

**GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING COMMUNITY FORUMS**

**TO ASSESS INVOLUNTARY RESTRICTIONS**

**that may occur during implementation of the**

**CEPF project “Establishing sustainable community fisheries and wetland management at Boeung Prek Lapouv Sarus Crane Reserve”**

## **1. THE CEPF SOCIAL SAFEGUARD**

The Letter of Inquiry (LoI) to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for the project, *Establishing sustainable community fisheries and wetland management at Boeung Prek Lapouv Sarus Crane Reserve*, outlines the implementation and management of a legally designated community fishery. These activities have the potential to trigger CEPFs safeguard policy to address social impacts from restrictions of access to natural resources as per the World Bank's Involuntary Resettlement Policy (OP 4.12).

There is a Local Conservation Group (LCG) which is active at Boeung Prek Lapouv. The LCG carries out law enforcement activities, upholding relevant provisions of the laws of Cambodia, such as the Forestry Law, Fisheries Law, Decree on Wildlife Protection and the official national sub-decrees for the existing protected area and will do for the proposed new community fishery. The CEPF safeguard policy is not triggered when dealing with illegal activities.

However, it is possible that a person or persons may be inappropriately denied access to natural resources, in which case their complaints need to be heard and adequately mitigated, while solutions sought to avoid any future unlawful restrictions. As the project is also preparing management plans for the protected areas there is potential for communities to lose access rights and face increasing restrictions on resource use.

## **2. ASSESSING INVOLUNTARY RESTRICTIONS**

The project will provide a platform for local communities to voice any complaints they may have about activities undertaken during the project implementation period and thereby enable periodic assessments of whether mitigation measures are necessary and adaptations to project implementation need to be considered.

The project leader, Chamroen Chiet Khmer (CCK) which works with communities surrounding Boeung Prek Lapouv, already holds regular meetings with community members as part of its role in the current CEPF project lead by WWT. For the community fishery project, CCK will hold, at quarterly intervals, community forums which will be held at appropriate locations so that all stakeholders from local villages are able to attend. The first community forums will be held in November/December 2012 followed by a further three before project end.

CCK is a suitable organization to facilitate the community forums as it is well-respected locally for the work it has already undertaken as part of the *Establishing Sustainable Management at Key Wetlands for Sarus Crane in the Cambodian Lower Mekong* project, and have the communities interests at heart. For example, as well as regularly holding community forums already, it has jointly lead with WWT, on facilitating the Ecosystems Services Appraisal at BPL.

Members of the Local Conservation Groups will not attend these forums, nor will any other member of government that is not a resident of that particular village. The community forums will be built on regular end of the month meetings CCK with community groups that they have formed under current and previous CEPF grants, i.e. Village Volunteer Committees, Self-Help Groups, Community Livelihood and Development Management Committees, but all members of the community can participate in the forum and the time and date of the forum will be announced beforehand.

The main aim of the forum will be to obtain information on involuntary restrictions caused as a consequence of implementation of the *Establishing sustainable community fisheries at Boeung Prek Lapouv Sarus Crane reserve* project, however the forum will also be used to assess community awareness of the project.

It is important that the reason for involuntary restrictions, should they occur, being imposed on an individual or group is properly assessed. Often local people are not aware of the law, *i.e.* what is illegal. It will therefore be helpful if staff from CCK that will be facilitating the meetings have sufficient understanding of the laws that apply to natural resource collection and wetland reserve conservation. To that end it will be helpful if the LCG groups hold a brief refresher session explaining and reviewing laws pertaining to natural resource extraction and to the conservation areas immediately ahead of the community forum. This will help raise awareness of the appropriate laws among communities and avoid cases of involuntary restrictions imposed legally by the LCG being brought up during the forum. After the awareness raising session, the LCGs will leave and the community forum will commence under direction of a CCK representative facilitator.

A member of CCK will take minutes during each community forum so that these can be shared with project partners (including WWT and community stakeholders) and CEPF. Below is a guideline of topics to discuss in each community forum session.

Valid involuntary restrictions brought up in community forums will be flagged and the project will document mitigation measures taken. Subsequent community forums will be used to assess if the issue has been dealt with appropriately.

Table 1. Guidelines for topics to discuss in quarterly community forum sessions

Objective	Topics to discuss	Facilitator to note
<p>1. Pre-forum Awareness Raising (LCG present)</p>	<p>Understanding of project</p> <p>Location and boundaries of proposed community fishery</p> <p>Legal vs illegal activities</p> <p>Role of LCG</p> <p>Rationale for community fishery designation</p>	<p>Number of people that know the project objectives, the role of CCK and other partners</p> <p>Number of people that are clear about the proposed location of the community fishery area and its boundary</p> <p>Activities described as legal by participants. Activities described as illegal. LCG &amp; Facilitator can correct participants afterwards if required.</p> <p>LCG to outline their mandate and activities</p> <p>CCK to outline rationale (with Community Fisheries consultant as appropriate)</p>
<p>2. Pre-forum Information Gathering (LCG present)</p>	<p>Ongoing threats to the fishery at BPL and sustainability of current fishing activities</p>	<p>Threats affecting the fishery and/or sustainable fishery use, including source of threats + location if applicable.</p>
<p>3. Evaluation of Fishery Values and Project Benefits (LCG not present)</p>	<p>People's perception of existing fishery and proposed community fishery project benefits</p>	<p>Perceived benefits of project mentioned by participants (can include wider wetland values, e.g. water storage, fisheries, grazing, plant harvesting). Here, CCK can use data gathered from WWT's ecosystem services appraisal undertaken in January 2012</p>
<p>4. Involuntary Restrictions (LCG not present)</p>	<p>Involuntary restrictions (actual or proposed) imposed on people</p>	<p>Involuntary restrictions mentioned by community. Facilitator needs to separate restrictions imposed on people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- restrictions that are imposed on what clearly is an illegal activity contravening official laws, statutes and regulations (the facilitator can explain why the restriction is necessary)</li> <li>- restrictions where it is less clear if it concerns an illegal activity (the facilitator then, without making further judgment, needs to explain that this will be brought to the attention of the wider project for discussion)</li> </ul>

Appendix 1. List of target villages where quarterly community forums will be held

No.	Village	Commune	District	Province
1	Dei Leuk	Chey Chouk	Borei Chulsa	Takeo
2	Banteay Sloek			
3	Sangkom Meanchey			
4	Banteay Thlay	Prey Khla	Koh Andet	
5	Kaev Kamphleung			
6	Chroy Pon	Kropum Chhuk		