

CEPF Small Grant Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name	People Resources and Conservation Foundation
Project Title	Focused Protection for White-Shouldered Ibis and Giant Ibis in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary
Date of Report	30 June 2011
Report Author and Contact Information	Mark E Grindley, PRCF Chief Technical Officer for Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand Email: mark.grindley@prcfunion.org
CEPF Region	Indo-Burma Hotspot
Strategic Direction	1: Safeguarding priority globally threatened species in Indochina by mitigating major threats
Grant Amount	USD 19,940
Project Dates	16 December 2009 to 16 December 2010, subsequently extended to 31 May 2011

Project Implementation Partners

Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary (Implementing Agency)

Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary (LWS) was represented by Mr. By Seng Leang on the Project Steering Committee, and by several participating rangers who joined field surveys and worked with local communities during project implementation. Mr. Leang coordinated field activities and allocated responsibilities between staff, liaised with local government, and opened and participated in several training courses and the final project workshop.

Hugh Wright (technical support)

Mr. Wright provided continuous technical backstopping in the design of field surveys, data analysis, and the final Action Planning. He also ensured good coordination between this project and other Ibis research being undertaken in Cambodia, and with his own doctoral dissertation data.

BirdLife Cambodia (administrative support)

The People Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF) operates in Cambodia under a Memorandum of Understanding with BirdLife International, with which it has an arrangement to provide office space and in-kind administrative support for projects of mutual interest. The PRCF bookkeeper for this project was housed in the BirdLife Cambodia office.

People Resources and Conservation Foundation

The PRCF was project holder and took the lead on overall project planning and management. The PRCF also provided a Technical Advisor and Project Manager, Mr. Mark Grindley.

Conservation Impacts

How the project has contributed to implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile

The project aimed to use a community based model to improve understanding of the status and distribution of the White-shouldered and Giant Ibis in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, and to identify partners and priorities for follow-up conservation actions.

Project activities began in January 2010 when community consultations were conducted at three villages within the Sanctuary, identified because of their proximity to key ibis habitats. The meetings targeted 19 local people interested to help research, monitor, and protect these enigmatic species. Local community members were formed into three Site Support Groups (SSGs) in Sre Angkrong and Srey Shrey villages, located in the northwest and south of the Sanctuary respectively, and Lomphat town in the north-central area. All three sites proved to have significant numbers of White-Shouldered Ibis using paddy land near to the villages.

Census, distribution, and nesting data were collected by LWS rangers at the three main identified sites, through preliminary investigation and consultation with local communities. Monitoring was conducted eight to ten days per month using the MIST monitoring system. A 'roost reward scheme' was also implemented where local people were provided small financial rewards to identify Ibis roost locations and counts of habitation.

A total of 19 roosts were found at three key sites, and roost counts were conducted regularly at each site. A census of White-shouldered Ibis was conducted on four occasions throughout the course of the project. This required simultaneous counts at each roost, and was coordinated with similar counts elsewhere in northeastern Cambodia by other conservation groups. In collaboration with rangers, one to two local people monitored all roosts.

Census data showed the highest populations of White-shouldered Ibis in October, followed by August, September, and July respectively. A count of 187 birds in October was the highest population recorded in LWS, and has established the Sanctuary as the second most important site for White-shouldered Ibis in the world (Wright et. al. 2010). This is considered to form one of the most significant project contributions to the CEPF profile.

While no accurate census was determined for Giant Ibis, a critical estimate based on sighting would assume more than 15 individuals present at LWS. However, results for Giant Ibis were much less conclusive than for White-shouldered Ibis due to the former species' wide dispersal and low densities, and due to poor access to large areas of the wildlife Sanctuary. The project steering committee therefore felt it was a more productive use of CEPF resources to focus on White-shouldered Ibis, which is of a higher conservation priority and which can be better monitored by voluntary local Site Support Groups in areas close to permanent settlements.

A total of 11 White-shouldered Ibis nests were found during the project timeframe, two thirds of which were located outside the Sanctuary. Five of these were observed by Site Support Group members and ibis rangers to be successful—the first such records for the site, while the other six nests failed due to nest robbing for eggs, chick collection, and habitat disturbance. One Giant Ibis nest was recorded during the dry season, which is the first record for LWS. Low overall records for Giant Ibis reflect the difficulty of locating this species, but could also be a result of a relatively low proportion of suitable habitat in the Sanctuary. More surveys are required to better understand the breeding ecology and food preference of this species.

Results of community consultation showed that villagers were willing to take part in project activities, informing of hunting and other illegal activities and providing data where possible about both ibis species, and other threatened animals.

