

Process Framework for Involuntary Restriction on Access to Resources

1. **Date:** 1 April 2016
2. **Grant No.** 65994
3. **Grantee:** Movement for Ecological Learning and Community Action (MELCA) - Ethiopia
4. **Title:** Supporting Implementation of the Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve Management Plan
5. **Location:** Kafa-Yayu Corridor

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6. Project Background

Since the establishment of Sheka Forest biosphere reserve, much has been done in public awareness raising, establishing and strengthening the management structure and its governance system. In addition to these, Sheka forest management plan crafted, widely discussed, endorsed and finally becomes functional. As per the zonation of the forest biosphere reserve; out of 238,750 hectare of the zone 55,255 hectare (23.14%) is allocated for core zone and 76,395 hectare (32%) for Buffer zone and 107,100 (44.86%) for transition zone.

Based on the Biosphere regulation the core zone is considered as “No Go Zone” and it is purely protected for conservation of biodiversity. Even though the management plan is become functional, there is still a growing threat around Sheka forest biosphere reserve that focused on the conversion of forest land to subsistence agriculture or small scale coffee plantation by local farmers or their family members from nearby towns. This leads to deforestation, fragmentation, and degradation of the surrounding forests. Additionally, private investments (e.g. Tea and coffee plantations) are mushrooming and have resulted in deforestation and degradation of the pristine forest (ranging from small scale pockets of degradation to large scale forest clearance), infringed land customary rights and cleared valuable bio-cultural sites.

Clearing of the forest land also includes some of sacred sites. Traditionally the Sacred sites include wetlands, Riverine forest, big trees etc. In general, typical and representative ecosystems like rivers, springs, waterfalls etc are included in sacred natural sites. However, these Sacred natural sites are also faced a problem by illegal settlers and expansion of agriculture and small and large scale farming activities. Therefore, something has to be done to conserve these very significant biodiversity hotspots.

To be clear, “sacred sites” exist in the core zone, buffer zone, and transition zone. Sacred sites in the core zone are, by definition, already protected. This project is focusing on sacred sites in the buffer and transition zones in Masha and Anderacha woredas. The project is focusing on 20 sites with a combined 30 hectares.

During the project implementation of this project it is planned to address:

- 1.1. Better implementation of the Sheka forest biosphere reserve management Plan. The Management Plan for Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve was released in January 2015. It has been formally endorsed by the Zonal Administration; no further authorization is necessary to begin implementation. Multiple stakeholders, including MELCA, have begun implementation, but

resources are required for better implementation of the Sheka forest biosphere reserve management plan.

1.2. Demarcation of management zones. The management plan calls for further identification, zonation, and protection of core zones (surrounded by buffer zones and transition zones). MELCA has received funding from Norwegian Peoples Aid to conduct some of this work through December 2016. Further funding is necessary to facilitate actual protection activities. (For example, an external evaluation called for a wider community role in biodiversity protection instead of reliance solely on rangers/scouts.)

1.3. Support to local communities. The Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve has, among its formal functions, one of development; specifically, fostering economic and human development that is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable. This requires support to local communities in terms of improving livelihoods and participation in management. One measure to do this is to build on MELCA's work from the previous CEPF grant, including beekeeping, spice and home gardening, animal fattening, and the registering of cooperatives.

1.4. Intergenerational learning. The Norwegian Peoples Aid program recommends expansion of the SEGNI program to transfer indigenous knowledge from elders to the next generation. MELCA worked with twelve schools using CEPF funds and now there is a need to run additional 8 rounds SEGNI program.

1.5. Experience exchange workshop. Via the EWNHS-awarded small grant, MELCA improved coordination and collaboration of research and projects in the Kaffa-Yayu Coffee Biosphere Reserve via the creation of a "platform" for information exchange. The platform has a growing membership of representatives of local communities, concerned federal, zonal and woreda offices, universities, research centers, and NGOs. This platform should be strengthened

Specifically in relation to the first objective, the protection of sacred sites is a key component in the implementation of the Management Plan and significantly contributes to the conservation of core areas of the biosphere reserve. This action is identified under Strategic Outcome 1 of the Management Plan (pp32 and 33). MELCA will identify the non-protected sacred natural sites in the Masha and Anderacha Weredas, map the sites, and get them officially recognized through certification. Certification will ensure the improved ecological state of the sacred sites, helping to halt the allocation of these lands for other activities. MELCA is supporting the Zonal Administration to develop legislation for the protection of sacred natural sites which needs to be validated through the involvement of all stakeholders engaged in the process. The legislation will also include monitoring of the ecological state of sacred sites as a component of core zones of the biosphere reserve. MELCA proposes to bring all stakeholders involved together to raise their awareness and promote local communities participation in the protection of Sacred natural sites which are in core, buffer and transition zones

7. Participatory Implementation

MELCA will ensure participatory implementation in several aspects of the project.

