

Kunming Institute of Zoology
Freshwater turtle conservation in the karst areas of Yunnan and Guangxi
Social Assessment

(i) Indigenous People in the Project Area

The project will be conducted in the border region between Yunnan Province and Guangxi Province, mainly in the regions to the east of the Red River, Yunnan, and in the west of Guangxi Province. These proposed project target areas are mainly inhabited by two ethnic groups, the Zhuang ethnic group and the Miao ethnic group, respectively. In Wenshan Prefecture, Yunnan, there is a total population of 3.7 million people, of which about 1.4 million people are of the Han ethnic group, 970 000 people are of the Zhuang ethnic group, 410 000 people are of the Miao ethnic group, and 310 000 people are of the Yi ethnic group. Han nationality accounts for 43.5% of the population. In Baise City, Guangxi, there is a total population of 3.78 million people, including Zhuang, Han, Yao, Miao, Yi, and some others. Ethnic minorities account for 87% of the population. The Zhuang population alone accounts for 80% of the total population. The livelihoods of these people principally depend on the cultivation of fruit and sugarcane - activities that will not be impacted by our work.

(ii) Expected Project Impacts

Positive impacts: Our investigation will generate important information about protected species, informing the development of conservation strategies. Therefore, our work will improve the protection of important ecosystems and endangered species in the project areas, leading to improvements in environmental sustainability, the provision of ecosystem services, and so will indirectly improve the well-being and livelihoods of the population.

Negative impacts: The specific conservation measures that will be implemented by the project will only be designed once the initial scoping surveys and research have been completed. However, we do not believe that our work will result in significant adverse impacts to the local community. Any negative impacts that do occur should be very limited. Potential negative impacts are principally likely to include those associated with reducing the prevalence of illegal wildlife hunting and trade. Although some people do earn income from these activities, they are prohibited by China's Forestry Law and are causing direct threats to important ecosystems and endangered species in the project area. Widespread hunting has brought many species to the brink of extinction.

(iii) Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Affected Communities During Project Design

Free, prior and informed consent of affected communities will be sought during the design of conservation activities, during the early stages of the project. However, it will not be necessary to seek free, prior and informed consent for conservation activities that only consist of preventing illegal activities. A baseline socioeconomic assessment of affected communities will allow us to determine what proportion of communities in our target areas derive their livelihoods from our focal species, and how many households are likely to experience reductions in income as a result of our project. While we recognize that it may be difficult to obtain reliable information about illegal activities (at that therefore special approaches and indirect measures may be needed), this should create a baseline against which we will identify negatively affected households later on, and make informed decisions about what form and level of compensation would be appropriate, and other relevant mitigation measures.

(iv) Measures to Avoid Adverse Impacts and Provide Culturally Appropriate Benefits

Although potential negative impacts are mainly associated with the prevention of activities which are illegal according to Chinese law, we will take measures to respond to this situation. In particular, we will identify affected households

and put them in touch with organizations who can help them access alternative (and legal) livelihood options, based on available local resources.

(v) Grievance Mechanism.

We will provide all affected communities with the contact details of the KIZ Project staff, and the CEPF-Regional Implementation Team (KFBG and IUCN), and inform them that any grievances should be directed to these individuals.