

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Fauna and Flora International, FFI.
Project Title:	Raising Awareness and Building Capacity to Manage Human Elephant Conflict in Mondulhiri province, Cambodia.
Date of Report:	1 st April 2011
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CEPF Region: Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot, Indochina Region

Strategic Direction: The project primarily focused on Strategic Direction 1: "*Safeguard priority globally threatened species in Indochina by mitigating major threats*", and specifically Strategic Direction 1.2: "*Implement public awareness campaigns that reinforce existing wildlife trade policies and contribute to the reduction of consumer demand for 67 globally threatened species and their products*"

Grant Amount: \$19,662

Project Dates: March 2010 – March 2011

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

The Cambodian Centre for the Study and Development of Agriculture (CEDAC) specializes in long-term technical support and training for poor farmers to increase yields using organic and low-cost methods, and has worked with over 7,000 farmers in more than 400 villages across Cambodia. CEDAC will be working with the project team to provide training on agricultural improvement to local communities affected by human elephant conflict.

Conservation Impacts

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

This project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile by improving the conservation of the endangered Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) - an iconic mega-fauna species which still survives in relatively large numbers within eastern Cambodia and the Priority Corridor of the Mekong River and its major tributaries. The forests inhabited by elephants in this area also play a crucial role in maintaining the watershed stability of the lower Mekong in Cambodia and the regulation of seasonal flooding and drought. The Asian elephant is a priority species under the CEPF ecosystem profile, as it is extremely vulnerable to exploitation from the illegal wildlife trade and also the threats posed by human elephant conflict.

This project has contributed directly to **Strategic Direction 1**, Safeguard priority globally threatened species in Indochina by mitigating major threats, and **Investment Priorities 1.1** - Identify and secure core populations of 67 globally threatened species from overexploitation and illegal trade; **1.2** - Implement public awareness campaigns that reinforce existing wildlife trade policies and contribute to the reduction of consumer demand for 67 globally threatened species and their products; and **1.6** - Publish local-language reference materials on globally threatened species respectively.

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

Expected Results:

- 1) Increased awareness and understanding of the urgent need for elephant conservation among local people (approx 600 families) affected by HEC, agro-business (rubber plantations e.g. Socfin KCD and Covipharma) and extractive industry stakeholders such as Southern Gold, and members of Provincial government.
- 2) Reduced HEC through distribution of HEC toolboxes and training on mitigation methods given to farmers (approximately 100) at target sites. This can be measured and monitored using CECG's national HEC database, which has data on HEC for the last 6 years.
- 3) Increased conservation stakeholder coordination on implementation of activities and dissemination of materials, reports etc.

Actual Results and Impact:

CECG conducted three workshops in Mondulakiri province during the project period. Each included a history of elephants in Cambodia – their biology, ecology, cultural significance (elephants for example, were crucial in the building of Angkor Wat and hundreds of other temples between the 10th and 15th centuries) and current conservation status. The first of these was at a grass-roots level and focused on primary and secondary schools in O'Reang and Bousra communes where people and elephants live in close proximity to each other. Our presentations were given to 104 children and 5 teachers.

The second workshop in our awareness raising campaign was targeted at local government and law enforcement authorities, and was held at the joint station of Forestry Administration and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) at Keo Seima, Mondulakiri province. There were 23 participants, including 19 village chiefs from the five surrounding communes where wild Asian elephants occur, as well as three commune leaders and a representative from WCS. After presentations and a question-answer session on elephants and human elephant conflict, 500 HEC "toolboxes" (Khmer language booklets on HEC mitigation strategies) were handed out to village chiefs for disbursement in each of their respective villages. 100 books on the Bunong tribe and the intrinsic linkages of their animistic beliefs and the forest and its elephants were distributed, as well as elephant T-shirts for all participants.

Our awareness-raising programme culminated in February 2011 with a provincial workshop at the Sakana Hotel, Sen Monorom town, Mondulakiri province. 45 participants attended, including the provincial directors of Mondulakiri Department of Environment, the Inspector of Police, Military Police Chiefs, District governors and their deputies, representatives from the local rubber industry, the provincial Chief of the Forestry Administration, Director of Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary, representatives of WCS and WWF, and the deputy governor of Mondulakiri province. Following presentations on the status of elephants and human elephant conflict in Mondulakiri by the project team, other participants gave presentations, including a WWF presentation on elephant monitoring in accordance with CITES protocols; the Director of the Provincial Department of the Ministry of Industry, Mines & Energy; and Directors of other protected areas shared their experiences and challenges on elephant management at their respective project areas.

During November 2010 we established new Human Elephant Conflict Guarding Groups in Siem Bok district, Stung Treng province. This area of the northern Prey Long forest was identified as a HEC hotspot during a field trip in 2009, when the project received numerous requests for assistance on HEC mitigation from the commune councils in the area.

During a 5-day field trip, the CECG team visited villages deep inside Prey Long forest that have recently experienced crop losses due to elephant depredation. Our team provided training on the deployment of HEC mitigation tools such as noisemakers, watchtower construction and perimeter

alarm systems. We provided equipment and 100 copies of our local language “HEC Toolboxes” to villagers. This has enabled local people to protect their crops during the last harvest season with no reports of any losses due to elephant raiding.

In Monduliri province, we distributed 1000 copies of the HEC Toolbox to local villagers living in forest edge communities, as well as other interested parties at the provincial government level, including the deputy provincial governor and provincial chief of police.

