

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Conservation International – Philippines

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): *Creating a New Protected Area for the Mantalingahan Range Forests of Palawan*

Implementation Partners for this Project: South Palawan Planning Council; Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff; Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Provincial Government of Palawan

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): March 1, 2004-June 30, 2007

Date of Report (month/year): September 2007

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

Conservation International Philippines (CIP) in partnership with major stakeholders in Palawan is working to conserve viable populations of the threatened and endemic species of Palawan, particularly in Mt. Mantalingahan in the southern part of the province. Our goal is to support the establishment and effective management of Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape. The Mantalingahan Range Forest is one of eleven Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Palawan and is one of the 10 Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites in the Philippines.

This project was designed to establish the Mt. Matalingahan range as a protected area through a co-financing arrangement of CEPF and the Global Conservation Fund (GCF). The GCF provided funding for the protected area gazettal process while CEPF provided funding for capacity-building on protected area planning and management.

With the support from CEPF and GCF, CI initiated the process of obtaining the documentary requirements required under existing relevant laws to finally establish the area as protected area through an approval of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), and ultimately through a Presidential Proclamation. With the commitments and active involvement of our key partners, we have achieved significant progress towards having Mt. Mantalingahan proclaimed as protected area. For the short-term goal, the PCSD approval has been obtained. On the other hand, we have currently completed eight of the thirteen required steps under Philippine law for the formal proclamation of a protected area. The Presidential proclamation is the eleventh step.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: *The strategy of CI-P and the SPPC is to pursue area-protected outcomes on two legal tracks and on two timelines. In the short term, we will pursue legal protection of core zones within the SPPA under Republic Act No. 7611, the Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) law, which is legislation unique to Palawan. Core Zones, as defined under Republic Act 7611 (Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan) are strictly protected areas free of human disruption. Included are primary forest, areas above 1000 meters elevation, peaks of mountains or other areas with very steep gradients, and endangered habitats and habitats of endangered and rare species. Exceptions, however, may be granted to traditional uses of tribal communities of these areas for minimal and soft impact gathering of forest species for ceremonial and medicinal purposes. Because of the lack of biodiversity data in southern Palawan, the current ECAN zones are based principally on topography and vegetation, rather than the distribution and habitat requirements of threatened species. In fact, many of the lowland forest patches in the SPPA are currently zoned as multiple use areas because of the weight given to altitude and slope in establishing the preliminary ECAN zones. This project could amend this significant flaw in the ECAN zoning system. We will support provincial and local governments to revise ECAN maps to change the status of critical habitats that are currently zoned in a non-core status to core status. Protection for threatened species within core zones will be enhanced through municipal government ordinances and provincial government executive orders under Republic Act 7160, the Local Government Code of 1991, and PCSD recognition under the newly enacted Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. Our longer-term goal is legal recognition of the 800,000 hectares of the SPPA as a Protected Landscape and Seascape (IUCN Category V) under Republic Act 7586, the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) Act of 1992. We believe that we can also achieve a Presidential Proclamation of the entire SPPA as a Category V Protected Area by project conclusion. This step is critical in order to provide a long-term legal framework for landscape scale management that is embedded within the larger Palawan conservation corridor. We recognize that not having sufficient biodiversity data to define the optimal size, shape, and boundaries of core zones in the SPPA. has been problematic for GCF in evaluating this project. While the IBA status of Mt. Mantalingahan and the surrounding lowland forests undoubtedly makes Mt. Mantalingahan a global conservation priority, strict protection of the entire IBA is impossible because of human settlement and activity. Our efforts in this 6-month interim period have strived to improve the definition of this Key Biodiversity Area, recognizing the fact there is some degree of fragmentation, overlapping management regimes, and incomplete knowledge of the distribution of biodiversity and of the ecological and space requirements of key species. We believe that within the two years covered by this project CI and SPPC can establish and support the effective management of the core zones that include a large tract of forest within Mt. Mantalingahan and small patches of the remaining mangrove areas. These core zones contain a high percentage of threatened and restricted-range species.*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	

