

Social Assessment

5th of April, 2019

CEPF Grant 109083

Edenhope Nature Preserve

***Registration of Three Community Conservation Areas within the Santo Mountain
Chain KBA of Vanuatu***

Tasmate, West Coast Santo, Vanuatu

Grant Summary

1. Edenhope Foundation
2. Registration of Three Community Conservation Areas within the Santo Mountain Chain KBA of Vanuatu
3. 109083
4. \$44,270
5. 7/1/2019 to 4/30/2021
6. Vanuatu
7. 4/5/2019

8. Indigenous People affected:

The community of Tasmate village, West Coast Santo, is primarily affected by the scope of this project within the broader context of Edenhope's presence as lessees of Tasmate's traditional (custom) land. Four tribes/family groups constitute the population of 160 in Tasmate village: the Rojo family, the Kenneth family, the Teno family and the Ben family. Representatives of the younger generation of each of these families are signatories to Edenhope's lease of the 786ha that constitutes the Community Conservation Area of Edenhope Nature Preserve.

As the proposed project requires logistical support from the village community, including transport, accommodation and catering for intended participants, as well as use of their land to provide the space for training, the residents of Tasmate are thus most affected by this intervention. The communities of Wunpuko, Nogugu and Peniel, who will be receiving site visits from Edenhope and project partners for the establishment of CCA sites, will be impacted under the framework for Involuntary Restrictions to land use and will thus be addressed in the corresponding documents.

9. Summary of the proposed project:

The scope of this proposal is to establish a dedicated taskforce for CCA registration at 3 sites within the Santo Mountain Chain – Wunpuko, Nogugu/Peniel and Tasmate. For the duration of this project from 2019 to 2021, the taskforce comprised of Edenhope and partnering organisations will assist these Conservation Committees located in these communities with mapping, biodiversity site assessment, identification of vulnerable/endemic species, and conservation management planning. The taskforce will also work with community leaders to create local awareness and obtain support letters for the proposed CCA sites on regional and provincial levels. On completion of the project, there will be 3 sites within the Santo Mountain Chain undergoing registration and pending approval by Vanuatu's Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation as Community Conservation Areas.

As part of the proposed Workshops, the taskforce will provide feedback and advice to other conservation committees working throughout the KBA, with the aim that 5 further Conservation Management Plans will be drafted and ready to commence the process of CCA registration following the completion of this project. By this time, the capacity of local peers within the Santo Sunset Environment Network will be sufficient as to enable communities to undergo the process of CCA registration with significantly less, if any, outside input from NGOs.

10. Potential impacts:

Positive project impacts:

- Engendering a sense of duty and responsibility for maintaining conservation areas.
- Fostering development and education of cultural minorities within the indigenous community, i.e., women and young people.
- Empowering indigenous communities to take necessary action to adapt to the effects of climate change on food security, resource management, infrastructure development.
- Indigenous communities are enabled to design locally relevant conservation actions that respond to major threats at priority sites.
- Local networks have increased capacity, including training and mentoring in financial and project management, meaning less reliance on Government and external environmental partners.
- Training will focus on co-operative, sensitive strategies to conservation management; no outcome or agenda is enforced or imposed upon indigenous communities, rather techniques and skills learned from field experience in conservation are shared and compared.
- Creating a context within indigenous communities for discussion about environmental issues.

Assessment of positive project impacts:

The goal of the proposed project is to empower and engage the indigenous peoples of West Coast Santo to get informed and take action on conservation issues that importantly affect their way of life. Edenhope wishes to take a non-interventionist, facilitory strategy that enables the expertise of regional experts in the field of biodiversity management to be shared with the local residents of West Coast Santo, who have had no such opportunity until this time.

For the Tasmate community specifically, which is most affected on a practical level by the training opportunities provided in these grant, the most vital positive impact is the transformation of their remote regional location into a centre for education and conservation strategy. The opportunity to host these trainings makes Tasmate a leading exemplar on environmental management, which as a whole is something for the community to be proud of.