In conjunction with local agricultural NGO CEDAC, the project provided training on crop diversification at HEC sites in Monduliri province. Established in 1997, the Cambodian Centre for the Study and Development of Agriculture (CEDAC) specializes in long-term technical support and training for poor farmers to increase yields using organic and low-cost methods, and has worked with over 7,000 farmers in more than 400 villages across Cambodia. CEDAC brings unrivalled skills in training trainers, establishing Farmers' Associations and self-help groups, marketing, and micro-credit schemes. Their main contribution to this project has been to teach local villagers living near elephant areas how to meet their food needs on existing agricultural land - a vital step towards reducing pressure on natural habitats, which has helped win community support for elephant conservation. The training in Monduliri focused specifically on alternative crops such as cassava and beans, including classroom and practical exercises on planting, irrigation, transplanting and harvesting.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: N/A

Species Conserved: Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

Corridors Created: N/A

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

The project has been successful in reducing HEC in Monduliri and Stung Treng provinces, with local people being able to harvest rice without significant damage from elephants due to improved guarding and protection strategies. Farmers at HEC sites have now learned the value of crop protection and actively participated in crop protection efforts.

Challenges to achieving project goals include an uncertainty over concessions and developments from local people in the project area. Long-term land security and tenure is in question, and people are worried about future livelihood options. The Director of Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary was concerned about current high levels of development, with associated newcomers to the area who will want to convert forest to farmland and how this could potentially result in an escalation of HEC.

The other main issue that was raised was on large-scale development plans, which are unclear from the national level, and have consultation with local people and stakeholders. Especially there is a lack of environmental concerns in biologically sensitive areas.

Officials from the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME) attended workshop and showed interest to work together on projects, but were reluctant to speak in front of other stakeholders due to their poor reputation on addressing environmental issues on other projects.

The issue of landmines along the Vietnamese border remains a significant challenge to conservation work in some areas, and there is uncertainty to the status of what are cleared areas and where the remaining danger areas are. Another key challenge identified during the workshop was the current negative perception that national and provincial government has on environmental NGO's and with some projects in particular. This meeting went some way to

clarifying the position FFI, MoE and FA are jointly taking in their approach to elephant conservation.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

After our school presentations in O'Reang commune, Bousra district, Monduliri province, three students expressed strong desires to study conservation at university, so that they can be educated to protect his homeland.

The Stung Treng provincial governor gave a very strong endorsement for our project and wishes to join our team next time we go to the field to learn more about the project and our approach. Similar sentiments were received from the deputy governor of Monduliri province, who is largely responsible for NRM and conservation across the whole province.

We did not expect much participation from police chiefs and representatives from the rubber industry. In fact we experienced active involvement during the workshop, and even verbal endorsement of any future trans-boundary efforts that may happen. Representatives from the Dak Lak rubber company expressed concern over the high level of threats to wild elephants and associated habitat loss and supported project efforts to conserve the Asian elephant in Monduliri.

During the project period of performance, we discovered that some elephants were illegally killed in 2010 – one male and one female in separate incidents in the Seima Protected Forest and the Sre Pok Wilderness Area. Due to ivory tusks, skin and other body parts being taken, we are concerned that a professional poaching gang are operating and catering to international markets, perhaps killing to order. With these killings representing the first confirmed poaching incidents in five years, this highlighted the need for a nationally led response to complement efforts made by PA management authorities at the site level. To date, the identity of the poachers is undetermined.

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.

We learned that when working with local communities, one was to help build trust and ensure maximum participation in project activities is to implement activities on livelihood improvement first, and then lead into specific objectives of the project.

We also encountered numerous misunderstandings between provincial authorities on conservation projects and the objectives of conservation practitioners in the area. For example, NGO's have agreements and MoU's with the government at the national level in order to operate in country, which government actors at the provincial level are almost never aware of.

If organizations wish to hold workshops or meetings locally, then liaison with the proper local authorities should also take place during the planning stages to avoid confusion on what the specific project activities are.

When working with ethnic groups such as Phnong people we found it necessary to spend more time and resources on things such as training in order to change practices and attitudes. This can help reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings occurring between INGO's and ethnic groups, which can often lead to delay or obstruction of project activities. In this case, the project

team included a Phnong speaker and we would recommend other projects to take this approach when engaging other minorities.

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

Our project design was informed by a long-term presence of project staff in the area, precluding the inception of this grant, which included ethnic minority representation. The project considered human needs first and once these had begun to be addressed, sought to tackle specific project objectives such as such as attitude change and HEC mitigation.

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

The success of our awareness raising campaign was due to our close liaison with provincial authorities during the planning process. BUT this can be much improved and make a large impact on the success or failure of future activities. Liaison with local government should be embedded in the project design structure.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Due to the potentially high impact and awareness raising campaign can have, such activities should not be overlooked or under-invested in by other species conservation efforts. However, presenters and speakers should be carefully selected based on their ability to clearly convey conservation messages to inspire grassroots action.

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
USFWS	A	\$37,000	
L.A Zoo	A	\$15,000	
Australia Zoo	A	\$16,000	
FFI/MoE/FA	A	\$12,000	

****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.

The key successes of our project was getting a high level of farmer participation, both Khmer and Phnong Success in getting buy-in from local people to achieve regular crop guarding = sustainability.

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.

N/A

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, 2010 to June 30, 2011. (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		120ha	The project strengthened local capacity of local people living in and around the Keo Seima Protected Forest, Mondulkiri province.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	N/A			
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		270ha	150ha under improved management for elephants at Prey Long forest, Stung Treng province; and 120ha, in and around Keo Seima Protected Forest, Mondulkiri province.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	Yes		150ha	The project improved local management practices on mitigating human elephant conflict at villages inside Prey Long forest in eastern Cambodia.
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	N/A			

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

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.cepfn.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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