

CEPF Safeguard Policy: Indigenous Peoples (OP4.10)

Project Title: Ghizo and Kolombangara Ridges to Reef: Integrated planning for natural resources, communities, and biodiversity (Phase 2)

Organization: World Wide Fund for Nature - Solomon Islands

Application Code: 65964

Social Assessment –Kolombangara and Ghizo Islands

As with Phase1, this project will continue to implement activities within areas where Indigenous Peoples reside; therefore, similar to the Phase 1 assessment, this Social Assessment has been compiled for communities reside on Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, and was prepared to demonstrate how the project will comply with CEPF’s Safeguard Policy on Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Peoples of Kolombangara

The island of Kolombangara is divided into 2 provincial constituency wards, the Northern and Southern, and within these wards there are roughly 41 community villages within the Northern ward, and some 53 community villages occupying the Southern ward. Of these community villages there are 9 main settlements. According to the Kolombangara Island Biodiversity and Conservation Association (KIBCA) as of today, there are thought to be a total of 18 indigenous tribes known to reside within the two constituency wards of Kolombangara Island. KIBCA reports that approximately 6,000 people currently reside on Kolombangara Island, and current reports state that the population has been steadily growing since the last 2009 census. During the community consultation activities facilitated by KIBCA, WWF aims to generate up-to-date and accurate records of the total population, number of tribes and total number of people within each tribe, and to use this information to assist in recording indirect and direct beneficiaries of this R2R project.

Names of the 18 indigenous tribes of Kolombangara:

Koloma	Jito
Ngava	Siporae
Vumba	Sikipoza
Qoza	Padezaka
Kona	Matakale
Sarelata	Vasiluku
Paleka	Sirebe
Kumbongava	Vuri
Bantongo	Leanabako