<p><i>New core zones that include a large tract of forest within Mt. Mantalingahan and small patches of the remaining mangrove areas. These core zones will contain a high percentage of threatened and restricted-range species.</i></p>	<p>The Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN) maps prepared by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) in 1998, 2001 and 2003 were reviewed and validated on the ground.</p> <p>As a result of the review of the existing ECAN zones and the other criteria for zoning defined in the law, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) adopted a revised ECAN zoning guidelines in April 2005. PCSD is the organization mandated to implement ECAN zoning in the province. The new guidelines have strong consideration on the inclusion of habitats of threatened species within core zones. A revised version of ECAN for all 5 municipalities encompassing Mt. Mantalingahan and the other municipalities in the entire province was generated. This revised version was likewise validated with the communities and local government units.</p> <p>All 5 municipalities encompassing Mt. Mantalingahan have adopted their respective ECAN zones through municipal resolutions. Core zones of each municipality constitute some 30-40% of the total land area of the municipality.</p> <p>The approved Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN) zones which was adopted by the barangay, municipal and PCSD in 2006 was used as one of the references for determining the boundaries of the proposed Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Area. Series of consultations and field validations were made within the affected barangays and the five municipalities before finally generating the final protected area boundary. The proposed PA map has been approved by the concerned DENR offices (Community Environment and Natural Resource Office-CENRO and Provincial Environment and Natural Resource Office-PENRO). Some 92,540 hectares out of the 120,457- hectare proposed protected landscape are classified as core zone.</p> <p>The various stakeholders participated during the consultations and workshops for developing the Initial Protected Area Plan which includes the formulation of management strategies for the various zones (i.e. core, restricted-use, controlled use, traditional use and multiple use zones).</p>
<p><i>A Presidential Proclamation of the entire SPPA as a Category V Protected Area by project conclusion.</i></p>	<p>The local government units (LGUs) covering the five municipalities, the DENR-CENRO and PENRO Office and the PCSDS agreed on the final boundary of the proposed PA in accordance with ECAN zoning guidelines and land classification policies. The agreed boundary for the proposed Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Landscape was delineated in collaboration with DENR-CENRO and PENRO. The total land area covered is 120,457 hectares, with the municipality of Rizal having the</p>

	<p>largest share in terms of land area, i.e. 59,407 hectares. The map has been finalized with a completed technical description signed by the local DENR office and endorsed for the PENRO's signature.</p> <p>The 36 barangays where consultations were conducted by two (2) teams composed of representatives from CI, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Protected Areas and Wildlife Services (PAWS), DENR-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office(CENRO), South Palawan Planning Council, municipal and barangay local government units, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples(NCIP), and panglimas (tribal chieftain) overwhelmingly endorsed the proposed protected area. These tribal and barangay endorsements were forwarded to the municipal-level where it was further deliberated and endorsed to the provincial level. Similar endorsements at the Provincial level was obtained.</p> <p>The protected area suitability assessment report for Mt. Mantalingahan have been completed and submitted to the Regional Office of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources which was likewise forwarded to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to be taken up at the Regional Development Council meeting for endorsement to the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB). This is the 9th step in the protected area registration process in the Philippines.</p>
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Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

With the commitments and active involvement of our key partners, we have achieved significant progress towards having Mt. Mantalingahan proclaimed as a protected area. The project's short-term goal (i.e. pursue legal protection of Mt. Mantalingahan range within the SPPA through municipal government ordinances and provincial government executive orders under Republic Act 7160, the Local Government Code of 1991, and PCSD recognition under the newly enacted Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.) has been achieved.

The major highlights of accomplishments (including those activities supported by the Global Conservation Fund) are:

- a) the endorsements of all the 36 Barangay Councils; all 5 Municipal Development Councils; the Provincial Development Council and Legislative Board of Palawan for the protected area proclamation of Mt. Mantalingahan;
- b) the completion of the Protected Area Suitability Assessment, Resource Basic Inventory, survey and registration of protected area occupants and Initial Protected Area Plan through the assistance of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The consultations conducted at the barangay level to include the indigenous communities (in 36 barangays) were very exhaustive. The multi-sectoral team made sure that majority of the local communities including the indigenous peoples in the uplands were properly informed and fully understand the benefits of establishing a protected area. For major undertakings such as creation of protected area, time should really be spent for a consultative and participatory process from the very beginning in order to avoid further delays in the process. The composition of a

multisectoral team conducting the consultations provides a broader perspective and a clearer response to issues raised by the stakeholders. It is important that all key partners have the same level of understanding and appreciation of the processes taking place as well as the policy framework behind the tasks at hand.

