

CEPF Small Grant Final Project Completion Report

Complete the following report worksheet to provide CEPF with an overall summary of the results of your project. Within the narrative section, responses should be concise, but include sufficient detail to present a clear understanding of the development and progression of this project.

Date of Report (MM/DD/YY)
07/15/04

Organization Information

Organization Name
Philippine Eagle Conservation Program Foundation, Inc.

Project Title
Development of Biodiversity Monitoring Project for the Eastern Mindanao Corridor

Project Dates (as stated in the contract agreement)
April, 2003 to March, 2004

Partners
University of the Philippines in Mindanao Northern Mindanao State Institute of Science and Technology

Project Description – Provide a brief description of the project your team implemented.
<p>In April 2003, we implemented a project whose objectives included the establishment of a consortium between UP in Mindanao, NORMISIST and us, the Philippine Eagle Foundation, for the development of a project proposal on biodiversity conservation within the Eastern Mindanao Corridor (EMC). A technical working group composed of experts from the member institutions crafted a project proposal for biodiversity profiling and archiving. We were done with formalizing the partnership through MOU's (Memorandum of Understanding) and a final project proposal was already submitted to CEPF for review in October of the same year. In anticipation of a possible approval, we requested a "no cost extension" for the project that was approved and implemented in January. The goal of this extension was to meet and consult with major stakeholders represented by the regional offices of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, Protected Area authorities and the Local Government Units of EMC to get their thoughts on the project and ultimately get endorsements.</p>

Narrative Questions

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

The project has two objectives:

1. Establish and institutionalize a partnership between PEF, UP Min and NORMISIST for the development of a full project proposal on biodiversity profiling and assessment within the Eastern Mindanao Corridor.
2. The second objective is to develop a full project proposal in the form of a project log frame and budgetary requirements, which will be reviewed for funding by CEPF.

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

One objective was added as a consequence of the approval of the “no cost extension” request:

1. Consult with major stakeholders to get their consent and endorsements.

We felt it was important to get endorsements because of several reasons. The National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act, the law which governs declaration of natural areas as protected areas, recognizes DENR as the official proponents. Because the ultimate goal is to delineate and declare areas within EMC declared as protected sites, involvement of the regional and local offices of the DENR (i.e. regions 13 and 11) is critical. Aside from having the mandate, they can also share material and human resources. The regional DENR is also implementing projects that are supposed to contribute to the preservation of the forests. Convincing them and having them adopt the corridor approach to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development ensures that their work conforms to the corridor framework.

Local government units are equally important not only because they can provide local legislative backing, which provides the benefit of ensuring community acceptance making fieldwork and other conservation work easier to implement, but also since they have on-going initiatives consistent with what the project wants to achieve. Such initiatives include proclamation of critical watersheds, rehabilitation of sanctuaries through community-based reforestation projects, and delivery of basic social services. We wanted to involve the “big players” at the very start as they have the legal, political and social influence to ensure project success.

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

We have met the two objectives satisfactorily. The consortium worked and the proposal that underwent several revisions and improvement was submitted to CEPF.

The consultation meetings with DENR, LGU's and local environment boards also served its purpose. All except one group has favorably given their endorsement letters and expressed support and commitment:

1. February 2, 2004: DENR Region XII, Regional Executive Director (RED), Regional Technical Director (RTD), Protected Areas and Wildlife Division (PAWD) Chief
2. February 5, 2004: Compostela Valley Province, Provincial Administrator and the Province Environment and Natural Resources Officer.
3. February 12, 2004: Mati Pujada Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape, Protected Areas and Management Board.
4. February 27, 2004: Province of Agusan del Norte, Provincial Planning and Development Officer. ENRO. Province Environment and Natural Resources Officer.
5. Mar 2, 2004: Province of Surigao del Sur, Governor
6. Mar 3, 2004: Province of Surigao del Norte, Provincial Administrator
7. Mar 4, 2004: DENR Region XIII, Regional Executive Director (RED), Regional Technical Director (RTD), Protected Areas and Wildlife Division (PAWD) Chief, Butuan City Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO)
8. Mar 18, 2004: Surigao del Sur, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

In this section, I will specifically refer to our experience with DENR Region XIII authorities, which is the only office that did not give a formal endorsement. Their reason was they needed to study the proposal further. Few weeks after the meeting with them, they sent us a letter about some of the queries they have on the project. We responded to each question and in addition, outlined the project steps. We also highlighted their role and how important it is in the project implementation. They eventually expressed support, but until now we are still waiting for a formal endorsement. But nevertheless, we were glad that they expressed interest on the project details as this provided us the means to elaborate and hopefully that resulted in a better understanding of the project's intent. Apparently, there is still a need for another round of meetings to clarify points that may have remained unclear to them. We intend to do this as an integral part of the project start up in case it gets approved. But we considered this more as a challenge rather than disappointment or failure.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

As our experiences with a few projects have indicated, proposal development done in such a manner that different persons with different experiences and expertise get to sit down, discuss and share their ideas results in a project design that is practical and doable.

Consultations or meetings with other project collaborators also provide many benefits. It can at times be tedious, demands good negotiating skills and requires a great deal of patience, but it's worth it.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

After submitting the proposal, the next step is to await the approval of the proposed project to establish two GIS laboratories serving the needs of the Northern and Southern region of the EMC, respectively, and delineate priority protected areas based on results of a corridor-wide biodiversity assessment. We will start work in the field as soon as possible once it gets approved.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

The small grant has provided the driving force to institutionalize civil-society led conservation within the EMC. Participated in by researchers from UP in Mindanao and NORMISIST, two leading academic institutions located strategically at the south and north region of the EMC, respectively, and PEF biologists and staff who have long years of experience with biodiversity conservation, the civil society is assured that the project is practically science-based. This is an important aspect that is often lacking in isolated, stand alone projects of many local NGOs. The series of consultations also ensured that the key authorities understand the project, already have an idea of what is expected of them, and how it would affect/benefit them. Remarkably, those that have been consulted welcomed the idea. In addition, the mere gesture of having valued their thoughts and consent can mean much to them benefiting the project in the long run. For one, it can significantly reduce animosities from stakeholders who would have otherwise felt left out and thus, become uncooperative if they were not consulted beforehand. This may sound silly but in the Philippines, experience indicated that some projects suffer delays as major players refused to cooperate because they felt they were bypassed. With the consultation that has been done, we won't worry about this problem.

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