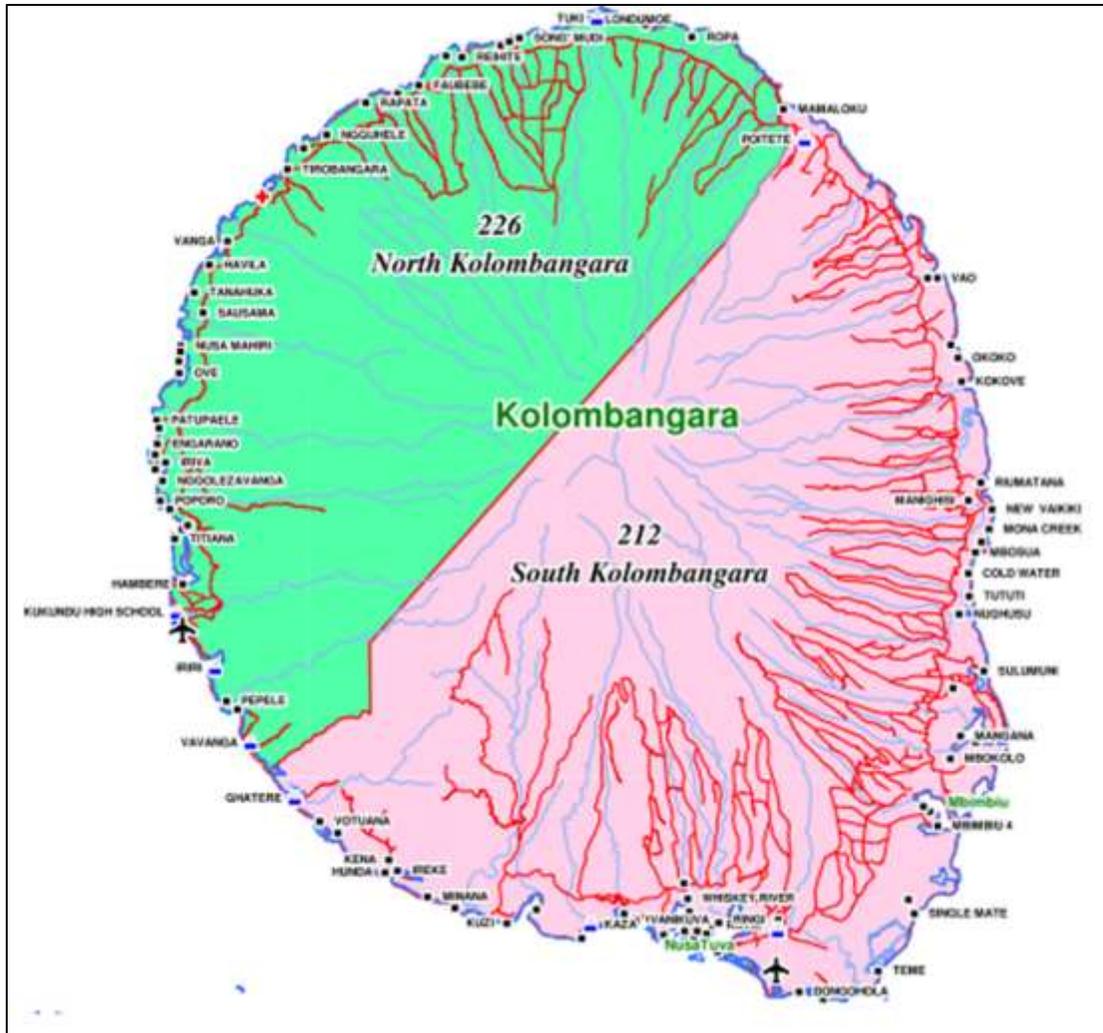


Figure 1: Community villages (black squares) within the Northern and Southern constituency wards of Kolombangara (blue rectangles represent schools). Image generated from a pdf map produce by the Solomon Island National Geographical Information Centre, copyright of the Solomon Island government.

Indigenous Peoples of Ghizo Island:

Ghizo Island, Western Province consists of 1 provincial constituency ward, and numerous tribes can be found settled across the island. Over the years, people from other islands/countries have either settled on or have been relocated to Ghizo Island for a host of reasons.



Figure 2: Communities villages (black squares) on Ghizo Island (blue squares represent schools). Image generated from a pdf map produce by the Solomon Island National Geographical Information Centre, copyright of the Solomon Island government.

There are eleven major rural/semi-rural communities on Ghizo Island, excluding the town of Gizo itself. These include the community villages of Saeraghi, Vorivori and Bibolo who are descendants of the original settlers and owners of Ghizo Island. Paelonge and Suvania/Simboro settlers are immigrants predominantly from Simbo Island. The communities of Titiana, New Manda, Nusabaruku and Babanga are of Gilbertese (Kiribati) decent and the Fishing Village is of Malaita origin. The Kongulavata community is predominantly occupied by people from Simbo, with a population of residents from Choiseul and Malaita who have also settled in Kongulavata Bay. Gizo town (spelt differently than Ghizo Island) is the most diverse community on the island as descendants of all the above mentioned people reside there, plus residents for others Solomon Island provinces.

According to the 2009 census (most recent census), the estimated resident rural population on Ghizo Island, was 3,630 and the Gizo urban center population was 3547, with a total of urban and rural population estimated at 7177. To date, Ghizo Island supports a total of 4 major ethnic groups (indigenous settlers, Simbo Island Settlers, Kiribati Settlers and North Malaitan Settlers) and two minor ethnic groups from Choiseul Island and Roviana, Western Province.

Expected project impacts on Indigenous People of Kolombangara and Ghizo Islands

Positive impacts

With the overall aim to develop comprehensive Ridge to Reef Conservation Plans for Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, Phase 2, *Participatory Mapping and R2R Conservation Development* (creation of R2R conservation reports), will continue to build on the R2R awareness and capacity building effort resulting from Phase 1. As with Phase 1, this phase will continue to work to engaged communities, stakeholders and key partners (Gizo Environment Livelihood and Conservation Association (GELCA) and KIBCA), with the objective to produce 2 R2R conservation reports (1 for each Ghizo and Kolombangara), and create maps for sustainable and effective natural resource management planning, illustrating key ecological areas of high natural resource use, and zones of potential environmental threat from resource extraction, climate change and population growth. This will also involve building the capacity of local indigenous NGOs (KIBCA and GELCA) in advocacy and implementation of the R2R approach.

