

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Wildlife Conservation Society
Project Title:	Preventing poisoning of Cambodia's vultures
Date of Report:	9 th March 2012
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CEPF Region: Indo-burma

Strategic Direction: 1. Safeguard priority species in Indochina by mitigating major threats

Grant Amount: \$19,970

Project Dates: 25th February 2011 to 25th February 2012

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

The project is implemented as part of the Cambodian Vulture Conservation Partnership (CVCP). This is a broad partnership of government and NGOs led by WCS. Implementation of this project is carried out by a number of partners including local community members; key partners are as follows:

- Forestry Administration and the General Department for Administration of Nature Conservation and Protection (part of the Ministry of the Environment) are responsible for the management of vulture restaurant and nesting sites.
- ACCB provide co-funding and technical support to nest protection and vulture restaurant activities.
- BirdLife in Indochina are responsible for the implementation of activities at two restaurant sites (Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary and Western Siem Pang).
- WWF are responsible for the implementation of activities at two restaurant sites (Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary and Mondulkiri Protected Forest)
- SVC coordinate ecotourism activities at WCS sites, they provide additional vulture restaurants as a tourist attraction.
- Community members implement the nest protection scheme and receive direct payments from it.
- Cornell University: Yula Kapetanacos is a PhD candidate conducting DNA analysis on feathers collected at vulture restaurants during the project, to study vulture movements and obtain an independent population estimate.
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WCS is a project member of the SAVE consortium which has been developed through a partnership of South Asian governments and national and local NGOs. Details of this project can be found here: <http://www.primarynetworks.co.uk/save/index.html>

Conservation Impacts

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

The project has directly contributed towards the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile by successfully mitigating major threats to three priority species, namely White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis*, Slender-billed Vulture *G. tenuirostris* and Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus*.

The project has conducted activities outlined in the Cambodian Vulture Action Plan, focusing on securing key populations of these three vulture species by reducing accidental poisoning of vultures through misuse of pesticides and the monthly provision of diclofenac free food to vultures at six vulture restaurants. CEPF support ensured that nest protection and monitoring was implemented at four sites, although success rates of vulture nests were relatively low during the project period. Data from the annual vulture census indicate that the population in Cambodia is stable as a result of conservation measures, a significant achievement in a global context.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

During the project duration no vultures poisoning incidents were detected. Prior to awareness-raising on the misuse of poisons in mid-2010, there had been a total of 37 vultures poisoned of which only 6 survived. The efforts of the project in raising awareness amongst local communities about the threat to human and wildlife health from misuse of pesticides is very likely to have caused this change. With support from CEPF for our awareness-raising activities in 2011 the flow of information to communities was maintained and this is likely to have accounted for the drop in poisoning incidents. Awareness-raising to reduce misuse of pesticides took place in and around all key sites in the Northern and Eastern Plains of Cambodia. Communities in 14 villages spread over four provinces were provided with information about the harmful effects of eating poisoned fish and meat to reduce fishing and hunting with pesticides. We also provided additional information about safe storage, mixing, application and disposal of pesticides to improve human health. Direct advocacy with district veterinary officers and local pharmacies and outlets was conducted.

Vulture numbers recorded in the 2011 annual census were slightly lower than in 2010, but similar to those recorded in 2009. This does not indicate a decline in the number of vultures; instead, it reflects natural variation in the number of vultures attending restaurants. The vulture population in Cambodia is probably not increasing, but is stable. The monthly provision of diclofenac-free food at six sites, facilitated by the CEPF project, is essential for maintaining the population in the short to medium term, owing to low carcass densities. The restaurants also provided the opportunity for feathers to be collected for a DNA mark-recapture study that will provide an independent estimate of the Cambodian vulture population. During the project period an additional eight vulture restaurants were conducted by the Sam Veasna Centre, further increasing the amount of food available to vultures.

With CEPF support, a paper detailing the status, threats and conservation of Cambodia's vulture population has been accepted for publication by Bird Conservation International. The paper makes use of data collected during the project period, from the annual vulture census and nest monitoring. Copies of the paper will be deposited with the CEPF RIT after it has been published.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: N/A

Species Conserved: directly: White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis*, Slender-billed Vulture *G. tenuirostris* and Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus*, indirectly (through reduction in misuse of poisons): Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus*, Eld's Deer *Rucervus eldii*, Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius* and Lesser Adjutant *L. javanicus*.

Corridors Created: N/A

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

The project successfully met its short-term objectives as described above. The low nest success experienced in 2011 was a result of increased nest predation and disturbance, and highlights the

difficulty in conducting this activity effectively. In order to meet the long-term objectives of the project continued and ongoing support of vulture conservation activities will be required.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

None.

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 project included activities proposed in the Cambodian Vulture Action Plan and built on activities already ongoing in the project area. As such it was relevant and feasible. It was designed in consultation with the relevant partners and experts (e.g. ACCB, WWF and BirdLife), which facilitated the speed with which we could implement the project once funding was received.

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

The project was implemented by a suite of stakeholders with relevant experience either at particular sites or on certain issues. This ensured that activities were implemented in a timely manner and to a high standard. Community groups were involved wherever possible, both in the activities which raised awareness about the dangers of misusing poisons and in nest protection, from which they benefitted directly. Good relationships with FA staff at key sites were essential for the success of this project.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

The Cambodia Vulture Conservation Project has reaffirmed the requirement for support to mitigate the most pressing threats facing vultures in Cambodia. Close collaboration between NGOs and FA is essential for the success of this ongoing project. Increasing nest productivity is essential if the vulture population is to increase in size. Providing food at vulture restaurants prevents poisoning and increases the food supply for vultures, as well as facilitating monitoring. Without additional food, the number of vultures surviving to breed each year would decline and it is likely that nest success would decline further. Maintaining advocacy and awareness-raising is a priority to prevent misuse of poisons and NSAIDs causing mortalities, and to prevent persecution of vultures.

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
ACCB	A	\$7,660	For Red-headed Vulture research
ACCB	A	\$10,237	For nest protection and restaurants

***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** *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

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

All project activities are sustainable with sufficient donor support. Intensive direct species conservation activities such as nest protection and food provisioning will never be self financing, although tourism revenue can contribute to funding the latter. Following an intensive awareness raising campaign on the dangers of the misuse of poisons, conducted during the project, this activity can be maintained at a lower level. Through the publication of a peer reviewed paper the results of the project can be better understood by the wider scientific and conservation communities.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

None.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

No environmental and social safeguard activities were necessary under this project; the survey did not adversely affect the environment or indigenous peoples.

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, 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			

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

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Increased Income due to:				Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
									Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services									
Total																					

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit:

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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