Negative project impacts:

- Resistance to change could result in loss of culture and social cohesion. A lack of understanding about the long-term aims of the project (ie., setting up an indigenous conservation network) could mean that local residents do not trust the intervention and resist co-operation on the practical implementation of the project.
- Dependency on external support could arise through the very opportunity of receiving remuneration for the support offered by Tasmate community. Following the initial period of the grant, unreasonable expectations could arise that affect the way that Tasmate community relates to the Santo Sunset Environment Network in terms of hospitality towards and relations with participating communities.
- A lack of organisation in Tasmate community could result in remuneration for support and service not being distributed fairly amongst different tribes/families or not directed at mutually beneficial community projects.
- Potential conflicts may arise within the community, and/or between Tasmate and Edenhope, on account of misunderstandings or miscommunication about sustainable use of natural resources; e.g., the prohibition on hunting and fishing on CCA land.

Assessment of negative project impacts:

All the potential negative impacts to the indigenous peoples included in this project can be successfully mitigated by proper communication at the outset (during the free, prior and informed

consultation) and by working alongside an effective organisational structure within Tasmate community (i.e., a specialised committee related to grant activity implementation) that deals exclusively with any social, financial or land use issues arising from the establishment of a local conservation network.

Further, the key values of Edenhope's co-operation with Tasmate on any matters concerning the implementation of the project are engendering a mutual sense of trust, respect, and transparency. It is the duty of Edenhope as grantee to ensure that all services rendered by individuals in Tasmate village to the project are adequately and fairly remunerated and accounted for. The committee of Tasmate residents can then support and verify the integrity of the project to the wider community.

11. Participatory preparation: This section will describe the participation of affected communities during the project design process (i.e. prior to submission of the full proposal), and explain how Free, Prior and Informed Consent was obtained.

A meeting was held in Tasmate village on Sunday 7th of April, 2018, total 15 pax (6 female, 9 male) representing all 5 families in the community. The agenda was as follows:

- To explain in detail the opportunity for conservation actions and dedicated training in the region provided under the CEPF grant, giving a background of how the narrative of our 2017-2018 grant has contributed to the scope of the present project.
- To share what the contribution of partner organisations such as Live&Learn is to be, including statements from members of these partner organisations.
- To consider the practical implementation strategies to be undertaken by Tasmate in co-operation with Edenhope: i.e., what is to be done, who could do it, and how remuneration is to be provided.
- Setting up of a specialised committee for the implementation of this project, confirming that the roles of Roger Rojo and Fred Kenneth are still acceptable as heads of the the committee.
- Consultation with this committee on matters pertaining to project design and community involvement; discussion of the grievance mechanism and dispute management options; providing information about participatory monitoring and evaluation exercises.

A formal letter of consent was obtained from community representative Andrew Kenneth, attached as scan and English translation, with his contact details.

12. Mitigation strategies: This section will outline measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits.

Our two key mitigation strategies for the management of grievances in this project are informed by the lessons learned from our previous project. These are: *conscious communication* and *trust*.

Conscious communication ensures that the needs of Tasmate community and Edenhope representatives are both expressed and considered. The style of conscious communication is predicated upon deeply listening to the needs of others and responding accordingly in the moment, without giving advice or making judgment. This is something we practice as part of our way of life at Edenhope and it has proven positive in its application to implementing our projects with Indigenous Peoples.

The most meaningful outcome of assuming this style of communication in coordinating with indigenous communities is that there is no privileging of 'us' over 'them;' rather, it equalises the field of relationship between the project initiators and project beneficiaries, enhancing the sense of collaborative co-creation in the implementation of activities. We found that the practice of conscious

communication is a vital part of establishing working relationships based on trust, which ultimately results in positive, meaningful development for all participants through the project.

Before and during the project term, we expect to meet in person at least once per fortnight to discuss any relevant matters arising, including requests for assistance and any grievances concerning specific implementation strategies. Fred and Roger will advise us of any negative issues affecting members of the community or the village as a whole both in relation to the CEPF project and Edenhope's overall presence as lessees of Tasmate customary land.

Trust comes down to a demonstrated willingness and availability on both sides for needs expressed by one party to be met by the other. A mutual foundation of trust and understanding has proved vital to the success of our working relationship with Tasmate. We have found that by building relationships based on integrity with community representatives that the aims and intended outcomes for the project were received with great enthusiasm and support by the village.

What this means in practical terms for the present project is that when we coordinate on practical matters with the Tasmate committee, we bring elements of warmth, humour and enjoyment into every aspect of co-ordination. So that when unexpected difficulties arise – as they inevitable do working in such a remote region - there is no sense of stress or anxiety about any change of plans. We have found through experience that working towards a sense of mutual trust between Edenhope as coordinators and Tasmate as the Workshop hosts contributes to the success of grant activities.