We are currently on the ninth out of the thirteen required steps under Philippine law for the formal proclamation of a protected area. The Presidential approval is the eleventh step, and with the current progress, we're likely to have it by December 2007 or first half of 2008. Some delays were brought about by factors beyond CI's control. Nevertheless, the momentum of all concerned agencies remains active. GCF has recently extended the grant to support further work in Mt. Mantalingahan.

The regional and national level reviews have not been met due to irregularities in convening the members of the review committee brought about by the post-2007 national election period. Despite the delay in meetings, the key technical staff who are actually doing the technical reviews have been given advance copies of the protected area suitability assessment reports and the pertinent attachments as required by law in order to catalyze formal approval process.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The harmonization of the various relevant laws (SEP law, NIPAS law, Local Government Code, Indigenous Peoples Rights Act) in Palawan was a constraint in the past and has remained a challenge over the years because of political turfing. This proposed protected area now serves as a convergence of more collaborative works among agencies and institutions in achieving conservation outcomes in Palawan.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: Project Design Refinement with Partners	The participation of the South Palawan Planning Council's technical committee members in the preparation of implementation workplan makes them aware of the important deliverables, hence they continuously provide counterpart support in key activities.
<i>Validation of a six-month work plan by the SPPC Technical Working Group and the Palawan Tropical Forestry Protection Programme completed within 1 mo of project implementation</i>	The SPPC-technical committee directly participated in conducting consultations on the municipalities to pave way for the completion of the 6-month workplan.
<i>Establishment by CI of a project coordinating office within the SPPIC in Sofronio Espanola municipality within 2 mos of project implementation</i>	A coordinating office for the continuation of the project was established in the South Palawan Planning, Information and Management Center (SPPIMC) in the municipality of Sofronio Espanola. The office was manned by a full-time local coordinator and a local staff engaged by the South Palawan Planning Council to work as counterpart to CI's area coordinator.
Output 2: Continue Capacity Building Activities for South Palawan Planning Council	Initially, the focus of the capacity building was on the use and application of GIS only, however, the subsequent grant (described in Output 4)

	considered a more integrated approach on capacity-building program for the local players in Mt. Mantalingahan.
<i>Assessment of GIS planning capacity for the 5 municipalities of SPPC completed by month 3</i>	An assessment of the ECAN Boards of the five municipalities within Mt. Mantalingahan was completed. The potential capacity building areas that will increase local capacity to put in place the zoning mechanisms essential to the creation of a protected area were identified.
<i>Training on GIS conducted by month 6</i>	A core group of ten permanent staff members from the five municipalities were trained in basic GIS application in April 2004, in collaboration with the Palawan Tropical Forestry Protection Programme.
Output 3: Continue biodiversity survey efforts to prioritize sites within the SPPA (focusing on non-core / non-restricted use forested areas)	The completion of the surveys has allowed CI and its partners to refine the proposed zoning in 2001 and 2003. Potential areas for inclusion/delineation as core zones were identified, including areas previously classified by PCSDS as non-core or restricted- use areas.
<i>Biodiversity survey of identified new sites completed with survey results leading to final identification of small reserves within municipalities by month 6</i>	Six sites in the peripheral lowland forests were surveyed. An additional survey on higher elevation resulted to new species records and have strengthened our proposal to protect Mt. Mantalingahan forests. The presence of the AZE trigger species for Mt. Mantalingahan, <i>Palawanomys furvus</i> , was confirmed.
Output 4: The Institutional Capacity For Conservation Planning and Protected Area Management within the South Palawan Planning Area Is Strengthened	<p>The assessment of key players (institutions, organizations, environmental bodies, individuals) of Mt. Mantalingahan was completed. The assessment was conducted to generate information on existing and potential conflicts in the area particularly on the management of the proposed protected area, planning, management and development capacities of the various stakeholders, current institutional arrangements, etc. to develop a capacity building program for the managers of and key players in the proposed protected area. The assessment was made through review of existing documents, focus group discussion and interviews.</p> <p>The capacity building program covers technical, scientific, management and development skills and sociological principles and skills for protected area management to provide the competence of the various stakeholders to effectively manage and process information, initiate planning and monitoring.</p>
<i>At least one protected area management orientation / training held for SPPA staff in Year 1.</i>	A training program focusing on the basic concepts of protected area management was developed. Local protected area superintendents and senior staff of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau were identified as resource persons.