The village groups interviewed did not believe that the conservation initiatives negatively affected local livelihoods and expressed concern of the disappearance of the forest and the effects of large scale forest losses on their livelihoods, particularly for livestock farming and small scale timber harvesting.

In order to prioritize habitats for future surveys, the project also undertook an inventory of trapaengs (natural waterholes) and wetlands, which are the preferred dry season foraging habitat for both Ibis species and seemingly one limiting ecological requirement for healthy populations. In total 122 trapaengs were recorded, 30 of which were samples to categorize these on a number of criteria believe linked to suitability for ibises, including size, seasonality, vegetation type, level of disturbance and presence of other species. This data is a second major contribution to the CEPF profile, as it will allow better targeting of future surveys and habitat protection.

A workshop focused on Ibis conservation action planning for the Sanctuary was organized on 2 May 2011, in Banlung town, Ratanakiri province. It included the participation of 20 representatives of the Site Support Groups, local authorities, LWS rangers, LWS management team, and community ibis specialists involved in similar work with BirdLife Cambodia in Western Siem Pang—the most important site for White-shouldered Ibis globally. The key threats and proposed priority activities were identified for project phase II action (see below). All participants strongly endorsed the Ibis research team in LWS to seek for more funding to continue with long-term conservation action of the species', particularly with nest and roost protection and to promote Ibis conservation through local awareness activities.

The project also undertook village meetings to raise awareness of the conservation importance of the two ibis species, and distributed a conservation poster throughout the Sanctuary. A number of press articles were generated by the Cambodia White-shouldered Ibis census, and by the elevation of Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary to second most important site known globally for the species.

Ibis observations though the project term included:

Number of sightings of White-shouldered Ibis =	246 times
Number of individuals =	1063 individuals
Number of sightings of Giant Ibis =	25 times
Number of individuals =	64 individuals

The full results of project activities are presented in a separate technical document annexed to this Project Completion Report.

Summary of overall project results/impact against the expected results in the proposal

Expected Result 1:

Annotated list of prioritized trapaengs and veals with accompanying maps

A sample of 122 known ponds in the Sanctuary was surveyed to allow for improved prioritization. This sample was smaller than expected due to the difficulties in accessing large parts of the Sanctuary.

At the time of writing, data compilation has been complete but analysis has not yet been undertaken, as the surveys have only just been completed. This analysis will be undertaken under a follow-up project in 2011 by the project officer, Sum Phearun, and by PhD candidate Hugh Wright.

**Expected Result 2:
Technical document explaining criteria and method for prioritization**

The project technical report lists the prioritization criteria. It will be applied to the field data later in 2011.

**Expected Result 3:
Six Site Support Groups established in villages near priority sites for conservation of the ibis species**

Since only three sites were identified as important for site-based Ibis conservation the project focused on establishing these three groups. However, membership was increased due to the smaller group number, and each comprised several sub-groups based on the geographical distribution in each village. The participation during the project of eight rangers also complimented the Site Support Groups since all rangers are themselves local villagers.

Expected Result 4:

Regulations for use of sites under each Site Support Group, agreed by the communities and Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary

Regulations were agreed as part of the initial awareness raising and social safeguards assessment, and were kept as simple as possible to ensure easy adherence and dissemination. The main focus was on reducing nest robbing and accidental disturbance during the breeding season. Regulations were disseminated through meetings and by poster.

**Expected Result 5:
Action plan for ibis conservation, for inclusion into the Sanctuary Management Plan**

A draft action plan is included within the project technical report. This identifies some key actions for follow-up in 2011 by the Site Support Groups, Sanctuary, and other project stakeholders. Additional funding has already been secured to support and implement some of the recommended activities.

Relevant information on the following categories:

Hectares Protected:	Not relevant
Species Conserved:	A contribution has been made to the conservation of White-shouldered Ibis and Giant Ibis
Corridors Created:	Not relevant

Project Success and challenges towards achieving its short and long-term impact objectives

The aim was to initiate immediate measures to conserve the White-shouldered and Giant Ibis in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, through establishment of Site Support Groups, participatory research and priority setting and action planning.

It has been possible with this small grant to initiate site-based conservation and participatory research for the two ibis species in Lomphat. However, there have been several challenges:

1. Finding a suitable project officer was essential, and took time. In fact, there was only one candidate, Sum Phearun, who already had experience on the species. The project is testimony to his dedication.

2. Access to large areas of the sanctuary is difficult, and it proved unrealistic to expect volunteer support group members to cover large distances on foot. Work was therefore focused on areas close to the three target villages.
3. Covering two species with relatively different breeding seasons and ecology put a strain on the limited project resources. Efforts for Giant Ibis were therefore limited in to the benefit of the work on White-shouldered Ibis, and the former species needs a much greater commitment to extensive foot surveys.

Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)

None

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project

Project Design Process

There was significant input from CEPF into the design, with detailed comments and recommendations provided after submission of the original proposal. This made the design somewhat difficult, as it was clear that CEPF had its own ideas about what should be included. Also, the approval process took several months, which made it difficult to plan for the start date.

The project benefited greatly from PRCF (and BirdLife's) considerable experience in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, and from existing relationships with the local communities. It was also made good use of the interest and experience of Hugh Wright, which was essential to ensuring research design and the final recommendations made best use of the available knowledge on both species.

Project Implementation

We had considerable difficulty in finding and maintaining motivated rangers, partly due to staff changes and partly due to the relatively low interest in two of several large big species found in the Sanctuary.

In retrospect, we should have tried harder to educate and mobilize these rangers at an earlier time, though this changed when Sum Phearun was able to join the project full time. We under-budgeted for survey costs and over budgeted for village consultations and meetings. In fact, village discussions are relatively inexpensive and do not need to be held too regularly; CEPF's flexibility in budget reallocation allowed us to adjust for this.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community

None.

Additional Funding

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

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Chicago Board of Trade	A	5,000 USD	Held by Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, with support from BirdLife
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	A	2,000 USD (Project budget 50,000 in total)	Held by PRCF for tiger conservation in LWS; use to cost share some overheads
Conservation Leadership Award	B	8,000 USD	To Sum Phearun

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

Summary of success/ challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components/ results

The project established Site Support Groups in three villages, and although the sustainability of these groups is to be seen, there has at least been voiced commitment to continue monitoring the species, reporting records and helping disseminate and enforce the regulations for their protection. The chance of these activities becoming longer-term is heightened by the continued presence of the PRCF (and BirdLife Cambodia) at the site, and the fact that some additional funding has also been gained for Sum Phearun to continue supporting them.

As the project was implemented by a number of sanctuary staff, institutional capacity will remain at the site after the project funding. This lends itself to sustainability since on going financial and technical support is not necessarily required for the relationship between the support groups and the Sanctuary to continue.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Not applicable.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Summary of implementation required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project

As required under CEPF regulations, a Social Safeguard Policy were designed and implemented by the project to ensure no unnecessary loss of access resulted project interventions. This took the form of community consultations, with a number of standardized questions completed by each Site Support

Group to gauge general attitudes towards conservation efforts and identify the impacts the actions are having on local communities. The results are summarized in Appendix 1.

Overall we believe that the project resulted in no negative impacts on participating communities. However, there were a number of weaknesses in the design and implementation of the safeguards strategy, including inadequate training, lack of field-testing, and lack of full incorporation into project design. These are additional lessons that we have learned from the experience of implementing this project.

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.

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Performance Tracking 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, 2009 to June 30, 2010. (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.	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?	No			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.	No			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	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.	No			

APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

The following questions were used to guide discussions with Site Support Group members during project preparation, as a means to ensure mutual understanding, particularly among project staff and between villagers and rangers. The questions are taken from a PRCF internal assessment policy, tailored to meet CEPF requirements. All resource use restrictions imposed by the support groups with respect to the ibis species were voluntary. Project ownership and right to reply to the safeguard policy were communicated by the project officer to the participating communities and rangers. Review of the original responses was undertaken at the close of the project and revised where necessary. Results and summarized here. All meetings were facilitated and minuted by the project officer.

No.	Social Safeguard Questions
Q1	Which sites and species are being protected with the local community? (give sites names, descriptions and GPS locations)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Rice fields, ponds (trapaeng), lakes, streams, Viels, and Dry Deciduous Forest (DDF) are feeding, roosting, and breeding sites for Ibis and currently, those habitats are being protected by local people (SSG).</i> <i>Wildlife species including White-shouldered Ibis, Giant Ibis, White-rumped Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture, Red-headed Vulture, Elephant, Sarus Crane, Adjutant, Tiger, and Bear are also being protected under various schemes by local people.</i>
Q2	What do the communities use these sites / resources for? How important are they?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Local people use these sites for rice cultivation, collection of Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP), timber, fishing, and livestock watering/grazing. These sites are considered significant areas for local people in maintaining sustainable livelihoods.</i>
Q3	How are the target sites / resources currently managed by the community?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Currently, communities' play an important role through participation and contributing themselves to the on-ground conservation activities by reporting important habitats (roosting, feeding and nesting) used by threatened species. Community members also report illegal hunting and participate in awareness raising activities. Local people make up patrol and monitoring teams and so far, local authorities have provided strong support to project staff and the community to conserve key threaten species.</i>
Q4	How can traditional management be enhanced for conservation?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The elders in the villages have educated their children/relatives and young people to respect the territory guardian/the spiritual forest and prohibit them from cutting and hunting at important habitat areas.</i>
Q5	What customary rights are there to the target natural resource, and are they compatible with the conservation goals under Q1?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Local people consider their customary rights to access fishing, rice cultivation, and local level use of timber and NTFP. Conducted at a community level, harvesting of these resources is not seen to affect to the conservation targets and conservation of natural resources.</i>
Q6	Is there or might there be conflict with neighboring villages or outside resource users following a project intervention?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>No conflict has occurred throughout the project duration nor have natural resource users from outside and inside been in conflict with each other.</i>
Q7	What are the potential benefits to the community from improved protection of the

