

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Biodiversity Inventory for Nature Conservation (BINCO) vzw
Project Title:	Filling the gap: biodiversity surveys to increase long-term forest sustainability
Date of Report:	31 October 2016
Report Author and Contact Information	Dr. Matthias De Beenhouwer m.debeenhouwer[at]gmail[dot]com

CEPF Region: Eastern Afromontane Region

Strategic Direction: 1. Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co- benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development in priority corridors

1.1.1 – 1.1.5

Grant Amount: 19,813

Project Dates: 1 July 2015 – 30 September 2016

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

MELCA- Ethiopia: assistance in organizing meetings and trainings, organized local permission and provided contacts and logistics. Important advisory role.

Mettu University: research assistance in terms of one lecturer from Mettu University, especially as translator during the training part of the expedition.

Jimma University: M.Sc. student on ecotourism plus logistic support.

Conservation Impacts

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

The Sheka KBA represents one of the highest geographical priorities for biodiversity investments in the Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspot. Our project, gathering information on the distribution of amphibians, mammals and birds, including 17 globally threatened (sub)species and many endemic (sub)species of amphibians, mammals and birds (IUCN, 2016), will provide a baseline study for future monitoring and surveying events. In addition, different core zones within the reserve were studied, compared and evaluated.

These core zones can be seen as clusters of KBAs, within a fragmented anthropogenic landscape, and they could provide a geographical focus for investment. They also present opportunities for research into biodiversity, ecosystem service provisioning and

ecosystem resilience. Lastly, they can be used by local people for NTFPs, improving the economic sustainability of this KBA.

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

Expected: At the end of the project, BINCO will have made a biodiversity inventory. BINCO will deliver checklists of Birds, Mammals and Amphibians. Also, BINCO will advise and propose certain hotspots within the Biosphere reserve which can be further monitored or receive increased protection.

→ BINCO has delivered checklists of Birds, Mammals and Amphibians, observed and monitored in Sheka. BINCO has documented and identified up to now 246 bird species, 25 mammal species and 21 amphibian species within the boundaries of the reserve. Also, BINCO has evaluated and advised on the current core zones, which should receive increased protection and can function fully as natural habitats. BINCO has made recommendations on management practices and what areas should receive a higher level of protection.

For more information, we would like to refer to the freely available [BES 5 report](#).

For raw species data, we would like to refer to the freely available [datasets](#).

Expected: At the end of the project, BINCO will have delivered 5 trainees, capable of monitoring and identifying birds, mammals and amphibians. These persons will also be able to show tourists around in the Biosphere reserve.

→ The training of five trainees from Masha and Anderacha woreda was started in beginning of February 2016 and lasted up to end of April 2016. The training started with a theoretical desk training of 15 days. This desk training mainly focused on biodiversity, biodiversity monitoring and species identification of mammals, birds and amphibians. Then, after 7 days of practical training in the field, focusing mainly on bird and amphibian sampling and identification, trainees were joining multiple day expeditions to different locations (core and buffer zones) and habitats (montane moorland, bamboo forest, wetland, riverine forest...) within the biosphere reserve. Training was successful with 4 out of 5 trainees passing the test in the end, and different interesting discoveries made by trainees themselves during fieldwork. Trainees helped to identify 246 bird species, 25 mammal species and at least 21 amphibian species. Trainees also assisted in and organized several workshops and meetings. Lastly, together with the trainees, an ecotourism concept was discussed and developed, resulting in a guide booklet. BINCO thus has delivered 4 trainees, capable of monitoring and identifying birds, mammals and amphibians.

Expected: At the end of the project, BINCO will have supported MELCA's research centre and constructed a protocol that can be used for researchers and tourists to visit the Biosphere reserve / research center.

→ BINCO has delivered 12 camera traps, 2 binoculars and 1 laptop to Jimma University (and not the MELCA - Sheka branch office, as originally planned). Research materials directly donated to MELCA - Sheka branch office include 3 guide books (reptiles and amphibians, birds, and mammals), sampling materials (gloves, eppendorf tubes, boxes, bags) and research materials (including 2 binoculars, caliper and pesola dynamos for weight measurement). Camera traps are currently being used by Jimma University in cooperation with Leuphana University (patricia.rodrigues@leuphana.de) in the Belete-Gera forest priority area, assessing the interaction between mammals and food security (agricultural land). In the near future, camera traps and binoculars are planned to be used for the identification of a new KBA in Illubabor zone, a CEPF funded project led by Mettu University.