As Phase 2 is predominantly a participatory process, strongly involving Kolombangara and Ghizo Island community participation, guided by KIBCA and GELCA, in identifying priority area for conservation and major threats to the environment, this provides the opportunity for a people driven and focused R2R Conservation Plan development.

Having communities engaged and participating in the data collection, and are awareness and supporting the R2R approach, provides communities to have a voice and input in determining how conservation and resource use will support their culture, livelihood and future opportunities.

Overall, this R2R Project will enhance the community-based conservation and resource management and will benefit the people of Ghizo and Kolombangara in the following ways:

- Key marine and terrestrial habitats will be protected and under effective co-management, ensuring essential ecosystem services for well-being are preserved
- Culture and livelihoods will be sustained, with increased opportunities for increased income and livelihoods presented
- Communities are benefiting from increased food security
- Communities have the knowledge of terrestrial and marine connectivity, and understand and are fully aware of the impacts associated with land and resource use/extraction has on the marine habitats, and vice versa

If resource management and conservation efforts are increased around Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, it is also possible that resiliency of communities and natural habitats to climate change and other environmental impacts will also increase, further contributing to aforementioned benefits, and minimizes hardships associated with natural disaster events.

WWF anticipates that the results of Phase 2 will provide the foundation for the creation of Ridge to Reef Conservation Plans for Ghizo and Kolombangara, that will have the marine and terrestrial habitats in Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands protected and under effective co-management through the implementation of R2R conservation approach; and have the communities within these two islands ultimately benefiting from increased food security, income and livelihoods.

In addition, with the Phase 2, the continuation of advocating and raising awareness on the R2R approach, WWF anticipates there will be indirect positive benefits seen in the education, training and capacity building of engaged communities and key partners, especially with the KIBCA Rangers and GELCA, yet also with the young people of these communities. By continue to work with local communities; the R2R conservation message will reach a greater audience, and provide greater understanding on the connectivity between terrestrial and marine conservation and its necessary protection for future generations.

Negative impacts

As the nature of this Phase 2, involves full engagement and participation from communities, stakeholders and partners, adverse impacts are likely to be very minor, if they occur at all.

As in Phase 1, WWF recognizes that this participatory phase may bring up issues associated with traditional resources ownership, especially in regards to suggestion of zoning for development or resource management. On Kolombangara this conflict is believed to be minimal, however on Ghizo Island this is heightened, due to the account of the varied places of origins of the Ghizo settlers.

Results from community engagements conducted during Phase 1, and in recent consultations with KIBCA and Ecological Solutions Solomon Island (ESSI), who have been conducting a scoping project on Kolombangara, show that communities are supporting the concepts for zoning for resource management, thus conflicts are at a minimum on Kolombangara Island. Similarly, Phase 1 generated great support for zoning from communities on Ghizo Island, and in light of a recent Wester Province planning workshop and meetings with the Parliamentary ward member for Ghizo and with the Western Province Minister of Environment, it is thought that this issue will also be minimal, yet will require continual consultation and monitoring.

However, it should be noted that there is a possibility that the participatory mapping activities also might create further negative perception from the communities on both Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, as this activity requires documenting areas of usage and extraction. As previously mentioned this could especially bring up issues over land boundaries between the various settlers on Ghizo Island.

Additionally, as this participatory phase and the various associated activities is relatively short, there will be limited community employment opportunities. This could lead to disagreements, within and between communities, regarding who gets hired to assist with the project and how the opportunities are shared fairly within the engaged communities.

Regardless of the nature of ongoing or proposed conservation work, there is always a possibility that neighboring communities will dispute who has the right to be involved, manage, and benefit from the project. However, another issue is jealousy amongst communities who are not engaged as much as others. Therefore, there is potential for this project to contribute to negative emotions and tension between various communities.

Free, prior and informed consultations with Ghizo and Kolombangara communities

In Phase 1, community consultations were conducted focusing on raising awareness and understanding on the R2R approach, and during these consultations and during the Look and

Learn Experience trip to Choiseul, the communities (leaders), from both Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, had the opportunity to discuss and decide whether they were interested in supporting and participating this project; and signed supporting agreements were collected. Follow-ups consultations with these leaders will be conducted during the first quarter activities, and Free, prior and informed (FPI) consent for Phase 2 will be gathered and send to CEPF.

