

Grantee Name: Wildlife Information Liaison Development (WILD) society

Grant Title: Enhancing biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods in the Anamalai Corridor

Summary: The proposed project involves improving the management of forest areas and forest-based livelihoods at Theni Forest Division and Palni Hills, two CEPF priority sites in the Anamalai Corridor of the Western Ghats Hotspot, India. It also involves continuing to promote the establishment of the proposed Theni Conservation Reserve as per the previously undertaken project supported by CPEF-ATREE “Establishing Community Conservation Reserves in the Anamalais”. Establishment of protected areas has usually resulted in overlap with lands occupied and utilized by Indigenous People. This document explains how the project supports Indigenous peoples and other non-indigenous communities and activities that could enhance local communities’ support from protected area management and forest-based livelihoods in the proposed region. We also list the provisions made for evaluating the potential impacts on the indigenous community in question and site-specific action plan for Theni and Kodaikanal.

Trigger: The project was found to trigger the following CEPF socio-economic safeguard - **Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10)** as most of the sites in the proposed project area is inhabited by an indigenous nomadic hunter-gatherer community - *Paliyar*. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paliyan>)

The project sites detailed in Table 1 consist of rich biodiversity outside the existing protected areas under the ownership of the Tamil Nadu Forest Department. The sites Kottagudi and Agamalai have been proposed as a part of the Theni Conservation Reserve. The notification and management of the Conservation Reserve will not lead the loss or restriction of access to resources that are legally available to the local communities. The community is currently entitled to land for livelihood sustenance, rearing livestock, availing ponies for transport, collection and use of non-timber forest products, education facilities and food rations and various other subsidies for food and livelihood security. Moreover the project aims to improve the forest-based livelihoods where they are in practise by the Paliyars

Paliyan Tribe:

An indigenous community (Paliyan) was identified during a prioritisation study that involved questionnaire surveys and a focus-group discussion with community members in July 2010 (Table 1) to understand their interest in reserve management, conservation issues, resource use, human-wildlife conflicts, presence of flagship species and the major livelihoods of the community. Paliyans are semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers scattered in the montane forests of the southern Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu (Dindigul, Coimbatore and Madurai District) Kerala (Idukki District). They dwelled in caves and rock crevices and subsisted on wild yam, honey and other forest produce for daily sustenance and health care. Since modernisation, numerous individuals have been alienated from their forests due to the creation of protected areas for nature conservation and encroachments by non-indigenous people. They currently subsist on income gained from selling forest produce, farming and as labourers.

Sl. No.	Project Site	Forest Division	Geographical Co-ordinates	Livelihood
1	Agamalai	Theni	N10.1328° E77.4534°	Labourer, NTFP collection
2	Arsaredi	Megamalai	N9.5301° E77.3748°	Labourer, NTFP collection
3	Paliangudi	Megamalai	N9.6236° E77.1923°	Farming, Labourer, NTFP collection
4	Kottagudi	Theni	N10.0852° E77.2487°	Labourer, NTFP collection
6	Chinnur	Kodaikanal	N10.1342°	Labourer,

			E77.4547°	NTFP collection
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The CEPF-ATREE supported “Establishing Community Conservation Reserves in the Anamalais” worked with the Paliyar community at three sites: Agamalai, Kurangani and Kumbhakarai. The communities expressed a positive interest in reserve management and the proposed Conservation Reserve (Report attached). They provided Support Letters towards the reserve’s setup which was sent to the State Government and the Forest Department. Notifying this Conservation Reserve will lead to potential positive impacts for the indigenous community in the form of: A platform to discuss current grievances including the need for roads, medical facilities and mitigating HWC; review and resolve decision making jointly with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department by being a part of the Reserve Management Committee (mandatory under Section 36B Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2002). This could thereby increase their food security, income and relationship with the forest department and instil a sense of ownership and rights. It would also lead to the improvement of overall facilities in the area and support livelihoods through the project initiatives.

The current project’s initiative of capacity building in forest-based livelihoods was the result of discussions in the previous project (see attached Report) and additional sites other than the previous project have been identified where the project activities will be undertaken. More sites at Kodaikanal will be decided after discussions with the DFO, Kodaikanal. The project initiatives will not have any negative impacts on the indigenous communities as it involves capacity building to improve livelihoods and establishing a Conservation Reserve where they would be involved in collaborative management with no restrictions on legally allowed resource usage that was in place previously. During the meetings and workshops undertaken with these communities, these issues will also be pursued for discussions. Moreover project information will also be displayed at project sites and contact details provided for the communities to contact us directly in case of any grievance.

Time-scale of Project Activities Integrating Indigenous Peoples Safeguards

Activities	Month
As per the project's activities, meetings and workshops will be conducted at these sites to understand the dependence on forest resources, market dynamics and build their capacity in resource collection and value addition.	Workshops: April-June 2013 & 2014; Meetings will be conducted throughout the project period
Management plans of the proposed Theni Conservation Reserve	April-June 2013
Project information will be made available to the community in the local language as per CEPF-ATREE Poster Format.	July 2013