BINCO has also developed, in cooperation with MELCA, a [guide booklet](#). This booklet focuses on ecotourism development in Sheka and the surrounding areas in West Ethiopia. The information has been disseminated towards locally active tour operators but is also freely available online for backpackers.

Expected: At the end of the project, BINCO will have delivered a final report and disseminate results together with MELCA

→ Final report delivered by October 31st. BES (Biodiversity Express Survey) report delivered by September 30th. Training report and guide booklet published by 31st of October. Two scientific papers, which we aim to submit to peer reviewed journals, are under construction and will be made publically available free of charge at Research gate and on our [BINCO website](#) once published.

Our results were disseminated to different school groups from Masha Woreda, in March 2016, reaching approximately 180 school students between 14 and 16 years old, and 7 teachers. Meetings were organized in September 2016 with the woreda offices and local kebele leaders of both Anderacha and Masha woreda. Finally, one meeting was organized in Addis Ababa by MELCA involving stakeholders from different NGO's and government institutes. Results were disseminated to the woreda offices and to the offices of agriculture and the office of tourism in Sheka. Research results were shared with 21 different research institutes across 9 different countries. Twenty nine tour operators (travel agencies), based in Ethiopia, have been contacted regarding ecotourism in the region and have received tourism information, including the guide booklet.

Expected long term sustainability: To contribute to the long-term conservation of the Sheka Forest KBA in Ethiopia.

→ Information about the biodiversity of Sheka is surprisingly limited and restricted to forest plant surveys and structured interviews regarding large mammal diversity. BINCO believes that biodiversity knowledge, through increased surveying and monitoring, and through the collection and dissemination of primary data, can contribute directly to the protection of selected areas and individual species. Indeed, and thanks to MELCA, this information is already disseminated to the Ministry of culture and tourism and Ministry of Environment, forest and climate change, and representatives of the different institutes have attended a workshop on this project.

BINCO also wants to continue supporting ecotourism development in Sheka and will work out a BINCO-local concept on their website where small-scale ecotourism is central. As such, tourists can come into contact with the projects BINCO is doing and the output it is creating. Ecotourism is often seen as a crucial step towards long term sustainability of natural resources.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: N.A.

Species Conserved: N.A.

Corridors Created: N.A.

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

The project had clearly defined and realistic short-term objectives. Achieving the short-term objectives within the proposed timeframe was therefore relatively straightforward, controllable and successful. The team worked well together, and except for some smaller hick-ups related to the fact that this was the very first collaboration between BINCO and MELCA, and the first project of BINCO in Sheka, the output it has created was great.

The long-term objective, on the other hand, is hard to measure, will require some luck and future funding, and depends on a great deal of external factors upon which we have no or limited control.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

MELCA is working very closely together with communities, universities and policy institutes, maintaining good relationships with all stakeholders. The impact of MELCA was significant and has facilitated our work in an unexpectedly positive manner. There was also a positive impact of the trainees on the results of the biodiversity surveys, with different interesting discoveries made by trainees during fieldwork. Trainee – trainer relationships was sometimes inversed making the training aspect of the project into a mutual learning event.

Due to the nature of the project, there was a significant gender bias. Although no prior arrangements were made as such, it remains unfortunate and we've tried to rectify this. Unfortunately, no female participants were found, mainly related to present role models in the area. In the future, however, more emphasis should be put in the project on avoiding this gender bias.

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)

During the project design process, we had good communication with Birdlife, which not only accelerated project design but also improved the result-oriented approach of the project. Project applicants have learnt from this project design.

Also, when designing the project, some factors were added related to contribution towards local development (e.g. guide association), which was an underestimation of the people and practices already in place. Thanks to the work of MELCA-Ethiopia and other institutes already performed in the region, these factors became unnecessary. More collaboration with local stakeholders in the project design phase could have avoided this, eventually redirecting the project in those aspects.

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

During the project implementation phase, the main lesson learned was the importance of a local partner with extensive network and information available. Due to the limited knowledge of the project applicant within the specific region of the project implementation, some aspects related to transportation, isolation, distance to the study areas and research permission (on a local level) were underestimated in the project in terms of time consumption.

