

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Snehakunja Trust
Project Title:	Empowering Local Communities for Conservation in Newly Declared Conservation Reserves of Western Ghats
Date of Report:	18 February 2014
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CEPF Region: Western Ghats

Strategic Direction: 1. Enable action by diverse communities and partnerships to ensure conservation of key biodiversity areas and enhance connectivity in the corridors.

Investment Priority 1.1 Test the pilot model of community and private reserves to achieve the conservation out comes at priority sites and critical links in unprotected areas of Malnad-Kodagu region.

Topic (ii) develop and support implementation of management plans for conservation reserves and community reserves designated through CEPF projects.

Grant Amount: US\$38,000

Project Dates:

Start Date: 2011/11/1 End Date:2013/10/31

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner): Karnataka Forest Department and LIFE Trust, Sirsi.

LIFE provided expertise in establishing decentralized and community nurseries, and helped to train local communities in value addition of forest products.

The Forest Department was the lead partner in establishing the conservation reserves. It was responsible for establishment of Village Forest Committees and implementation of the reserve management plans.

Conservation Impacts

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

Project activities supported developing conservation strategies for three newly declared conservation reserves in the Western Ghats of Karnataka State, India: Aghanashini-Lion-tailed Macaque Conservation Reserve; Bedthi Conservation Reserve; and Dandeli Hornbill Conservation Reserve. Note: one additional site (Shalmala Riparian Ecosystem Conservation Reserve) was added to the project, after being declared by Karnataka State Government in May 2012.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

Suggestions for the management plans for four newly declared conservation reserves in Uttara Kannada district were prepared and submitted to Karnataka Forest Department and are under review. Community-based Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was used to collect data about the conservation needs of each conservation reserve.

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

1. A well informed /educated local community for management of newly declared Conservation Reserve
2. Well protected Conservation Reserve, with increased population of endangered species like Lion-tailed Macaque, Hornbill, and secured corridor for Tigers.
3. Sustained financing mechanisms for management.
4. Improved livelihood option for local community.

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

1. Awareness about conservation reserves (a new category of protected area) increased among the local communities around the reserves as well as in other parts of the landscape. Demand for declaration of such protected areas especially conservation reserve appeared from other parts of the landscape.
2. Management plans for long term protection were prepared and are currently under review.
3. The state budget allocated separate funding for conservation reserves.
4. Natural places began attracting larger groups of visitors. However, more work is needed to turn this into a livelihood option or additional income for local people, and, unfortunately, this goal could not be achieved fully within the lifetime of the project.

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

1. A detailed Management plan for all three conservation reserves.
2. Strengthening of local community participation conservation.
3. Clearly defined strategies for conservation of targeted species.
4. Cultivation of Non-timber Forest Product (NTFP) species to reduce pressure on forest.
5. Nursery development of local species.
6. Formation of local institutions for forest conservation.

Actual Progress toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

1. Detailed management plans for each of the conservation reserves have been prepared and are currently under critical review by the reserve managers. Once their comments have been incorporated, the plans will be officially submitted to the forest department for approval.
2. Local communities have been empowered to participate in the management of each conservation reserve.
3. Strategies for the conservation of target species have been developed and incorporated into the management plans of the respective conservation reserves.
4. Over 5,000 NTFP and other species have been raised and distributed to communities living in and around the conservation reserves.

5. Two community nurseries have been developed, to raise local forest species.
6. Five Village Forest Committees (VFCs) have been established, to play a leading role in management of the four reserves, alongside six existing VFCs.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: 41,422 ha in total, comprising:

1. Aghanashini Lion-tailed Macaque Conservation Reserve (29,952 ha)
2. Bedthi Conservation Reserve (5,731 ha)
3. Dandeli Hornbill Conservation Reserve (5,250 ha)
4. Shalmala Riparian Ecosystem Conservation Reserve (489 ha).

Species Conserved: Great Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Tiger, Leopard, and several endemic and threatened plant species.

Aghanashini-Lion-tailed Macaque Conservation Reserve supports the largest population of the endemic Lion-tailed Macaque in the Western Ghats, as well as good examples of *Myristica* swamps: a highly threatened ecosystem.

