the 2 countries. The lack of an obvious 'umbrella' body on the Cambodian side was one cause of difficulty.
- There is an improved understanding of the value of the freshwater biodiversity of the basin; our studies showed that only 19% of the fish caught are sold and the remaining 81% consumed at home. 79% of total food from animal sources comes from aquatic animals: Fish 61%, other aquatic animals 18%, 16% livestock, 5% wild animals. 92% of the fish consumed came from wild capture, with aquaculture contributing a mere 8%.

The Landscape Manager made a presentation at a major Green Economy workshop held in Hanoi for the Greater Mekong sub-region largely based on the Sekong Basin work. From the Summary Report from that meeting:

“A fisheries co-management case study in Laos provided a practical, on-the-ground application that outlined critical steps to grounding success through consensus building, data collection, revision of draft regulations, agreement on revised draft regulations by local level stakeholders, district approval of aquatic resources management regulations, public announcement of the establishment of village regulations for aquatic resources management, and monitoring and evaluation.”

- The main increase in scientific knowledge derived from the fish taxonomy survey of the upper Xe Khaman that was carried out by Maurice Kottelat:
  - Forty-five fish species were observed in the 2011 survey, bringing to 175 the number of species recorded from the Xekong Basin
  - Five species observed during the survey are new to science
  - Twenty-five species (14%) have been observed from no other river basin and are potentially endemic to the Xekong basin.
  - There are 2 main reasons for this: (i) some species require fast moving streams, and (ii) this is the only major tributary in Laos that joins the Mekong below the barrier of the Khone Falls.

**Please provide the following information where relevant:**

**Hectares Protected:** There are now 52 FCZs set up and running in the Sekong basin through WWF support, and they cover a total of 356.25ha. We can be confident that their benefits are wider than that due to the migratory nature of many of the species.

**Species Conserved:** It is difficult to be precise on species conserved, although WWF has reported before the high percentage of villagers that say many fish species numbers have increased once the FCZ is up and running

**Corridors Created:** This project was not involved in creating corridors, but it did contribute to the maintenance of the natural freshwater corridor of the Sekong river and its tributaries.

***Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.***

Slightly fewer FCZs were set up than we planned to achieve. There are a number of reasons for this, including holding both the Sekong Basin Advisory Group (SBAG) meeting and the Project Steering Committee in the second half of last year (basically the government demanded we do the steering committee, when WWF would have been happy with only the SBAG meeting). The SBAG cost more than \$18,000 when the budget provision was under \$2,000 - a major reason for difficulties elsewhere; the fact that often 8 government people attend say an FCZ opening when the proposal predicted 4 (thus doubling the cost); and the change in exchange rate from 10,000 kip to the \$ when the proposal was made to 8,000 kip to the \$ in the almost 2 years the project operated. The project was due to finish in June, we finished the funds in April, so we were only 2 months short of the expected end date.

The other important problem that was discussed with CEPF when they were here in Laos, is that the proposal (written before any of the key staff, Country Director, Finance Manager and Landscape Manager were in those posts) stated there would be very substantial matching funds, not just in-kind but real money. However, the aforementioned staff were unable to locate where these funds were to come from and no one else in the country programme or regional team could explain either.

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

None to report.

## **Project Components**

**Project Components:** *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

**Component 1 Planned:**

Improved connectivity of fish migratory pathways across the Sekong Basin

**Component 1 Actual at Completion:**

It would hard to say that connectivity has improved but certainly the natural connectivity has been maintained, and local communities consistently report increased fish populations

**Component 2 Planned:**

Improved understanding and institutional mechanisms of the role of communities in managing and monitoring freshwater protected areas as a tool in IRBM

**Component 2 Actual at Completion:**

Every FCZ has an associated management committee entirely made up of local villagers, so at this level the understanding and mechanism has improved. District agriculture and forestry officers have clearly seen this, and so do the District Governors who sign off the FCZs and regulations

**Component 3 Planned:**

Sekong Basin Advisory Group meetings designed and delivered to discuss IRBM issues

**Component 3 Actual at Completion:**

Only one such meeting was financially possible, plus the 8 district level meetings that led into it. The IRBM training manual was partially tested, therefore basin-wide issues were discussed, but possibly not by a wide enough range of agencies.