	target sites / resources? How can these benefits be enhanced?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Many protected sites/areas have high economic potential to maintain their livelihoods in a sustainable way. This has been enhanced through education, awareness raising, and support from local authorities and Ibis rangers.</i>
Q8	What are the possible adverse impacts of the project (e.g., on food security), and how can they be avoided or mitigated?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No adverse impacts were identified.</i>
Q9	What indigenous knowledge is there in the community that might be incorporated into the project?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SSGs were not clear on the Question and answer didn't relate.</i>
Q10	How can broad support and understanding of the project and conservation importance of the target resource be achieved?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local communities have been educated and increased their knowledge through meeting, training, and participation. Some specific areas, which were known as important sites/habitats for Ibis, have been identified and prioritized for protection by local people in those areas. Conservation of habitats has also been linked to providing long term sustainable livelihoods of communities.</i>
Q11	How can project success be measured, and monitored?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increased knowledge of local people with reduced conflicts relating to project goals.</i> • <i>Increasing involvement from local people in project activities by through collaboration of monitoring and recording of research data.</i> • <i>Greater assistance from villagers in educated and sharing concepts and knowledge of conservation to other people in their community.</i> • <i>Negative impacts, conflicts, or complaints throughout the project's duration.</i> • <i>Reduced hunting activities on the Ibis and other key conservation species.</i>
Q12	How can negative impacts be monitored, and what should community members do if they have a complaint about the project or project staff?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There have been no any negative impacts - the community members and project staff worked together to conserve those species very well and they happy to join with the project. They can contribute some of their time to the project and conduct some livelihood activities (agricultural activities) as well.</i> • <i>NB: This question was not fully understood as it should have been and therefore the answer does not completely relate to the question.</i>

APPENDIX 2: Project Budget Report

Budget Report

Project Title:	Focused Protection for White-Shouldered Ibis and Giant Ibis in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia				
Organization:	People Resources and Conservation Foundation				
Reporting Period:	Jan 2010 - May 2011				
Total Budget	\$19,940.00				
Balance from Previous Period					
Advance Received	\$17,946.00				
Available Funds	\$17,946.00				
Output Summary	Current Period Expenses	Project to Date Expenditures	Approved Budget	Available Budget	Percentage Spent
Salaries/Benefits	\$5,017.00	\$5,017.00	\$4,370.00	-\$647.00	114.81%
*Professional Services	\$493.00	\$493.00	\$500.00	\$7.00	98.60%
Rent and Storage	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-
Telecommunications	\$236.00	\$236.00	\$400.00	\$164.00	59.00%
Postage and Delivery	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-
Supplies	\$2,174.32	\$2,174.32	\$1,920.00	-\$254.32	113.25%
*Furniture and Equipment	\$589.00	\$589.00	\$500.00	-\$89.00	117.80%
Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-
Travel	\$6,793.99	\$6,793.99	\$5,850.00	-\$943.99	116.14%
Meetings and Special Events	\$2,436.44	\$2,436.44	\$4,200.00	\$1,763.56	58.01%
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-
Sub-Grants	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-
Indirect Cost	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00	\$0.00	100.00%
Comments					
Totals	\$19,939.75	\$19,939.75	\$19,940.00	\$0.25	100.00%
Total Current Period Expenses	\$19,939.75	*Procurement Report: For all Professional Services and Expensed Furniture and Equipment procured for unit costs in excess of \$5,000, the following must be maintained on record:			
Closing Balance	-\$1,993.75	- Item			
Projected Expenditures		- Name of vendor			
		- Budgeted amount			
		- Actual amount			
		- Number of bids received			
Advance Requested	\$1,993.75	- Rationale for selection			