Bedthi Conservation Reserve supports Great Hornbill.

Dandeli Hornbill Conservation Reserve supports four species of hornbill, including Malabar Pied Hornbill and Great Hornbill.

Corridors Created: Ecological connectivity enhanced between the northern part of the Malnad-Kodagu Corridor and the southern part of the Sahyadri-Konkan Corridor.

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

Unlike the research project, this work involved multiple stakeholders and many diverse landscape and species. Each case study was different from another experience. Although the landscape is small, it was diverse with different cultural and social structure.

Government officials, politicians and local people are all different in all these different locations. In that sense, there is a long way still to go to ensure the conservation of the target sites.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Not really.

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:

Priority ecological research undertaken and results fed into development of management plans for the three Conservation Reserves. Detailed mapping of the protected area

Component 1 Actual at Completion:

Detailed mapping of the four Conservation Reserves has been completed and fed into their management plans, including the delineation of critical areas for conservation,

priority linkages within the landscape, sites for restoration and areas for immediate conservation action.

Component 2 Planned:

Local communities empowered to play an active role in management of the Conservation Reserves and to share benefits from the sustainable management of their resources.

Component 2 Actual at Completion:

Sustainable harvesting practices of NTFPs, especially commercially valuable species such as *Garcinia gummigatta*, have been demonstrated and are practiced in villages at each conservation reserve. Five village forest committees (VFC) have been newly started with earlier existing six VFCs. VFCs provide an opportunity for local people to have larger participation in management of Conservation Reserves.

Component 3 Planned:

Awareness of the values and management objectives of the three conservation reserves raised among key stakeholders.

Component 3 Actual at Completion:

A series of awareness-raising programs have been conducted in the region, and also pamphlets and brochures have been distributed among the local communities. Six such awareness-raising programs have been conducted across landscape, and about 5,000 pamphlets each have been distributed in all the four conservation reserves. Celebrities, such as cricketers, have been invited to convey the message of conservation reserves.

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

All components were realized.

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

Management plans for the four conservation reserves will be submitted separately, upon approval by Karnataka Forest Department.

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)

A multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder interaction and negotiation approach was the key to the success of this project. Project was designed to collect information about ecological as well as social, aspects of implementation of conservation.

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

Regular interaction with all stakeholders and contact with stakeholders helped in successful implementation. The project leader being a person from the community and living in the village also helped to gain confidence of all stakeholders better than a project led by outsiders.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Conservation is not just science; it is about understanding the tradeoffs between ecological, social and economic spheres in a landscape. Understanding the balance between them may help in implementation of conservation action. Otherwise beautiful, peer-reviewed science may not necessarily result in field based action. Field based conservation action may take longer than expected.

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.

Nil.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

****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.)
- D*** In-Kind contributions can include staff and volunteer time, supplies, and other materials your organization provides to the project.

Sustainability/Replicability

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

Long term commitment for a landscape helps make conservation action more effective.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

We are still developing conservation plans for priority areas that were identified during first phase of the CEPF-ATREE small grant project. We hope that this may lead to conservation of about 10,000 hectares more in Uttara Kannada district under suitable state legislation, such as the Biodiversity Conservation and Protection Act, 1992, and the Wildlife Conservation Act, 1972.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

Regular interaction with local people was carried out. All procedures framed in the Process Framework under the CEPF safeguard policy on involuntary resettlement were completed duly.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

None.

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, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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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

(Enter Grant Term)

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 results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	Yes	41,422 ha		Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one. Management plans prepared for four conservation reserves: 29,952 ha Aghanashini Lion-tailed Macaque 5,731 ha Bedthi 5,250 ha Dandeli Hornbill 489 ha Shalmala Riparian Ecosystem
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	NA			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	Yes	41,422 ha		Sustainable harvesting practices of NTFPs
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NA			
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, But not directly			Training sustainable harvesting practices of NTFPs will help local communities to increase their economic conditions by selling them. However, we do not have any data. We are in the process of collecting data now.

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