	<p>Training and orientation for the South Palawan Planning Council (SPPC) and the technical committee members on NIPAS (National Integrated Protected Areas System) law and its application to Mt. Mantalingahan was conducted.</p> <p>A one-page fact sheet on protected area concepts and management was prepared. The fact sheet describes the different categories of protected areas, illustrates examples of protected areas within the province/country under each category, and defines the role of the different stakeholders in protected area management. The primary target audience for the material are the local government unit staff. A Filipino version of the fact sheet was also prepared for distribution to barangay-level officials and other community members.</p> <p>A 2-day session on conflict management particularly on policies was completed. Actual scenario were discussed. The learning modules paved the way towards threshing out varying interpretations of institutional and policy concerns on protected area management in Palawan. The issue on indigenous peoples rights also emerged.</p>
<p><i>At least one local government official from each municipality participates in an organized learning exchange with another PA in the Philippines in Year 1.</i></p>	<p>Possible protected areas within and outside the province were explored and assessed in view of the learning exchange for the technical working group of the South Palawan Planning Council. The Penablanca Protected Landscape and Seascape and Northeastern Cagayan Protected Landscape and Seascape were identified as possible learning areas.</p> <p>Fifteen members of the SPPC and its technical committee visited Penablanca Protected Landscape and Seascape in the Sierra Madre Biodiversity Corridor.</p> <p>The visit included interaction with the Protected Area Management Board who shared their experiences in managing Penablanca.</p> <p>The post-visit assessment showed that the participants' enthusiasm to pursue protected area status for Mt. Mantalingahan has become stronger. The cross visit generated understanding among the participants on the different dynamics on protected area establishment and management. These learnings provided helpful insights in pursuing the establishment of Mt. Mantalingahan as protected area.</p> <p>In addition, the technical committee members of the South Palawan Planning Council also visited the Malampaya Protected Landscape & Seascape and in El Nido-Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area in northern Palawan. The lessons, particularly on harmonizing the provisions of the National Integrated Protected Areas System and the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan have</p>

	<p>been very useful for application in Mt. Mantalingahan.</p>
<p><i>At least 3 of the 5 municipal land-use plans within the SPPA updated using the revised ECAN zoning as framework by Year 2.</i></p>	<p>All existing 5 municipal land-use plans of the five municipalities encompassing Mt. Mantalingahan were compiled and digitized.</p> <p>A land-use specialist was engaged to conduct a land-use suitability assessment and come up with recommendations for appropriate land-uses in the various zones within the proposed Mt. Mantalinaghan Protected Landscape.</p> <p>The spatial analyses of the land-use systems in order to balance the demands of development with the protection of biodiversity-rich habitats and maintenance of the environmental services provided by the forest ecosystem in Mt. Mantalingahan and surrounding landscape focused on the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimation of the minimum requirements (i.e., minimum forest cover) to sustain ecosystem functions and services including streamflow, soil conservation (minimizing erosion), biodiversity conservation; • Assessment/ estimation of the indicative carrying capacity to establish limits on the utilization of lands for various non-conforming uses will be considered from the remaining area after the minimum forest cover required to ensure sustainability of resources and ecosystems had been determined and set aside as non-negotiable uses; • Identification of strategies and measures to achieve a right mix of land uses where economic development goals and conservation objectives are satisfactorily met (e.g., policy measures, institutional reforms/development, capacity building, IEC, and monitoring). Sustainability of a particular land use combination is assessed in terms of social acceptability, contribution to economic development, and contribution in the stabilization or destabilization of natural resources and ecosystems. <p>The review of the individual land-use plans highlighted inconsistencies and land-use incompatibilities across the boundaries of the 5 municipalities. The local government units, including the Provincial Government, appreciated the recommendations of this exercise and are considering these recommendations in the current revision stage.</p>

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

The capacity-building program for the key players in Mt. Mantalingahan positively complemented the site-based activities in compliance with the requirements in the gazettal process. The increased awareness on protected area management concepts among the kay partners paved

the way for better collaboration in reaching out to the community level in order to obtain their support, as well. Another notable result of the collaborative efforts was the quicker than anticipated adoption of the revised ECAN zoning which served as a very relevant input in determining the size and scope of the protected area.

Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

None

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

The fringes of the Mantalingahan mountain range is mostly populated by indigenous peoples, specifically the Palaw'an tribes. Therefore, we have added a new partner for implementation of this project, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), sanctioned under the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act as the primary government agency responsible for policies, plans and programs to promote and protect the rights of the indigenous people and the recognition of their ancestral domains. We have included this agency in the project to ensure that we are adhering to all proper requirements with relation to the rights of indigenous peoples in this area. The involvement of a representative from the National Commission of Indigenous People in the multi-sectoral team who conducted the consultations accelerated the acceptance of the indigenous peoples, who are usually reluctant to support external proponents.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

Capacity-building and awareness-raising programs are extremely useful for projects where local government units and political leaders are the dominant stakeholders, them being your project partners and beneficiaries. Because political leaders tend to have different perspectives about protected areas and their benefits, projects such as this need to invest more on communications/awareness types of activities to ensure smooth implementation.

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

The collaborative efforts of the key players in securing the documentary requirements for the proposed PA proclamation so far shows the best evidence of collaboration happening in the area. The South Palawan Planning Council through its Technical Committee continuously plays a pivotal role in pursuing protected area status for Mt. Mantalingahan with technical and logistical support from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the non-government organizations. Their growing political will and support is becoming more apparent as they become more directly involved in the project and is seen in the forefront.

The SPPC, through its Chairman and technical committee, provided counterpart funds and technical support and coordination. The DENR provided leadership in conducting field activities to generate the documentary requirements, i.e. Protected Area Suitability Assessment, Survey and Registration of Protected Area Occupants, Resource Basic Inventory, etc. The PCSDS provided guidance in harmonizing the registration process with the SEP law; and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples through its provincial unit provided support during community consultations, particularly within the indigenous communities, to ensure the recognition, promotion and protection of the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

While CI lays the groundwork for securing the necessary requirements for PA status, it is worth noting that these activities are being collaboratively undertaken by the LGUs, SPPC, PCSDS, DENR and other NGOs.

A protected area suitability assessment team was organized by DENR, as the lead organization mandated to implement the 13 legal steps towards pursuing protected area status as described in the NIPAS law. The team was composed of representatives from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, the local government units, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and CI, as the NGO representative. The team conducted community consultations together. Scheduling of activities has not been a problem as all partners understand the urgency to protect the remaining good forests because of the anticipated expansion of mining activities in this area. All the respective concerns of each agency vis-a-vis our common objective of protecting Mt. Mantalingahan have been emphasized in discussions. An open forum has provided the chance for local communities to respond and clarify issues. To facilitate an open discussion, and to encourage indigenous peoples to speak up, a Palawan interpreter and facilitator was engaged. In this way, language barriers had been addressed.

Relevant stakeholders were given project updates both informally and formally. New issues were tackled during the regular meetings of the South Palawan Planning Council where other key organizations have representations, as well.

Constant interaction of various stakeholders to clarify issues and build common understanding generated collective efforts and support for the project.

To further enhance understanding by the local executives of the significance of a protected area to their governance and development initiatives, the 5 members of the South Palawan Planning Council and representatives from PCSD and indigenous community joined the southern Palawan mayors' exposure trip to Kudat Banggi and Mt. Kinabalu National Park in Sabah, Malaysia. The trip was initiated by the Office of Congressman Abraham Mitra of the Second District of Palawan. The learning trip was conceived for the local chief executives to learn and appreciate the establishment of a protected area, the collaborative management mechanisms established by various stakeholders, and the value of protected areas in ecotourism and other local development initiatives. This trip also enhanced politicians' awareness for a deeper appreciation of current efforts of biodiversity conservation in Southern Palawan which eventually provide economic benefits to their constituents. Interestingly, there was positive result noted from the reactions of the local executives as they cite their learning in making decisions, undertaking actions and re-affirming support to forward the establishment and management of Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Landscape to advance their development efforts.

VII. 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
GCF	A	\$ 20,000	granted in 2003
GCF	A	\$ 71,692	granted in 2004
GCF	A	\$265,078.76	granted in 2005-2007
SPPC	C	\$120,000	common fund contributed by each of the 5 municipalities from 2003-2007

***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** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

The Global Conservation Fund has allocated additional funding, effective September 2007 to support management plan formulation, and other relevant activities towards an effective management of the area.

With GCF support and input, CI will develop and launch sustainable financing mechanisms that will cover recurrent costs and management operations of the protected area. A study on sustainable financing options for the protected area will be initiated in the next six months, and one of these options will likely be a GCF-supported endowment fund. To meet the match requirements for such an endowment fund, and to meet the needs of local communities living in and around the protected area, CI will also develop a range of non-traditional tools which can provide financial support for protected area management while also providing environmentally-friendly income opportunities for local communities that will support conservation of the protected area. The management plan will address direct interventions within the protected area and its buffer zones.