This will also be continued during Phase 2, through consultations with KIBCA and GELCA, who will work with WWF to identify additional key community leaders (chiefs, villages leaders and/or village elders), with the aim to gain and collected FPI consent to continue with R2R activities for Phase 2. As previously mentioned, KIBCA and ESSI have consulted and informed most of the communities on Kolombangara of the R2R project, and believe that the majority of the communities are in full support of this phase. In addition, WWF has recently been in discussion with the 3 Western Province Provincial ward members for Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, and in the first quarter of this project, we will aim to gather official agreements and FPI consents from these MPs, supporting this R2R phase.

Key community leaders, from both Ghizo and Kolombangara communities, will be encourage and invited to attend the participatory mapping workshops, and during this time, they will have the opportunity to be involved in documenting land use areas, and also be able to discuss any concerns or issues that might have come about. Prior to these workshops, all participating leaders and/or representative will be required, in writing, stating that they wish to be involved in the R2R project, and particularly in this participatory phase (mapping workshops), and that there are no disputes amongst the traditional owners within the communities, regarding participation.

Anticipating that the future development of a Ridges to Reef conservation plan may lead to the establishment of protected areas, the letters will also confirm whether or not all traditional owners support the creation of a protected area within the area they lay claim to and whether or not the proposal is free from tenure dispute.

Measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits

Aforementioned, traditional land/resource ownership disputes and conflicts are a possibility, however, in the Solomon Islands such disputes are often a result of an array of factors, including:

1. Limited dialogue between the various tribes interested in the resources;
2. Incorrect and/or limited and proper explanation of proposed resource use/development has not been communicated at the community level;
3. No formal agreements regarding Ownership or the Terms and Conditions of resource use exist; and/or
4. No record or identification of the true resource owner

For the most part such disputes can be settled around Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands by ensuring that all interested parties are involved and equally benefitting from ongoing and proposed projects. As it is anticipated that such conflict will be minimal; this participatory phase which provides equal opportunities for involvement from the community, should greatly reduce any disputes that may arise. As the main aim is to have the key community leaders for Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, represented and participating in the mapping workshops and

contributing to various project outputs (e.g. database of values, threat assets and resource use, and the creation of resource maps) this will provide communities with the opportunity to activity express their interests and concerns, during the creation of these outputs.

As a means to mitigate possible disputes, the community consultation activities, facilitated by KIBCA and GELCA, scheduled for the second quarter of this project, will look to address and document concerns (in the field reports). Key community leaders will be engaged during these consultation activities, and this will provide the opportunity for anyone to express interests and/or concerns. It will also allow for KIBCA, GELCA and WWF to relay the message that by participating in this R2R project all communities stand to benefit in the same way. WWF has learnt from past projects that the inclusion of all interested parties and effective communication to the communities reflects the success of the project and limits resource ownership disputes.

Furthermore, by utilizing GELCA and KIBCA with their knowledge of community dynamics and engaging with the Provincial ward Members of Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands, WWF believes this will limit any minor community disputes regarding employment opportunities or payment for services within the communities. As KIBCA and GELCA will be directly contracted to assist WWF during this phase, this limit having to hire addition community services for consultations.

It is envisioned that KIBCA and GELCA, directed by WWF and ESSI, will carry out all communities' consultation for their associate island wards, in one or two locations. This will mean that key representatives and interested community members will be encouraged to attend these consultations. This will also mean that any payment for services will remain within the community. However, if there appears to be any disagreement within the communities WWF will reassess the issue, and look to identify an agreeable solution with the communities. As this phase does not involve going into the communities, and is more focused on key community leaders attending consultations and participatory workshops, this means that there are limited activity involving services of the communities. As the four proposed participatory mapping workshops will be held in Gizo town, WWF will utilize its established listed of service providers (e.g. caterers, venue hire), and any services required will be allocated to ensure all service providers have equal opportunities.

Similarly, regarding catering within the communities, there are established women's groups that work together to perform catering duties, which generally have enough representation that all families are benefiting equally. When required, WWF will use these women's groups, and where there are no established group, communities will be encourages to designate a group of women in such a way that all families will benefit from some income.