1. Approach for identification, demarcation and certification of sacred natural sites (SNS)

The approach is mainly depend on discussion/consultation with elders, cultural leaders and respected members of the society and local administrators. After discussion, local community members will elect peoples that represent the society to be engaged in the demarcation and legalization of sacred natural sites. Then the elected community members will draft their action plan and budget. Based on approved budget and action plan they will be engaged in demarcation on the ground. The local community technically will be supported by GPS reading and producing map using GIS.

Certification will ensure the improved ecological state of the sacred sites, helping to halt the allocation of these lands for other activities. In addition to these, MELCA-Ethiopia will support the Zonal Administration to develop regulation/guidelines for the protection of cultural sites which needs to be validated through the involvement of all stakeholders that are engaged in the process. The legislation will also include monitoring of the ecological state of sacred sites.

2. Approach to enhance inter-generational learning integrated with issues pertinent to population, health, and the environment.

8 new schools from 2 woredas will be selected for SEGNI program and school level orientation will be organized. Following this each school will select 12 males and 12 female students to participate on SEGNI program based on their leadership quality. Next to this, SEGNI stakeholders meetings will be organized at each woreda and awareness about the program will be given. Then 8 rounds culture and biodiversity nature experiences will takes place inside protected forest. It took place through familiarizing youth with culture, biodiversity and self.

8. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

Potentially affected people will be defined as the members of Masha and Anderacha woredas, with an approximate total population of Males=40,346 , Females=41,325, Total 81,671. This includes people who have been using the targeted precluded areas for small scale and subsistence agriculture and gathering of natural products. “Affected persons” is defined not to include transient people or permanent residents engaged in illegal activities in the area.

9. Measures to assist the affected persons

As part of the project MELCA is providing alternative livelihood support to all residents, including those who formerly used sacred sites for subsistence. With consultation of all relevant stakeholders, selection criteria will be prepared. Following the criteria unemployed youth and women project beneficiaries will be selected and the relevant capacity building trainings will be done. The necessary materials and revolving start up money will be provided to be engaged on non-timber forest products income generating schemes. The approach will more focus on maximizing the groups’ efforts in the use of non-timber forest products, Such as improving harvesting, collection and storage of their products. MELCA will assist with branding/labeling of honey and spice production to attract premium prices for their organic products and will ensure that the community will have a sustainable income generating scheme that will contribute to the conservation and better management of the transition zone.

10. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism

Community members will of course be able to complain directly to government representatives and during stakeholder workshops. In addition, we will publicly post instructions, in Amharic, directing people to voice complaints to any of the following, in any order with which they are comfortable.

- Million Belay, Director. millionbelay@yahoo.com. +251-911-402403
- Zewditu Tessema, CEPF RIT Project Officer. Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society. z.tessema@ewnhs.org.et. 251-116-511737
- Maaïke Manten, CEPF RIT Team Leader. BirdLife International. maaïke.manten@birdlife.org. 254-20-2473259 / 8068314
- CEPF grievance at cepfexecutive@conservation.org

Should we receive any complaint or grievance, we will immediately consult with the RIT team leader and appropriate government authority, at a minimum.

11. Implementation Arrangements

Befekadu Refera, Yeshitela, Negussie, and Adugna Shaweno will be responsible for all elements in the implementation of this process framework. Together and variously, they will engage local communities, their leaders, and government representatives to ensure their understanding of the project and the goals of demarcating sacred sites. These three people will facilitate community mapping exercises and meetings where people agree on final boundaries. These three people will be responsible for preparing and posting public documents describing new exclusion zones. These three will also be responsible for providing alternative livelihood training to members of the community, including to specifically affected people.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

Per project design, MELCA will be based both in Addis Ababa and on site. Monitoring and evaluation of this process framework will be a natural part of monitoring and evaluation of the overall project. We will provide semi-annual reports on the implementation of this framework that provide:

- Location, date, and participation of all public consultations
- Description of any disputes/complaints and their resolution
- Copies of public announcements on site demarcation or decrees