If more information would have been available, this would have accelerated project implementation and thus would have been beneficial for project output. But then again, the information assembled would not have been as useful as it is now.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Training has become increasingly important as part of conservation projects in developing countries. Capacity building by visiting scientists can create a friendly

environment by helping the community to solve problems it identifies as important and spark the interest of local people for the whole of conservation biology. It is also an integral part of being a project leader to help the communities and the trainees to form national and international links.

We learned that we should better integrate a project beforehand into the needs of local communities and NGOs (if present). Also, we now better understand the need to connect our trainees to the broader public, both at scientific level (e.g. as field assistants for university projects) and at ecotourism level (e.g. as guides for tourists) to assure long-term sustainability beyond the scope of this project.

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
Idea Wild	A	990 \$	Research materials
KNBV	B	750 €	Stipendium bottelier

**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 long term sustainability of this project was based on two outcomes:

Educational outcome: The training of five local people on how to survey and monitor forest biodiversity and how to act as ecotourism guides is finished and four out of five trainees successfully completed the theoretical and practical training.

Furthermore the benefits of biodiversity knowledge, both from an economic and scientific perspective, need to be emphasized upon and further developed. In conjunction with the Biology department of Jimma University, BINCO has helped to set up a biodiversity research center at the MELCA – Sheka branch office in Masha. Both institutes can work together, and the materials and knowledge present can be used as a base for future research activities and projects.

Practical outcome: In cooperation with the Tourist office in Masha, a sustainable ecotourism programs has been developed and the trainees can be used for both research projects and as tourist guides. This ecotourism and research component has been promoted through different channels (guide booklet and tour companies). BINCO also wants to continue supporting ecotourism development in Sheka and will work out a BINCO-local concept on their website where small-scale ecotourism is central. As such, tourists can come into contact with the projects BINCO is doing and the output it is creating. Ecotourism is often seen as a crucial step towards long term sustainability of natural resources.

MELCA has used our results to strengthen the protection of the Sheka forest biosphere on national level (ngo and government) by increasing local participation of civil societies via meetings, education in the schools and strongly focuses on improving livelihoods via alternative incomes. MELCA has shared the gathered information and already disseminated it to the Minister of culture and tourism and Minster of Environment, forest and climate change.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Project equipment is now already being used for a different project in another KBA in the Southwest of Ethiopia: the Belete-Gera forest. Moreover, a similar project, run by Mettu University has been approved and is being implemented in Illubabor zone. That project builds further upon this project and shows the sustainability of the project, both from a logistic point of view (e.g. camera traps) and from a knowledge point of view (e.g. training).

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

Our project triggered the 'Indigenous people safeguard policy'. Thanks to the support and collaboration with MELCA-Ethiopia, the indigenous people were continuously involved in the project. Prior to project implementation, they were consulted (kebele leaders) and asked permission whenever the forest of the local kebele was researched. After the project was finished, all kebele leaders were informed during a meeting on the outcomes of the project. If the project output results in an increased forest protection, the indigenous people will benefit from this as they will be protected from outside investors (coffee/tea).

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Project outputs in terms of reports, blogs and publications will be updated on the [BINCO website](#). There is a (promotional) movie being developed which will also be launched through our website.

For more information on biodiversity surveys we would like to refer to the freely available [BES 5 report](#).

For raw species data, we would like to refer to the freely available [datasets](#).

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:

Name: Dr. Matthias De Beenhouwer

Organization name: Biodiversity Inventory for Conservation (BINCO) vzw

Mailing address: Walmersumstraat 44, 3380 Glabbeek, Belgium

Website: www.binco.eu

Tel: +32485304360 or +32489436537

Fax: N.A.

E-mail: [mdebeenhouwer \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:mdebeenhouwer@gmail.com) or [info \[at\] binco \[dot\] eu](mailto:info@binco.eu)

*****please complete the tables on the following pages*****

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved for project from inception of CEPF support to date	Describe the principal results achieved during project period (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	55,255 hectares	Six out of seven core zones within the Sheka biosphere reserve were visited (one was considered unsafe at the time of sampling). Evaluation and management recommendations are elaborated upon in a specific "BES 5 report" (see Annex 1).
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	No		
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	55,255 hectares	Our project, gathering information on the distribution of 21 amphibian, 25 mammal and 246 bird species, including 17 globally threatened (sub)species and many endemic (sub)species of amphibians, mammals and birds (IUCN, 2016), will provide a baseline study for future monitoring and surveying events.
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.