However, the nature of this R2R project allows for communities to work together and participate in achieving the over-arching goal of protecting their important natural environments and resources which they depend on for food security, livelihood and well-being. Therefore, this approach and its associated consultations, participations activities and FPI consent mechanisms will hopefully reduce the likelihood of resource ownership conflicts.

Monitoring of safeguard implementation

During the first two quarters of Phase 2, the above measures for reducing disputes and negative impacts will be carried out. To ensure that communities, stakeholders and key partners are

represented in all activities, including meetings, workshops and consultations, participant's name and place of residence will be recorded. Specially, attendance sheets for each activity will be completed and submitted to CEPF. We will also create a 'Stakeholders Registry' which will be used to document and monitor participants support and participation in the development of the R2R Conservation Plans for Ghizo and Kolombangara Islands.

In regarding to minimizing disputes during participatory mapping exercise, WWF and ESSI in consultation with the GIS Specialist and with assistance from KIBCA and GELCA will inform all participants of what information and data is required for creating the resource maps. This will be done by consulting with the key representatives identified to attend the mapping workshops prior to the actual activity. A brief refresher on the specific information and the importance of the data to be captured in the resources maps will be conducted before mapping exercise starts. In addition, representatives from the Solomon Islands Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Environment will be attending all mapping workshops. This may assist in addressing disputes regarding land boundaries and resource use that may arise during the workshops. By having an open and transparent dialogue with the key community representatives, WWF believe this will minimize conflict during the workshops.

Grievance mechanism

WWF will encourage participants, stakeholders, partners and community members to register any grievances through the following:

- 1) Directly at meetings, consultations and workshops;
- 2) Through either KIBCA (for Kolombangara Island communities) and GELCA (for Ghizo Island communities) representatives; and/or
- 3) Through discussion with their Provincial Government representative (e.g. MP, Minister)

In the event that there is a grievance brought forward, WWF will communicate the grievance to CEPF and the Regional Implementation Team at IUCN within 7 days of receiving knowledge of the grievance.

Additional Information

Specific's regarding KIBCA and GELCA:

KIBCA: Kolombangara Island Biodiversity Conservation Association, was formed by the Indigenous landholders of Kolombangara Island to represents their interests in conservation.

KIBCA was formed on 10 December 2008 at a meeting of leaders, elders and chiefs of Kolombangara villages, communities and tribes. KIBCA was registered on May 2009 under the Charitable Trust Act as a non-government or community-based organisation. KIBCA's office is at Ringgi, Kolombangara Island.

KIBCA'S overall objective is to protect Kolombangara Islands' rich marine and forest biodiversity and to educate, promote and encourage sustainable management of natural resources through viable economic and social ventures for our communities.

KIBCA manages the area of Kolombangara above 400m above sea level as a 19,400 ha conservation reserve. KIBCA has also established that all environment and conservation projects conducted on Kolombangara have to involve consultation with their Project Coordinator, and when possible utilize the establish group of Rangers to carrying out or assist in activities on the island. WWF will utilize the knowledge and expertise of the KIBCA Rangers and the Project Coordinator during this project.

GELCA: Gizo Environment Livelihood and Conservation Association was established by Ghizo Island marine stakeholders with support and assistance from WWF SI in 1998. The initial program was establish as a means to incorporate traditional marine environment and resource management practices within the Ghizo marine area, and combines these traditional practices with modern conservation methodologies, such as the establishment of community-based Marine Protected Areas, to promote the conservation of marine biodiversity and manage use of subsistence marine resources.

GELCA is a recognised Charitable Trust within Solomon Islands. It has its own constitution and has the ability to seek out funding opportunities to assist with livelihood and/or conservation initiatives around Ghizo Island.

The GELCA Management Committee, which is comprised of key representatives from communities, relevant government departments such as fisheries and tourism, WWF and the private sector, and it is responsible for managing/overseeing projects occurring within the Ghizo area. Each GELCA management committee community representative is elected at the community level and is responsible for providing information about ongoing/proposed projects to their respective communities. Another major role of GELCA community representatives is conflict resolution. Thus, if community members are hesitant to bring up grievances during meetings or consultations, they can approach their GELCA representative who will respond in an appropriate and productive manner.