

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Missouri Botanical Garden
Project Title:	Improving Linkages for Collaborative Research and Conservation of Plants in Indochina
Date of Report:	8 May 2009
Report Author and Contact Information:	Jacinto C. Regalado, Jr.

CEPF Region: Indochina

Strategic Direction: 1.3

Grant Amount: \$4,605.53

Project Dates: 27/11/2008 –
12/12/2008

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

The following Vietnamese partner institutions nominated participants to the Symposium, allowed their staff to travel on official business, and facilitated their passport applications: the Institute of Ecology & Biological Resources (25 participants), Vietnam Nature Museum (1 participant), Cuc Phuong National Park (1 participant), National Institute of Medicinal Materials (1 participant), Hanoi University of Science (2 participants), Ho Chi Minh City University of Natural Sciences (3 participants), Ho Chi Minh City Biotechnology Center (1 participant), Institute of Tropical Biology (2 participants), Vietnam Creatures (1 participant), and a local NGO, the Center for Plant Conservation (3 participants). The total number of Vietnamese participants was forty, of which twenty junior scientists and students were supported by the CEPF grant. The Missouri Botanical Garden and the Komarov Botanical Institute were represented by one and two participants, respectively.

Conservation Impacts

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

The first International Symposium on the Flora of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 8-11 December 2008. This was the first symposium wherein more than 160 delegates representing 17 countries discussed international cooperation in the study and conservation of plants in the Indochina region. The symposium covered a wide range of subjects such as plant taxonomy, plant geography, ethnobotany, GIS and informatics, conservation and national parks. This important event therefore provided an excellent forum where botanists and conservation biologists from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia discussed their research, shared their knowledge, and exchanged ideas with each other as well as with experts from other countries.

The project aimed to increase Vietnamese representation in the symposium. Many scientists and students from Vietnam could not afford the cost of attending this professional meeting. The project provided financial

support for botanists, students, and research support staff from Vietnamese institutions to attend the symposium. Thus the project helped build a strong network of academics, researchers, conservation professionals, and institutions working together to generate scientific knowledge and primary baseline data for sound decision-making on the conservation of threatened plant diversity in Indochina. The CEPF has identified a major need for investigation of the status and distribution of globally threatened plant species in Indochina.

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

Through the contributed paper and poster presentations, the symposium participants learned and shared information and experiences that would further strengthen plant conservation initiatives in the Indochina region. Examples of CEPF priority species that were discussed in the Symposium include cycads, conifers, magnolias, orchids, begonias, palms, aroids, and gingers. During the coffee breaks and lunches, they have had the opportunity to enhance their professional network by meeting colleagues and forming new alliances with both regional and international scientists and conservationists.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: not applicable

Species Conserved: not applicable

Corridors Created: not applicable

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

The project was successful in increasing the representation of participants from Vietnam, particularly from Hanoi where several junior researchers and graduate students are actively involved in writing the Flora of Vietnam. For historical and political reasons, the botanical community in Hanoi has worked in isolation from neighboring countries and from France where plant specimens collected during colonial times are deposited. The project opened the avenue for international and transboundary cooperation – essential for conservation of plants whose distribution ranges often cross political boundaries.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

A positive impact of the enthusiasm manifested by the Vietnamese participants was the selection of Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, as the venue of second symposium in the year 2010.

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)

Timing was a major factor that affected the project design process. The project proposal was submitted to CEPF several months after the deadline for Symposium session topics and abstracts of paper and poster presentations had passed. The CEPF Indochina Regional Implementation Team started requesting and accepting proposals in late August 2008. The time between the notice of grant award in November 2008 and the Symposium held in December 2008 did not provide a window of opportunity for some outstanding participants to prepare paper and poster presentations. Nevertheless, eight papers and eight posters were

presented by those who registered before the symposium deadline.

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

By combining air transportation from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City and land transportation from Ho Chi Minh City to Phnom Penh and by sharing lodging and transportation, it was possible to stretch the total project funds to cover 40 Vietnamese and 3 non-Vietnamese symposium participants.

There were three registered participants from the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR) who cancelled their travel plans at the last minute because of personal reasons. One of these participants was designated in the project proposal to receive CEPF funding. With approval of IEBR officials, the void was filled by one junior botanist who received CEPF funding and five staff members who received counterpart funding. The substitution of a person receiving the CEPF funding by another junior botanist had no significant impact on the project. The addition of five staff members provided valuable travel and logistic support to the project.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

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.

***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 Symposium committee welcomed the invitation of the Vietnamese delegation to hold the next meeting in Hanoi in 2010. The next meeting will be a great opportunity for CEPF grantees in Indochina (who will have had one year of CEPF project implementation by 2010) to exchange scientific information as well as share experiences and lessons learned in the conservation of threatened plant diversity in the region. Providing continuity and holding the Symposium on a regular basis will sustain and strengthen the budding network of plant scientists and conservationists in the region.

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.

The project did not involve activities that have adverse impacts on the environment and on the local community.

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, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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