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

As noted in the box above, only one SBAG was possible, and it is unlikely to meet again if there is no external support available. (This would still be true if the planned two such meetings had been held).

***Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.***

All such tools etc have already been shared with CEPF.

**Lessons Learned**

***Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.***

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

The current WWF staff were not involved in the design process for this project, so it has not always been possible to be certain that our interpretation of the design met the expectations/hopes of the original thinking. For example, was it ever thought possible that the SBAG would develop a life of its own? Also, the budgeting left a lot to be desired, both in the underestimation of what activities actually do cost to implement and in the large amount of match funding that turned out not to be forthcoming.

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

With the caveats already stated about some weaknesses in the design, the implementation was as effective as it could have been.

***Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:***

It is hardly new to say this, but this project confirmed that transboundary targets are difficult to hit when the project is only based in one of the two countries. WWF continues to try to get transboundary management of the Sekong Basin on both governments' agendas since we believe it is an important landscape, and we are seeking funding to pursue this in a more effective way in future.

## Additional Funding

**Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.**

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
WWF	In-Kind & co-financing from the McKnight Foundation & WWF itself	210,200	Not all of the WWF finance promised was actually available

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

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

## Sustainability/Replicability

**Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.**

At the village level, the FCZs are sustainable, based on what we have seen in earlier projects. Replication is already happening in the Oxfam Novib funded project in 3 central provinces of Laos, and the M&E and fish catch monitoring methods partly developed by this Sekong Basin project are being used in WWF's new project in Siphandone.

**Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.**

Nothing to report here

## Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

No action was required towards these policies, other than the day to day actions of the project team (both WWF and government)

## Additional Comments/Recommendations

## Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

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**\*\*\*If your grant has an end date other than JUNE 30, please complete the tables on the following pages\*\*\***

## Performance Tracking Report Addendum

### CEPF Global Targets

## June 1, 2010 – May 31, 2012

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.  
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2011 to May 31, 2012. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan?	No			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	Yes	65.4	97.4	<p><u>10 FCZs in Sekong province</u>            Vang Prieu FCZ, Hatvi village (5 ha);            Vang Prieu FCZ, Kroung village (6 ha);            Vang Houakenglouang FCZ, Kenglouang village (10 ha);            Vang Hintang FCZ, Pakthone village (10 ha);            Vang Pakhouaykor FCZ, Nangyong village (5 ha);            Vang Pakhouayhinlat FCZ, Nangyong village (20 ha);            Vang Tover FCZ, Dak Ta Ok Noy village (0.4 ha);            Vang Kongkrune FCZ, Dak Bong village (0.2 ha);            Vangchalieng FCZ, Dak Ta Ok Yai village (0.4 ha);            Pakpoune village FCZ</p> <p><u>14 FCZs in Attapeu province</u>            Boung Hinxang FCZ, Sökkham village (0.8 ha);            Vang Veunva FCZ, Halangnoy village (8.4 ha);            Vang Saitok FCZ, Phok village (1.3 ha);            Vang Lavae FCZ, Phonemani village (4.2 ha);            Vang Pakhouaypin FCZ, Mai village (5 ha);            Vang Yang FCZ, Vangyang village (0.8 ha);            Vang Khaen FCZ, Vongsamphan village (0.7 ha);            Vanghin FCZ, Vongsai village (10 ha);            Nongpadouk FCZ, Vongsai village (0.7 ha);            Vang Roy FCZ, Phoukeua village (6.4 ha);            Vang Chalongboom FCZ, Vonglakhone village (0.5 ha);            Vang Sai FCZ, Vangsai and Phouxay villages (0.8 ha);            Vang Kongkoy FCZ, Moun village (0.3 ha);            Vang Houangan FCZ, Namngone village (0.5 ha)</p>
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile?	No			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas?	No			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	Yes	11	24	24 villages benefited from the establishment of fisheries conservation zones.

**If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table**