The five municipalities comprising the Southern Palawan Planning Council (SPPC) continues to provide co-financing for project activities. The SPPC has increased their annual common fund contribution to \$60,000.

We are also negotiating with the Malampaya Foundation to provide counterpart funding of at least \$50,000 per year. Malampaya Foundation is now expanding its interventions to southern Palawan and is showing growing interest towards funding human well-being concerns for communities within and adjacent to the proposed protected area.

The Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF), through the Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI) will also provide counterpart funding amounting to \$200,000 for poverty-alleviation interventions beginning January 2008 for a period of 3 years. Four out of the five municipalities within Mt. Mantalingahan range, being among the top-five poorest municipalities in Palawan are the priority municipalities following the poverty scanning made by PEF and PNNI in 2006.

Other in-kind contributions are coming from the staff time of PCSDS, DENR, NCIP and the local government units. We are also working with partners to support a sustainable tourism development proposal to JBIC, which, if funded, would begin in 2008.

Finally, CI will also seek additional funding from other US-based and international donors to support the Mt. Mantalingahan program.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our accomplishments vis-à-vis the legal requirements under Section 3 of the National Integrated Protected Areas Act include the following:

Step 1. Compilation of Maps and Technical Description was completed with inputs from the various local stakeholders related to the land classification regulations and revised ECAN zoning. The total area covered by the proposed PA is 120,425 hectares encompassing the municipalities of Rizal, Quezon, Espaniola, Brooke's Point and Bataraza.

Step 2. Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA) was conducted by the PASA team using a standard key informant questionnaire prescribed by DENR. The PASA team was organized by the DENR with participation from PCSDS, LGU and CI.

Step 3. Posting of Public Notices for the proposed establishment of the Mt. Matalingahan range as protected area was completed. Postings were made in public places especially in the barangay and municipal halls and other strategic areas. Duly signed announcements were also published in local newspapers.

Step 4. Community Consultations were conducted by two (2) teams composed of CI, DENR-PAWS, DENR-CENRO, SPPC, municipal and barangay LGU, NCIP, and Panglima (Tribal Chieftain) in the upland communities covered by the proposed protected area as part of the massive consultations being conducted.

Step 5. The Survey and Registration of Protected Area Occupants (SRPAO) was completed. Approximately 3,000 households are impending protected area occupants, majority of which are indigenous Palaw'ans who are occupying the timberland areas in the municipalities of Brooke's Point and Bataraza.

Step 6. On Resource Profiling, the composite team headed by the DENR conducted the validation of the results of the 2003 and 2004 biodiversity surveys in the area and also conducted inventory of flora and fauna in additional sampling sites.

Step 7. The Initial Protected Area Plan (IPAP) was developed and deliberated by the various local councils that resulted to their positive endorsements. The Plan stipulates the key issues in the area, proposed PA management goal and objectives, site management strategies and a proposed 1-year implementation budget. This IPAP reflects the initial picture on how the area will be managed, however, this will be refined during the development of the comprehensive management and development plan which will take place after the approval of the presidential proclamation.

Step 8. Public Hearing in all 5 municipalities have been successfully carried out and properly documented as required by Law. The objective of this exercise was to inform the public within and adjacent to Mt. Mantalingahan and get their feedback on its proposed establishment as protected area. This was participated by all sectors, i.e., youth, private/business sector including mining groups, farmers and government employees. Results of the public hearings were very encouraging as the local government units affirmed their support through resolutions of support from the Municipal Legislative Bodies and pledged to continue their funding support for the sustained management and development of the protected area.

Step 9. The Completed Staff Work was submitted to the DENR-Regional Office as basis for the Regional Review process.

Other pending steps include the following:

Step 10. National review

Step 11. Presidential proclamation

Step 12. Congressional action

Step 13. Demarcation

A compilation of other pertinent documents including list of species, maps, minutes of barangay consultations, proceedings of public hearing in 5 municipalities and signed endorsements may be downloaded at http://www.conservation.org.ph/mantalingahan_ebook09.exe. This is an eBook which is currently being developed and expanded as reports/information/data become available, to document our work in Mt. Mantalingahan. This is also intended to be a reference for succeeding initiatives on protected area establishment in Palawan where the SEP, Local Government Code and IPRA Law are harmonized with NIPAS.

VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

Please include your full contact details below:

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