13. Monitoring and evaluation: This section will explain how compliance with the safeguard policy on Indigenous Peoples will be monitored, and reported to CEPF and/or the Regional Implementation Team. Monitoring and evaluation methodologies should be adapted to the local context, indicators, and capacity.

Monitoring and evaluation of safeguard policy will be done twice yearly throughout the period of the grant, in July and January. At these times, members of the dedicated project committee of Tasmate community will undertake a survey to evaluate their level of satisfaction with the progress of the CEPF project, and specifying any positive or negative impacts they have experienced in the implementation of activities since the previous assessment. The survey will be prepared for them to complete in Bislama, translated by Nicola Trethowan, and sent with a scan of the original survey to the Regional Implementation Team.

This survey will also be issued to the communities of Wunpuko, Nogugu and Peniel on conclusion of the 10-day site visits planned during the period of this project.

Questions included on the survey will include:

- How would you rate your satisfaction with the project in the last three months?
- How often has the committee met to discuss for this project in the last three months?
- How often has the committee met with members of the community to discuss this project?
- How often has the committee met with members Edenhope to discuss this project?
- In the last three months, how difficult was it to manage this project?
- In what ways has this project benefited the community in the last three months?
- In what ways has this project impacted negatively on the community in the last three months?

Responses to the first 5 questions will be on a sliding scale of 1 to 5. For the last two questions, which look specifically at positive and negative impacts of the project, respondents will be asked to give specific details about the impacts of the project.

Evaluating by a survey will enable Edenhope in partnership with the community to look at ways to ensure that a line of communication and co-operation remains open throughout the project. The survey format, written in clear language easy for the respondents to understand, is a good way to monitor the level of information exchange at all levels of the project implementation. Further, it offers a coherent way to look at any risks or grievances that may come up for Tasmate community at any stage of the project. As the community are primarily involved in a hosting/facilitory capacity, their input during monitoring will help us to formulate ways to properly manage the training sessions in Tasmate village.

Throughout thi project, the monitoring process will also enable us to create a progressive, evolving account of ‘what comes up’ and ‘how do we solve it.’ All negative impacts, and the strategies involved to mitigate them over the course of the year, will be included in a report and submitted with analysis as a final evaluation of Edenhope’s Social Safeguard compliance in conclusion of the project in April 2021.

14. Grievance mechanism:

Full details of the grievance mechanism in place, and the contact details of the Regional Implementation Team, will be shared with members of the specialised committee of Tasmate community members dedicated to the implementation of this project for them to keep on-hand. They will be the first contact point for any claimant wishing to make a grievance, and will direct them to co-ordinate their grievance to Edenhope either in person, by letter or online messaging system.

The main contact person at Edenhope responsible for dealing with grievances is Nicola Trethowan. Any claimant wishing to raise a grievance about the intended project will be asked to share their grievance with her, either verbally or in writing. Verbal grievances will be recorded and written down in Bislama, signed and dated by the claimant. The written record of a grievance will be scanned and sent to the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director, accompanied by an English translation and the proposed response from Edenhope within 15 days. If the response is not met with satisfaction by the claimant, then Edenhope agrees to take up the matter further on their behalf by contacting the CEPF Executive Director via email.

In written communications that Edenhope distributes to local villages along the West Coast in regards to the project, full details will be provided as to how to contact CEPF and Edenhope with any grievances.

Edenhope Foundation: Nicola Trethowan / edenhopefoundation@gmail.com / +678 570 9700
Regional Implementation Team (EMI): cepfeastmelanesia@iucn.org
Vatu Molisa, IUCN Project Liason Officer (Vanuatu) : vatumaranga@gmail.com / +678 25302
CEPF Executive Director: cepfexecutive@conservation.org

15. Budget:

The only foreseeable cost of implementing this policy is time taken to arrange meetings with the specialised committee in Tasmate, and processing survey results.

As use of the Edenhope vehicle to drive to Tasmate for regular meetings contributes to fuel and wear and tear of the vehicle, these costs are covered under 'Maintenance.'

→ \$35 per month for Social Safeguard activities [2 scheduled visits per month] x 22 months = \$770

Printing of survey sheets comes under the budget line of 'Supplies, ' (printing paper and ink cartridges).

→ 1 printer toner @ \$126 + 1 package printing paper @ \$20 = \$146

The time spent by Nicola Trethowan on Social Safeguards Assessment will be voluntary and comes under 'In-kind Contribution.'